Good Evening Mayor and Council

Please find below questions from a Councillor with answers from staff regarding the Curb Cut Contract Report:

Are city crews also doing curb ramps? Or are all new curb ramps now being done through this contract?
The plan for 2020 is for all curb ramps that are not already included in larger projects to be constructed by contractors as City crews are fully allocated to other capital construction projects. There is flexibility in delivery approach for future years (see below). Curb ramps being constructed as part of a larger project will be done by City crews.

If this is a 5 year project, why contract it out rather than hiring more city staff to do it?
The contract is structured as a 1-year contract with up to 4 optional 1-year extensions. Also, the total number of curb ramps to be delivered by contract is at the City's sole discretion. This offers the flexibility for delivery by City crews, contractors or a mix of both in future years. This approach also ensures that there will be capacity for this work should other unforeseen priorities arise that require re-allocation of City crews or should the City wish to accelerate delivery of curb ramps (beyond our internal capacity to deliver).

Streets Operations, similar to the other Operations groups, is already in the recruiting process for 27 net-new Operations Workers (over the course of this Capital plan), those new employees will be allocated to other priorities. There are a number of reasons Streets Operations is not planning on hiring new workers for this project, at this time, including:

☐ Despite strong recruiting efforts, the City has not been able to find enough talent to fill all of our vacant positions (both replacements and net-new). This has been a struggle for the past two years. We continue to work with our HR and recruitment team to increase our success

☐ Physical space restrictions in the Yards are also a strong consideration.

☐ Ramp-up would require additional operating/OH budget to cover more management, more training budget, etc. that we do not currently have.

It is also a good opportunity to bench mark our crews against outside work forces to ensure we continue to give good value.

Is the number and speed laid out in this contract (190 + 50 ramps in the next year) consistent with how many curbs per year we had committed to? More? Less?
Funding for curb ramp construction was increased 4x in the 2019-22 Capital Plan relative to 2015-18 Plan ($5M over 4-years, up from $1.2M over 4-years). This increase was chosen specifically to target the backlog of curb ramp requests that had developed (over 600 currently). The current funding and delivery plan will allow the City to reach that target by the end of the Capital Plan (i.e. no backlog of requests for curb ramps and the ability to respond to new requests without delay).

How does our rate of building curb cuts compare to other comparable cities working to make infrastructure accessible?
While the current rate of curb ramp construction has increased significantly relative to the last capital plan, Vancouver is still behind other cities in terms of total output (Calgary and Edmonton each target about 250 to 350 curb ramp installations per year, for example). That being said, land area, population and the extent of the gap would also be important considerations when comparing different cities⬚programs.
Best
Sadhu

Sadhu Aufochs Johnston | City Manager
City of Vancouver | 453 W 12th Avenue
Vancouver | BC V5Y 1V4

604.873.7627 | Sadhu.johnston@vancouver.ca
Twitter: sadhuajohnston

CITY OF VANCOUVER