MEMORANDUM

To:	City Council
From:	David Grantham, P.E., City Engineer
cc:	Eddie Manfro, Interim City Manager Stephen Bise, P.E., Public Works Director
Date:	9/22/2025
Subject:	**Curb Ramps at Street Intersections**

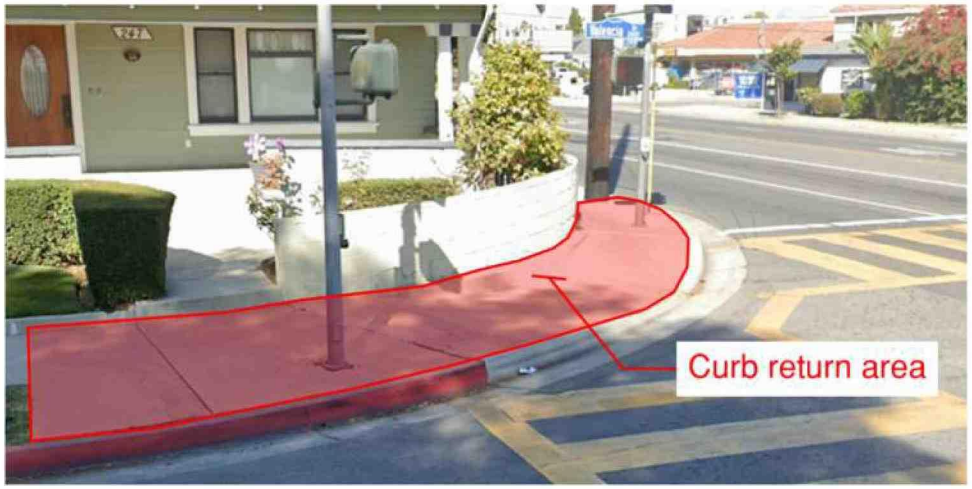
As requested by Council, this memorandum summarizes the City's approach to construction of curb ramps at street intersections.

Background

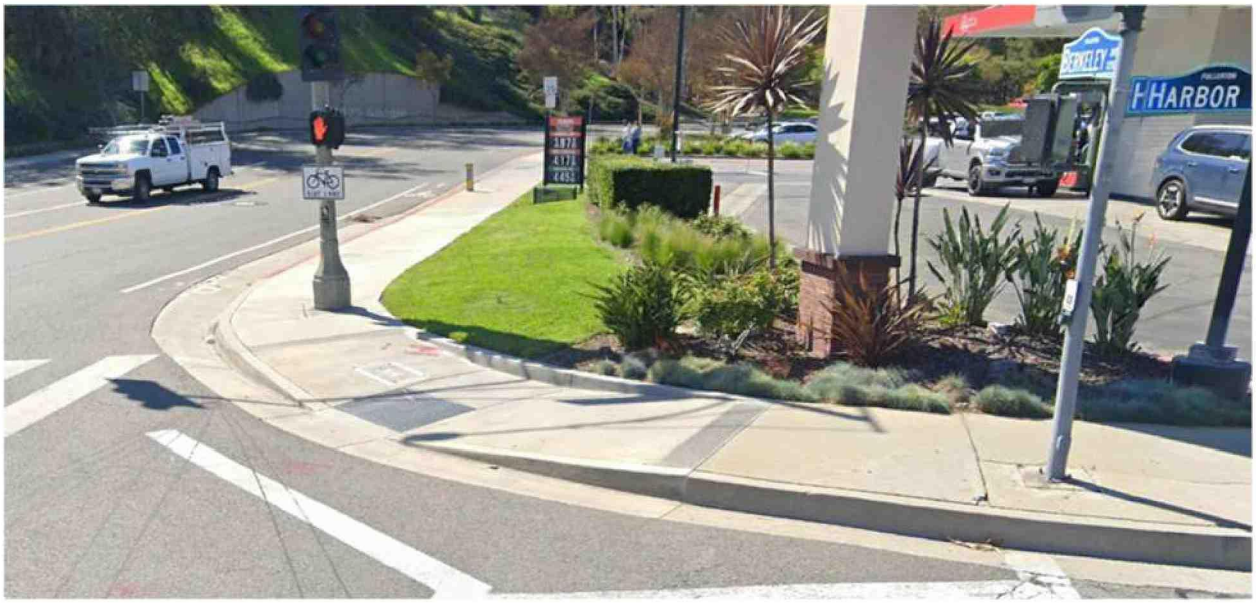
Providing mobility is one of the important aspects of The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which includes accessibility along and across public streets. Installation of curb ramps at street intersections is the common approach to providing this accessibility.

Since ADA was passed in 1990, the City typically addresses curb ramp installation as part of street rehabilitation or improvement projects (both publicly or privately funded projects). Requirements and standards have evolved over time, resulting in existing curb ramps throughout the City having different appearances, however, existing curb ramps that do not meet current standards are considered acceptable until such time adjacent improvements (such as street rehabilitation projects or concrete repairs) trigger the need to reconstruct to current standards.

Curb ramps are typically constructed within the area known as the curb return. This is the area adjacent, and behind, the curved curb connecting the public streets at each intersection. As shown below.



The location of street right of way at intersections is generally the biggest challenge when constructing or modifying any facility within the curb return area. Due to the age of the City, the vast majority of intersections have limited right of way. Today's development standards include adjacent property owners dedicating a 'corner cut off', which provides sufficient right of way at intersections for curb ramps, traffic signals, underground utilities, etc. However, this standard was not typical or required for the vast majority of previous developments within the City. As shown below. This limited right of way is easy to see when you compare the area of concrete sidewalk at intersections between Fullerton and newer cities or recent developments in Orange County.





Current Approach

The City uses Caltrans curb ramp standard plans as our current guideline for curb ramp construction and includes a preference, when feasible, to install dual/directional ramps at each curb return. An example of dual/directional ramps is shown below.

However, due to the design requirements for curb ramps, available right of way, existing utilities and facilities, adjacent private improvements, etc. many times it becomes infeasible to implement dual/directional curb ramps at intersections throughout the City.



The City continues, when applicable, to require new private developments dedicate street right of way and also upgrade curb ramps to current standards, with a preference for dual/directional ramps.

Staff will continue the preference to implement dual/directional curb ramps whenever feasible.