

2022 Report on French Language Services

BACKGROUND

The French Language Services (FLS) Branch plays an important role in supporting City departments in providing quality municipal services in French to its residents and staff. Their work supports mutual respect and recognition of both official languages in accordance with the City's [Bilingualism By-law No. 2001-170](#) and [Bilingualism Policy](#).

On Wednesday, May 9, 2001, City Council passed the Bilingualism By-law No. 2001-170 that recognized the City's bilingual character and enacted a citizen's right to communicate and receive services in English and French in accordance with the Bilingualism Policy.

Further, on Wednesday, May 9, 2001, City Council enacted the Bilingualism Policy, which reaffirmed its commitment to offering services in English and French to both residents and staff. The Bilingualism Policy is based largely on that of the former City of Ottawa and is deemed to be both practical and flexible in its approach.

The Bilingualism Policy identifies a number of priorities for action by the FLS Branch including translation services, complaint resolution, coordination and support to the development of annual departmental operational plans, interpretation services for Committees and City Council, and the promotion and active offer of French-language services.

In addition, the Bilingualism Policy contains provisions that govern several aspects of bilingual municipal services. This includes communications, the proactive delivery of services in both languages to residents and staff, and organizational requirements such as the designation of bilingual positions, language training, and cultural program management.

On Thursday, December 14, 2017, [Bill 177, the Stronger, Fairer Ontario Act \(Budget Measures\), 2017](#), received Royal Assent. This was an omnibus bill that amended a variety of statutes, including the [City of Ottawa Act, 1999](#). The amendments were intended to recognize within provincial legislation Ottawa's bilingual character and require the City to pass a by-law providing that the administration of the municipality shall be conducted in both English and French, and that all or specified municipal services to the public shall be made available in both languages, in accordance with Subsection 14(1) of the [French Language Services Act](#).

In keeping with this, the Bill 177 amendments acknowledged that the City's existing Bilingualism By-law (No. 2001-170), originally passed on Wednesday, May 9, 2001, already fulfilled the City's statutory obligation to pass a by-law and they also explicitly recognize City Council's discretion to determine the "scope and content" of that by-law.

Though the City's bilingual character is now officially recognized in the *City of Ottawa Act, 1999*, the changes to the *City of Ottawa Act, 1999* did not expand the City's obligations in terms of the provision of French-language services, beyond the requirement of having a By-law under Subsection 14(1) of the *French Language Services Act*, or beyond those obligations that would already be recognized by existing law including for example, under By-law 2001-170.

As a result of these changes, Section 11.1 of the *City of Ottawa Act, 1999*, now reads as follows:

Bilingualism

11.1 (1) The city's bilingual character is recognized.

By-law respecting use of English and French languages

(2) The city shall pass a by-law under subsection 14 (1) of the French Language Services Act.

Same, board of health

(3) The by-law applies with respect to the administration of the board of health and the provision of services by the board.

Scope and content of by-law

(4) The scope and content of the by-law shall be as determined by the City.

Existing by-law

(5) For greater certainty, City of Ottawa By-law No. 2001-170 (Bilingualism) meets the requirement of subsection (2).

In addition to providing support to City staff on the implementation of the City's above-noted Bilingualism By-law and Policy, the FLS Branch supports all City departments in the delivery of municipal services in French to residents and City staff as follows:

- Assisting departments in developing, implementing and evaluating programs and services offered in French;
- Working with internal stakeholders to ensure a Francophone lens is applied when planning for municipal projects and offers expertise on best practices related to French-language services delivery;
- Working with departments to develop departmental operational plans to improve the delivery of French-language services throughout the organization;
- Receiving and handling City-wide complaints pertaining to French-language services;

- Assisting departments in adapting their communications strategies and outreach for the Francophone community;
- Actively engaging with the Francophone community by organizing activities and liaising with key stakeholders;
- Supporting the French Language Services Advisory Committee (FLSAC) in carrying out its mandate;
- Supporting the City's membership to the *Association française des municipalités de l'Ontario* (AFMO) by sitting on its Board of Directors; and
- Coordinating all City-wide translation and simultaneous interpretation services.

DISCUSSION

In accordance with Section R.1.6 of the Bilingualism Policy, each department is responsible for the preparation and submission of an annual French language services operational plan outlining goals for the improvement of services provided in French. These plans are approved by City Council.

As such, Section 1 of this report provides an overview of the 2020-2022 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan outcomes. It also provides staff's recommendation for the 2022-2026 Term of Council action areas and the 2023-2024 departmental operational plans annual goals for City Council's consideration and approval, as further described in this report.

Further, this report provides Members of Council with information and statistics regarding French-language services in the City in the following sections:

- Section 2: Information and statistics related to designated bilingual positions and second language training, complaints, and translation services
- Section 3: French Language Services Advisory Committee
- Section 4: 2022 French language service highlights
- Section 5: French-language initiatives in 2023

Section 1: Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans

As previously noted, Section R.1.6 of the Bilingualism Policy requires each City department to complete a City Council-approved Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan. The plans describe goals and standards created to improve services provided in French, and City departments are required to submit their plans to City Council annually. To meet this requirement, each department submits their plan

annually to the FLS Branch by December 31. FLS then reports annually to City Council on the department's progress as part of the Office of the City Clerk's Annual Report.

Overview of the 2020-2022 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans

By way of background, on Wednesday, December 11, 2019, City Council unanimously adopted [Motion No. 25/4](#) to direct the Office of the City Clerk and the Recreation, Culture and Facility Services (RCFS) Department to work with interested City Councillors as a pilot project to develop the 2020 operational goals with the objective of developing clear metrics for the following:

- Review and assess the number of bilingual staff whose primary function is to directly serve the public, on a full-time basis, in the aforementioned service areas [Section R.4 of the Bilingualism Policy]; and
- Establish an annual compliance review for contractors offering services directly to the public, and to community associations and groups that receive more than 30 per cent of their funding from the City of Ottawa [Section R.1.18 of the Bilingualism Policy].

Given the direction to both the Office of the City Clerk and the RCFS Department, City Council on Wednesday, June 10, 2020, approved the following two measures as part of the 2019 Report on French Language Services that was included in the [Office of the City Clerk 2019 Annual Report](#):

1. That each department review the language designation of all its positions, to ensure that the appropriate positions are designated bilingual to meet the needs of our residents and employees; and
2. That each department review and create an inventory of all purchases of service groups providing services directly to the public, and community associations and groups whose activities are funded by the City of Ottawa at a rate of more than 30 per cent, and to complete an initial review to assess that they are providing bilingual postings and publications and a minimum of bilingual personnel at the activity site is available.

The above-noted motion further directed the FLS Branch to assist General Managers in developing their respective 2020 French Language Services Departmental Operational Plans. At the June 10, 2020 meeting, City Council further approved the following measures for the 2020-2021 operational plans for the remaining departments:

1. That each department create a personalized toolbox on services in French and make it available to staff;

2. That each department create and update a list of employees able to offer services in both official languages, by subject matter; and
3. That each department review the language designation of all its positions to ensure that the appropriate positions are designated bilingual to meet the needs of our residents and employees.

Due to impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic, at its meeting on Wednesday, May 26, 2021, City Council approved the recommendation in the staff report titled "[Office of the City Clerk 2020 Annual Report](#)" to extend the completion date of the 2020-2022 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans to December 31, 2022.

All departments have now reported back to FLS and indicated that the goals in their respective 2020-2022 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans have been completed.

Recommended approach for the 2022-2026 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans

The recommended Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans for the 2022-2026 Term of Council have been designed to enable departments to assess the quality and availability of the City's French language services and programs with the objective of continuous improvement.

The departmental operational plans assist all departments in:

- Improving compliance with the Bilingualism Policy
- Assessing the quality and quantity of French language services on an ongoing basis to align with the Term of Council and its strategic priorities
- Reducing French language related complaints
- Encouraging staff to adopt a bilingual lens in their daily work

As such, and in accordance with Section R.1.6 of the Bilingualism Policy, staff is recommending that City Council approve the following four action areas for the 2022-2026 Term of Council and 2023-2024 annual goals, which align with the Bilingualism Policy, , as set out in the table below:

Table 1 - Action areas and 2023-2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan

goals

Action area for the 2022-2026 Term of Council	Goal for the 2023-2024 French Language Services Departmental Operational Plans
Planning	Department actively promotes its services in both official languages.
Timeliness	Timely availability of services in both official languages ensured by thoughtful distribution of bilingual human resources.
Communication	All documents published by the City of Ottawa or its agencies and intended for the public (internal and external) be published in both official languages.
Department specific	Effective operation of the department through improved language capacity in its work units.

The 2023-2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan template is attached to this report as Appendix A for reference purposes.

Should City Council approve the approach for the departmental operational plans as described in this report, FLS will recommend new goals specific to the four action areas annually to enhance departments’ compliance with the Bilingualism Policy and help create a culture of bilingualism that is embedded in all City operations. These annual goals will be recommended for City Council’s approval each year through the Office of the City Clerk’s Annual Report throughout the 2022-2026 Term of Council.

As has been past practice, FLS will also report back to City Council on the 2023-2024 departmental operational plans in the Office of the City Clerk’s 2023 Annual Report in Q2 of 2024.

Section 2: Information and statistics related to designated bilingual positions and second language training, complaints, and translation services

Designated bilingual positions and second language training

In 2022, FLS continued to support Human Resource Services which is the lead department in the designation of bilingual positions and second language training across the organization.

Regarding the designation of bilingual positions, hiring managers are responsible and accountable for ensuring that service levels continue to be met in both English and French in accordance with the Bilingualism Policy. As such, they can seek guidance from FLS in

the determination of designated positions and their linguistic profiles. The expert advice provided by FLS allows hiring managers to make informed decisions about the designation of bilingual positions in their units.

Statistics relating to bilingual positions in the organization in 2022 are as follows:

- 16 per cent of the City's positions were designated bilingual, which remains unchanged from 2021. This number is consistent with the last five years.
- 578 language proficiency assessments were conducted primarily for staffing competitions and/or staff who transferred to designated bilingual positions. This represents a significant increase compared to 343 language proficiency assessments in 2021.

Over the course of 2022, language training continued in a virtual format, with individual and group classes being offered to all staff. Priority target participants are those staff who provide services in both languages and whose training was key to ensure proper service delivery.

Statistics relating to second language training in 2022 are as follows:

- 599 registrations for language training compared to 636 in 2021. Staff are embracing virtual delivery of this program and although participation levels have declined slightly since 2021, they are comparable to levels in 2020.
- During the winter and spring sessions, there was an average of 24 per cent increase in training demand compared to 2021.
- An average of five per cent of all language training in 2022 winter-spring session was to increase English capacity. Following the fall session, English training increased to nine per cent.

Complaints regarding French-language services

The FLS Branch is responsible for managing, investigating, and responding to all concerns relating to the provision of French-language services for the City. The City adheres to strict service standards in the handling of all complaints received through the [Corporate Complaints](#) mechanism and the FLS Branch reports publicly on these complaints on an annual basis through this report.

The Corporate Complaints Handling Procedure defines a complaint as being “any expression of dissatisfaction about the action or lack of action taken regarding operations, facilities or services provided by the City of Ottawa or by a person or body acting on behalf of the City of Ottawa”.

The City is committed to continuous improvement in the delivery of bilingual municipal services and complaints reporting and data collection allows FLS to:

- Assist departments in improving the quality of services in French to residents and staff;
- Address the needs and concerns of residents and staff regarding the provision of services in French;
- Collaborate with departments to ensure necessary measures are taken to prevent the recurrence of such complaints; and
- Identify situations and trends that require a broader evaluation of business practices and implement corrective action.

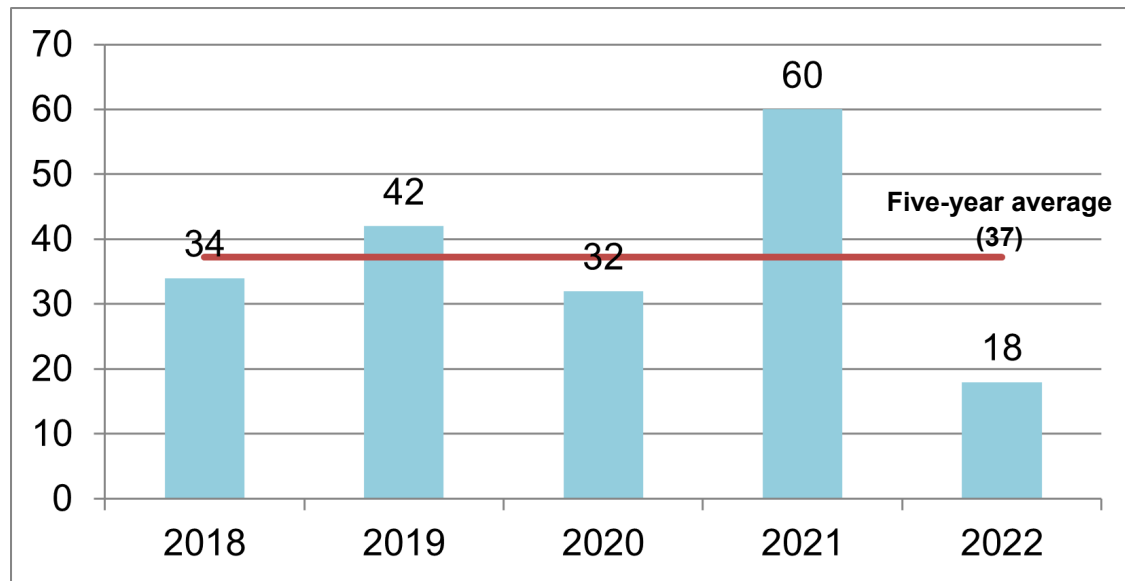
When a complaint is submitted through a channel under the Corporate Complaints Handling Procedure, FLS works with the relevant department to understand the issue and determine which measures should be taken to improve service and avoid reoccurrence. FLS also collaborates with the Ontario Ombudsman's Office on the resolution of complaints as required.

FLS relies on a collaborative approach to help all relevant stakeholders create conditions that ensure progress with the objective of continuous improvement in the provision of services in French at the City. FLS consistently reports back to the complainant to inform them on the outcome of their complaint in accordance with the Corporate Complaints and Handling Procedure and as further described below.

Complaints received in 2022

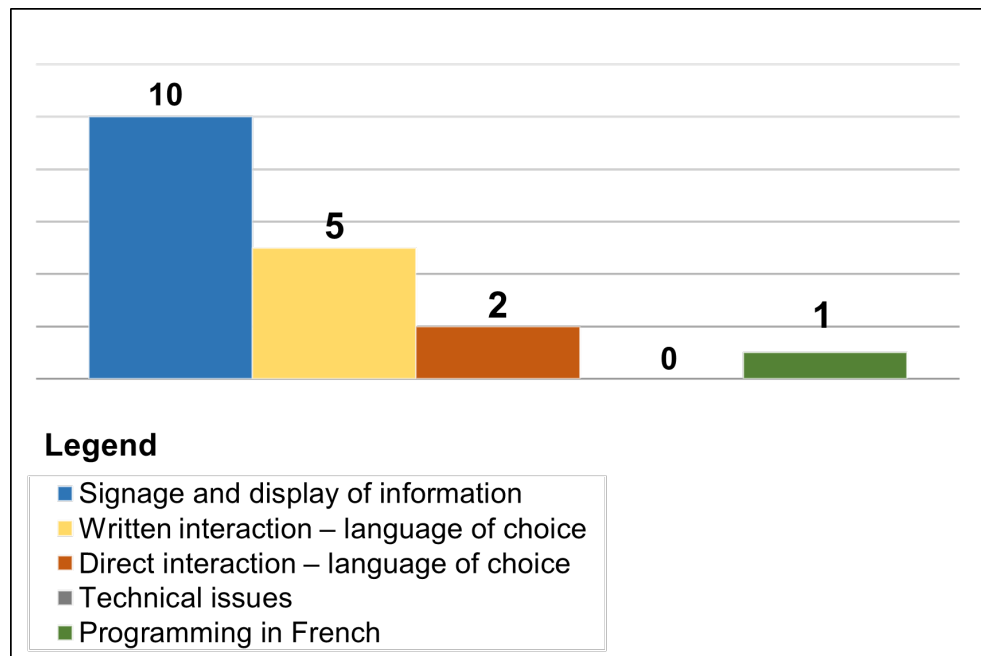
The number of French-language complaints received in 2022 was 18. This represents a decrease of 42 complaints from the 60 complaints received in 2021, and is below the 2018-2022 five-year average of 37 complaints per year as illustrated in the table below.

Figure 1 - Number of French language complaints from 2018-2022



Upon review of the complaints received in 2022, staff note that the majority relate to signage and the display of information at City facilities as well as interactions in an individual's official language of choice as illustrated in the table below.

Figure 2 - Types of complaints received in 2022



Of the 18 complaints received in 2022:

- 10 complaints related to signage and the display of information in one language only or grammatical errors on signage, compared to 19 in 2021;

- Five complaints related to an individual receiving written responses in English to inquiries submitted in French, compared to seven in 2021;
- Two complaints related to an interaction that did not take place in the individual's official language of choice, compared to 28 in 2021; and
- One complaint was filed regarding the lack of programming in French, compared to four complaints in 2021.

The average complaint resolution time in 2022 was 13 business days. This surpasses the standard under the City's Corporate Complaints Handling Policy of 20 business days in which a final response or update must be sent, barring exceptional circumstances.

The above-noted issues were corrected, and FLS continues to work with departments to ensure that signage is quality controlled by the Translation Services Unit prior to being posted. Further, FLS is working with all City departments to continue to support a proactive delivery of services to individuals in both French and English, including French language toolkits and active offer training, as further described in "Section 4: 2022 French-language service highlights" of this report.

Translation Services Unit

The Translation Services Unit (TSU) within the FLS Branch is responsible for the coordination and translation of City documents and coordination of simultaneous interpretation services for all City departments. The translation services offered by the unit include comparative revision, proofreading and terminology. This unit oversees the coordination of more than 30 external translation service providers to meet the City's translation demand.

The TSU is committed to supporting City-wide quality translation services to meet the objectives of the Bilingualism Policy, and to ensure residents can receive City communications in both French and English.

In 2022, the TSU assisted all departments with the translation and revision of timely communications required for the seamless delivery of City services, projects, programs, and activities. Services requested and processed by the TSU were wide-ranging and covered a variety of topics including but not limited to City web pages, social media messages, resources and tools for the public, schools, workplaces, and professionals, as well as corporate procedures and guidelines for staff, memorandums, and reports to City Council.

In 2022, the TSU:

- Received 30,611 requests for services, which is comparable to the 30,825 requests processed in 2021.

- Processed an average of 123 requests per day, with 47 per cent of requests deemed to be a “rush”.¹
- Translated 9,851,035 words, a 15 per cent decrease compared to the 11,361,799 words translated in 2021.

Despite the volume of requests and “rushed” timelines, the TSU was able to provide internal quality control on 32 per cent of translated documents, an increase from the 16 per cent of documents that received internal quality control in 2021. It is important to note that due to the volume of requests received and timelines, the TSU is unable to perform quality control on all translated documents. That said, the TSU performs quality control on a large number of public facing and city-wide communications as well as documents translated internally. For example, in 2022, the TSU performed quality control on several communications from the Mayor and City Manager’s Offices, as well as documents relating to the City’s light rail transit system (LRT), and the 2022 Municipal Elections.

In addition, the TSU monitors the quality of the City’s external translation providers and regularly performs quality control on externally translated documents to ensure that the quality meets the expected standard as outlined in the Request for Standing Offer No.: 29820-96175-S01.

The breakdown of services requested by type between 2019 and 2022 is presented in the table below for additional information:

Table 2 - Types of services requested by year

Types of services requested	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of requests for translation ²	19,879	21,702	23,803	20,812
Number of requests for comparative revision ³	2,139	1,941	2,025	1,913

¹ A request is flagged “rush” when it is a same-day request, or the requested turnaround time is less than the established translation timeline standards.

² Translation: Writing a text from French to English or from English to French, while respecting the tone, style and terminology used by the author.

³ Comparative revision: Comparing a translation to the source text, in French or English, and making necessary changes, including edits in the original text.

Types of services requested	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of requests for proofreading ⁴	992	874	888	933
Number of documents quality controlled ⁵	7,008	5,062	3,947	6,842
Number of transcriptions ⁶ and terminology ⁷ requests	201	171	162	111
Total requests for service	30,219	29,750	30,825	30,611

Section 3: French Language Services Advisory Committee

In accordance with Section R.1.19 of the Bilingualism Policy, the City is required to establish an Advisory Committee on French Language Services whose mandate is to advise the City Council on issues that impact the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and its application to the City’s services, programs, policies, and initiatives.

In order to support the FLSAC, FLS staff attend committee meetings, review and provide advice to help ensure that the committee’s work plan and goals align with Council’s priorities. FLS also assist staff in developing presentations to the committee by providing advice on areas to seek the committee’s expertise and feedback as further described in this report.

Overview of the 2018-2022 French Language Services Advisory Committee

The establishment of the 2018-2022 French Language Services Advisory Committee (the FLSAC) was approved by City Council on [Wednesday, December 5, 2018](#). On Tuesday, February 12, 2019, former Councillor Jean Cloutier was appointed as the Council Liaison by way of a [motion](#) approved by the Finance and Economic Development Committee.

At the end of its term, the FLSAC accomplished many of the goals which were aligned with the 2019-2022 Term of Council Priorities and the [FLSAC’s work plan](#), as approved by City Council on Wednesday, April 8, 2020. In collaboration with FLS, members of the FLSAC

⁴ Proofreading: Reviewing an existing document or translated text in a given language for errors or typos and making necessary changes. This process is not a comparison of two texts.

⁵ Quality Control: Evaluating whether a translation is accurate, follows the structures of the language in which it is written and respects the City’s quality standards. This includes taking steps to ensure that any necessary corrective measures are implemented. This service is done by an internal Translator-Reviser only.

⁶ Transcription: The act of writing down verbatim what has been said in an audio file.

⁷ Terminology: Set of terms specific to a professional field, a field of knowledge.

worked towards the following goals as part of their 2020-2022 work plan:

1. Support an approach that helps increase in the number of recreational activities and social and community services offered in French.
2. Foster economic development through the promotion of bilingualism—Ottawa, Canada's capital.
3. Encourage the participation of the Francophone population in public consultations.
4. Support the development of programming, activities as well as learning and professional development options offered in French for City staff.
5. Continue to raise staff awareness of the importance of providing an active offer of bilingual services.

With the support of the FLS, members of the FLSAC worked with City departments to successfully complete the following activities as part of their 2020-2022 work plan:

- At its meeting on Thursday, [February 11, 2021](#), the FLSAC approved its report on Francophone hubs initiative and French language recreation activities and provided recommendations to the Recreation, Culture and Facilities Services (RCFS) Department. In 2021, the majority of RCFS registered programs in both languages were cancelled, therefore there was no follow up presentation from the department in 2022.
- At its meeting on Thursday, [May 12, 2022](#), the FLSAC:
 - Made recommendations to the Planning, Real Estate and Economic Development (PRED) Department to move forward an economic development strategy and promotion of bilingualism with the City's partners. Recommendations were made based on PRED's update on the implementation of previous recommendations.
 - Approved its report with recommendations to the Public Information and Media Relations Branch (PIMR) of Innovative Client Services (ICS) Department to encourage more consultation and engagement with the City's Francophone population and the City of Ottawa, including Smart City 2.0 initiatives.
 - Received an update from Human Resources on the implementation of talent development measures including programming, activities, learning, and professional development offered in French to City Staff. FLSAC provided additional feedback on the implementation of these measures.

In addition to the activities above, the FLSAC's mandate stipulated that FLSAC is

available as a resource to City staff to provide input on matters being pursued to achieve City Council's strategic priorities. Accordingly, the FLSAC received presentations from City staff and provided feedback regarding the following initiatives:

- The City of Ottawa Municipal Accessibility Plan (COMAP);
- Official Plan Review;
- Term of Council Priorities 2019-2022;
- Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan;
- Women and Gender Equity Strategy and 2021-2022 Framework;
- Inclusive Communication guide for City employees; and
- The 2022 Municipal Elections.

Further, as noted in the [FLSAC's Mid-Term report](#), submitted to the Finance and Economic Development Committee meeting of Tuesday, December 7, 2021, the COVID-19 Pandemic and distancing requirements had an impact on staff's and the FLSAC's workload. To accommodate staff's workload and operational requirements, additional consultations on important strategic projects were requested. Furthermore, to allow for flexibility for Members during these challenging times, the FLSAC, in consultation with FLS staff, deferred the following activities from its approved work plan to the 2022-2026 FLSAC, subject to the 2022-2026 Term of Council's approval of the next work plan:

- Goal 1, Activity 2: Advising Community and Social Services Department staff regarding services offered by Children's Services, to support and enhance services offered in French in Ottawa's west end and in non-bilingual neighbourhoods.
- Goal 5, Activity 1: Advising Transportation Services Department on strategies to recruit a greater number of French-speaking bus and Para Transpo operators and Electric Rail Operators at Transportation Services.
- Goal 5, Activity 2: Advising Transportation Services Department on the elaboration of additional professional training and development materials, as well as on recommendations on the active offer of services in French.

FLS staff will bring the above-noted items back to the 2022-2026 FLSAC for consideration as they develop their work plan, which staff anticipate will be submitted to City Council for approval in late 2023.

2022-2026 French Language Services Advisory Committee

At the writing of this report, City Council has not yet established the 2022-2026 FLSAC.

During Council's consideration of the "[2022- 2026 Council Governance Review](#)" at its meeting of December 7, 2022, City Council directed the Office of the City Clerk to bring forward a report and recommendations regarding advisory bodies, including the FLSAC, to the Finance and Corporate Services Committee and City Council in Q2 of 2023.

Once City Council approves the establishment of a FLSAC for the 2022-2026 Term of Council, FLS will continue to work collaboratively with the committee members, the Council Liaison, and other City departments to ensure that recommendations regarding the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and its application to City services, programs, policies, and initiatives complement and align with City Council's strategic priorities.

Section 4: 2022 French-language service highlights

French Language Services Branch

In 2022, FLS continued to fulfil their role in supporting City departments in providing quality municipal services in French, while actively engaging with the Francophone community both internal and external to the City in accordance with the Bilingualism Policy and By-law. To do so, staff actively engaged with the Francophone community and stakeholders through a variety of external and internal initiatives as further described below.

External initiatives

In 2022, FLS continued to strengthen important relationships with its external partners and stakeholders by:

- Supporting the Association des communautés francophones d'Ottawa (ACFO) with the submission of candidates for the Prix Bernard Grandmaître Awards in February 2022. This included the successful nomination of Anthony Di Monte, retired General Manager of Emergency and Protective Services, who received the Health Care Provider of the Year Award.
- Coordinating activities to celebrate the Francophonie Month in March 2022, including the Mayor's Annual Francophone RendezVous. This event welcomed more than 150 guests, including members of the Francophone and Francophile community, key stakeholders, and community members, and showcased ACFO Ottawa's achievements.
- Celebrating Franco-Ontarian Day and the 47th Anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian Flag at the Festival Franco Ontarien, in collaboration with the *ACFO Ottawa*. On Sunday, September 25, 2022, the Mayor, the president of ACFO Ottawa, the president of the Festival Franco-Ontarien, elected officials, and members of the FLSAC, were in attendance for the official flag raising at Major's Hill park. To

celebrate, several City facilities flew the Franco-Ontarian flag on September 25, 2022, from dawn until dusk, in addition to the Flag's permanent presence at Ottawa City Hall.

- Attending various annual events such as the Vanier Community Centre's Déjeuner des flocons (Snowflake Breakfast), the Prix Bernard Grandmaître Awards, and working with community partners such as the ACFO Ottawa;
- Continuing collaboration with the Regroupement des gens d'affaires (RGA) de la capitale nationale, through the Economic Development Unit, to promote programs offered through their "Bilingualism...c'est payant" awareness campaign; and
- Participating as a member of the Board of Directors of the Association française des municipalités de l'Ontario (AFMO) with former Councillor Jean Cloutier, and supporting the work of the association by strengthening its strategic plan and direction and laying foundation for the future.

In addition, FLS and the City continued to celebrate various individuals who champion and support French-language services in the community with formal recognitions as follows:

- The City of Ottawa presented the Key to the City, the City's highest and most prestigious honour, to a number of accomplished Canadians who have had an impact on our city and its image on the national and international scene. Among the recipients were former Governor General, veteran journalist and global ambassador for La Francophonie, Michaëlle Jean and Ottawa Medical officer Dr. Vera Etches, and Ottawa Public Health staff for their outstanding efforts in the organization of the Ottawa COVID-19 vaccination clinics and always striving to provide equal services in both official languages.
- The City of Ottawa celebrated and recognized the contributions of some of its outstanding citizens by celebrating the 2022 Order of Ottawa award and Brian Kilrea Award for Excellence in Coaching recipients at ceremonies at City Hall on Thursday, November 3, 2022. Among the honoured 2022 recipients was Francophone personality Mélissa Larocque, who is a French as a second language teacher with the Ottawa Catholic School Board.
- Former Mayor Jim Watson presented a proclamation to the ACFO d'Ottawa in recognition of the organization's work and initiatives during Francophonie Month.

Internal initiatives

The FLS Branch continued its efforts to encourage service excellence through its activities conducted in French and to promote awareness of the Bilingualism Policy for

staff through several internal initiatives including:

- The internal publication of the monthly “FrancoForum” newsletter to 450 subscribed staff, highlighting activities and events happening in French within the organization and throughout Ottawa.
- Publishing articles promoting the Bilingualism Policy and services offered by FLS in the City’s Management Bulletin as well as in the internal City staff newsletter “In the Loop”. In addition, monthly “Faux Pas” quizzes were published in “In the Loop” in an interactive format, with multiple choice questions and detailed explanations for the correct answers, making learning French more enjoyable.
- Continuous improvement of the internal FLS SharePoint Site with information, tools, and resources to support the application of the Bilingualism Policy. The site was launched with updated “One City, two languages” branding and visual identity to highlight the 20th anniversary of the City’s Bilingualism Policy, and to promote the concept of an active office of bilingual services. This was made possible thanks to a contribution agreement with the federal Department of Canadian Heritage.
- Launching the new learning modules, “One City, two languages – the active offer in action for our residents” for City staff. These modules were developed to provide staff with the tools to provide an active offer of bilingual services to residents. Following the launch of the new training, it was added to the New Employee Checklist and 533 City staff completed the learning modules to date.
- Assisting City departments with best practices for delivering bilingual services, the development of common outreach and consultation approaches, and the development of tools to achieve progress in delivering services in both official languages and to meet the goals set out in the annual departmental operational plans.
- Supporting the 2022 Municipal Elections and the Elections Office on a number of matters including a large volume of translation requests, providing internal quality control on all public facing election-related communications, and providing bilingual support on voting days in the election call centres and in various other election worker roles. In addition, FLS shared election worker recruitment information with Francophone networks and stakeholders in order to attract bilingual applicants and ensure that at least one bilingual election worker was assigned to each of the 678 voting places required for the 2022 Municipal Elections.
- Providing advice to departments on best practices for delivering services in both French and English. Approximately 75 internal inquiries were received by the FLS Branch on a variety of subjects and projects including:

- Best practices for holding virtual events in both official languages, such as Heritage Day and the Doors Open Ottawa events;
 - The requirements to have documentation available in both official languages in new SharePoint resource pages for staff;
 - Bilingualism requirements for third-party consultants offering services on behalf of the City;
 - Inquiries regarding park naming designations and linguistic requirements; and
 - Inquiries related to the designation of bilingual positions.
- Drafting communications to City staff regarding the Journée internationale de la Francophonie.
 - Coordinating a staff-led Francophone affinity group as part of the Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2019-2024), which aligns with the goal of creating a thriving workforce and respectful workplace. In 2022, Francophone affinity group meetings were held quarterly. The group discussed a variety of subjects such as Francophonie Month, the Bilingualism Policy, Translation, Franco-Ontarian Day as well as the use of French in the workplace.

City departments

FLS works in close partnership with all City departments to ensure quality bilingual services through implementation of an active offer. An active offer ensures that City services in French are evident, readily available, easily accessible and of comparable quality to services offered in English. The following initiatives provide a small sampling of the City's responsiveness to the evolving needs of the Francophone community.

Additional highlights of City-wide service delivery in both official languages are set out in [Appendix B](#).

- The City's first Anti-Racism Strategy was developed by the Community and Social Services Department (CSSD). A series of action planning and townhall sessions were held by the Gender and Race Equity, Inclusion, Indigenous Relations, and Social Development (GREIIRSD) service area to invite feedback from community stakeholders, Ottawa residents, and City staff. These townhalls were conducted with simultaneous interpretation – ensuring all present could hear and participate in the conversations in both French and English. Over 1,000 participants took part in these sessions.
- CSSD operates two Municipal Child Care centres which are designated and

licensed to offer French childcare programming. In 2022, the staff at the Centre Éducatif Tournesol liaised with Francophone community partners, advocating for French language rights in the childcare community as well as provided French language professional learning opportunities to Francophone educators across our Municipal Child Care centres.

- The City’s Human Needs Task Force was active until Saturday, December 31, 2022, and included numerous francophone service providers. The program developed and distributed bilingual fact sheets to provide the public and the local social service sector with updated information on local services including food security, EarlyON online children’s programs, and when to use 3-1-1, 2-1-1 and 9-1-1.
- The Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services Department’s (RCFS) Complexes, Aquatics and Specialized Services (CASS) re-launched the “Nager pour survivre” and “Swim to Survive” programs with local schools. The “Nager pour survivre” and “Swim to Survive” programs run for the entire school year (September to June) and offers instruction in French or English on the essentials needed to survive an unexpected fall into deep water.
- The RCFS Cultural Funding Unit coordinated the “Prix du livre d’Ottawa 2022”, celebrating local francophone authors. The award for French fiction was given to Michèle Vinet for her novel ‘Le malaimant’. She was awarded a prize of \$7,500. Three additional books were shortlisted and finalists each received \$1,000.
- OC Transpo launched the “We’re Here to Take You There!” campaign ([‘Nous sommes là pour vous y amener’](#)). All campaign slogans, themes and materials had dedicated French iterations reviewed in collaboration with FLS. The campaign also targeted Francophone audiences with television and online advertisements through Radio Canada and included dedicated French-language out-of-home advertisements.
- Ottawa Public Health (OPH) continued to maintain web content and has consistently added web pages on COVID-19, Flu and RSV, among other topics, to provide the latest information on the local public health situation. OPH webpages include reports and data, infographics, factsheets, FAQs, downloadable handouts, forms and checklists, videos, and other resources, all of which are available in both official languages.

Section 5: French-language initiatives in 2023

The FLS Branch is dedicated to continuing to support City departments in the successful delivery of quality services to residents and visitors alike in both English and French and

the implementation of the 2023-2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans should they be approved by City Council. This will be achieved by working collaboratively with departments and by providing expert advice and relevant tools to support best practices for service delivery in French.

At the time of the writing of this report, the following initiatives are planned and underway for 2023:

- The continuation and increased promotion of a new interactive training for staff, depicting practical examples of providing an active offer of French-language services with the goal of assisting staff to intuitively recognize when it is needed and to support the City's ability to provide excellent customer services to our residents;
- The continuation of our staff-led Francophone affinity group as part of the Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2019-2024) which aligns with the goal of creating a thriving workforce and respectful workplace where staff are free to be their authentic selves in French;
- Submission of three nominations for the ACFO Ottawa's Prix Bernard Grandmaître Awards Gala, which took place on February 21, 2023:
 - Pierre Poirier for the "Health Contributor of the Year Award";
 - Sofiane Maghrebi for the "Francophonie Ally of the Year Award"; and
 - Makhena Rankin-Guérin for the award "Young Leader of the Year Award".
- The preparation and coordination of activities to celebrate Francophone Month in March, as well as planning the Mayor's Annual Francophone RendezVous;
- Increasing FLS' visibility within the organization and externally throughout the year and during Francophonie month through social media initiatives;
- Continuing collaboration with the Regroupement des gens d'affaires de la capitale nationale (RGA), to promote their lexicon of useful expressions for businesses eager to attract bilingual clients along with their "Bilingualism...c'est payant" awareness campaign;
- Continuing to support the "Ottawa bilingue : avançons ensemble" initiative with the ACFO Ottawa by participating with other community partners on the steering committee for the evaluation of project submissions;
- Continuing to provide support to the Association française des municipalités de l'Ontario (AFMO) by sitting on its Board of Directors with Councillor Stéphanie

Plante;

- The continued development of partnerships with important stakeholders in the Francophone community;
- Continuing to collaborate with the Ontario Ombudsman's Office in the resolution of complaints; and
- Continuing efforts to reduce the number of recurring complaints concerning direct and written interactions with clients by providing tools, advice, reminders, and documentation to improve these interactions. The City is confident in its ability to treat its residents equally in all aspects of municipal services governed by the City's Bilingualism Policy, through its transparent rigorous complaints process. FLS will continue to work with all City departments to ensure that actions undertaken because of complaints yield positive outcomes for residents.

In addition to the above-noted initiatives, FLS will continue to find creative ways to maintain and enhance its service levels to provide timely and accurate information to residents and staff in French and English in 2023. FLS will also continue to provide quality Translation Services and coordination of all City-wide translation and simultaneous interpretation services.

Further, at the core of FLS' priorities lies the ongoing commitment to resolving City-wide complaints pertaining to French-language services, assisting departments in their communications strategies to reach the Francophone community, and engaging and liaising with the Francophone community and key stakeholders.

As such, FLS will continue to assist City staff in meeting the requirements of the Bilingualism By-law and Policy and in achieving the City's commitment to continuous improvement in the delivery of bilingual municipal services. In addition, upon City Council's establishment of the 2022-2026 FLSAC, FLS will continue to support the committee in carrying out its mandate.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

- [Appendix A](#) – 2023-2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan Template
- [Appendix B](#) – 2022 City-wide service delivery in both official languages

APPENDIX A

2023-2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan Template

Department:	
Department's General Manager:	
Department's Business Support:	
Department's French Language Services Champion:	

Action area	Goal Bilingualism Policy requirement	Objective	Recommended actions for consideration	Key performance indicators	Key challenges Describe any challenges faced in the implementation of the recommended action	Implementation status	Actions taken Provide summary details	Date of the update	Additional comments
Planning	Department actively promotes its services in both official languages.	Staff trained on the proactive offer of bilingual services.	Assess staff's training intake of the "One City, two languages – the active offer in action for our residents" learning modules. Consider seeking support from your Human Resources Consultant.	100% annual completion rates among frontline bilingual staff and 50% annual completion rate in staff holding designated positions. Quarterly reports on the department's active offer training intake rates can be issued by your Human Resources Consultant.					
			Promote and issue regular reminders to encourage staff to complete the active offer training and take refresher course every 12 months. Consider seeking advice on promotion strategies from French Language Services.	Quarterly reminders included in the department's communications plan and in the emails from management to all staff.					
			Promote and encourage the active offer training to all newly hired staff.	100% completion among new hires. The training is included on the New Employee Checklist during the employees first month.					
			Include the active offer training in annual development plans for staff providing services in both official languages.	Active offer training included in annual development plan for 100% of staff providing services in both official languages.					

Action area	Goal Bilingualism Policy requirement	Objective	Recommended actions for consideration	Key performance indicators	Key challenges Describe any challenges faced in the implementation of the recommended action	Implementation status	Actions taken Provide summary details	Date of the update	Additional comments
			Engage staff in the active offer as a standard for customer service excellence.	The department's customer service excellence includes the active offer of services and staff adhere to its principles.					
Timeliness	Timely availability of services in both official languages ensured by thoughtful distribution of bilingual human resources.	Written and verbal interactions provided in the official language of choice of residents and employees.	Ensure template messages are readily available to staff for use in both official languages and create new templates to adapt to evolving needs.	List of messages templates, 100% of KBAs and procedures compiled and reviewed in both official languages. Templates submitted for translation.					
			Ensure constant availability of bilingual staff with sufficient language skills to process written and verbal communications in both official languages.	Increased number or percentage of designated positions in order to guarantee a permanent availability of bilingual staff, including during peak periods of leave.					
			Remind staff of the bilingualism requirements for internal and external communications. Consider implementing internal communications on how the department's staff can obtain and use translation (translation/and or proofreading) and interpretation services.	A section in the department's SharePoint includes the department's specific bilingual tools and resources as well as links to bilingual tools provided in the French Language Services Branch's toolbox.					
Communications	All documents published by the City of Ottawa or its agencies and intended for the public and staff be published in both official languages.	All internal and external City communications are bilingual.	Assess and ensure all internal and external communication products are bilingual.	100% of communication products bilingual such as ottawa.ca content, social media content, newsletters, printed materials, SharePoint pages, etc.					
			Assess and ensure all internal and external signage is bilingual and determine if additions and/or corrections are required (via regular site visits) and bilingual signage is provided by third-party contractors.	100% of signage on City property or that of its agencies is bilingual.					

Action area	Goal Bilingualism Policy requirement	Objective	Recommended actions for consideration	Key performance indicators	Key challenges Describe any challenges faced in the implementation of the recommended action	Implementation status	Actions taken Provide summary details	Date of the update	Additional comments
			Determine where universal communication system (e.g. pictograms, international symbols) can be implemented.	100% of signage on City property or that of its agencies is bilingual.					
	Effective operation of the department through improved language capacity in its work units	List department specific objective.	List action to be implemented	List of key performance indicators					
			Ensure all new signage is quality assured with Translation Services.	100% of signage on City property or that of its agencies is bilingual.					
			List action to be implemented	List of key performance indicators					
			List action to be implemented	List of key performance indicators					

APPENDIX B

2022 City-wide service delivery in both official languages

In 2022, the City worked to continually demonstrate its commitment to providing quality services to staff and residents in French and English. To do so, FLS works in close partnership with all City departments to ensure the official language of preference of the public and staff is available when accessing City services.

Further to the French-language service highlights outlined in Section 4 of Document 5, additional service highlights and initiatives are provided below, illustrating the City's proactive work in incorporating the requirements of the Bilingualism Policy in its service delivery model and in being responsive to the evolving needs of the Francophone Community as well as staff.

Bilingual service delivery overview

- The City's official social media channels are presented in both official languages; this also includes service alerts on all channels (Twitter, web posts, emails, and SMS);
- All staff presentations, City-wide print materials, and online communications are available in both official languages;
- All media releases and advisories are provided in both official languages;
- All generic voice mailbox greetings and email signatures are provided in both official languages;
- All public facing Client Service Centres and call centres offer services in both official languages;
- Regular community outreach and stakeholder engagement activities are held in both official languages;
- Committee report recommendations and executive summaries are always available in both official languages;
- "Budget at a Glance", "Budget Backgrounders" to City Council, and the City's Budget books are posted on ottawa.ca and are consistently provided in both English and French;
- User interfaces for all customer facing transit fare payment systems are bilingual. This includes ticket machine screens and audio, and faregate feedback; and

- Electric Light Rail Vehicle Operators continue to employ the use of pre-recorded bilingual messages to notify passengers of events on the trains. This message bank continues to grow in consultation with Operators and from feedback received.

2022 Bilingual service delivery by the numbers

- More than 658 corporate communications for staff were produced in both official languages, including:
 - 404 'Au courant' / "In the Loop articles";
 - Six emails from Employee Communications;
 - 139 Management Bulletin articles;
 - 32 network emails from the City Manager;
 - 46 City Manager Connection posts
 - 13 joint network emails from the City Manager, Mayor and occasionally from City Councillors and General Managers;
 - 11 network emails from the City's Senior Leadership Team or Directors;
 - Five network emails from other elected officials to promote City programs;
- All communications on the Stage 2 LRT project, including social media, were released in French and English. Examples of other products can be found on the Stage 2 website and include:
 - 25 Construction Updates;
 - 215 Newsletters;
 - 24 web articles;
 - 12 videos;
- 329 inquiries were received and responded to in French from internal and external clients to the HR Service Centre;
- 47 bilingual datasets were added to the open data catalogue bringing the total number of datasets on Open Ottawa to 425;

- 63 French online engagement activities were posted on the “Participons Ottawa” platform;
- 36,530 inquiries were received in French from external clients to the 3-1-1 Call Centre which represents six percent of all calls received in 2022;
- 340,000 waste collection calendars were printed and distributed to households, in addition to the online version. All the operational and educational information is provided in both languages;
- Two editions of the Solid Waste Master Plan eNewsletter were sent to over 2,000 subscribers in the language of their choice;
- 52 weekly collection reminders and 14 service alerts were delivered to 320,000 recipients via email, text, or phone call to residents who have signed up to receive ReCollect messages/Service alerts in either French or English; and
- Revenue Services handled over 230,000 calls, emails, and in-person interactions with residents who could be served in the official language of their choice.

New and innovative initiatives enhancing services provided in French to City staff and residents

- OC Transpo launched one main customer service contact number, 613-560- 5000, that consolidated several existing numbers to provide more streamlined access to transit customer information. With this new line, customers can choose the French option immediately at the beginning of the call rather than listen to an English and French recording of the options;
- OC Transpo adopted the Canada Video Relay Service where people with hearing or speech disabilities can connect with a sign-language interpreter via video conference before calling OC Transpo at 613-560-5000. The video relay service allows callers to express themselves in their first language, American Sign Language (ASL) or Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ) when communicating with OC Transpo;
- OC Transpo launched a new self-serve online system that allows Para Transpo customers to quickly book, cancel, and track their trips. This system is offered in both English and French;
- The Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services Department’s (RCFS) Community Recreation and Cultural Programs Branch (CRCP) and Business Technical

Support Services Branch (BTSS) through a Heritage Canada grant, implemented “Mon Coin FrancoFun” in seven Francophone Hub facilities across the City. The “Mon Coin FrancoFun” created a visual identity that attracts the Francophone/Francophile community to our facilities, and highlights numerous French programming, community, and employment opportunities;

- Following an internal Diversity Audit in 2022, Ottawa Public Health (OPH) embarked on a Strategy Planning exercise for 2023 while ensuring to include diverse staff perspectives throughout the process as part of the health unit’s commitment to Health Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (HEDI). Key Francophone staff have been designated to be part of these important sessions, which will continue in 2023;
- Community and Social Services Department’s (CSSD) Children’s Services branch worked collaboratively with The Table Francophone to ensure the linguistic and cultural vitality of Francophone childcare spaces and services in Ottawa. The recruitment and retention of qualified Early Childhood Educators is a significant issue for local childcare service providers, especially in the Francophone community. To address sector workforce pressures, six designated Francophone service providers are participating in an ongoing City led Workforce Professional Learning Pilot with the goal of enhanced staff training, recruitment, and retention.

Public awareness, outreach, and collaboration

The City regularly collaborated with residents and kept them informed through media, public awareness campaigns, outreach, and consultations. Here are a few examples of how the City ensured engagement and visibility with its residents and partners using a Francophone inclusion lens:

- OPH participated in 109 interviews (radio, television, written media), of which 11 were to French media outlets. OPH participated in 19 media availabilities, always ensuring that statements included content in both official languages and that staff were able to respond to media questions in their official language of choice; and ensured that spokespersons were available in both official languages.
- The Public Works Department’s Traffic Services branch provided real-time information shared in both languages on-site via bilingual signage, on Twitter via [@Ottawa Traffic](#) and [@Ottawa Circule](#) and on the web via interactive traffic map available for use in [French](#) or [English](#).

- CSSD's Gender and Race Equity, Inclusion, Indigenous Relations, and Social Development (GREIIRSD) service area leads a Youth Futures Program, which offers youth facing marginalization and other barriers the opportunity to gain the skills and experiences they need to thrive and succeed. In 2022, 150 youth were selected, 45 of whom were Francophone.
- RCFS continued its efforts in the Vanier revitalization plan. The Vanier + Montréal Road public art plan has been in development since 2019. The plan engages the Francophone community and local artists in the enhancement of the Vanier community. In 2022 the Riverain Park public art project was initiated. An artwork by two local francophone artists has been chosen by a selection committee which will be implemented in 2023.
- The Finance and Corporate Services Department (FCSD) provided bilingual staff for Councillor-led budget consultations (English or French);
- Public consultations and presentations conducted by the Planning, Real Estate and Economic Development Department (PRED) were offered in both official languages and included bilingual staff who engaged with residents in the language of their choosing.
- The Winter Maintenance Quality Standards Review was a public engagement opportunity for residents to provide input into the City's Winter Maintenance Quality Standards. Bilingual facilitated public sessions were held and residents were given the chance to attend in person, online or via a special phone number that was available to residents who required additional support to provide input. For this first-time initiative, staff from the Accessibility Office provided French and English services by phone during the public consultation period. All materials were posted and shared via the Engage Ottawa site and were updated in both English and French;
- The City's Employment Ontario Program partnered with Algonquin College and Collège La Cité to provide a Food Service Worker Training program to Ottawa residents. This eight week and 30-hour job placement program enabled participants to gain skills to work in various hospitality and food service settings, such as hospitals, long-term care homes, schools etc. In 2022:
 - 41 program information sessions were held in French
 - Five, eight-week Food Service Worker Training programs were offered in French, including one weekend and evening program for employed

Francophone residents interested in upgrading their skills.

- 49 Francophone residents registered in the training programs offered in French.
- Employment Ontario partnered with four Francophone employers for the work placement component of the program, including: University of Ottawa, Bruyère Hospital, Rendez-vous des aînés francophones d'Ottawa, and Centre d'accueil Champlain.
- Of the three French training programs that are complete, 24 participants graduated and 14 have secured employment in the hospitality and food service industry.
- RCFS Cultural Funding Unit supported local arts, heritage and festival organizations, as well as local professional artists and heritage professionals through 17 funding and awards programs. In 2022, the City made 48 allocations to francophone applicants, investing over \$2.02 million through cultural funding programs to organizations and individuals that are francophone, and/or offer French or bilingual programming.
- RCFS Cultural Funding Unit supported local arts, heritage, and festival organizations, as well as local professional artists and heritage professionals through 17 funding and awards programs. In 2022, the City made 48 allocations to francophone applicants, investing over \$2.02 million through cultural funding programs to organizations and individuals that are francophone, and/or offer French or bilingual programming.
- FCSD implemented the Vacant Unit Tax and ensured bilingual staff where available to facilitate Councillor-led budget consultations. In addition, FCSD provided the community with all communications, notices, posters, advertisements, and forms in both official languages.
- The Infrastructure and Water Services Department (IWSD) attended the Overbrook 100th Anniversary celebration, a bilingual event, to promote and educate residents on the City's high quality drinking water. IWSD had members available to speak to the attendees in both languages and all materials for distribution were available in both languages.