

ITEM	2
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	14
COUNCIL MEETING	1981 03 09

Re: WHEELCHAIR RAMPS

Following is a report from the Municipal Engineer on wheelchair ramps.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the recommendation of the Municipal Engineer be adopted.

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TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER  
 FROM: MUNICIPAL ENGINEER  
 SUBJECT: WHEELCHAIR RAMPS

DATE: 1981 MARCH 04

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT the Municipal Engineer be authorized to install wheelchair ramps under the policy guidelines as noted in the body of this report.
2. THAT Council authorize an expenditure from the Traffic Management Budget of \$10,500.00 to cover the cost of installing wheelchair ramps in 1981.

REPORT

During an informal meeting of Council held on 1981 January 07 to discuss the 1981 Provisional Capital Improvement Program Budget, staff was requested to give consideration to the establishment of a progressive program to construct curb cuts that will provide ramps for the handicapped to use when crossing streets within the Municipality. It was further suggested that priority should be given to the areas of the Municipality where commercial development exists, as the use of such facilities by the handicapped would be far greater than in the residential areas.

Under current policy, wheelchair ramps are installed at each corner of an intersection in commercial, institutional and recreational areas during (a) construction of new sidewalks or (b) the reconstruction of existing sidewalks.

A review of this matter indicates that it would be advisable to formally broaden the policy to include the installation of ramps in existing sidewalks that are not under reconstruction. This policy amendment would give recognition to the fact that in some cases there is justification to remove a section of perfectly good existing sidewalk solely for the purpose of providing for a ramp. Although this has been done in a few cases already where there was a demonstrated need (Kingsway at Hall Avenue and Salisbury Avenue), it is suggested that the policy should cover this as well so that there is a clear understanding of what authority Council wishes to give in this regard.

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Of further importance is the need for the policy to allow for the use of judgment in selecting locations for the installation of ramps. If we follow a blanket policy which precludes discriminate selection, it is conceivable that handicapped users could be placed in potentially dangerous situations. What is needed, therefore, is a latitude within which an evaluation can be made based on such factors as the existence and degree of grades, sight distances, volume of traffic and whether or not there are adequate traffic controls at crossings.

In view of the foregoing, it is staff's opinion that the following policy would best serve the interests of all concerned:

Policy

Wheelchair ramps may be installed in sidewalks adjacent to a commercial, recreational or institutional zoning where (1) a new sidewalk is being constructed, (2) an existing sidewalk is being reconstructed, or (3) in an existing sidewalk that is not being reconstructed, subject to the following two conditions:

- (a) There is a proven need for a ramp, and
- (b) The location for a ramp is evaluated to be safe for the use of people in wheelchairs.

If Council adopts the recommendations in this report, about 15 ramps would be installed in 1981 at a total cost of approximately \$10,500 (\$700 each x 15).



E. E. Olson  
MUNICIPAL ENGINEER

HB:mg