

**Recommandations du CCSF à la  
Comité des finances et du développement économique  
Rapport préparé par  
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(CCSF)**

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**Recommendations from the FLSAC to the  
Finance and Economic Development Committee**

**Report prepared by:  
Paul Lalonde, member  
Jean-Louis Schryburt, member  
Eli El-Chantiry, City Councillor**

**French Language Services Advisory Committee (FLSAC)**

**November 10, 2016**

## Preamble

The mandate of the French Language Services Advisory Committee (FLSAC) is to make recommendations to Ottawa City Council about issues that impact the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and its application to the City's services, programs, policies and initiatives. The FLSAC is primarily responsible for ensuring that its activities align with and complement City Council's strategic priorities.

In September 2015, the FLSAC resolved to devise a three-year work plan to be revised annually. This work plan was submitted to the Finance and Economic Development Committee (FEDCO) on September 29, 2015. As set out in the three-year plan, the FLSAC will submit an annual progress report to FEDCO, as well as annual updates and revisions.

Following the adoption of the work plan, the FLSAC formed sub-committees responsible for carrying out the objectives outlined in the work plan. A representative of each sub-committee will present the work achieved by the sub-committee to the FLSAC and will gather recommendations in the form of a brief report for adoption and subsequent submission to the relevant standing committee to be received for information purposes.

## Introduction

The first activity listed under Objective 2 in the work plan is to advise the Economic Development Branch (EDB) about the development of a strategy for communicating with businesses that aims to create solid links with the Francophone and Francophile business community in Ottawa.

During the meeting of September 8, 2016, Danyelle Bélanger, Research Assistant, and Sherry Beadle, EDB Program Manager, presented the City of Ottawa's economic development strategy, including the City of Ottawa's communication plan to facilitate economic development.

At the end of her presentation, Ms. Bélanger posed four open-ended questions to guide FLSAC members in their reflection and recommendations. Following the meeting, FLSAC members shared their comments with the sub-committee, which made the summary of these comments provided in the "Discussion" section below.

In response to this exercise, the FLSAC made a few recommendations to the EDB in order to improve the City of Ottawa's strategy for communicating with the Francophone and Francophile business community in Ottawa.

## Discussion

1. Can the FLSAC advise us on **developing criteria** for determining whether an **organization can be defined** as Francophone or Francophile?

In the FLSAC's view, any establishment that is a French-language establishment or has a French-language service component and that contributes to the development and growth of the French-speaking community is one of the City of Ottawa's Francophone or Francophile organizations. This definition also applies to not-for-profit organizations or associations that operate in French and that contribute to the development and growth of the French-speaking community.

The FLSAC proposes the following criteria to clearly define (and distinguish) Francophone and Francophile organizations.

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<b>Francophone organizations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The company identifies and advertises itself as Francophone in its advertisements, menus, written documents, website, etc.</li><li>▪ Clients can be served in French by most of the company's employees.</li><li>▪ The company's services are actively offered in French.</li><li>▪ The company conducts business entirely or almost entirely in French.</li><li>▪ The company's signs are completely bilingual or only in French.</li><li>▪ The company is actively involved in the Francophone community.</li></ul>
<b>Francophile organizations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The company does not identify or advertise itself as being Francophone.</li><li>▪ The workplace is not necessarily Francophone, but supports the Francophone community through its services and its involvement in the Francophone community.</li><li>▪ Bilingual employees are hired to ensure that clients can be served in French by at least one of the company's employees.</li><li>▪ The company's signs are bilingual.</li><li>▪ The company promotes its services to the Francophone community in French.</li></ul>

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The FLSAC wants to stress the growing diversity of the Francophone and Francophile communities in Ottawa. Because of this, French-speaking companies may identify as such under a variety of flags and cultures within the diversity of the international Francophonie nations.

2. Does the FLSAC have advice for **encouraging** the Francophone and Francophile business community **to take part** in the programs offered by the Economic Development Branch?

▪ ***Increase advertising of the EDB's programs***

In the view of some FLSAC members, these programs do not seem to be publicized enough, which may prevent the Francophone community from fully taking part in them.

The FLSAC recommends that the EDB better inform stakeholders of these programs through Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) and chambers of commerce. This would involve making the rounds with these clubs at lunches, breakfasts, etc. and targeting their Francophone and Francophile members.

The Regroupement des gens d'affaires de la Capitale nationale (RGA) is a direct way to disseminate information about these programs to the Francophone business community.

▪ ***Use French in meetings of the G33 and other economic development committees***

The FLSAC recommends that the EDB ensure that its "G33" Economic Development Collaboration Group takes the necessary measures to hold its meetings in English and French. The G33 aims to encourage community leaders to contribute to collective economic development efforts in the Ottawa region. When it seeks the opinions and advice of its Francophone members to identify talent, define its branding and develop tourism, the City of Ottawa is able to further encourage the Francophone and Francophile entrepreneur community to take part in the EDB's programs.

3. Can the FLSAC **suggest Francophone or Francophile businesses** that could benefit from the Business Outreach Program?

The FLSAC recommends creating links with organizations like RGA, Invest Ottawa and the Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉE). These organizations work very closely with Francophone businesses and entrepreneurs and can help the EDB better target Francophone and Francophile companies for the Business Outreach Program. As well, the EDB can use Invest Ottawa's start-up resources to find Francophone and Francophile businesses.

A good idea would be to try renewing the EDB's relationship with RGA. This organization manages the Business Assistance Program, which provides assistance in translating menus, signs and websites, workshops on effective French-language customer service, guidance in recruiting bilingual staff, and tools to give the organization bilingual branding.

Also, we recommend that the new Innovation Centre at Bayview Yards create or identify tools and services to help businesses offer bilingual services. These tools and services should be a central focus of Ottawa's one-stop business acceleration shop for businesses, investors and other stakeholders.

4. Does the FLSAC have recommendations on the way in which the City of Ottawa and its partners **position the bilingual work force** in their **efforts to attract investment**?

The FLSAC recommends that the EDB look further into the use of online tools. For example, the EDB could develop an online registry where businesses can indicate which of their services are offered in French and how many bilingual employees they have. The EDB could also provide potential investors with a kit containing statistics and information on the benefits of Ottawa's bilingual work force, which could also be made available on the City's website.

Finally, the EDB could continue to refer businesses and entrepreneurs toward existing programs offered by the RGA in order to benefit from pre-existing partnerships with Francophone academic and educational institutions (e.g., University of Ottawa, La Cité, Saint Paul University) and their employment centres, which can recommend bilingual candidates to investors and businesses.

## Recommendations

Along with the recommendations given in the "Discussion" section above, the FLSAC makes additional recommendations to the Economic Development Branch.

- ***Develop closer ties with the Réseau des villes francophones et francophiles d'Amérique and the International Organisation of La Francophonie***

The FLSAC recommends that the City maintain its relationship with the Réseau des villes francophones et francophiles d'Amérique who has among their objectives to develop strategic economic alliances. The purpose of this informal network is to promote the cultures, economies and tourism industries of Francophone and Francophile communities.

- ***Support and educate Business Improvement Areas (BIAs)***

The FLSAC recommends that the EDB ensures that BIAs are identifying and integrating Francophone and Francophile businesses and supports them in recruiting and earning the loyalty of more of these businesses.

Potential initiatives for the EDB should include committing to educating, training and helping BIA businesses to actively offer services in French (e.g., bilingual menus and signs, retail service and advertising).

The EDB could set measurable goals with the BIAs and work with them to implement a system for collecting data on the following: recruitment, training, signage, advertising, languages spoken at work, hiring of employees that can speak French (and other languages), customer satisfaction (Facebook polls, etc.), and growth of Francophone and Francophile customer base.

- ***Encourage and support Francophone and Francophile businesses in highlighting Francophone events and celebrations***

The FLSAC recommends that the EDB encourage and support the Francophone and Francophile business community in recognizing the contribution of the Francophone community during those special days that are dedicated to their culture. Examples of these are the Franco-Ontarian Day (September 25<sup>th</sup>), the International Francophonie week and the Rendez-vous de la francophonie (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> weeks in March), the International Francophonie Day (March 20<sup>th</sup>) and the Franco-Ontarian Festival (the week ending with June 24<sup>th</sup>).

- ***Improve the collection of data on the status of Francophones in the business community***

The FLSAC believes it is important to educate BIA members about the potential increase in revenue they could enjoy from catering to Francophone and Francophile customers in addition to their existing customer base. To achieve this, it is necessary for the EDB to have access to reliable data on the francophone community's contribution to local economy.

As part of new initiatives to evaluate the economic contribution of French language businesses in Ottawa, the EDB could draw on the existing framework of its Business Ambassador Service. Entrepreneurs who have just opened or are just about to open a restaurant or food premise are asked to complete a questionnaire (available at <http://ottawa.ca/en/business/business-ambassador/business-ambassador-service>). Among the survey's questions is one asking respondents to identify their preferred language of communication with the City. To this question could be added one (or more) which would help to identify the language in which the business operates and provides service to its clients.

This practice could be applied in other EDB programs to identify the preferred language of businesses in other economic sectors.

Each year, the EDB could document this data and produce statistics to identify Francophone and Francophile businesses.