

November 20, 2020

The Honourable Carla Qualtrough  
Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Diversity Inclusion  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister,

**Re: Accessible Fuel Services in Delta**

In recent months, Delta Council has heard from several residents who are concerned about the lack of full service pumps at gas stations in Delta. Residents report that some of the few remaining full service gas pumps in Delta have been, or are in the process of being, converted to self serve – further limiting fuelling options for people with mobility issues.

At the November 9, 2020 Regular Meeting, Delta Council received the enclosed report on this issue and resolved to send letters to all gas station owners/operators, as well as corporate headquarters, urging them to review their current policies and practices to confirm that they properly support convenient, effective and timely access for people with mobility challenges, and to see where improvements can be made.

Furthermore, the issue of accessibility at gas stations, and at retail stores more generally, will be referred to Delta's Mobility and Accessibility Committee for further consideration and feedback. I would be happy to share any recommendations the committee may have with you when they are available.

As part of our commitment to creating a liveable community, the City actively promotes initiatives that enhance diversity, accessibility and inclusion for all members of our community. We all share a responsibility to make our communities inclusive and accessible to all.

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If you have any questions, please contact me at 604-946-3210.

Yours truly,



George V. Harvie  
Mayor

Enclosure

cc: Delta Council  
Sean McGill, City Manager  
Mel Cheesman, Director of Corporate Services



City of Delta  
COUNCIL REPORT  
Regular Meeting

To: **Mayor and Council**

From: **Corporate Services Department**

Date: **October 28, 2020**

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**Full Service Gas Stations in Delta**

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The following report has been reviewed and endorsed by the City Manager.

▪ **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- A. THAT letters be sent from Mayor Harvie to gas station owners/operators in Delta to highlight the importance of providing accessible fuel services for people with mobility issues, and to urge them to continue to provide these services to ensure accessibility for all residents in the Delta community.
- B. THAT opportunities and actions to promote accessibility and inclusion in the provision of commercial and retail services be addressed in Delta's Social Action Plan.
- C. THAT this report be referred to the Mobility and Accessibility Committee for consideration and further action.

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▪ **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to identify what steps could be taken by Delta to support the retention of full service pumps at gas stations in Delta for people with mobility issues.

▪ **BACKGROUND:**

At the June 22, 2020 Regular Meeting, Council received correspondence from two local residents expressing concern that a particular gas station in North Delta was converting to self-serve pumps only, and urging Delta to take steps to ensure that full service pumps continue to be available at gas stations in Delta. Council asked staff to provide a report back on this issue. Since then, more correspondence has been received from people with mobility issues asking what Delta can do to support the retention of full service gas pumps.

▪ **DISCUSSION:**

Full service gas stations have been in decline for many years. From 1996 to 2016, the number of gas stations in Canada offering full service pumps fell from 61% to 18%<sup>1</sup> and the trend is continuing downward. Full- and split-serve gas stations are typically less cost effective than self-

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<sup>1</sup> City of Coquitlam Analysis of Full-Service Bylaw, Kent Group Ltd. January 2017

serve since they have higher labour costs. On the other hand, there continue to be consumers who need additional help refueling their vehicles and it is important to ensure those needs are met.

**Municipal regulations:**

A small minority of municipalities - Richmond and Coquitlam - have historical bylaws that prohibit self-serve stations, initially on the basis of health and safety concerns, and then to support youth employment. The City of Vancouver implemented a bylaw in 1986 which requires all the city's gas stations to have at least one full service pump and an attendant present at all times the station is open. Burnaby, District of North Vancouver, Port Moody and Surrey also have limited requirements for full service pumps. These bylaws have been the subject of various legal challenges by gas station owners: municipalities are generally more successful in regulating gas station services through the use of zoning powers rather than business regulation powers.

Consistent with most other BC municipalities, and with most local governments across Canada, Delta does not regulate the types of service provided at gas stations. In 2003, staff brought forward zoning amendments to require new service stations to provide full service at 2 pumps between the hours of 6am and 10pm. At the same time, Council considered implementing design guidelines for gas stations in the Official Community Plan. The bylaws went to Public Hearing, but did not proceed to third reading.

In 2014, Delta's Zoning Bylaw was amended to eliminate reference to full or self serve pumps at gas stations. The previous bylaw had definitions for self and full service stations reflecting the emergence of self service. A survey of gas stations in Delta found that many were not operating in accordance with their zoning in terms of types of service provided and, since the provision of fuelling services was considered to be a business decision, Council supported the bylaw amendment to remove the definition.

Delta could potentially amend its Zoning Bylaw to require full service at gas stations; however, the new requirements would only apply to new or rebuilt facilities and would not affect the majority of gas stations already operating in Delta. Accordingly, staff does not recommend this option.

**Service provider policies, resources and online tools:**

Most major companies have implemented accessibility policies that recognize the need to accommodate and assist people with mobility issues. Many self-serve only gas stations offer additional assistance to customers who request help with refuelling. Some have information decals and intercom systems at the pumps through which customers can request assistance. Other initiatives include:

- Drivers with disabilities can use the online Esso Fuel Finder tool to find stations that offer fuelling assistance.
- Drivers with a disabled parking permit receive full service at self-serve prices at Shell stations with both full and self-serve pumps. Customers are required to identify themselves to a gas station attendant or to call in advance to make arrangements.

- At split-service Petro Canada stations, drivers with an accessible parking permit receive full service at self serve prices.

In addition to company-specific policies, there are other online tools developed to assist drivers with mobility issues, including the BC Paraplegic Association, which has compiled a comprehensive listing of full service gas stations across BC on Google Maps, and the Fuel Service app that helps drivers with disabilities or mobility issues find and receive assistance refueling their cars: <https://fuelservice.org/en/>. These tools were used to identify gas stations in Delta offering full service pumps – listed in Attachment ‘A’.

### **Recommended Actions for Delta:**

Notwithstanding these initiatives by gas station owners, Delta has heard from residents concerned about accessibility at gas stations in Delta and it is important to ensure their needs are met. It is recommended that letters be sent from Mayor Harvie to gas station owners/operators in Delta to highlight the importance of providing accessible fuel services for people with mobility issues, and to urge them to continue to provide these services to ensure accessibility for all residents in the Delta community.

Concerns regarding full service fuel pumps are part of the broader issue of accessibility and inclusion, and the need to build communities that accommodate and support people of all abilities. There may be opportunities through Delta’s Social Action Plan to identify opportunities and actions to promote accessibility and inclusion in the provision of commercial and retail services in Delta. One of the first priorities of the new Social Planner will be to update the Social Action Plan, and accessibility will be one of the key issues to be addressed. In addition, with the pending formation of the new Mobility and Accessibility Committee, it is recommended that this report be referred to this committee for consideration and further action.

### **Implications:**

Foundation for the Future Implications – in accordance with the Social Pursuit Foundation, the recommendations of this report help pursue opportunities to promote and enhance diversity, accessibility, and inclusion, and to ensure the needs of Delta’s residents with mobility challenges are met.

Financial Implications – none.

### **CONCLUSION:**

The ongoing decline in the number of gas stations offering full service pumps is presenting challenges for some people with mobility issues. Most retailers recognize the need to provide full service assistance to these customers and many have taken steps to ensure these services can be easily located (online search tools) or requested directly at the pump. To address residents’ concerns that some gas stations in Delta are in the process of eliminating full service pumps, it is recommended that a letter be sent from Mayor Harvie to highlight the importance of full service gas pumps for people with mobility issues, and urging them to continue to provide, or to reinstate, this service to ensure accessibility for all residents in the Delta community.

Additional measures to promote accessibility and inclusion in the community will be explored and reported back through Delta's Social Action Plan update, and through the Mobility and Accessibility Committee once it is established.




Mel Cheesman  
Director of Corporate Services

Department submission prepared by: Bernita Iversen, Manager of Corporate Policy  
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▪ **ATTACHMENT:**

A. Gas Stations in Delta with Full Service Pumps

This report has been prepared in consultation with the following listed department.

Concurring Department		
Department	Name	Signature
Community Planning & Development	James Klukas	

**Gas Stations in Delta Offering Full Service Pumps**

Tsawwassen	Chevron – 1204 56 Street
	Shell – 1591 56 Street
Ladner	Chevron – 9628 Ladner Trunk Road
	Chevron – 5206 Ladner Trunk Road
	Shell – 5277 48 Avenue
North Delta	Chevron – 8579 120 Street
	Shell – 8380 112 Street
	Shell – 7165 120 Street
	Chevron – 7390 120 Street

These gas stations were identified through the service app <https://fuelservice.org/en/> as providing full service for drivers with disabilities or mobility issues.