



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Transportation Policy Advisory Committee

DATE: November 19, 2015

SUBJECT: Report from the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee in response to a referral from City Council regarding a resident concern on wheelchair accessibility on Union Street.

Recommendation

Accept this report.

Background

On July 14, 2015, Councilor Champlin received a communication from Peter Pilch, resident of Union Street, with concerns on wheelchair accessibility along Union Street and requesting: consideration of sidewalk condition near the Union/Maple intersection that complicates wheelchair travel; installation of signs on Union Street indicating wheelchair users; and potential funding opportunities for transportation services that accommodate wheelchair users. City Council referred this request to the Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) on August 10, 2015. The Traffic Operations Committee (TOC) considered this request at its August 20, 2015 meeting and General Services Division followed up by making a sidewalk ramp adjustment in September. TPAC's Public Transportation Committee discussed this request at its September 22, 2015 meeting. TPAC considered this request at its August 27 and November 19, 2015 meetings.

Discussion

Staff field viewed sidewalk along Union Street and particularly the sidewalk ramp on the northeast corner of the Union/Maple intersection. This corner was found to have an inappropriate transition between the sidewalk ramp and the street pavement. As a temporary measure GSD has installed asphalt fillets at the corner curb line to make access easier at the handicap ramps. As a more permanent measure, with Council's recent approval of funds for expanded road paving, GSD feels it can consider adding Union St. to the paving program for next summer. That will allow resetting of curb and rebuilding of the handicap ramps at the same time.

Regarding the requested posting of warning signs indicating 'handicapped person' (or for that matter similar signs such as 'deaf person' or 'children at play'), TOC concurred as it has in the past that use of these signs is neither effective nor approved per Federal standards. They have not been found to provide drivers with relevant information and may foster a false sense of security in pedestrians or other non-motorized users.

Mr. Pilch's communication to City Council also requested information on potential funding opportunities for expanded wheelchair transit service for hours beyond those covered by CAT's regular service schedule. TPAC's Public Transportation Committee suggested that the following programs or funding opportunities could be explored by Mr. Pilch, depending on his needs.

- Staff at Central NH Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC) suggested that the Mid-State Regional Coordinating Council and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation might be able assist interested persons in potential funding or reimbursement for this type of service. This sort of project could be eligible for reimbursement through 5310 Purchase of Service (80-20 match) or 5310 Formula Funding (50-50 match) grants. CHNRPC (226-6020) can provide appropriate guidance to Mr. Pilch depending on his needs.
- Additional information can be found on the following link to NHDOT's grant page: <http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/aerorailtransit/railandtransit/grants.htm>

Staff has reached out to Mr. Pilch on several occasions and has invited him to attend meetings of both TPAC and the TPAC-Public Transit Committee. The findings and suggestions summarized in this report have been shared with him.

RJM/rjm

cc: Transportation Policy Advisory Committee
Peter Pilch