

CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
M E M O R A N D U M

**DATE:** June 28, 2004

**TO:** City Departments and City Facility Managers

**FROM:** Patti Boekamp, Engineering and Capital Projects Acting Director  
Gary Halbert, Development Services Acting Director  
Linda Woodbury, Disability Services Coordinator

**SUBJECT:** Implementation of Truncated Domes on Curb Ramps

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The City is committed to having its public rights-of-way accessible to all individuals. This memorandum sets forth the City's policy on truncated domes on curb ramps and shall be used in the new construction and alterations of City owned or leased facilities and public rights-of-way. This policy should be incorporated in all City contracts for new construction, alteration, and addition projects.

As part of the City's ongoing efforts to ensure compliance with the State and Federal accessibility laws<sup>1</sup>, the City's Access Law Technical Group formed the Curb Ramp Committee to review areas of conflict or confusion and recommend policies on curb ramps, including the issue of truncated domes. This committee's work culminated in the issuance of new City standard drawings for curb ramps. These new City standard drawings comply with the federal requirement that curb ramps include truncated domes. Please refer to the attached Manager's Report, dated May 27, 2004, for the background information regarding truncated domes. The implementation and policy are set forth below in bold italics.

I. Curb Ramp - (New Construction and Alteration):

1. Implementation:

***The new City standard curb ramp drawings are complete and have been signed as of June 14, 2004. Accordingly, all new construction or alteration projects that include or trigger curb ramps shall use truncated domes, as required in the new City standard curb ramp drawings and consistent with the implementation detailed herein.***

***A. Public Projects***

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<sup>1</sup> The California Building Code (CBC) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)/Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), respectively.

- 1) *Design phase: public projects in the design phase (schematic, design development, or construction document) shall comply with the new City standard curb ramp drawings.*
- 2) *Contracts processing phase: public projects in the contracts processing phase shall comply with the new City standard curb ramp drawings.*
- 3) *Bidding phase but not awarded (out to bid): public projects which are out to bid, but not yet awarded, shall comply with the new City standard curb ramp drawings.*
- 4) *Contract awarded but ramps not constructed: those public projects for which the contract has been awarded but the ramps have not yet been constructed are strongly encouraged to use the new City standard curb ramp drawings. The decision of whether to use the new standard curb ramp drawings will be made on a case-by-case basis depending on various factors, including: available funding, willingness of contractor to negotiate a fair price, and nature of project (is it integral to the project – i.e. sidewalk project). If agreeing on a price presents a challenge, consider exploring time and materials for a few curb ramps to determine the price. If the contractor is not willing to negotiate a fair price, then look at the contract to determine whether there is a “deductive change order” provision, and whether there is a unit price for the curb ramps, as another avenue to achieve the installation of curb ramps consistent with the new City standards.*
- 5) *Ramps constructed but not yet accepted: if the curb ramp is otherwise compliant (only missing truncated domes), then defer the ramp(s) to the Transition Plan Update.*
- 6) *Ramps constructed and accepted: defer to the Transition Plan Update.*

**B. Private Projects:**

- 1) *Plan check/review phase: private projects in plan check/review phase shall comply with the new City standard curb ramp drawings.*
- 2) *Permitted, but not built: DSD is sending a “Notice” to the industry informing them to comply with the new standard curb ramp drawings.*

2. General:

Newly constructed or altered streets, roads, and highways must contain curb ramps or other sloped areas at any intersection having curbs or other barriers to entry from a street level pedestrian walkway.

28 Code of Federal Regulations § 35.151(e)(1).

Newly constructed or altered street level pedestrian walkways must contain curb ramps or other sloped areas at intersections to streets, roads, or highways.

28 Code of Federal Regulations §35.151(e)(2).

A curb ramp shall be provided wherever an accessible route crosses a curb – ADAAG 4.7.1.

Curb ramps shall be constructed at each corner of street intersections and where a pedestrian way crosses a curb. The preferred and recommended location for curb ramps is in the center of the crosswalk of each street corner. Where it is necessary to locate a curb ramp in the center of the curb return and the street surfaces are marked to identify pedestrian crosswalks, the lower end of the curb ramp shall terminate within such crosswalk areas – 2001 CBC 1127B.5.1.

3. Detectable Warnings:

A curb ramp shall have a detectable warning complying with ADAAG 4.29.2. ADAAG 4.7.7.

Detectable warnings shall consist of raised truncated domes. ADAAG 4.29.2.

A curb ramp shall have a detectable warning . . . when the ramp slope is less than 1 unit vertical to 15 units horizontal. Detectable warnings shall consist of raised truncated domes. 2001 CBC 1127B.5.8.

***Curb ramps shall be designed consistent with the new City standard drawings for curb ramps, which include truncated domes. Truncated domes are required by the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines. The new design is consistent with the recommendation by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the U.S. Access Board. Federal Yellow shall be used for the truncated domes, unless there is a compelling reason otherwise, which is approved by the Access Law Technical Group.***

This policy is specific to curb ramps only. The overall street and sidewalk design is required to comply with the ADA/ADAAG, the CBC, and other governing laws and regulations adopted at the time of submittal for a building permit review or design of the public right-of-way project.

City Departments and City Facility Managers

July 8, 2004

Page 4

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Attachments:

1. City Manager's Report
2. Information: ADAAG Detectable Warnings (Truncated Domes)/US Dept. of Transportation Memorandum, May 6, 2002
3. New City of San Diego Standard Curb Ramp Drawings