

**Subject: 2023 Report on French Language Services**

**File Number: ACS2024-OCC-GEN-0010**

**Report to Finance and Corporate Services Committee on 4 June 2024  
and Council 12 June 2024**

**Submitted on May 24, 2024 by Caitlin Salter MacDonald, City Clerk**

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**Ward: Citywide**

**Objet : Rapport annuel 2023 sur les services en français**

**Numéro de dossier : ACS2024-OCC-GEN-0010**

**Rapport présenté au Comité des finances et des services organisationnels**

**Rapport soumis le 4 juin 2024**

**et au Conseil le 12 juin 2024**

**Soumis le 24 mai 2024 par Caitlin Salter MacDonald, Greffière municipale**

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**Quartier : À l'échelle de la ville**

## **REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Finance and Corporate Services Committee recommend that City  
Council:**

- 1. Receive this report for information.**
- 2. Approve the 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational  
Plans as described in this report and set out in Document 1.**

## RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

**Que le Comité des finances et des services organisationnels recommande au Conseil municipal :**

- 1. d'accepter ce rapport à titre informatif;**
- 2. d'approuver les Plans opérationnels des directions générales sur les services en français de 2024, comme il est décrit dans le présent rapport et indiqué dans le document 1.**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2023, French Language Services (FLS) continued to play an important role in supporting City of Ottawa departments in providing quality municipal services in French to its residents and staff. FLS supports mutual respect and recognition of both official languages in accordance with the City's [Bilingualism By-law \(By-law No. 2001-170\)](#) and [Bilingualism Policy](#).

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.

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

### **Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans**

The Bilingualism Policy requires each City department to complete a Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan, as approved by City Council.

The plans describe goals and standards to improve municipal services provided in French, and City departments are required to submit their plans to Council annually. To meet this requirement, each department submits its plan to FLS by January 31 of the following year. FLS then reports annually to Council on the departments' progress and completion by way of the Office of the City Clerk's Annual Report on French Language Services.

On May 10, 2023, Council considered the report titled, "[Office of the City Clerk 2022 Annual Report](#)." Through this report, Council approved four action areas for the 2022-2026 Term of Council and goals for the 2023-2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans as further described in the Discussion section of this report.

The 2023-2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans were submitted to FLS in early 2024. All departments have reported that their respective operational plans have been completed and the majority of departments have advised that their efforts to complete the City's active offer training will extend into 2024.

*Recommendation for the 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans*

The recommended 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan has been developed to assist departments' compliance with the Bilingualism Policy and help create a culture of bilingualism that is embedded in all City operations. The recommended plan also enables departments to continue building on the work done through the completion of the 2023-2024 plans and includes the following goals:

Table 2 - Action areas and 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan goals

<b>Action areas for the 2022-2026 Term of Council</b>	<b>Goal for the 2024 French Language Services Departmental Operational Plans</b>
Planning	That the quality and level of services provided in French be equal to those in English.
Timeliness	That each work unit at the City representing a separate and specific service to the public and/or employees be able to communicate in both official languages at all times without delay in service.
Communication	That all communication materials published by the City of Ottawa or its agencies and intended for both internal and external audiences, be published in both official languages simultaneously.

<b>Action areas for the 2022-2026 Term of Council</b>	<b>Goal for the 2024 French Language Services Departmental Operational Plans</b>
Department specific	That staff have the opportunity to work in the official language of their choice and the public be served in the official language of their choice.

In accordance with the Bilingualism Policy, staff recommend Council approve the 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan attached as Document 1. In addition to the above-noted action areas and annual goals, the 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan template contains objectives, actions and key performance indicators to assist departments in completing the annual goals.

Should Council approve the 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans, staff will issue the template to City departments for their completion by January 31, 2025. FLS will report back to Council on the operational plans in the Office of the City Clerk's 2024 Report on French Language Services, which is anticipated in Q2 of 2025.

### **Information and statistics related to designated bilingual positions, second language training, the Translation Services Unit and complaints**

#### *Designated bilingual positions and second language training*

In 2023, FLS continued to support Human Resources Services which is the lead department in the designation of bilingual positions and second language training across the organization.

Advice provided by FLS allows managers to make informed decisions about the designation of bilingual positions in their units. In 2023, 16.7 per cent of the City's positions were designated bilingual, which represents a slight increase from 16 per cent of positions that were designated in 2022.

In 2023, 784 staff members registered for language training, which marks an increase of 31 per cent from 599 in 2022. This increase is attributed to a number of factors including training being offered to all staff regardless of language designation; staff returning to the workplace; the availability of in-person classes; greater awareness of language training; and an increase in messaging to employees about the benefits of second language training for personal and/or professional development.

### *Translation Services Unit*

The TSU within FLS is responsible for the coordination and translation of City documents and coordination of simultaneous interpretation services for all City departments.

In 2023, 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. The TSU translated 10,572,586 words, which represents a seven-percent increase compared to the 9,851,035 words translated in 2022.

The TSU received 30,224 requests for services, which is comparable to the 30,611 requests processed in 2022, as further described in the Discussion section of this report.

### **Complaints regarding French-language services**

FLS is responsible for managing, investigating and responding to all complaints received by the City regarding the quality and provision of French-language services.

The number of French-language complaints received in 2023 was 47. This represents an increase of 29 complaints from the 18 received in 2022 and is above the 2019-2023 five-year average of 39.8 complaints per year.

Staff note that the majority of complaints were related to signage and the display of information on various City applications and facilities; specifically, these complaints were in relation to errors or unilingual text and messaging. While these complaints are considered resolved, staff have taken steps to ensure that both official languages have mutual respect and recognition on City-issued signage and communications.

To address the complaints related to signage, the Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services Department is undertaking an internal audit of all signage and fixed assets in City facilities to identify issues and areas for improvement as further described in the Discussion section of this report.

In addition, and to ensure that staff are aware of the requirements of the Bilingualism Policy as it relates to signage, FLS issued a number of communications to all departments regarding the translation and quality assurance of text on City signs. FLS also launched an internal poster campaign to all departments about the requirements of bilingual signage.

## **French Language Services Advisory Committee**

In accordance with Section R.1.19 of the Bilingualism Policy, the City is required to establish a French Language Services Advisory Committee (FLSAC). The FLSAC's mandate is to advise City Council on issues that impact the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and its application to the City's services, programs, policies, and initiatives as further described in the Discussion section of this report.

To support the FLSAC in carrying out its mandate, 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 assists staff in developing presentations to the committee by providing advice on areas to seek the committee's expertise and feedback.

### *Establishing the 2022-2026 French Language Services Advisory Committee*

On July 12, 2023, Council considered the report titled, "[Advisory Body Review](#)," which established the structure and procedural requirements for the City's Advisory Committees including confirming the establishment of the FLSAC for the 2022-2026 term. In addition, by way of motion at the same meeting, Councillor Stéphanie Plante was named as Council Liaison for the 2022-2026 FLSAC.

As further described in the Discussion section of this report, following the recruitment process, on September 27, 2023, Council approved the report titled, "[Appointments to the French Language Services Advisory Committee](#)." Through the approval of this report, 11 individuals were selected to form the 2022-2026 FLSAC.

On February 8, 2024, Member Pierre Loranger resigned from his position on the FLSAC. The selection panel for the FLSAC decided not to appoint a new member to fill Member Loranger's position as the current total of 10 members is within the threshold of seven to 11 citizen members required to be on the Committee, as outlined in the report titled, "[Advisory Body Review](#)."

### *Developing the 2024-2026 FLSAC work plan*

To develop the FLSAC workplan, FLS issued a survey to members of the FLSAC that sought information on members' areas of interest and requested input on activities, including the deferred items from the 2020-2022 FLSAC's work plan. FLS reviewed the submitted responses and developed a work plan that was in line with survey responses, the Term of Council Priorities, and Committee's mandate.

As outlined in the work plan, attached as Document 2, FLS identified eight activities for inclusion on the work plan including the three deferred activities from the 2020-2022 FLSAC, as further described in the Discussion section of this report.

The work plan was approved by the FLSAC at its meeting on February 8, 2024, and the report titled, "[French Language Services Advisory Committee 2024-2026 Work Plan](#)," was then submitted to the Finance and Corporate Services Committee and City Council for their approval at their meetings on March 5, 2024, and April 3, 2024, respectively.

Following the approval of the FLSAC work plan, the City Clerk used her delegated authority to approve an update to reassign Goal 3, Activity 1, from the former Planning, Real Estate, and Economic Development Department to the new Strategic Initiatives Department. This change was made to reflect the City's current organizational structure that was implemented April 17.

FLS will report to Council regarding the progress made on the 2024-2026 workplan and detail any other consultations provided through the Office of the City Clerk's 2024 Report on French Language Services which is anticipated in Q2 of 2025. The FLSAC will also provide an update on its work to date through its mid-term and end-of-term reports to the Finance and Corporate Services Committee and Council.

### **2023 French-language service highlights**

In 2023, FLS continued to fulfil its role in supporting City departments in providing quality municipal services in French, while actively engaging with the Francophone community as well as internal and external stakeholders through a variety of initiatives.

FLS continued to strengthen important relationships with its external partners and stakeholders by supporting the Association des communautés francophones d'Ottawa (ACFO), coordinating activities to celebrate the Francophonie Month in March 2023, celebrating Franco-Ontarian Day and the 48th Anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian Flag, attending various annual events such as the Vanier Community Centre's Déjeuner des flocons (Snowflake Breakfast) and the Prix Bernard Grandmaître Awards, and participating as a member of the Board of Directors of the Association française des municipalités de l'Ontario (AFMO).

In addition, FLS 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. These initiatives included internal publications,

continuous improvement of the internal FLS SharePoint site with information, tools, and resources to support the application of the Bilingualism Policy, assisting City departments with best practices for delivering bilingual services, coordinating a staff-led Francophone affinity group, and collaborating with the City's Learning Centre to implement content related to the City of Ottawa's Bilingualism Policy and translation requirements into presentations for relevant courses.

FLS works in close partnership with all City departments to ensure quality bilingual services through implementation of an active offer. Additional highlights of City-wide service delivery in both official languages are set out in the Discussion section of this report.

### **French-language initiatives in 2024**

There are a number of French-language initiatives planned and underway for 2024, as further described in the Discussion section of this report.

FLS 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 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans should they be approved by City Council.

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 assisting departments in their communications strategies to reach, engage and liaise with the Francophone community and key stakeholders.

Overall, 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.

### **RÉSUMÉ**

En 2023, les Services en français (SF) ont continué de jouer un rôle important en aidant les directions générales de la Ville à fournir des services municipaux de qualité en français aux résidents et au personnel. Les SF soutiennent le respect mutuel et la reconnaissance des deux langues officielles conformément au [Règlement sur le bilinguisme \(Règlement n° 2001-170\)](#) et à la [Politique de bilinguisme de la Ville](#).



La Politique de bilinguisme contient des dispositions qui régissent plusieurs aspects des services municipaux bilingues. Il s'agit notamment des communications, des services offerts de façon proactive dans les deux langues aux résidents et aux employés, et des besoins organisationnels, dont la désignation des postes bilingues, la formation linguistique et la gestion des programmes culturels.

De plus, la Politique de bilinguisme détermine un certain nombre de priorités municipales pour les actions des SF, notamment les services de traduction, la résolution des plaintes, la coordination et le soutien à l'élaboration des plans opérationnels annuels des directions générales sur les services en français, la réservation de services d'interprétation pour les comités et le Conseil municipal, ainsi que la promotion et l'offre active de services municipaux en français.

### **Plans opérationnels des directions générales sur les services en français**

La Politique de bilinguisme exige que chaque direction générale de la Ville établisse un Plan opérationnel de la direction générale sur les services en français, tel qu'approuvé par le Conseil. Les plans décrivent les objectifs et les normes visant à améliorer les services municipaux fournis en français, et les directions générales de la Ville sont tenues de soumettre leur plan au Conseil municipal chaque année. Pour répondre à cette exigence, chaque direction générale soumet son plan aux SF l'année suivante avant le 31 janvier. Les SF rendent ensuite compte au Conseil municipal des progrès et de l'achèvement des plans des directions générales dans le Rapport annuel sur les services en français du Bureau du greffe municipal.

Le 10 mai 2023, le Conseil a examiné le rapport intitulé « [Rapport annuel 2022 du Bureau du greffier municipal](#) ». Au moyen de ce rapport, le Conseil municipal a approuvé quatre domaines d'action pour le mandat du Conseil de 2022-2026 et des objectifs pour les plans opérationnels des directions générales sur les services en français de 2023-2024, comme il est expliqué plus en détail dans la section Analyse du présent rapport.

Les plans opérationnels des directions générales sur les services en français de 2023-2024 ont été soumis aux SF au début de l'année 2024. Toutes les directions générales ont indiqué que leurs plans opérationnels respectifs ont été achevés et la majorité a indiqué que les efforts pour achever la formation à l'offre active de la Ville se prolongeront jusqu'en 2024.

*Recommandation pour les plans opérationnels des directions générales sur les services en français de 2024*

Le plan opérationnel des directions générales sur les services en français de 2024 recommandé a été élaboré pour aider les directions générales à se conformer à la Politique de bilinguisme et à créer une culture du bilinguisme intégrée à toutes les activités de la Ville. Le plan recommandé permet également aux directions générales de continuer à s'appuyer sur les travaux réalisés dans le cadre des plans de 2023-2024 et comprend les objectifs suivants :

Tableau 2 – Domaines d'action et buts des plans opérationnels des directions générales sur les services en français de 2024

<b>Domaines d'action pour le mandat du Conseil 2022-2026</b>	<b>But des plans opérationnels des directions générales sur les services en français de 2024</b>
Planification	Que la qualité et le niveau des services offerts en français soient égaux aux services offerts en anglais.
Disponibilité en temps utile	Que chaque unité de travail de la Ville représentant un service distinct précis au personnel ou au public soit en mesure de communiquer tant en anglais qu'en français en tout temps, et ce, sans retard dans la prestation du service.
Communications	Que tout document publié par la Ville d'Ottawa ou ses organismes et destiné au public (interne et externe), paraisse dans les deux langues officielles.
Propre à la direction générale	Que le personnel ait la possibilité de travailler dans la langue officielle de son choix et que le public soit servi dans la langue officielle de son choix.

Conformément à la Politique de bilinguisme, le personnel recommande au Conseil d'approuver les plans opérationnels des directions générales sur les services en

français de 2024 joints en tant que document 1. Outre les domaines d'action et les buts annuels indiqués ci-dessus, le modèle de plan opérationnel des directions générales sur les services en français de 2024 comprend des objectifs, des mesures et des indicateurs de rendement clés pour aider les directions générales à atteindre leurs buts annuels.

Si le Conseil municipal approuve les plans opérationnels des directions générales sur les services en français de 2024, le personnel enverra le modèle aux directions générales de la Ville pour qu'ils le remplissent d'ici le 31 janvier 2025. Les SF rendront compte au Conseil municipal des plans opérationnels dans le cadre du Rapport annuel 2024 sur les services en français du Bureau du greffe municipal, prévu pour le deuxième trimestre de 2025.

### **Renseignements et statistiques sur les postes désignés bilingues, la formation en langue seconde, l'Unité du service de traduction (UST) et les plaintes**

#### *Postes désignés bilingues et formation en seconde langue*

En 2023, les SF ont continué à soutenir les Services des ressources humaines, qui sont responsables de la désignation des postes bilingues et de la formation en langue seconde dans l'ensemble de l'administration municipale.

Les conseils de la DSF permettent aux gestionnaires de prendre des décisions éclairées sur la désignation des postes bilingues dans leurs unités. En 2023, 16,7 % des postes de la Ville étaient désignés bilingues, ce qui représente une légère augmentation par rapport aux 16 % de postes désignés bilingues en 2022.

En 2023, 784 membres du personnel se sont inscrits à une formation linguistique, ce qui constitue une augmentation de 31 % par rapport aux 599 inscriptions en 2022. Cette augmentation est attribuée à un certain nombre de facteurs, notamment l'offre de formation à tous les membres du personnel, quelle que soit leur désignation linguistique, le retour du personnel sur le lieu de travail, la disponibilité de cours en personne, une plus grande sensibilisation à la formation linguistique et une augmentation des messages adressés aux employés portant sur les avantages de la formation en langue seconde pour le perfectionnement personnel ou professionnel.

### *Unité du service de traduction (UST)*

L'Unité du service de traduction (UST) est chargée de la coordination et de la traduction des documents de la Ville ainsi que de la coordination des services d'interprétation simultanée pour toutes les directions générales de la Ville.

En 2023, l'UST a aidé toutes les directions générales à traduire et à réviser rapidement les communications nécessaires à la bonne marche des services, des projets, des programmes et des activités de la Ville. L'UST a traduit 10 572 586 mots, soit une augmentation de 7 % par rapport aux 9 851 035 mots traduits en 2022.

L'UST a reçu 30 224 demandes de services, ce qui est comparable aux 30 611 demandes traitées en 2022, comme il est décrit en détail dans la section Analyse du présent rapport.

### **Plaintes concernant les services en français**

Les SF sont chargés de gérer, d'examiner et de traiter toutes les plaintes relatives à la qualité et à la prestation de services en français reçues par la Ville.

En 2023, la Ville a reçu 47 plaintes concernant les services en français, ce qui représente une augmentation de 29 plaintes par rapport aux 18 plaintes reçues en 2022 et se situe au-delà de la moyenne sur cinq ans de 39,8 plaintes par année pour la période 2019-2023.

Le personnel a constaté que la majorité d'entre elles concernaient la signalisation et l'affichage d'information portant sur diverses applications et installations de la Ville; plus précisément, ces plaintes portaient sur des erreurs ou des textes et messages unilingues. Bien que ces plaintes soient considérées comme résolues, le personnel a pris des mesures pour garantir le respect et la reconnaissance mutuels des deux langues officielles dans la signalisation et les communications publiées par la Ville.

Afin de répondre aux plaintes relatives à la signalisation, la Direction générale des loisirs, de la culture et des installations (DGLCI) a entrepris un audit interne de l'ensemble de la signalisation et des actifs dans les installations de la Ville afin de trouver les problèmes et les points à améliorer, comme il est détaillé dans la section Analyse du présent rapport.

En outre, afin de s'assurer que le personnel est conscient des exigences de la Politique de bilinguisme en matière de signalisation, les SF ont envoyé à toutes les directions

générales bon nombre de communications concernant la traduction et l'assurance de la qualité des textes figurant sur la signalisation de la Ville. Les SF ont également lancé une campagne d'affichage interne portant sur les exigences de la signalisation bilingue.

### **Comité consultatif sur les services en français**

Conformément à la section R.1.19 de la Politique de bilinguisme, la Ville est tenue de créer un Comité consultatif sur les services en français (CCSF). Le CCSF a pour mandat de conseiller le Conseil municipal à l'égard des questions qui ont une incidence sur la mise en œuvre de la Politique de bilinguisme et son application aux services, programmes, politiques et initiatives de la Ville, comme il est décrit en détail dans la section Analyse du présent rapport.

Pour aider le CCSF à remplir son mandat, le personnel des SF assiste aux réunions du Comité; examine et fournit des conseils pour s'assurer que le plan de travail et les objectifs du Comité s'harmonisent avec les priorités du Conseil. Les SF aident aussi le personnel à préparer les présentations au comité, le conseillant sur les domaines pour lesquels il faut solliciter l'expertise et la rétroaction du comité.

#### *Établissement du Comité consultatif sur les services en français (CCSF) de 2022-2026*

Le 12 juillet 2023, le Conseil a examiné le rapport « [Examen des organismes consultatifs](#) », qui établit la structure et les exigences procédurales pour les comités consultatifs de la Ville, y compris la confirmation de l'établissement du CCSF pour la durée du mandat 2022-2026. En outre, par motion lors de la même réunion, la conseillère Stéphanie Plante a été nommée agente de liaison du Conseil pour le CCSF 2022-2026.

Comme il est expliqué plus en détail dans la section Analyse du présent rapport, à la suite du processus de recrutement, le Conseil a approuvé le 27 septembre 2023 le rapport intitulé « [Nominations au Comité consultatif sur les services en français](#) ». En approuvant ce rapport, 11 personnes ont été sélectionnées pour faire partie du CCSF 2022-2026.

Le 8 février 2024, le membre Pierre Loranger a démissionné de son poste au CCSF. Le comité de sélection du CCSF a décidé de ne pas nommer un nouveau membre pour remplacer le membre Loranger, car le total actuel de 10 membres se situe dans le seuil de 7 à 11 membres citoyens requis pour faire partie du comité, comme indiqué dans le rapport intitulé « [Examen des organismes consultatifs](#) ».

### *Élaboration du plan de travail du CCSF de 2024-2026*

Afin d'élaborer le plan de travail, les SF ont envoyé un sondage aux membres du CCSF pour obtenir de l'information sur leurs domaines d'intérêt et recevoir des commentaires portant sur les activités, y compris les points reportés du plan de travail du CCSF de 2020-2022. Les SF ont examiné les réponses soumises et ont élaboré un plan de travail conforme aux réponses au sondage, aux priorités du mandat du Conseil et au mandat du Comité.

Comme il est décrit dans le plan de travail ci-joint intitulé document 2, l'équipe des SF a retenu huit activités à inclure au plan de travail, notamment les trois activités reportées du plan de travail 2020-2022 du CCSF, comme il est expliqué plus en détail dans la section Analyse du présent rapport.

Le plan de travail a été approuvé par le CCSF lors de sa réunion du 8 février 2024, et le rapport intitulé « [Plan de travail 2024-2026 du Comité consultatif sur les services en français](#) » a ensuite été soumis au Comité des finances et des services organisationnels et au Conseil municipal pour approbation lors de leurs réunions respectives du 5 mars 2024 et du 3 avril 2024.

À la suite de l'approbation du plan de travail du CCSF, la greffière municipale a utilisé ses pouvoirs délégués pour approuver une mise à jour visant à réattribuer l'objectif 3, activité 1, de l'ancienne Direction générale de la planification, de l'immobilier et du développement économique à la nouvelle Direction générale des initiatives stratégiques. Ce changement a été apporté afin de refléter la structure organisationnelle actuelle de la Ville, remaniée le 17 avril dernier.

Les SF rendront compte au Conseil municipal des progrès réalisés dans le cadre du Plan de travail 2024-2026 et détailleront toute autre consultation fournie dans le cadre du Rapport annuel 2024 sur les services en français du Bureau du greffe municipal, qui est prévu pour le deuxième trimestre de 2025. Le CCSF fournira également une mise à jour de son travail jusqu'à présent au moyen de ses rapports de mi-mandat et de fin de mandat au Comité des finances et des services organisationnels (CFSO) et au Conseil municipal.

### **Faits saillants des services en français en 2023**

En 2023, les SF ont continué à jouer leur rôle en appuyant les directions générales de la Ville dans la prestation de services municipaux de qualité en français, tout en

s'engageant activement auprès de la communauté francophone ainsi que des parties prenantes internes et externes au moyen d'une variété d'initiatives.

La DSF a continué à consolider les relations importantes avec les partenaires et intervenants externes en aidant l'Association des communautés francophones d'Ottawa (ACFO), en coordonnant les activités pour souligner le Mois de la Francophonie en mars 2023, en soulignant le Jour des Franco-Ontariens et des Franco-Ontariennes et le 48<sup>e</sup> anniversaire du drapeau franco-ontarien, en participant à divers événements annuels comme le Déjeuner des flocons du Centre communautaire de Vanier et les prix Bernard-Grandmaître, et en siégeant au conseil d'administration de l'Association française des municipalités de l'Ontario (AFMO).

De plus, les SF ont poursuivi leurs efforts pour encourager l'excellence du service grâce à leurs activités en français et pour sensibiliser le personnel à la Politique de bilinguisme au moyen de plusieurs initiatives internes, notamment des publications internes, l'amélioration continue du site SharePoint interne des SF avec de l'information, des outils et des ressources pour soutenir l'application de la Politique de bilinguisme, l'aide apportée aux directions générales pour la mise en œuvre de pratiques exemplaires en matière de prestation de services bilingues, la coordination du Groupe affinitaire francophone et la collaboration avec le Centre d'apprentissage pour intégrer le contenu relatif à la Politique de bilinguisme de la Ville d'Ottawa et aux exigences en matière de traduction dans les présentations des cours pertinents.

Les SF travaillent en étroite collaboration avec toutes les directions générales de la Ville afin de garantir des services bilingues de qualité grâce à la mise en œuvre d'une offre active. D'autres éléments essentiels de la prestation de services dans les deux langues officielles à l'échelle de la Ville sont exposés dans la section Analyse du présent rapport.

### **Initiatives en français en 2024**

Des initiatives des SF sont prévues et en cours pour 2024, comme décrit plus en détail dans la section Analyse du présent rapport.

Les SF sont déterminés à continuer d'appuyer les directions générales de la Ville dans la prestation de services de qualité aux résidents et aux visiteurs, tant en anglais qu'en français, et dans la mise en œuvre des plans opérationnels des directions générales sur les services en français de 2024, s'ils sont approuvés par le Conseil municipal.

Les SF continueront également à fournir des services de traduction de qualité et à coordonner tous les services de traduction et d'interprétation simultanée à l'échelle de la Ville.

En outre, au cœur des priorités des SF se trouve l'engagement permanent d'aider les directions générales dans le cadre de leurs stratégies de communication afin d'atteindre et d'engager la communauté francophone et les principales parties prenantes ainsi que d'assurer la liaison avec elles.

Dans l'ensemble, les SF continueront d'aider le personnel de la Ville à satisfaire aux exigences à la fois du Règlement et de la Politique de bilinguisme, ainsi qu'à respecter l'engagement de la Ville à l'égard de l'amélioration continue de la prestation des services municipaux bilingues.

## **BACKGROUND**

French Language Services (FLS) plays an important role in supporting City departments in providing quality municipal services in French to its residents and staff. FLS 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 May 9, 2001, City Council passed the *Bilingualism By-law* (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 May 9, 2001, City Council enacted the Bilingualism Policy, which reaffirmed its commitment to offering municipal 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 municipal priorities for action by FLS including translation services, complaint resolution, coordination, and support to the development of annual departmental operational plans, booking interpretation services for Committees and City Council, and the promotion and active offer of municipal 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 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* (By-law No. 2001-170) already fulfilled the City's statutory obligation to pass a by-law and 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, By-law No. 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).

FLS also supports all City departments in the delivery of municipal services in French to residents and City staff by:

- 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 municipal French-language services delivery.
- Developing departmental operational plans to improve the delivery of municipal French-language services throughout the organization.
- Receiving and handling complaints pertaining to municipal French-language services for the organization.
- 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.

Further, the Translation Services Unit (TSU) within FLS is responsible for the coordination and translation of City documents and coordination of simultaneous interpretation services for all City departments. The TSU is committed to supporting City-wide quality translation services to meet the objectives of the Bilingualism Policy and to ensure residents receive City communications in both French and English.

## **DISCUSSION**

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

As such, Section 1 of this report provides an overview of the 2023-2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan outcomes. It also provides staff's recommendation for the 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans, attached as Document 1, for City Council's 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, second language training, the Translation Services Unit, and complaints
- Section 3: French Language Services Advisory Committee
- Section 4: 2023 French-language service highlights
- Section 5: French-language initiatives in 2024

### **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 Council-approved Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan. The plan establishes goals and standards to improve municipal services provided in French and aim to 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

Departments are required to submit their plans to City Council annually. To meet this requirement, each department submits its plan to FLS by January 31 of the following year. FLS then reports to City Council annually on the departments' progress and accomplishments related to French-language services in the Office of the City Clerk's Annual Report on French Language Services.

On [May 10, 2023](#), City Council approved the report titled, "[Office of the City Clerk 2022 Annual Report](#)". Through this report, City Council approved four action areas for the 2022-2026 Term of Council and goals for the 2023-2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans as follows:

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

<b>Action area for the 2022-2026 Term of Council</b>	<b>Goal for the 2023-2024 French Language Services Departmental Operational Plans</b>
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.

#### *Update on the 2023-2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans*

The 2023-2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans were submitted to FLS in early 2024. All departments have reported that their respective operational plans have been completed and the majority of departments have advised that their efforts to complete the City's active offer training will extend into 2024.

To ensure that staff are delivering quality bilingual services to residents and staff by providing an active offer, FLS is recommending that the 2023 key performance indicator

for active offer training completion rates, being 100 per cent annual completion rates among frontline bilingual staff and 50 per cent amongst staff holding designated bilingual positions, be carried over to the 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans. Furthermore, to increase staff's awareness of the requirement to provide an active offer, staff is recommending an additional key performance indicator: That 25 per cent of all departmental staff complete the training in 2024. Additional information related to the 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans is provided below.

*Recommendation for the 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans*

The recommended 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan, attached as Document 1, has been developed to assist departments' compliance with the Bilingualism Policy and help create a culture of bilingualism that is embedded in all City operations. The recommended plan also enables departments to continue building on the work done through the completion of the 2023-2024 plans and includes the following goals:

Table 2 – Action areas and 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan goals

<b>Action areas for the 2022-2026 Term of Council</b>	<b>Goal for the 2024 French Language Services Departmental Operational Plans</b>
Planning	That the quality and level of services provided in French be equal to those in English.
Timeliness	That each work unit at the City representing a separate and specific service to the public and/or employees be able to communicate in both official languages at all times without delay in service.
Communication	That all communication materials published by the City of Ottawa or its agencies and intended for both internal and external audiences, be published in both official languages simultaneously.

Action areas for the 2022-2026 Term of Council	Goal for the 2024 French Language Services Departmental Operational Plans
Department specific	That staff have the opportunity to work in the official language of their choice and the public be served in the official language of their choice.

In accordance with the Bilingualism Policy, staff is recommending that City Council approve the 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan attached as Document 1. In addition to the above-noted action areas and annual goals, the 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan template contains objectives, actions, and key performance indicators to assist departments in completing the annual goals. The template is attached to this report as Document 1 for reference purposes.

Should City Council approve the 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plans, staff will issue the template to City departments for their completion by January 31, 2025. FLS will report back to City Council on the operational plans in the Office of the City Clerk’s 2024 Report on French Language Services which is anticipated in Q2 of 2025.

**Section 2: Information and statistics related to designated bilingual positions, second language training, the Translation Services Unit, and complaints**

*Designated bilingual positions and second language training*

In 2023, 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, and in accordance with the Bilingualism Policy, hiring managers are responsible and accountable for ensuring that service levels continue to be met in both English and French. That said, FLS is available to provide guidance in the determination of designated positions and their linguistic profiles upon request. The 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 2023 are as follows:

- 16.7 per cent of the City's positions were designated bilingual, a slight increase from the 16 per cent of positions that were designated bilingual in 2022.
- 590 language proficiency assessments were conducted primarily for staffing competitions and/or staff who transferred to designated bilingual positions. This represents a slight increase compared to the 578 language proficiency assessments completed in 2022.

In 2023, the City offered second language training to all employees regardless of the language designation of their position, with priority given to staff who provide services in both languages and whose training was key to ensure proper service delivery in accordance with the Language Training Policy. Training was delivered in a virtual format in early 2023, before expanding in the fall to provide students with the option to take training virtually or in person. Three formats of training were provided: group, self-directed and private.

Statistics relating to second language training in 2023 are as follows:

- 784 staff members registered for language training compared to 599 in 2022, marking an increase of 31 per cent. This increase is attributed to a number of factors including offering training to all staff regardless of language designation; staff returning to the workplace; the availability of in-person classes; greater awareness of language training; and an increase in messaging to employees about the benefits of second language training for personal and/or professional development.
- An average of six per cent of all language training in 2023 was to increase English capacity. This remains in line with the previous year.

### *Translation Services Unit*

As previously noted, the Translation Services Unit (TSU) within FLS is responsible for the coordination and translation of City documents and coordination of simultaneous interpretation services for all City departments.

The services offered by the unit include comparative revision, proofreading, transcription, and requests for terminology. This unit oversees the coordination of more than 30 external translation service providers to meet the City's translation demand.

In 2023, 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 budget documents, 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 2023, the TSU:

- Received 30,224 requests for services, which is comparable to the 30,611 requests processed in 2022.
- Processed an average of 122 requests per day, with 38 per cent of requests deemed to be a “rush”.<sup>[1]</sup>
- Translated 10,572,586 words, a seven-per-cent increase compared to the 9,851,035 words translated in 2022.

Despite the volume of requests and “rushed” timelines, the TSU was able to provide internal quality control on 23 per cent of translated documents in 2023. 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 many public facing and city-wide communications as well as documents translated internally. For example, in 2023, the TSU performed quality control on the majority of communications from the Mayor and City Manager’s Offices, as well as documents for ottawa.ca and the City’s social media channels.

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.

The breakdown of services requested by type between 2019 and 2023 is presented in the table below for additional information:

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<sup>[1]</sup> 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.



Table 3 – Types of services requested by year

<b>Types of services requested</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Number of requests for translation <sup>[2]</sup>	19,879	21,702	23,803	20,812	20,968
Number of requests for comparative revision <sup>[3]</sup>	2,139	1,941	2,025	1,913	2,100
Number of requests for proofreading <sup>[4]</sup>	992	874	888	933	529
Number of documents quality controlled <sup>[5]</sup>	7,008	5,062	3,947	6,842	6,560
Number of transcriptions <sup>[6]</sup> and terminology <sup>[7]</sup> requests	201	171	162	111	63
<b>Total requests for service</b>	<b>30,219</b>	<b>29,750</b>	<b>30,825</b>	<b>30,611</b>	<b>30,224</b>

The TSU also oversees the coordination of the City's simultaneous interpretation providers. Simultaneous interpretation involves the real-time translation of a message from the source language to the target language, while the source-language speaker continuously speaks. In accordance with the Bilingualism Policy, this service is required at all City Council meetings and for public consultations or other important or large-scale

<sup>[2]</sup> Translation: Writing a text from French to English or from English to French, while respecting the tone, style and terminology used by the author.

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

<sup>[4]</sup> 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.

<sup>[5]</sup> 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.

<sup>[6]</sup> Transcription: The act of writing down verbatim what has been said in an audio file.

<sup>[7]</sup> Terminology: Set of terms specific to a professional field, a field of knowledge.

municipal events. It is also offered upon request at Standing Committee and Advisory Committee meetings.

### *Complaints regarding French-language services*

FLS is responsible for managing, investigating, and responding to all complaints relating to the provision of French-language services for the City of Ottawa. The City adheres to strict service standards in the handling of all complaints received through the [Corporate Complaints](#) mechanism and FLS reports publicly on these complaints each year through the Office of the City Clerk's Annual Report on French Language Services.

The Corporate Complaints Handling Policy 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”.

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 and 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.

The City is committed to continuous improvement in the delivery of bilingual municipal services. The receipt and analysis of corporate complaints 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.

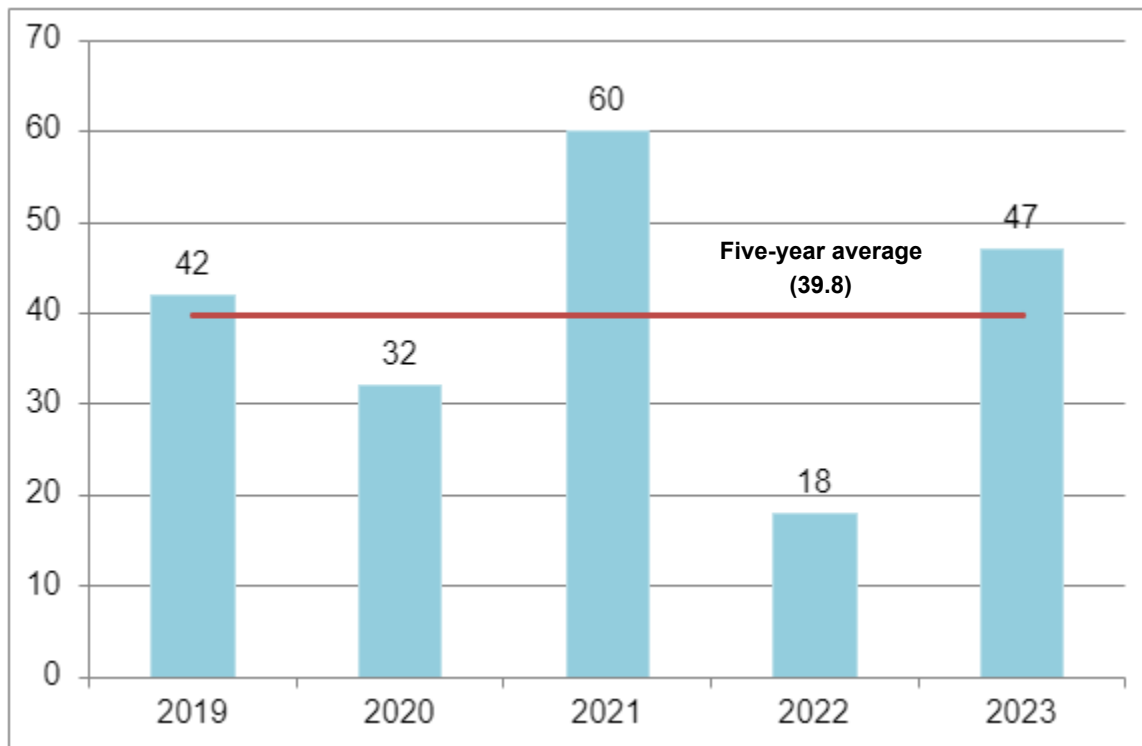
- Identify situations and trends that require a broader evaluation of business practices and implement corrective action.

### *Complaints received in 2023*

Forty-seven complaints related to French-language services were received in 2023. This represents an increase of 29 complaints from the 18 received in 2022. This is above the five-year average of 39.8 complaints per year from 2019-2023 as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

All complaints received in 2023 were resolved in an average of 17 business days, surpassing the standard set 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.

Figure 1 – Number of French language complaints from 2019-2023

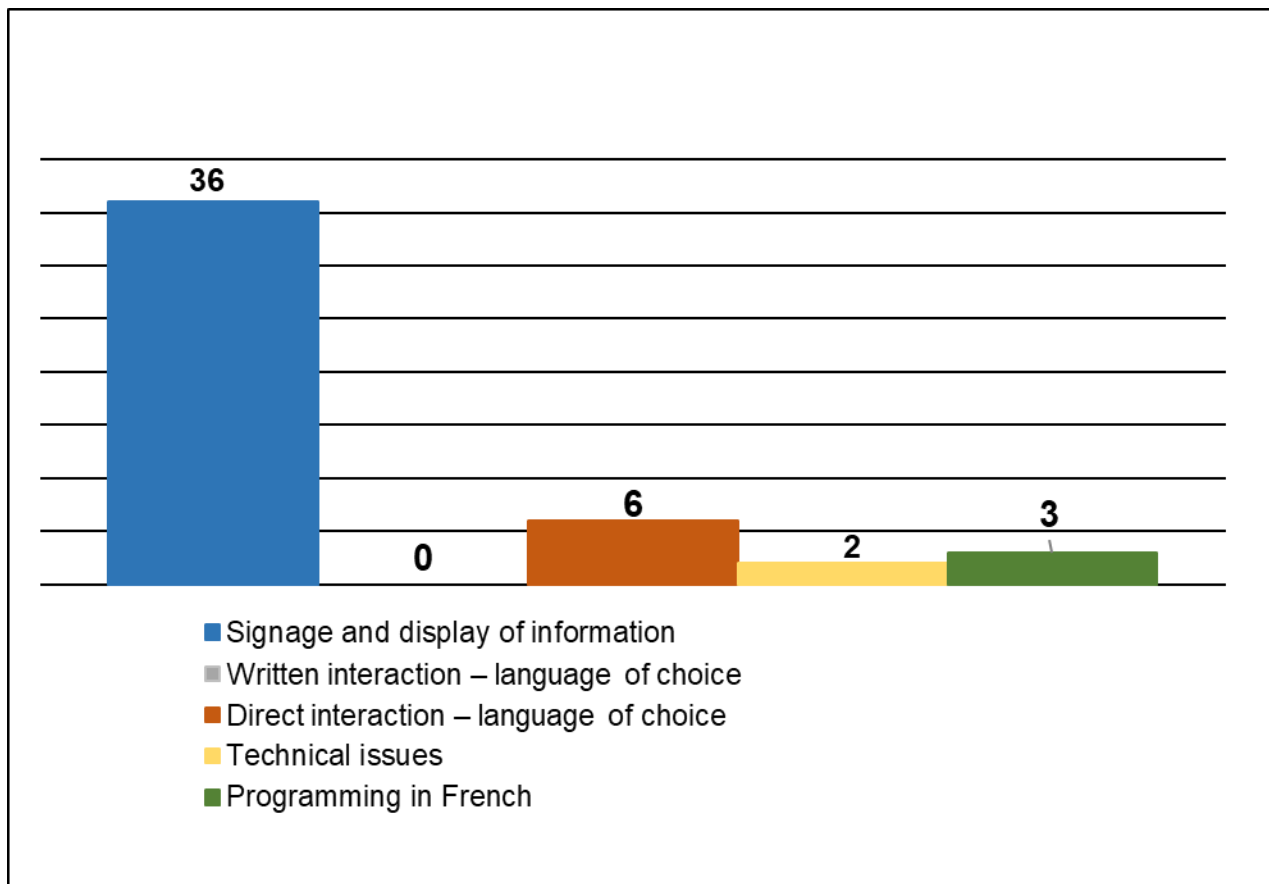


As illustrated in Figure 2 below, of the 47 complaints received in 2023:

- 36 complaints related to signage and the display of information, including inadequate translation or unilingual messaging, compared to the 10 complaints received in 2022.

- Six complaints related to a direct interaction that did not take place in the individual's official language of choice, compared to two in 2022.
- Two complaints were related to technical issues involving an automated phone service, compared to zero received in 2022.
- Three complaints were filed regarding the lack of programming in French, compared to one complaint in 2022.
- Zero complaints were received regarding written interaction in an individual's language of choice, compared to five complaints received in 2022.

Figure 2 - Types of complaints received in 2023



Upon review of the complaints received, staff note that the majority were related to signage and the display of information on various City applications and facilities; specifically, these complaints were in relation to errors or unilingual text and messaging. While these complaints are considered resolved, staff has taken steps to ensure that

both official languages have mutual respect and recognition on City-issued signage and communications as further described below.

In order to address the complaints related to signage, Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services (RCFS) Department is undertaking an internal audit of all signage and fixed assets in City facilities to identify issues and areas for improvement. This internal audit will review historical signage that was developed prior to the City of Ottawa's amalgamation, signage developed following amalgamation, and fixed assets that are unilingual.

Following the audit, RCFS, in collaboration with French Language Services, will work to review and correct signs and assets requiring remediation. Staff anticipate that remediation on identified items will take place throughout the 2022-2026 Term of Council and will be prioritized following consideration of operational feasibility and the annual budgets and lifecycle requirements for City assets.

In addition, and to ensure that staff are aware of the requirements of the Bilingualism Policy as it relates to signage, FLS issued a number of communications to all departments regarding the translation and quality assurance of text on City signs. FLS also launched an internal poster campaign about the requirements of bilingual signage. These posters were mailed to all City departments and are hung in staff common areas in City facilities.

FLS will continue to work with City departments to ensure that the translation of City-issued signage is quality controlled and support a proactive delivery of services to individuals in both French and English through a variety of initiatives as further described in "Section 4: 2023 French-language service highlights" of this report.

### **Section 3: French Language Services Advisory Committee**

In accordance with Section R.1.19 of the Bilingualism Policy, the City is required to establish a French Language Services Advisory Committee (FLSAC). The FLSAC's mandate is to advise City Council on issues that impact the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and its application to the City's services, programs, policies, and initiatives. The FLSAC is also available as a resource to staff, providing input on matters being pursued to achieve Council's strategic priorities. Above all, the FLSAC is responsible for ensuring that its business aligns with, and serves to complement, City Council's strategic priorities.

To support the FLSAC in carrying out its mandate, 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 assists 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.

### *Establishing the 2022-2026 French Language Services Advisory Committee*

The timeline to establish the 2022-2026 FLSAC was approved by City Council on December 7, 2022, by way of the [2022-2026 Council Governance Review Report](#). Through the adoption of this report, City Council directed the City Clerk to bring forward a report relating to advisory committees in Q2 2023.

City Council approved the [Advisory Body Review](#) report on [July 12, 2023](#), which established the structure and procedural requirements for the City's Advisory Committees including confirming the establishment of the FLSAC for the 2022-2026 term. In addition, by way of motion at the same meeting, Councillor Stéphanie Plante was named as Council Liaison for the 2022-2026 FLSAC.

In turn, the recruitment process for FLSAC members took place from July 13, 2023, to August 24, 2023, and included the circulation of advertisements and information through a variety of media in accordance with the City's [Appointment Policy – Council-Appointed Public Members of Committees, Boards and other External Authorities](#).

Following the recruitment process, on September 27, 2023, Ottawa City Council approved the report titled, "[Appointments to the French Language Services Advisory Committee](#)". Through the approval of this report, the following individuals were selected to form the 2022-2026 FLSAC:

- Warsama Aden
- Fatouma Ali-Ismaïl
- Marc Beaudry
- Mireille Brownhill
- Diane Desaulniers
- Katherine Dupuis

- Danièle Filion
- Pierre Loranger
- Lina Nada Maach
- Marc Maisonneuve
- Neiges Sénéchal

The inaugural meeting of the 2022-2026 FLSAC took place on November 16, 2023. At this meeting, the FLSAC approved its [Procedure By-law](#), and elected Neiges Sénéchal and Mireille Brownhill to serve as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively until 2025. As has been past practice, the FLSAC will elect its Chair and Vice-Chair annually throughout the Term of Council.

On February 8, 2024, Member Pierre Loranger resigned from his position on the FLSAC. At the writing of this report, the selection panel for the FLSAC has decided not to appoint a new member to fill Member Loranger's position as the current total of 10 members is within the threshold of seven to 11 citizen members required to be on the Committee, as outlined in the [Advisory Body Review](#) report.

#### *Developing the 2024-2026 FLSAC work plan*

In accordance with the report to City Council titled "[Advisory Committee Renewal to Support Council's Term of Council Priorities](#)", which was approved September 12, 2012, all City advisory committees are required to develop a work plan based on their respective mandates and the Term of Council Priorities. Further, the work plans require approval by the relevant standing committee and City Council.

In addition, on November 9, 2016, City Council approved the report titled "[2014-2018 Mid-Term Governance Review](#)", which recommended that the work plans for the City's advisory committees be in the same format and include a similar level of detail. The work plans must detail specific initiatives under the broader priorities in which the Advisory Committee will be involved, and how and when the Advisory Committee will provide input into these initiatives.

At the FLSAC meeting on [November 16, 2023](#), French Language Services (FLS) staff provided a presentation to Members of the FLSAC which included information about the FLSAC's mandate, the 2023-2026 Term of Council Priorities, examples of work plan

goals and activities, and a proposed process to develop the work plan. Information was also provided about items that were deferred from the 2020-2022 FLSAC work plan. As noted in the [FLSAC 2019-2021 Mid-Term Report](#), submitted to the Finance and Economic Development Committee meeting on December 7, 2021, due to COVID-19, three activities were deferred from the 2018-2022 FLSAC's work plan to be considered by the 2022-2026 FLSAC for inclusion on its work plan.

To develop the work plan, FLS issued a survey to Members of the FLSAC which sought information on Members' areas of interest and requested input on activities, including the deferred items from the 2020-2022 FLSAC's work plan. FLS reviewed the submitted responses and developed a work plan that was in line with survey responses, the Term of Council Priorities, and Committee's mandate.

As outlined in the work plan, attached as Document 2, FLS identified eight activities for inclusion on the work plan including the three deferred activities from the 2020-2022 FLSAC, which correspond with the following four overarching goals:

- Goal 1: Support an approach that enhances municipal programs available to residents.
- Goal 2: Continue to raise staff awareness of the importance of providing an active offer of bilingual services.
- Goal 3: Support economic growth and resiliency in our bilingual City.
- Goal 4: Support the recruitment and hiring of bilingual City staff.

The work plan was approved by the FLSAC at its meeting on February 8, 2024, and the report titled "[French Language Services Advisory Committee 2024-2026 Work Plan](#)" was then submitted to the Finance and Corporate Services Committee and City Council for their approval at their meetings on [March 5, 2024](#), and [April 3, 2024](#), respectively.

Following the approval of the FLSAC work plan, the City Clerk used her delegated authority to approve an update to reassign Goal 3, Activity 1, from the former Planning, Real Estate, and Economic Development Department to the new Strategic Initiatives Department. This change was made to reflect the City's current organizational structure that was implemented April 17.

In addition to the items on its 2024-2026 work plan, the FLSAC is also available to consult with staff on departmental projects that do not appear on the established work



plan. Staff can request FLSAC consultation by contacting the Committee Coordinator and requesting that an item be placed on the agenda.

FLS will report to City Council regarding the progress made on the 2024-2026 work plan and detail any other consultations provided through the Office of the City Clerk's 2024 Report on French Language Services which is anticipated in Q2 of 2025.

The FLSAC will also provide an update on its work to date through its mid-term and end-of-term reports to FCSC and City Council.

#### **Section 4: 2023 French-language services highlights**

In 2023, FLS continued to fulfil its role in supporting City departments in providing quality municipal services in French, while actively engaging with the Francophone community as well as internal and external stakeholders through a variety of initiatives as further described below.

##### *External initiatives*

In 2023, 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 four nominees for the Bernard Grandmaître Awards in February 2023. The Bernard Grandmaître Awards recognize the leadership, commitment, and positive impact that groups and individuals have had on Ottawa's Francophone community over the past year.
- Coordinating activities and issuing communications in celebration of Francophonie Month (March 2023), including the Mayor's Annual Francophone RendezVous. This event welcomed more than 250 guests, including members of the Francophone and Francophile community, key stakeholders, and community members, and recognized the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Regroupement des gens d'affaires (RGA) as well as their invaluable contribution to the economic success of the Francophone community.
- Celebrating Franco-Ontarian Day and the 48<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian Flag. The celebration, held on September 25, 2023, was hosted by Councillor Stéphanie Plante, on behalf of Mayor Sutcliffe and in collaboration with ACFO Ottawa. It included performances by a grade four class from École

élémentaire publique Francojeunesse, Le R Premier, and Héloïse Rosenfeld. On this day, several City facilities flew the Franco-Ontarian flag from dawn until dusk, in addition to the flag's permanent presence at Ottawa City Hall and Marion Dewar Plaza. New in 2023, the flag also flies permanently at the Carré de la Francophonie in Vanier. On September 13, 2023, Councillor Plante brought forward a motion to City Council to declare the flagpole at the Carré de la Francophonie in Vanier as the very first official flagpole displaying the Franco-Ontarian flag exclusively and permanently on Montreal Road in the heart of Vanier.

- Attending various annual events such as the Vanier Community Centre's Déjeuner des flocons (Snowflake Breakfast) and the Prix Bernard Grandmaître Awards.
- Participating as a member of the Board of Directors of the Association française des municipalités de l'Ontario (AFMO) with Councillor Stéphanie Plante 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 individuals who champion and support French-language services in the community with formal recognition by way of the Order of Ottawa and the Brian Kilrea Award for Excellence in Coaching. Ray Martel received the 2023 Brian Kilrea Award at a ceremony at City Hall on November 2, 2023. Mr. Martel's many coaching contributions include the pioneering of an indoor soccer program, Le Vortex, to provide Orléans youth with French-language extracurricular sports.

### *Internal initiatives*

FLS continued its efforts to encourage service excellence through its activities conducted in French and to promote staff's awareness of the Bilingualism Policy through several internal initiatives including:

- The internal publication of the monthly "FrancoForum" newsletter to approximately 400 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 internal Management Bulletin and 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. In 2023, FLS reviewed the SharePoint site to identify areas where information could be added or better presented. The change in content and structure allows the SharePoint site to be a more useful tool for staff.
- Assisting City departments with best practices for delivering bilingual services, the development of common outreach and consultation approaches, and tools to achieve progress in delivering services in both official languages and to meet the goals set out in the annual departmental operational plans.
- Providing advice to departments on best practices for delivering services in both French and English. Twenty-eight inquiries were received by FLS on a variety of subjects and projects including:
  - Best practices for holding corporate events in both official languages.
  - Bilingualism requirements for internal work tools and communications.
  - Bilingualism requirements for public applications and documents such as Council reports.
  - Inquiries related to the designation of bilingual positions.
- Drafting communications to City staff regarding Francophonie Month, International Francophonie Day, and Franco-Ontarian Day.
- Coordinating a staff-led Francophone affinity group. In 2023, Francophone affinity group meetings were held quarterly. The group discussed a variety of subjects including their experience as part of the Francophone Community, the Francophonie, language barriers, and the use of French in the workplace.
- Collaborating with the City’s Learning Centre to implement content related to the City of Ottawa’s Bilingualism Policy and translation requirements into presentations for relevant courses. The intent of the training material is to remind staff of the requirements under the Bilingualism Policy for internal and external

communications, provide information about the City's Translation Services Unit, and direct staff to contact French Language Services should they have any questions on the Bilingualism Policy and translation requirements.

- As previously noted, FLS launched an internal poster campaign to remind staff about the requirement for bilingual signage in accordance with the Bilingualism Policy. These posters were mailed to all City departments and are displayed in staff common areas in City facilities.

#### *Initiatives from 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 sample 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 Document 3.

- Children's Services worked collaboratively with The Table Francophone to ensure the linguistic and cultural vitality of Francophone child-care spaces and services in Ottawa. In 2023, collaborative work on the renewal process for the Designation of Licensed French-Language Child Care Programs was undertaken, resulting in 16 licensed child-care service providers receiving a full designation and one provider receiving a partial designation for their French-language programs.
- The City of Ottawa Employment Ontario Centre partnered with Moi J'apprends in the fall of 2023 to provide residents with the *Formation Insertion Emploi* program. This French-language program provides participants with key skills and competencies that will assist in their job search including but not limited to the development of communication, customer service, interview, and job retention skills, and working with people with disabilities. Graduates of the program also received several certifications to increase their employability including WHMIS, Health and Safety at Work, Food Safety, First Aid/CPR and Smart Serve. Two rounds of training were delivered in 2023, and Employment Ontario staff worked with 34 program graduates to secure employment.

- Water Facility Treatment Services hosted a French tour of the Robert O. Pickard Environmental Centre (ROPEC), a wastewater treatment plant, for students from La Cité. This initiative contributed to encouraging and attracting French speaking students to view the City of Ottawa as a potential employer that supports, encourages, and commits to a workplace with services offered in both official languages.
- Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services implemented two French Advanced Leadership Programs during the summer of 2023, aimed at youth 14 years and older. The program focusses on valuable pre-employment skills, hands-on work experience in recreation, certification in High Five: Principle of Healthy Child Development, Standard First aid, CPR, and defibrillator training. Hours qualify for students' high school community service requirements.
- Transit Services conducted one of the City's largest recruitment drives with the annual Bus Operator Recruitment campaign. To reach potential applicants, the *We Drive Our City Forward* multi-phase communications and marketing campaign was delivered in 2023, with materials targeted to a Francophone audience, including [videos](#), radio, print and digital out-of-home advertisements, online ads, and social media.
- The Public Works Department worked to provide all legislated information for the City's Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) Program in English and French on [ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca). As the processing of infractions for the City's ASE Program was completed through a Joint Processing Centre in the City of Toronto, legislated information, including the ASE System Certificates of Accuracy, was previously available only in English on the City of Toronto's website. In 2023, the data was translated to French and made available for disclosure on the City of Ottawa's website in advance of the launch of a City of Ottawa-run Joint Processing Centre.
- Council and Committee Services adopted proactive communications to reflect Ottawa's diverse demography, including Francophones and French speakers. Recruitment efforts for public participation on committees and boards included targeted stakeholder and online outreach to ensure the opportunity reaches the Francophone and French speaking community.
- ServiceOttawa received 33,379 inquiries in French from external clients to the 3-1-1 Call Centre in 2023. This represents 6.25 per cent of calls received during

2023. All 3-1-1 Call Centre staff are bilingual and available to respond to inquiries in both official languages in the order that they are received.

### **Section 5: French-language initiatives in 2024**

FLS 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 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 advice and relevant tools to support best practices for service delivery in French.

FLS will also continue to provide quality Translation Services and coordination of all City-wide translation and simultaneous interpretation services.

At the writing of this report, the following initiatives are planned and underway for 2024:

- Continuing to support to the 2022-2026 FLSAC in carrying out its mandate.
- Continuing to issue regular internal communications to City staff regarding their obligations under the Bilingualism Policy and providing helpful tools to implement an active offer of bilingual service in staff's day-to-day work.
- Reviewing and updating the French Language Services toolbox on the FLS SharePoint site. The toolbox is designed to assist staff in implementing the Bilingualism Policy in their day-to-day work and currently includes bilingual work tools and templates, guides, customer service and public event tools, FAQs and more.
- The continuation and promotion of the interactive training for staff regarding the requirement to provide an active offer of service to residents and staff. The training depicts 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 where staff discuss all matters related the Francophone or French-speaking experience.

- The submission of four nominations for the ACFO Ottawa's Prix Bernard Grandmaître Awards Gala to recognize the achievements of the following individuals and organizations:
  - Héroïse Rosenfeld for the "Gisèle Lalonde - Youth of the Year Award"
  - Hermite Icart for the "Education Contributor of the Year Award"
  - The Vanier Community Services Centre for the "Organization of the Year Award"
  - Point d'Accueil Francophone for the award "Organization of the Year Award"

The nomination of the Vanier Community Services Centre was successful, and they received the "Organization of the Year Award" at the March 2, 2024, awards gala.

- The preparation and coordination of activities to celebrate Francophone Month in March, including the Mayor's Annual Francophone RendezVous.
- 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.
- Monitoring opportunities for government grants that will assist with the provision of French-language services for our residents.
- Monitoring changes to legislation that may impact French-language services at the municipal level, including changes that may come as a result of Bill C-13, *An Act to amend the Official Languages Act, to enact the Use of French in Federally Regulated Private Businesses Act and to make related amendments to other Acts*.
- 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.
- Continuing efforts to reduce the number of complaints received regarding French-language services by providing tools, advice, and reminders of staff's

obligations under the Bilingualism Policy. 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.

- Working with Supply Services to address the expiry of the contract with the current translation management system vendor in accordance with the City's procurement practices and policies.

Further, at the core of FLS' priorities lies the ongoing commitment to assisting departments in their communications strategies to reach, engage and liaise with the Francophone community and key stakeholders.

Overall, 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.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal impediments to approving the recommendations in this report.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

- Document 1 – 2024 Departmental French Language Services Operational Plan Template
- Document 2 – French Language Services Advisory Committee 2024-2026 Work Plan
- Document 3 – 2023 City-wide service delivery in both official languages

## **DISPOSITION**

Staff will undertake planned initiatives as set out in this report and pursuant to any Council direction.