

PROWAG Final Rule: Notable Changes and Current Status



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October 22, 2025

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Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

- Title II applies to public entities, e.g., state and local governments.
- A public entity must operate each of its programs, activities and services so that when viewed in its entirety, it is accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.



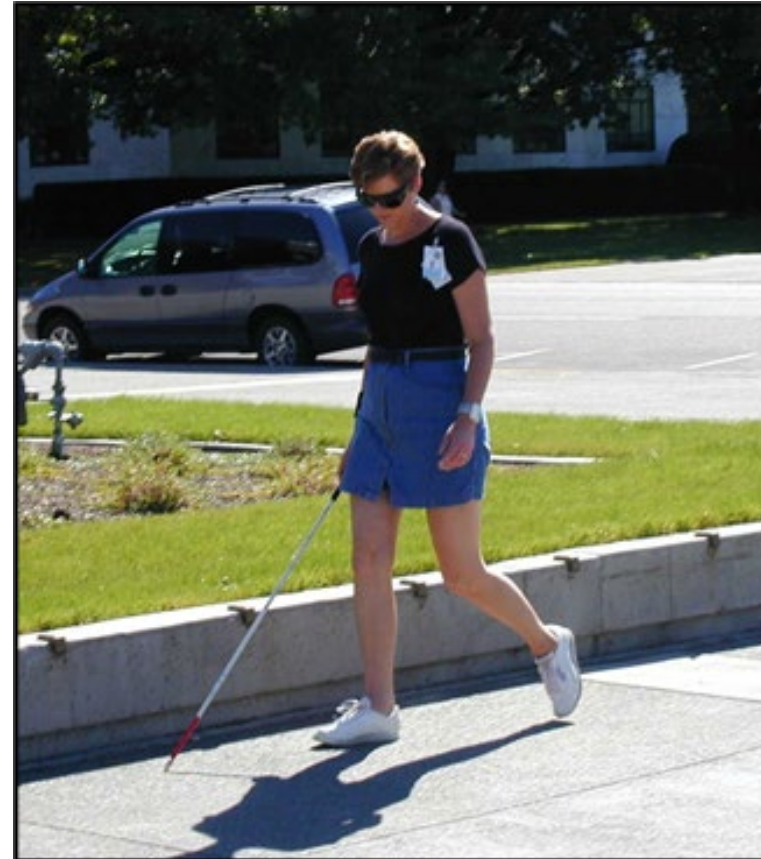
Relevant ADA Criteria

- Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)
 - for buildings and sites
 - 2010 ADA Design Standards (ADAAG)
- Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG)
 - for the public right-of-way
 - draft versions 2002, 2005, 2011, 2013 (added shared use paths)
 - Final Rule issued August 8, 2023

What Is PROWAG?

Accessibility guidelines that specifically address the challenges pedestrians with disabilities face when traveling in the public right-of-way (PROW) such as:

- sidewalks
- crosswalks
- shared-use paths
- on-street parking
- pedestrian signals



Current Status of PROWAG Adoption (1)

- Is not a federal standard (and not enforceable) under the ADA until adopted into regulations by USDOT and USDOJ.
- Adopted standards by each agency cannot provide less accessibility than PROWAG. DOT and DOJ adoption must be consistent with PROWAG.

Current Status of PROWAG Adoption (2)

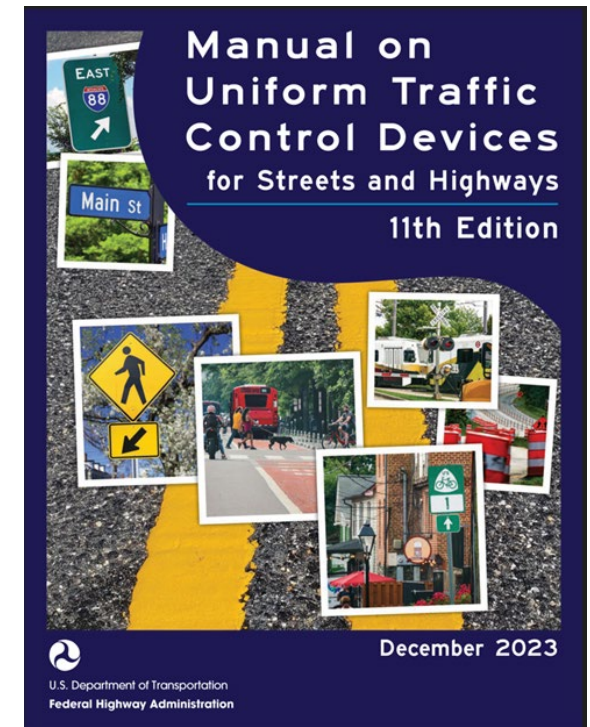
- On December 18, 2024 (effective 01/17/25), USDOT adopted the standards dealing with new construction and alterations of transit stops in PROW.
- Transit stops in PROW required to comply with technical accessibility specifications, including boarding and alighting areas, boarding platforms, transit shelters and accessible connections to existing pedestrian circulation paths.
- Adopting the other parts of PROWAG requires coordination between USDOT and USDOJ.

General Changes (1)

- “Advisory” material eliminated
- Cross slope changed from 1:50 (2%) to 1:48 (round to 2.1%) maximum
- Many definitions have subtle revisions

General Changes (2)

- MUTCD provisions included in text instead of being incorporated by reference.
- There are some discrepancies between PROWAG Final Rule and MUTCD that need to be resolved
 - pushbutton location
 - audible devices & channelizers in work zones
 - traffic signals in flashing mode



Conventional Industry Tolerances

- Clarifies that when requirements are stated as a range with specific minimum or maximum endpoints, they are not subject to conventional industry tolerances.

Alterations Generally (1)

1. Any portion of a ped facility that is altered must be altered to comply with the guidelines regardless of the intended scope of the project.
2. Facilities or portions of facilities that are “added” to an existing *developed* PROW are alterations and are subject to the requirements for altered facilities.
 - Compliance with the requirements is required to the maximum extent feasible where existing physical constraints make compliance with the applicable requirements technically infeasible.

Alterations Generally (2)

3. Altered facilities must be connected to an existing pedestrian circulation path by a pedestrian access route.
4. When crosswalks are altered, curb ramps or blended transitions shall be provided on both ends of the crosswalk where the pedestrian access route crosses a curb.

Identification of Places with No Ped Crossing

- Added provisions R203.6.1.1 and R203.6.1.2 to clarify that where crossing is prohibited at an intersection or not intended midblock or at a roundabout, jurisdictions must take care to ensure that there is no crosswalk or curb ramp and the pedestrian circulation path is separated from the roadway.

Places with No Ped Crossing



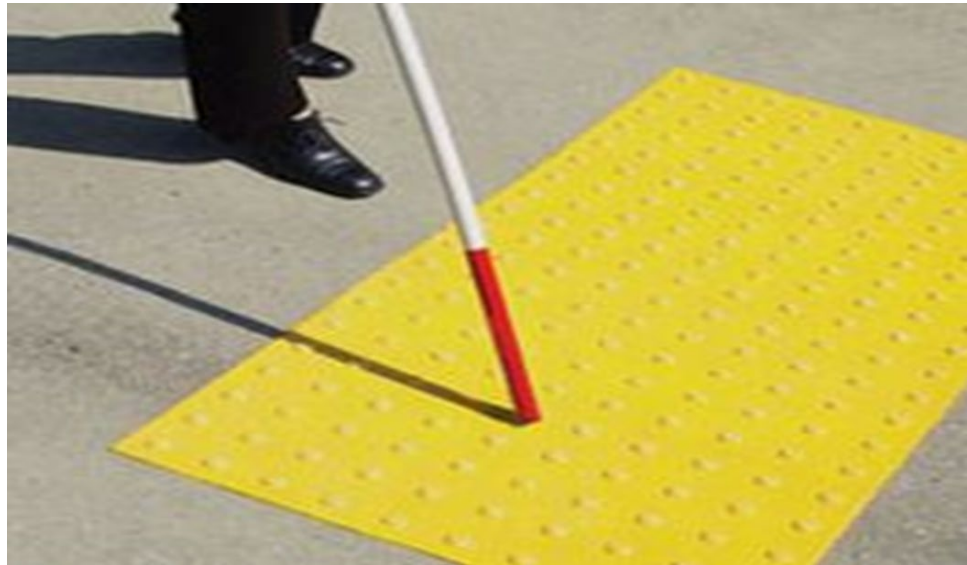
NO



YES

Detectable Warning Surfaces at Driveways

- Detectable Warning Surfaces (DWS) are required on pedestrian circulation paths at driveways with STOP or YIELD control or a traffic signal to alert pedestrians with vision impairments that they are walking into an active vehicular way.



Example of Where DWS Required at Driveway

STOP Sign



But Gray Areas Remain

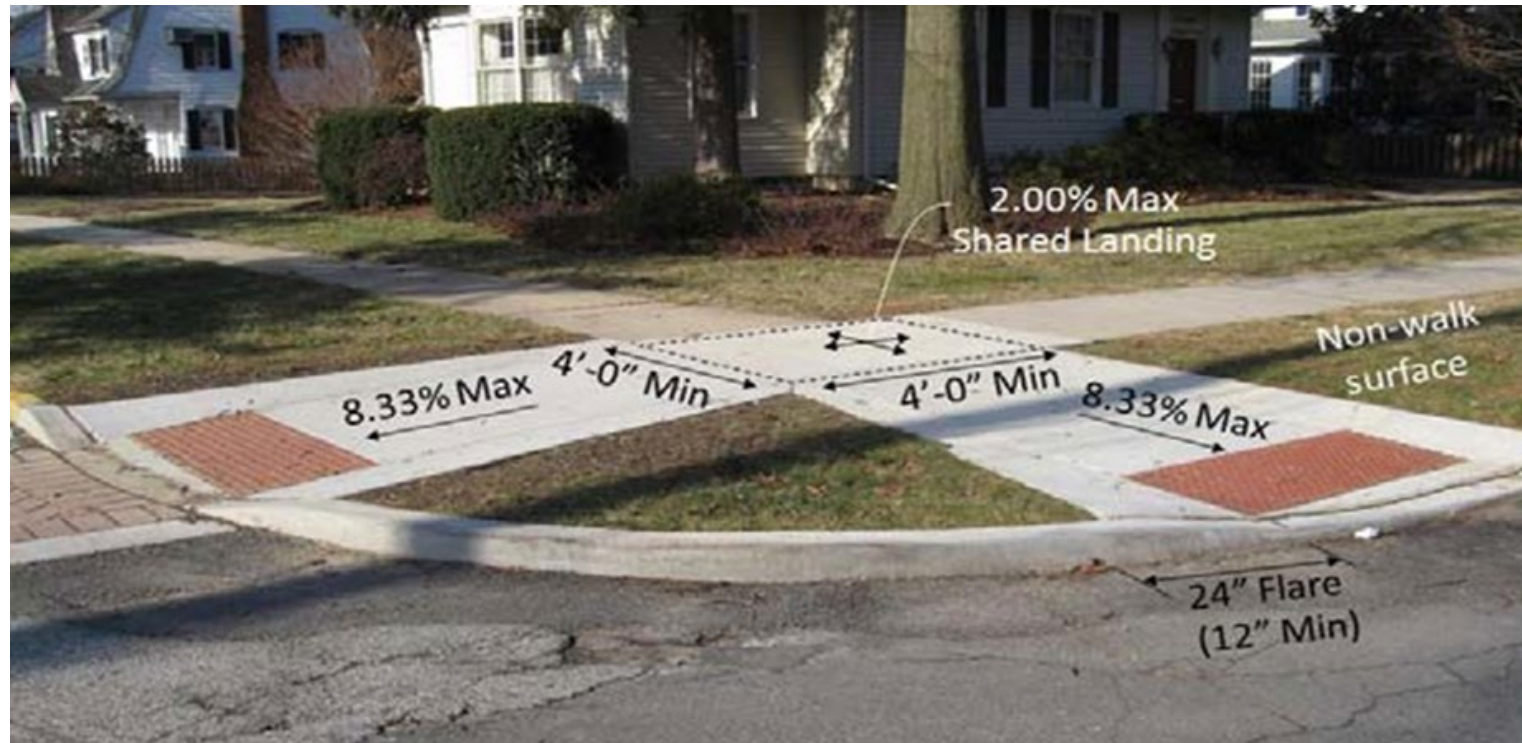


Curb Ramps and Blended Transitions

- Perpendicular Curb Ramps
 - landing (formerly turning space) required only if change in direction is necessary
 - clear area at bottom—5% maximum running slope

Landings

- Min. 4.0 ft. by 4.0 ft. landing shall be provided at the top of the curb ramp and shall be permitted to overlap other landings.



Curb Ramps and Blended Transitions (2)

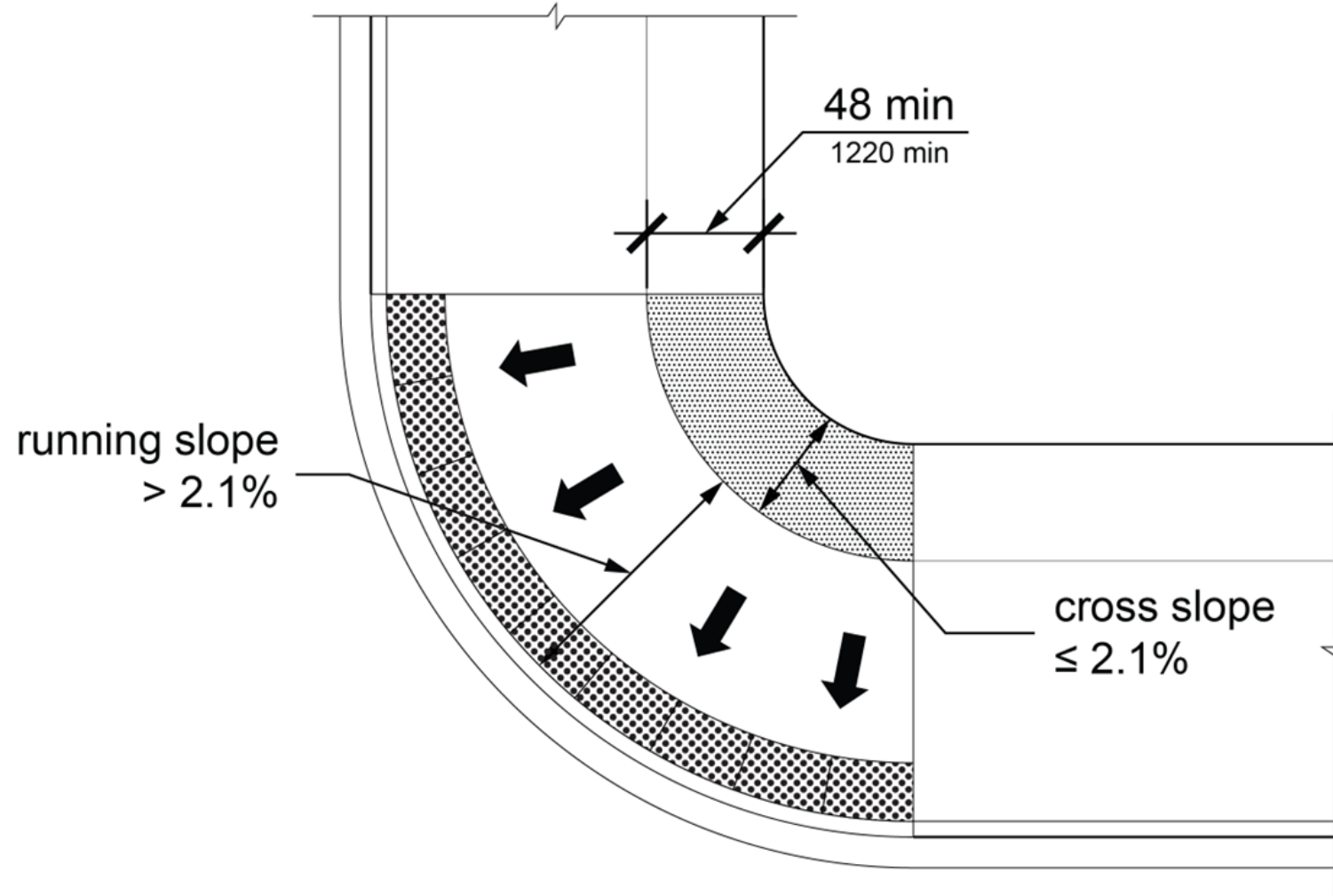
- Parallel Curb Ramps
 - removes requirement for larger landing if turning space is constrained



Curb Ramps and Blended Transitions (3)

- Blended Transition
 - bypass required only if it serves more than one pedestrian circulation path and has running slope greater than 2.1%
 - this is so a pedestrian with a disability may bypass the slope of a blended transition that the individual does not need to use.

Bypass at Blended Transition



Alterations That Trigger Installation of APS (1)

- Retained in the final rule scoping specifying that accessible ped signals be installed whenever new ped signals are provided and whenever ped signals are altered.
- Acknowledging the diverse nature of alterations that affect ped signals, the Board declined to list specific actions that trigger the requirement to install APS.



Alterations That Trigger Installation of APS (2)

- Ped signals are subject to same alteration requirements as other ped facilities. Entity making the alteration will assess, according to the requirements in the guidelines as adopted by USDOT and DOJ, whether installation of APS is required.
- USDOT and DOJ may provide further specifics as to alterations triggering installation of APS in their rulemaking adopting these guidelines.

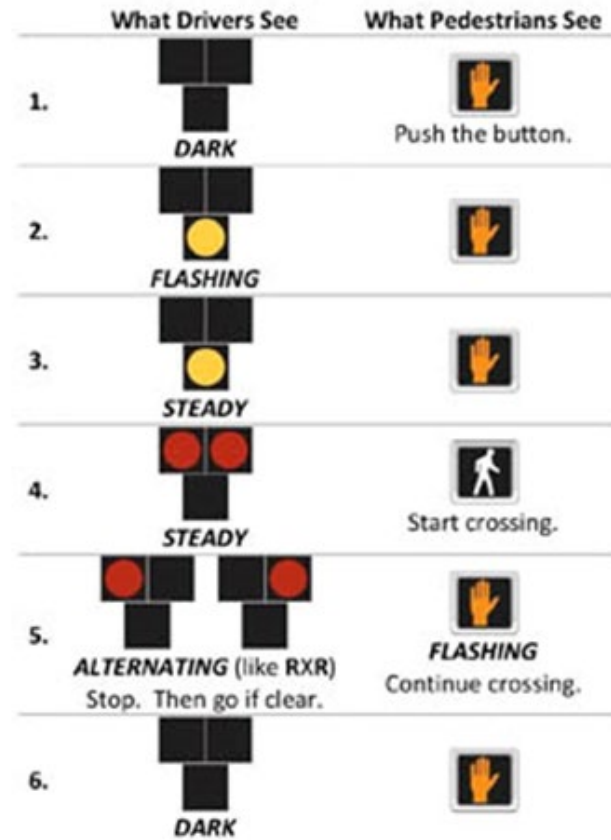
Crosswalk Treatments at Roundabouts/Turn Lanes (1)

- Edge Detection at Roundabouts
 - 2-ft minimum separation with landscaping or other non-prepared surface or . . .
 - vertical edge treatment continuous and detectable

Crosswalk Treatments at Roundabouts/Turn Lanes (2)

- Expands crosswalk treatment options among which jurisdictions must select for installation at *multi-lane* ped crossings at roundabouts to include:
 - traffic control signal with ped signal head
 - and . . .

Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon



Ped-Actuated Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon



Raised Crossing



Remember

- Even in the absence of enforceable standards, public entities are prohibited from discriminating against individuals with disabilities.
- Facilities in the public right-of-way are required to be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

Thank You!

Questions?

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