

Notice:

On October 2nd, 2012, Belfast City Council approved changes to our City Ordinances relating to the accessibility to all buildings used for Commercial purposes by people with disabilities.

If a Belfast business does not have a permanent means of access to a person of disabilities, but access could be provided by the use of a portable ramp *if the entrance step is 6 inches in height or less*, then that business must have a portable ramp and a sign in their window indicating its availability.

To encourage compliance with this Ordinance the City is taking these actions:

1. We are posting this notice and advising that we will shortly begin active enforcement of this local law.
2. We are also offering information on where you can buy one of these portable ramps and get one of these required Window signs. This information can be found at the City Planning Department

338-3370 ext 25 or on the City Website www.cityofbelfast.org

Amendment to Chapter 74, Building and Building Regulations

Purpose- This Ordinance is intended to extend the protections of the Maine Human Rights Act (5 M.R.S.A. Ch. 337) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12181) and to help ensure a vibrant and inclusive business environment in the City of Belfast by providing means of access to business establishments for individuals with physical disabilities.

Requirement for Access Ramps-Buildings and structures used for commercial purposes in the City of Belfast shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Maine Human Rights Act (5 M.R.S.A. Ch. 337) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12181) related to providing access to the premises for individuals with physical disabilities. If no permanent means of access is available for individuals with physical disabilities, but access can be provided from street or sidewalk level through the use of a portable ramp of 6" height or less, such a ramp shall be kept on site and provided for use upon request of any person seeking to obtain access to the building during business hours. Where such a portable ramp is required and made available, a sign shall be posted at the door to the establishment indicating the availability of the ramp.

Violations- The Code Enforcement Officer shall respond to and prosecute all violations of this Section in accordance with the City Building Code, Section 74-32, Section 116.

**City of Belfast
Resolution**

**Supporting the efforts of the Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Universalist
Church of Belfast to encourage more Belfast businesses to make their stores
handicapped accessible.**

Whereas, more American soldiers, men and women, who have been severely injured in wars are able, thanks to modern medicine, to return home; however, many of them are now ambulatory disabled, and

Whereas, after some of these soldiers returning home, visiting, or moving to the Belfast area find they cannot get into many of the businesses because they are not handicapped accessible to persons in wheelchairs or power chairs, and

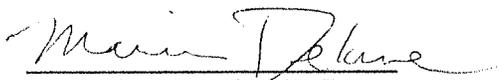
Whereas, The Americans With Disabilities Act, which was passed by the federal government in 1992, REQUIRES that all businesses that serve the public be made handicapped accessible if they can be made so without the business taking on excessive extra expense that could harm the business, and

Whereas, the Social Justice Committee also found that many businesses could be made accessible with a portable threshold ramp (cost: \$25-\$100) if a permanent one was not possible, and

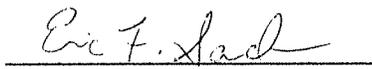
Whereas, the Social Justice Committee believes that handicapped accessibility CAN be made available and SHOULD be made available because of its value to disabled veterans, the community, and its economic value to the businesses.

Now be it therefore resolved: That the city of Belfast, through its City Council, does hereby declare support for the efforts of the Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Belfast to encourage those Belfast businesses which can be made handicapped accessible to do so.

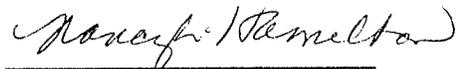
Dated: 2/1/11



Councilor Marina DeLune



Councilor Eric Sanders



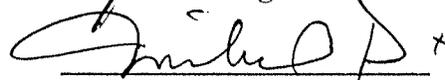
Councilor Nancy Hamilton



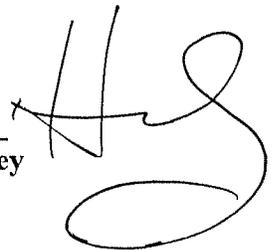
Mayor Walter Ash



Councilor Roger Lee



Councilor Michael Hurley



Portable Threshold Ramp

What is a Portable Threshold Ramp:

A Portable Threshold Ramp is a ramp designed to make it easier for people who are ambulatory disabled (use a cane, crutches, walker, wheelchair, power chair or scooter) to access entrances that have raised landings. Unlike a permanent ramp, which the Americans with Disabilities Act requires to be 12 inches for every 1 inch of rise, a Portable Threshold Ramp can be much shorter at 6 inches for every 1 inch of rise. It also can be taken out to accommodate the ambulatory disabled person in accessing your business and then brought back in. When the person is done doing business with you, the ramp can again be taken out to accommodate the person leaving your business.

Why would I want one:

Here are just three reasons why you would want a Portable Threshold Ramp:

1. You would be supporting our ambulatory disabled veterans. While people talk about “supporting the troops”, you would be doing it by your actions.
2. You would be supporting the local ambulatory disabled community. Maine has 97,000 people who are ambulatory disabled, according to a 2008 Census Bureau report. Maine also has the oldest population in the country. As people age, there is more of a chance of them becoming ambulatory disabled.
3. By having a Portable Threshold Ramp, you will be letting more people into your business, which would mean more sales.

How do I get one:

You can have one built. Here is a list of area carpenters:

Dean Anderson	phone: 338-1429	email: kalergarden@gmail.com
Kenny Cole	phone: 322-5243	email: kenny@kennycole.com website: www.colecarpentry.com .
Scott King	phone: 557-0547	email: skyviewcarpentry@gmail.com
Mark White	phone: 338-1663	

You can buy one from the internet. There are dozens of places that sell Portable Threshold Ramps, but here are just a few:

www.amazon.com

www.discountramps.com

www.ebay.com

www.literamp.com

For more information or a demonstration of a Portable Threshold Ramp, contact Neva or Stephen Allen of the Social Justice Committee of Unitarian Universalist Church of Belfast, 338-0613 or NevaBythesea@gmail.com.

Belfast welcomes you



Wheelchair Ramp Available
Just knock, or call
We'll be happy to assist you!

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