



NEW YORK CITY LAW DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CORPORATION COUNSEL

Michael A. Cardozo, Corporation Counsel

Press Release

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For Immediate Release

**NEW YORK CITY LAW DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT
TO COMPLETE INSTALLATION OF PEDESTRIAN RAMPS
THROUGHOUT THE CITY**

***MOVE OFFERS EXPANDED FREEDOM TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AS CONTEMPLATED BY THE
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT.***

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New York, September 11, 2002 -- The New York City Law today announced that the City has agreed to the efficient and expeditious installation of pedestrian ramps at all remaining unramped locations in the City where pedestrian walkways cross curbs. Pedestrian ramps are an essential element of the City's ongoing efforts to remove barriers which prevent individuals with disabilities, particularly those who use wheelchairs, from traveling throughout the City.

The agreement was reached as a settlement of a lawsuit brought by the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association (EPVA), which claimed that the City's delay to install ramps at every intersection in the City violated the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). The City represented the Department of Transportation in the settlement discussions.

Under the deal, the City agreed to a schedule of authorized commitments of capital funds for the continued installation of the ramps. For example, the City has authorized the commitment of \$15.646 million in fiscal year 2004; for fiscal year 2007, the commitment is for \$20 million. The schedule runs through 2010, but if ramps are not installed throughout the City by then, the agreement provides for additional authorizations to be made until the job is finished.

To date, the City has installed pedestrian ramps at 97,664 locations (reflecting 61.5 percent of the City's 158,738 corners). The City's first priority has been to install ramps in the most heavily traveled sections of the City as well as other locations regularly used by individuals with disabilities. As a result, approximately 80 percent of the intersections in Manhattan have already had pedestrian ramps installed. The agreement will now result in the installation of pedestrian ramps in the remainder of the City, thus furthering the ability of the City's disabled to have easier access to all of the City's neighborhoods.

"Everyone, including the disabled, should have unobstructed access to all of the City's sidewalks. This agreement reflects the City's commitment to have this goal expeditiously achieved in a fiscally prudent and sound manner," said Transportation Commissioner Iris Weinshall. "Given its 12,750 miles of sidewalks, the City has done an excellent job of providing access to people with disabilities. This agreement allows us to take our efforts a step further."

Sherrill Kurland, an Senior Counsel in the New York City Law Department's Administrative Law Division, who represented the City in the settlement negotiations, said: "We are delighted to have reached this agreement with the EPVA, and look forward to reaching the important goal of having all of the streets and sidewalks of New York City accessible to everyone."

The New York City Law Department is one of the oldest, largest and most dynamic law offices in the world, ranking among the top three largest law offices in New York City and the top three largest public law offices in the country. Tracing its roots back to the 1600's, the Department's 650-plus lawyers handle more than 100,000 cases

and transactions each year in 17 separate legal divisions. The Corporation Counsel heads the Law Department and acts as legal counsel for the Mayor, elected officials, the City and all its agencies. The Department's attorneys represent the City on a vast array of civil litigation, legislative and legal issues and in the criminal prosecution of juveniles. Its web site can be accessed through the City government home page at www.nyc.gov or via direct link at www.nyc.gov/html/law/home.html.

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