

RE: WHEELCHAIR RAMPS

ITEM 2  
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 18  
COUNCIL MEETING 89/03/06

MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

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

**TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER** 1989 FEBRUARY 17  
**FROM: DIRECTOR ENGINEERING**  
**SUBJECT: WHEELCHAIR RAMPS**  
**PURPOSE: TO RESPOND TO A B.C. TRANSIT ENQUIRY  
REGARDING WHEELCHAIR RAMPS**

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT a copy of this report be sent to Mr. John F. Mills, Vice-President, Planning, B.C. Transit, 1200 West 73rd Avenue, Vancouver.

BACKGROUND

Appearing on the Agenda of the Council meeting of 1989 February 20 was a letter from Mr. Mills regarding the feasibility of installing wheelchair lifts on all new buses that will be acquired for service in the Vancouver Regional Transit Service Area over the next twenty years. B.C. Transit requested a statement of the current Council policy and the Engineering Department's practice regarding the installation of wheelchair ramps. In addition, information was requested on the percentage of street corners that have already been ramped and a projected date that all intersections in Burnaby would be fully ramped.

REPORT

The best way of responding to the first part of the enquiry is to quote, the following excerpt from a Council report of 1988 October 07 (Manager's Report No. 66, Item No. 9):

"Wheelchair let-downs are now constructed in all new sidewalks 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 sidewalks.

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 thereafter as we can schedule our works crews to do them.

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.

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 response to the second part of the enquiry, the number of intersections currently having constructed ramps is approximately 20% of streets built to finished standard with curbs. This figure, on first consideration, may seem low but it needs to be borne in mind that virtually all of these have been built in heavier-use, need-established areas such as Metrotown but including other commercial, industrial, and institutional use areas as well. Staff will continue with this policy but will also insert into the priority system the possible need to consider bus stop locations as having a special priority, particularly if B.C. Transit implements its plan as pronounced in the letter from Mr. Mills. In this latter connection, staff will work with B.C. Transit personnel in any way that will be helpful in creating an integrated plan to give disabled individuals more opportunities for travel by public transit.

AH:ka

cc: Traffic Supervisor

  
E. E. Olson, P. Eng.  
DIRECTOR ENGINEERING