

RE: WHEELCHAIR RAMPS

MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the recommendation of the Director Engineering be adopted.

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TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER 1988 OCTOBER 11
FROM: ACTING DIRECTOR ENGINEERING
SUBJECT: WHEELCHAIR RAMPS
PURPOSE: TO RESPOND TO A COUNCIL ENQUIRY
REGARDING WHEELCHAIR RAMPS.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT this report be received for information purposes.

REPORT

Arising out of Council enquiries at the 1988 October 03 meeting was a request for a statement of the current Council policy and Engineering Department's practice regarding the installation of wheelchair ramps. The following is an excerpt from the Council report of 1988 February 15, Manager's Report #12, Item #1:

"Wheelchair let-downs are now constructed in all new side-walks in alignment with all legal crosswalks whether painted or unpainted. This would include all intersection corners and painted mid-block crosswalks. Should new sidewalk construction be a condition of subdivision, rezoning or a C.D. Comprehensive Development Zone, then wheelchair let-downs are also being constructed at all crosswalk locations including as well all existing side-walks.

Prior to 1985, our wheelchair let-down policy dictated that they were to be confined to commercial, industrial and recreational areas and were to be provided on all new and reconstructed sidewalk projects. A special work order was maintained to build wheelchair let-downs in these zones where a need was indicated. The policy was changed in 1985 whereby we now place wheelchair let-downs on all new and reconstructed sidewalks anywhere in the Municipality which included the past two local improvement programs. A special project work order is maintained to establish wheelchair let-downs in areas where curb and sidewalks already exist. The majority of these let-downs have been placed along commercial corridors and in the Metrotown area. During 1987, 128 wheelchair let-downs were installed in new sidewalk construction projects and an additional 65 from our special project work order were built into existing sidewalks. Individual requests are also placed on our special projects list and are installed as soon there-after as we can schedule our works crews to do them."

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In the above statement the policy referred to regarding wheelchair ramps in commercial, industrial and recreational areas was a Council policy adopted in 1975. Subsequently, in 1985 the Director Engineering extended the practice of installing wheelchair ramps to include all new construction and reconstruction involving curb and sidewalks within intersections.

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In 1985, the special work order was created to provide for the installation of wheelchair ramps at other than new construction or reconstruction. The current budget of this work order is \$90,000 which is being spent at the rate of about \$20,000 per year. While this work is throughout Burnaby on an "as required" basis, the majority has been within Metrotown as it is considered a priority area. Upon completion of the Metrotown area and dependant on available funds, we will move into other areas, including residential neighbourhoods.

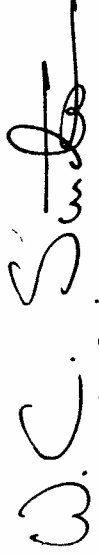
In addition to a general statement of the policy and practice, specific questions were raised as to why there were no wheelchair ramps installed during the recent L.I.P. projects on Selma and Denbigh Avenues at their intersections with Irving Street. Irving Street was constructed during an L.I.P. project prior to the change in practice to include all new construction, not just in commercial, industrial and recreational areas. The design of the Irving Street L.I.P. project included the complete construction of the all sidewalk curb returns, i.e., the rounded portion of the sidewalk and curb at intersections, around the corner onto the intersecting streets.

When the intersecting streets are improved, such as Selma and Denbigh were this year, only the straight portion of the sidewalks and curbs needs to be constructed. Therefore, the location of the wheelchair ramps is outside the area of new construction and would require the existing sidewalk curb return to be broken out and replaced with a wheelchair ramp.

Wheelchair ramps were installed at the north ends of the L.I.P. projects of Selma and Denbigh Avenues at their intersection with Oakland Street. The difference between the Oakland and Irving Street intersections of these two projects was that on Oakland Street only the curb, not the sidewalk, was continued around the corner during the construction of Oakland Street. With the construction of the Selma and Denbigh sidewalks around the corners to tie into the Oakland Street sidewalk, all that was required to install a wheelchair ramp was to "break out" a portion of the existing curb. As the new construction did involve working within the usual location where wheelchair ramps are installed, these ramps at the Oakland Street intersections met the policy.

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cc: Traffic Supervisor


W. C. Sinclair
ACTING DIRECTOR ENGINEERING