

2020 Report on French Language Services

BACKGROUND

The French Language Services (FLS) Branch supports all City departments in the delivery of municipal services in French to residents and City employees. To that end, FLS:

- provides expert advice to City staff on the implementation of the City's Bilingualism Policy;
- assists departments in developing, implementing and evaluating programs and services offered in French;
- works with internal stakeholders to ensure a Francophone lens is applied when planning for municipal projects and offers expertise on best practices related to French-language services delivery in support of the Service Excellence through Innovation Council priority;
- receives and handles City-wide complaints pertaining to French-language services;
- assists departments in adapting their communications strategies and outreach to the Francophone community;
- actively engages with the Francophone community by organizing activities and liaising with key stakeholders;
- supports the French Language Services Advisory Committee (FLSAC) in carrying out its mandate;
- supports the City's membership to the *Association française des municipalités de l'Ontario* (AFMO) by sitting on its Board of Directors;
- works with departments in the development of multi-year departmental operational plans to improve the delivery of French-language services throughout the organization; and
- coordinates all City-wide translation and simultaneous interpretation services.

On May 9, 2001, City Council enacted the Bilingualism Policy, which reaffirmed its commitment to offer 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 contains provisions governing several aspects of municipal activity. Notably, this includes communications, the proactive delivery of services in both languages to residents and staff, organization requirements including the designation of bilingual positions, language training, and cultural program management.

The Declaration of Principle within the Bilingualism Policy sums up City Council's general objective at the time the policy was adopted. It states, among other things, that "the City of Ottawa recognizes both official languages as having the same rights, status and privileges."

The Bilingualism Policy also provides for the implementation of a mechanism to investigate complaints from residents and staff pertaining to the availability and quality of services in both official languages. This task is the responsibility of FLS. The branch itself is under the authority of the Office of the City Clerk, which is responsible for implementing the policy.

Finally, the policy provides for the creation of a standing advisory committee — the FLSAC, which is responsible for providing recommendations to Council on issues impacting the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and its application to City services, programs, policies and initiatives. Above all, the FLSAC is responsible for ensuring that its actions align with and complement Council's strategic priorities.

In addition to providing Council with an update on City-wide accomplishments since Council considered the 2019 Report on French Language Services as part of the [Office of the City Clerk 2019 Annual Report](#) considered by Council on June 10, 2020, the purpose of this report is to highlight the various means by which FLS maintains close ties with the Francophone community and provides City departments with a wide range of services ensuring positive impacts are felt by staff and residents alike.

DISCUSSION

The FLS Manager, the FLS Coordinator and the FLS Communications & Projects Officer who make up the FLS Unit within the FLS Branch are responsible for advising the Corporation on the most effective ways of providing services in both official languages through various initiatives, working with the community and leading projects

that support the delivery of quality services to residents and employees in both French and English.

The FLS Branch is also responsible for managing, investigating and responding to all concerns relating to the provision of French-language services for the City. The City adheres to strict service standards in the handling of all complaints received through the Corporate Complaints mechanism and the FLS Branch reports publicly on these complaints on an annual basis. Residents can provide feedback regarding municipal services they have received by filing out the online form available on ottawa.ca. Complaints enable the City to ensure continuous improvement of its bilingual services.

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

2020 Summary and Statistics

(1) French-language services for residents

Departmental operational plans

Each year, as per Bilingualism Policy requirements, each department is required to prepare an annual operational plan describing future goals and standards for the improvement of services provided in French. These plans are approved by Council. The FLS Unit within the FLS Branch is responsible for the coordination of these multi-year plans, the development of the goals and reporting to Council on progress and completion.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, on December 11, 2019, Council unanimously adopted Motion No. 25/4, moved by Councillor Fleury and seconded by Councillor Cloutier, to direct the Office of the City Clerk and the Recreation, Culture and Facility Services Department (RCFS) to work with interested Councillors, as a pilot project for the development of the 2020 operational goals, with the objective of developing clear metrics as it relates to the following:

1. Review and assess the number of bilingual employees whose primary function is to directly serve the public, on a full-time basis, in the aforementioned service areas [provision R 4 of the Bilingualism Policy]; and
2. Establish an annual compliance review for contractors offering services directly to the public and to community associations and groups that receive more than

30 per cent of their funding from the City of Ottawa [provision R 1.18 of the Bilingualism Policy].

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

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

The Fleury motion further directed French Language Services to assist General Managers in the development of their respective 2020 Departmental French-Language Operational Plans and ensure these are made available to the Finance and Economic Development (FEDCO) and Council in the Office of the City Clerk's Annual report which will be made available for public consideration. As a result of this direction to staff, Council on [June 10, 2020](#), also approved the following measures for the 2020-2021 operational plans for all remaining departments:

1. That each department creates a personalized toolbox on Services in French and makes it available to staff;
2. That each department creates and updates a list of employees able to offer services in both official languages, by subject matter; and
3. That each department reviews the language designation of all its positions, with the goal of ensuring the appropriate positions are designated bilingual to meet the needs of our residents and employees.

It was anticipated that each department would complete its goals by the end of 2021 and produce a final report that would be outlined in the Office of the City Clerk 2021 Annual Report that is to be brought forward to Council in 2022.

It should be noted that at the time of Council's approval of the measures in June 2020, the prolonged impacts of the pandemic on the organization were still unknown. Each department produced a progress report at the end of 2020. Departments have indicated that meeting the approved goals within the current two-year cycle would put undue pressure on their staff in a time when resources are and will be stretched and redeployed to assist in vaccine distribution and eventual pandemic recovery efforts.

As such, FLS is recommending Council approve extending the timeline for completion of the current goals for all departments to the end of 2022, when a final report would be produced by each department. A final report on 2020-2022 Operational Plan achievements would be outlined in the Office of the City Clerk 2022 Annual Report that is to be brought forward to Council in 2023. Staff believe this approach would assist in alleviating the current pressures within the organization while continuing to ensure the organization's commitment to the improvement of services provided in French.

City-wide service delivery in both official languages

FLS works in close partnership with all City departments to ensure the implementation of the concepts related to an active offer. An active offer ensures that services in French are evident, readily available, easily accessible to the public and of comparable quality to services offered in English, when accessing City services. The following initiatives provide a small sampling of the City's responsiveness to the evolving needs of the Francophone community throughout what has been an extremely challenging year for the City given the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, with many facilities being closed or operating at reduced capacity and a significant number of staff being redeployed to support other departments, the City continued to offer key programs and services to its residents. More examples of City-wide service delivery in both official languages are set out in Appendix A.

- More than 570 corporate communications for employees were produced in both official languages, including 352 In the Loop articles, 51 emails from Employee Communications, 105 Management Bulletins, 44 network emails from the City Manager, five joint network emails from City Manager, Mayor and GM/elected officials, 12 network emails from SLT or directors and four network emails from other elected officials to promote City programs;
- 1,343 inquiries were received in French from internal staff to the Information Technology Services (ITS) Service Centre;

- 3,146 social media posts were disseminated in French, including 1,206 on Facebook, 1,577 on Twitter, 237 on Instagram and 63 on LinkedIn;
- Ottawa Public Health's (OPH) Social Media activities increased significantly in 2020:
 - The French Twitter Account ([Twitter.com/@OttawaSante](https://twitter.com/@OttawaSante)) gained over 1,200 new followers; had over 32,500 profile visits and was mentioned 1,544 times;
- The French Facebook ([Facebook.com/Ottawasante](https://facebook.com/Ottawasante)) account added 1,800 new followers, engaged with over 39,000 users and reached over 478,000 users with content of the best possible quality. To meet the needs of Ottawa's Francophones and Francophiles, Ottawa Public Health launched a Microsoft Teams group chat of francophone colleagues able and willing to share tips on how to phrase or edit tricky translations, better target messages, rework short sentences or expressions, and brainstorm appropriate messages or tools to better reach targeted audiences;
- OPH participated in 80 media availabilities, always ensuring that statements included French content and that staff were able to respond to media questions in both official languages;
- A sampling of OPH campaign slogans were developed and adapted in both languages: COVID Wise / COVID Avisé; COVID Kind / COVID Agréable; Social Wise / Social Avisé;
- A Virtual Paramedic Awareness Week Camp included French content via YouTube's closed caption translations and included a French interview with a paramedic;
- Outreach for the Solid Waste Master Plan was conducted in both official languages and in-person French dialogue sessions were offered with French slides and translators on standby. A Bilingual Technical Briefing was offered for Council and the media; and bilingual materials were developed including a survey for the general public and City staff;
- The Park Ambassador program was developed by RCFS in the summer as a mechanism to engage with the local communities and promote safe outdoor activities. A good number of these ambassadors were bilingual, and every effort

was made to deploy French-speaking staff in higher density Francophone communities;

- Innovative ways were developed by the Innovative Client Services Department (ICS) in the fall to ensure residents could continue to connect with the City during the pandemic by telephone. For example, 3-1-1 callers using Video Relay Service (VRS) connect with a sign-language interpreter in real-time. This allows callers to express themselves in their first official language: American Sign Language (ASL) or Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ), when asking questions or making requests to the City;
- By-law and Regulatory Services' COVID-19 and mask promotion, education and enforcement social media campaign used bilingual or language-free images and staff distributed bilingual COVID-19 information pamphlets to residents;
- The Integrated Neighbourhood Services Team (INST) launched a Neighbourhood Ambassador Program in partnership with OPH and the Boys & Girls Club of Ottawa. The purpose of this group was to engage youth in English, French, Arabic and Somali in order to educate and promote COVID-related safety practices and listen to the concerns of youth in our city. To date, eight youth were employed as ambassadors with a plan to hire 24 by April 2021; and
- As a result of the pandemic, Employment and Social Services pivoted to providing virtual services, offering Employment Ontario workshops in both official languages online including a new workshop: *How to Make the Most of a Virtual Job Fair and Interview Workshop/Comment tirer le meilleur parti d'un salon de l'emploi et d'un entretien virtuel.*

(2) Continuous improvement and complaints process

The FLS Unit within the FLS Branch is responsible for managing, investigating and responding to all official complaints received by the City regarding the quality and provision of French-language services through the Corporate Complaints Procedure. As such, the City is committed to continuous improvement in the delivery of bilingual municipal services.

The City's Corporate Complaints Procedure defines a complaint as being an expression of dissatisfaction related to a City program, service, facility, or staff member, where a person believes that the City has not provided a satisfactory service experience for the customer and a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

Complaints reporting and data collection allows FLS to:

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

When a complaint is submitted through the Corporate Complaints Procedure, FLS works with the municipal department to understand the issue and to determine which measures should be taken to improve service and avoid reoccurrence.

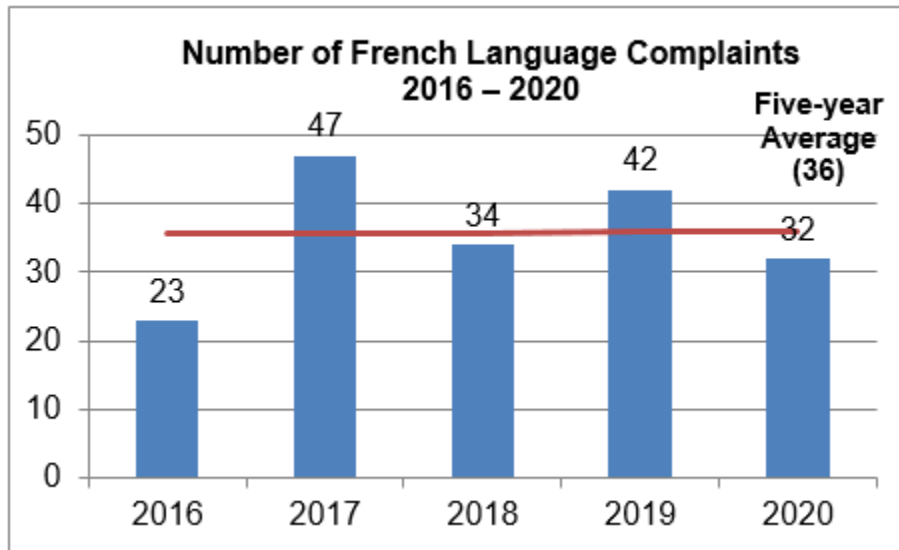
As the City improves its delivery of services offered in both official languages, FLS has noted that complaints are becoming more complex in nature. In some cases, complaints involve various departments, outside organizations or a requirement for technical solutions.

The average resolution time in 2020 was 11.7 business days compared to 17.5 business days in 2019. This represents an improvement of six days over 2019 and surpasses the City's standard of 20 business days in which a final response or update must be sent, barring exceptional circumstances.

The number of French-language complaints received in 2020 was 32. This is a decrease from 2019 where the City had received 42 complaints and is below the 2016-2020 five-year average of 36 complaints per year.

The next table illustrates the number of French-language complaints received by the City of Ottawa from 2016 to 2020.

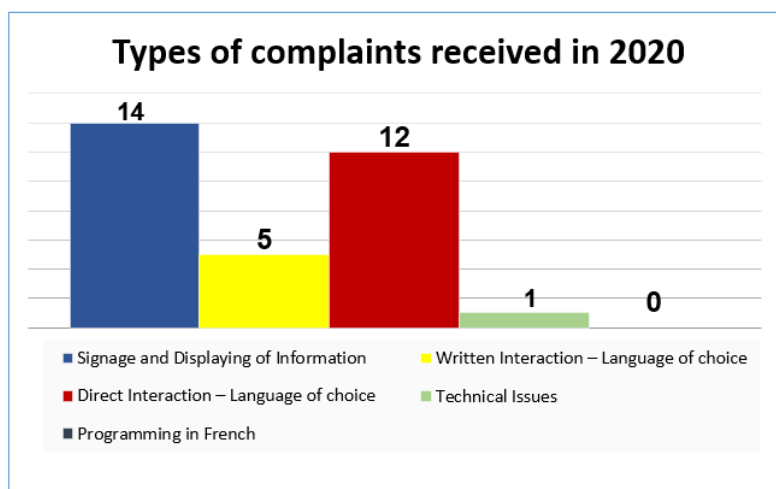
Table 1 Number of French Language Complaints 2016-2020



The total of non-receivable complaints (e.g. complaints about other organizations or not related to the Bilingualism Policy) was 13 in 2020 compared to 10 in 2019. All complaints received in 2020 were resolved and closed. An acknowledgment receipt was sent to complainants within three business days, 93 per cent of the time, an improvement of one per cent over 2019. In 2020, 30 individuals submitted a total of 32 FLS complaints to the City of Ottawa.

The table below reflects the breakdown of the 2020 complaints by complaint type.

Table 2 - Types of complaints received in 2020



Of the 32 complaints received in 2020, 14 were related to signage and displaying of information in one language only or grammatical errors on signage, compared to 12 in the previous year. Signage and displaying of information issues reported were corrected. FLS continues to work with departments on ensuring that signage is quality controlled by Translation Services prior to being posted. No complaints were filed pertaining to lack of programming in French. Written responses in English to inquiries received in French accounted for five complaints received, down from seven in 2019. Twelve complaints concerned direct interaction with the client that did not take place in their official language of choice, down from 16 complaints in 2019. FLS has been working with all departments to continue to support a proactive delivery of services residents in both French and English.

In resolving complaints, FLS relies on a collaborative approach to help all relevant stakeholders create conditions that ensure progress in the provision of services in French. FLS consistently reports back to the complainant to inform them on the outcome of their complaint.

Staff also collaborated with the Ontario Ombudsman's Office in the expeditious resolution of a complaint in 2020 regarding unilingual signage for speed on the Airport Parkway. Once FLS received all relevant information, staff were able to investigate and ensure appropriate bilingual signage was installed within less than 10 business days.

(3) Collaboration and community engagement

FLS was present in the community and continued to strengthen important relationships with its partners and stakeholders through collaborations and engagement activities.

2020 external initiatives:

1. Planned the 14th Annual Mayor's Francophone RendezVous which was scheduled to take place on March 27 to highlight the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Medicine's 75th anniversary as well as the 25th anniversary of its Francophone medical studies program. This event had to be cancelled due to the rapidly evolving situation regarding the spread of the COVID-19 virus and in consultation with our partner, whose members were focused on the fight against the spread of this virus;
2. Celebrated Franco-Ontarian Day and the 45th Anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian Flag at City Hall virtually, in collaboration with *l'Association des communautés francophones d'Ottawa* (ACFO). The filming of an official flag raising ceremony

took place in front of the Heritage Building at City Hall, with the participation of the president of ACFO Ottawa, elected officials and members of the FLSAC. The resulting video formed part of a province-wide production that was broadcast on the morning of September 25 by the *Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario*.

3. Submitted nominations to the ACFO Ottawa *Prix Bernard Grandmaître Awards*, which took place in February 2020:
 - Dr. Vera Etches, Medical Officer of Health, was retained as a finalist in the Francophone Advocate of the Year category;
4. Attended various annual events, in person, or via online platforms, such as the Vanier Community Centre's *Déjeuner des flocons* (Snowflake Breakfast), the *Prix Bernard Grandmaître Awards*, and worked with community partners such as Dialogue Canada and the ACFO Ottawa;
5. Continued to develop relationships with the *Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario (CEPEO)* and other important stakeholders, by attending the opening of La Maison de la Francophonie in Ward 7 in Ottawa's west end in January, an important milestone for the Francophone community;
6. Continued collaboration with the *Regroupement des gens d'affaires de la capitale nationale (RGA)*, to promote their jointly developed lexicon of useful expressions for businesses eager to attract bilingual clients along with their "*Bilingualism...c'est payant*" awareness campaign;
7. Opened Francophonie Month in 2020 with the RGA and selected students from Glebe Collegiate at a breakfast reception given by the Mayor before the pandemic restrictions were put into place;
8. Continued to support the "*Ottawa bilingue : avançons ensemble*" initiative with the ACFO Ottawa by participating with other community partners on the steering committee for the evaluation of project submissions and by supporting their submission for funding renewal to the Department of Canadian Heritage;
9. Continued deliverables on the two-part project stemming from the contribution agreement between the Department of Canadian Heritage and the City of Ottawa as part of the Government of Canada's Action Plan for Official Languages with an anticipated launch in 2021;

10. Continued to collaborate with the Ontario Ombudsman's Office by meeting, in October, with Mr. Paul Dubé, the Ombudsman of Ontario, and Ms. Kelly Burke, the new French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario, with the common objective of continuing to improve the services and programs we offer to our Francophone residents;
11. Participated, as a member of the Board of Directors of the *Association française des municipalités de l'Ontario* (AFMO) with Councillor Jean Cloutier, in supporting the work of the association through its reorganization by working on establishing a strategic plan and direction to lay foundations for the future. The AFMO's ongoing efforts include providing French-speaking elected municipal officers and directors a public forum and relevant services in French; acting as representative and advising ministries and organizations related to municipal affairs in Ontario; and
12. Supported the City's membership in 2020 to the *Réseau des villes francophones et francophiles d'Amérique* (RVFFA) and Councillor Cloutier as Council's representative.

In 2020, the City was to give the Key to the City to a number of accomplished Canadians who have had an impact on our city and its image on the national and international scene. Key to the City ceremonies, the City's highest and most prestigious honour, were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the anticipated recipients was former Governor General, veteran journalist and global ambassador for *La Francophonie*, Michaëlle Jean. The City plans to present the award to the previously announced 2020 recipients in 2021, COVID-19 regulations permitting.

The City was able to celebrate the contribution of some of its outstanding citizens in 2020 by presenting and delivering the Order of Ottawa Awards to recipients' homes. Among those honoured were well-known Francophone personalities Bob Monette, former Councillor, and the Brian Kilrea Award for Excellence in Coaching recipient Jean-Sophia Guillaume. The City hopes to be able to present these awards at a separate ceremony this fall.

The FLS Branch's continued efforts to encourage service excellence through its activities conducted in French to promote and create awareness of the Bilingualism Policy for employees are highlighted below. Internal initiatives in 2020 included as follows:

- The internal publication of monthly FrancoForum newsletter to 450 subscribed staff, highlighting activities and events happening in French within the organization and throughout Ottawa;
- The publication of monthly *Faux Pas* quizzes in the City staff newsletter titled, “In the Loop”. These monthly quizzes were presented in an interactive format, with multiple choice questions and detailed explanations for the correct answers, making learning French more enjoyable;
- Conducted internal and external consultations on updating the new “One City, two languages” branding and concept and worked on the development of tools, such as a new and updated training module for staff, which will support the concept of an active offer of bilingual services;
- Provided ongoing support to departments by communicating with staff, helping in the development of common outreach and consultation approaches, and by developing tools to achieve progress of the delivery of services in both official languages, and in support of the approved goals in the Departmental Operational Annual Plans;
- Continued to provide advice to departments on ways of delivering services in both French and English. In 2020, more specifically, FLS provided advice as it relates to online platforms for consulting and engaging with the public during the COVID-19 pandemic, emerging new social media trends and the procurement of goods and services.
- Over 90 internal consultations were provided by FLS to its municipal colleagues on a variety of subjects and projects, a few are mentioned below:
 - Simultaneous interpretation for online public consultations, virtual town halls for the Solid Waste’s Diversion Plan and online media availabilities for OPH’s media briefings;
 - Linguistic clauses for the renewal of contracts or procurement processes;
 - Replacement of internal-facing client-facing programs such as Ariba SAP and availability of reference and training materials in both languages;
 - Best practices on consulting the public in both languages for the Ward Boundary Review;
 - The recording of internal staff training videos in both official languages for the City’s Code of conduct;

- Supported the City’s emergency response efforts, FLS’ Project and Communications Officer was redeployed temporarily to support communications and graphics at OPH, while in early 2020, the FLS Coordinator provided short-term support to the 2020 Spring Freshet response team;
- Created new synergies with French Language Services and the Elections Office as they were combined into one Service Area at the end of 2019. Following this, the FLS Coordinator was assigned to support the Elections Office as staff prepared for the 2020 Cumberland By-election which took place on October 5, 2020.
 - As in previous elections, materials and training sessions for the 2020 Cumberland By-election were offered in both official languages to all voting place staff as well as key positions in charge of ensuring COVID-19 safety measures were adhered to during voting events;
 - Delivered a by-election where all voting places were staffed with bilingual election workers ensuring that electors could be served in the official language of their choice;
- Published articles in the City’s Management Bulletin to promote the Bilingualism Policy and services offered by FLS. Articles covered topics such as:
 - Translation of reports for Committee and Council;
 - Budget Reminder - Working with Translation Services during Budget; and
 - Bilingualism Policy reminder;
- Maintained an in-depth knowledge of key Francophone community stakeholders by subscribing to various newsletters, monitoring news and current events; and
- Held a “Midi Franco” Lunch ‘n Learn session with staff from the Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department (PIED) to encourage informal discussion and to network with colleagues in French.

French Language Services Advisory Committee

The mandate of the French Language Services Advisory Committee is to advise Ottawa City Council on issues that impact the implementation of the Bilingualism Policy and its application to the City's services, programs, policies and initiatives. Councillor Jean

Cloutier was appointed as Council Liaison by way of a motion approved by the Finance and Economic Development (FEDCO) on February 12, 2019.

At its meetings of November 20, 2019, and February 13, 2020, FLSAC discussed the development of its work plan. As a result, FLSAC recommended a three-year work plan which aligns with the 2019-2022 Term of Council Priorities and it was approved by City Council on March 25, 2020.

Members of the FLSAC selected the following priorities as part of their 2020-2022 work plan:

- Thriving Workforce — Promote bilingual service excellence by supporting a workforce that is healthy, diverse, adaptive and engaged;
- Economic Growth & Diversification — Encourage economic growth and diversification by supporting business investment and expansion, and talent attraction and retention, showcasing the city's bilingual and multicultural character, and branding Ottawa as a place to be;
- Service Excellence through Innovation — Deliver quality bilingual services that are innovative and continuously improve to meet the needs of individuals and diverse communities.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the meeting scheduled on May 14, 2020, was cancelled.

On September 10, 2020, virtual meetings resumed and the FLSAC received a presentation from the Recreation, Culture and Facility Services Department (RCFS) on its first work plan objective. The department provided an update on French-language recreational activities in Ottawa and in non-bilingual neighbourhoods and it provided information on how the pandemic required the City to modify its offer of recreational and cultural services. A recommendations report will be submitted to RCFS in early 2021.

FLSAC also received a presentation from the Manager responsible for Ottawa Public Health's social media messaging. The objective of the presentation was to present the variety of communication tools, channels and culturally adapted content the social media team uses to reach Francophone and Francophile residents.

Also, at the September 10, 2020, meeting, adjustments were made to the deliverables of the FLSAC work plan to accommodate various departments' capacity to present to FLSAC due to pandemic-related obligations.

At the November 16, 2020, meeting, two items were on the agenda. The Committee received a presentation on the 2021 City budget in addition to a presentation from the Economic Development Branch of the Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department (PIED) who updated members on their economic development strategy and promotion of bilingualism with City partners. A recommendations report will be submitted to PIED in 2021.

Lastly in 2020, the Advisory Committee was represented at various community events such as the *Prix Bernard Grandmaître* Awards and at the filming of the Franco-Ontarian Flag raising ceremony.

(4) Translation Services

The Translation Services Unit (TSU) provides City departments with translation, comparative revision, proofreading, terminology and simultaneous interpretation services. This unit oversees the coordination of more than 30 external translation service providers to meet the City's translation demand.

As a result of the pandemic, the TSU saw an increase in demand in 2020. As a result, in early 2020, the TSU team had to adapt their service delivery model to ensure that residents and staff continued to receive timely information, and this despite the increase in urgent requests as a result of the pandemic. Drawing on experience from previous emergencies such as the flooding events in previous years, TSU staff moved seamlessly to a fully virtual model and extended business hours in early March to enhance services and meet operational needs. TSU also had to put a member of its team and an external supplier on standby during weekday evenings and weekends to provide quality translation services around the clock. From March to July 2020, City departments were provided with translation services 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Despite the additional pressures of the pandemic, the TSU continued to support all translations related to ongoing City projects such as Stage 2 Light Rail Transit (LRT), the Official Plan, the Combined Sewer Storage Tunnel, by-law updates and implementation, as well as other projects such as the Community Safety and Wellness Plan, the Community Funding Policy Framework review, the shared facility for the Ottawa Public Library and Library and Archives Canada.

In 2020, TSU translated 11,467,423 words, which represents a 31-per-cent increase from the 8,773,080 words translated in 2019. TSU received 29,750 requests for services in 2020, which represents a decrease of 1.6 per cent compared to the 30,219

requests processed in 2019. This decrease in the number of service requests can be explained by a greater number of word count in documents submitted and also in the number of documents submitted in one request. TSU processed on average just under 100 requests per day. Fifty-four per cent of daily requests were deemed rush¹. Despite the high volume of urgent requests and short turnaround timelines, TSU was able to increase the number of hours spent on in-house quality control, proofreading and terminology advice to its suppliers by 878 hours. In 2020, City Translator-Revisers spent 3,272 hours on these services, compared to 2,394 hours in 2019, an increase of 27 per cent. This increase is due in part to the coaching and onboarding of new external translation suppliers as a result of a new Standing Offer for translation services that was put in place in June 2020. The renewal of the standing offer occurs every three years in compliance with the City’s Procurement Policy. Details are provided below.

The breakdown of services requested by type between 2017 and 2020 is presented in the table below:

Types of services requested	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of requests for translation ²	20,526	18,201	19,879	21,702
Number of requests for comparative revision ³	1,804	1,530	2,139	1,941
Number of requests for proofreading ⁴	888	632	992	874
Number of documents quality controlled ⁵	8,622	7,939	7,008	5,062

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

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

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

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

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

Number of transcriptions ⁶ and terminology ⁷ requests	N/A	N/A	201	171
Total requests for service	31,840	28,302	30,219	29,750

In 2020, TSU also issued a new Request for Standing Offers (RFSO) for professional translation services in collaboration with the Procurement Branch. External suppliers were invited to submit proposals for translation, comparative revision, proofreading, transcription and adaptation services in English and French. This formal process, conducted every three years, was posted on MERX⁸. The RFSO is structured to have fixed rates over three years. In the new RFSO, the average cost per word remained unchanged at \$0.23. The TSU is committed to supporting City-wide quality translation services to meet the City of Ottawa’s Bilingualism Policy objectives and ensuring our residents are able to receive City communications in both French and English.

(5) Designated Bilingual Positions and Second Language Training

The FLS Unit within the FLS Branch plays a supporting role to Human Resources which is the lead department in the designation of bilingual positions and second language training. Hiring managers are responsible and accountable for ensuring that service levels continue to be met in both English and French. As such, they can seek guidance from FLS in the determination of designated positions and their linguistic profiles. In this manner, the expert advice provided by FLS allows managers to make informed decisions about the designation of bilingual positions in their units.

Human Resources maintain the data, provides reports on bilingual positions, and leads the provision of language training and language assessment services supporting employees in achieving the bilingual requirements of designated positions.

In 2020, 16 per cent of the City’s positions were designated bilingual. This number is consistent with the last five years.

In 2020, 229 language proficiency assessments were conducted primarily for staffing competitions and/or employees who transferred to designated bilingual positions. This represents a decrease compared to 575 language proficiency assessments in 2019.

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

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

⁸ MERX is Canada’s leading electronic tendering service for public and private sector. Canadian suppliers and contractors use it to search for new business opportunities.

The decrease is due to unavailable assessment services as a result of the COVID-19 provincial lock down orders from March to July 2020 and limited hiring during this time.

In March 2020, in-person language training and assessment services were paused in compliance with provincial requirements related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Language assessment services resumed virtually in July 2020 for oral assessments and in person for reading and writing with specific safety protocols in place. Over the course of 2020, new virtual language training was successfully piloted with individuals and groups and is now offered more broadly to the organization.

In 2020, there were 383 registrations for language training. Ninety-five per cent of all training offered was to develop French language skills. COVID-19 impacted the ability to provide training to employees. In winter 2020, the number of participants was reflective of previous years, with 253 registered employees. In spring 2020, training was offered to employees in designated bilingual positions as a pilot for virtual delivery of the training program with 40 employees participating. In fall 2020, training was extended to returning learners in bilingual positions, with 90 employees participating.

Initiatives for 2021 and beyond

The FLS Branch is dedicated to continuing to support City departments in the successful delivery of quality services to residents and visitors alike in both English and French, and in the continued implementation of objectives set out in the 2020-2022 Operational Goals as described in Recommendation 2 of the Office of the City Clerk 2020 Annual Report.

This is and will continue to be achieved by working collaboratively with departments and by providing expert advice and relevant tools that support best practices for service delivery in French as the City continues work on important projects such as the construction of the Stage 2 LRT, the implementation of the City's new Official Plan and continue its efforts in supporting the City's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. French Language Services will continue, throughout 2021, to find creative ways to maintain and enhance its service levels to ensure that all COVID-19-related materials are translated as a priority in order to provide timely and accurate information to residents and staff in French and English.

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

Language Services Advisory Committee in carrying out its mandate. We continue to be committed to providing quality Translation Services and coordination of all City-wide translation and simultaneous interpretation services.

The following initiatives are planned and underway in 2021:

- The completion of the deliverables pertaining to the two-part project stemming from the contribution agreement between the Department of Canadian Heritage and the City of Ottawa as part of the Government of Canada's Action Plan for Official Languages which include:
 - The launch of its new "One City, two languages" branding;
 - The introduction of new tools for employees to help them gain a better understand the principles of the Bilingualism Policy and reinforce the importance of actively offering services in both official languages.
 - A new interactive training for employees, depicting practical examples of providing an active offer of French-language services with the goal assisting employees to intuitively recognize when it is needed and to support the City's ability to provide excellent customer services to our residents;
- The creation of an employee-led Francophone affinity group as part of the Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2019-2024) which aligns with the goal of creating a thriving workforce and respectful workplace where employees are free to be their authentic selves in French;
- The submission of Dr. Vera Etches, Medical Officer of Health, for the Health Care Provider of the Year Award for the *ACFO Ottawa's Prix Bernard Grandmaître Awards*, held in February 2020;
- The preparation and coordination of activities to celebrate Francophone Month in March, as well as planning of the Mayor's Annual Francophone RendezVous, which will be a virtual event this year due to the pandemic in collaboration with the ACFO Ottawa;
- The opening of Francophonie Month with *the Regroupement des gens d'affaires de la capitale nationale* (RGA) and the Mayor with a video that will promote the importance of actively offering services in both languages for retail businesses;

- Increasing FLS' visibility with the organization and externally throughout the year and during Francophonie month through social media initiatives;
- Continuing collaboration with the *Regroupement des gens d'affaires de la capitale nationale* (RGA), one of our important stakeholders, to promote their lexicon of useful expressions for businesses eager to attract bilingual clients along with their "*Bilingualism...c'est payant*" awareness campaign;
- Continuing to support the "*Ottawa bilingue : avançons ensemble*" initiative with the ACFO Ottawa by participating with other community partners on the steering committee for the evaluation of project submissions;
- Continuing to support City departments in the successful achievement of their Council-approved 2020-2021 Operational Plan goals;
- Assisting the Mayor's Office in the organization of a Francophone Caucus meeting of Elected Officials in January 2021;
- Continuing to provide support to the *Association française des municipalités de l'Ontario* (AFMO) through its restructuring activity by sitting on its Board of Directors with Councillor Jean Cloutier;
- The continued development of partnerships with important stakeholders in the Francophone community;
- Continuing to collaborate with the Ontario Ombudsman's Office in the expeditious resolution of complaints;
- Continuing efforts to reduce the number of recurring complaints concerning direct interactions with clients by providing tools, advice, reminders and documentation to improve these interactions. The City is confident in its ability to treat its residents equally in all aspects of municipal services governed by the City's Bilingualism Policy, through its transparent rigorous complaints process. FLS will continue to work with all City departments to ensure that actions undertaken as a result of complaints yield positive outcomes for residents; and
- Continued support to the FLSAC and to Councillor Cloutier as the Council liaison, as the Advisory Committee focusses on advancing its work plan priorities.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendix A – City-wide service delivery in both official languages

Appendix A

City-wide service delivery in both official languages

In 2020, the City of Ottawa worked to continually demonstrate its commitment to providing quality services to staff and residents in French and English while managing the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The French Language Services (FLS) Branch works in close partnership with all City departments to ensure the official language of preference of the public and staff is available when accessing City services.

Examples of the City initiatives in categories are provided below, illustrating the City's proactive work in incorporating the requirements of the Bilingualism Policy in its service delivery model and in being responsive to the evolving needs of the Francophone Community as well as staff. A new category was added for the 2020 Report which provide examples of special COVID-19-related initiatives that were developed and offered in both languages during the ongoing pandemic.

Service area highlights

- The City's official social media channels are presented in both official languages; this also includes service alerts on all channels (Twitter, web posts, emails, and SMS);
- All staff presentations, City-wide print materials and online communications are available in both official languages;
- All media releases and advisories are provided in both official languages;
- All feedback, complaints, comments received from the public are responded in the official language of choice;
- All generic voice mailbox greetings and email signatures are provided in both official languages;
- All public facing client service centres and call centres offer services in both official languages;
- Regular community outreach and stakeholder engagement activities are held in both official languages;

- Committee report recommendations and executive summaries are always available in both official languages;
- “Budget at a Glance”, “Budget Backgrounders” to Council and the City’s Budget books are posted on ottawa.ca and are consistently provided in both English and French; and
- User interfaces for all customer facing fare payment systems are bilingual. This includes ticket machine screens and audio, and faregate feedback.

Below are some of the numbers reported in 2020 on services offered in both official languages

- 844 job opportunities were posted in both official languages on all relevant platforms;
- More than 570 corporate communications for employees were produced in both official languages, including:
 - 352 *Au courant*/In the Loop articles;
 - 51 emails from Employee Communications;
 - 105 Management Bulletins;
 - 44 network emails from the City Manager;
 - Five joint network emails from City Manager, Mayor and occasionally GM/elected officials;
 - 12 network emails from SLT or directors;
 - Four network emails from other elected officials to promote City programs;
- On the Stage 2 LRT Project, the following communications were published in both languages:
 - 25 Construction Updates;
 - 107 Newsletters;
 - Six Public Information Sessions online and in person;

- Three Milestone Events (all communication products such as: Invitation, Media Advisory, News Release, Speaking Notes, Key messages);
- Four Videos;
- 776 inquiries were received in French from internal and external clients to the HR Service Centre and were issued a response;
- 71 media events were held in both French and English and 595 newsroom products were produced in French;
- 3,146 social media posts were disseminated in French, including 1,206 on Facebook, 1,577 on Twitter, 237 on Instagram and 63 on LinkedIn;
- 55 bilingual datasets were added to the open data catalogue bringing the total number of datasets to 358 on Open Ottawa;
- 29 French online engagement activities were posted on the *Participons Ottawa* platform;
- 40,500 inquiries were received in French from external clients to the 3-1-1 Call Centre which represent eight per cent of all calls, and a 1.3 per cent increase over 2019;
- 280,000 households across the city received the annual curbside collection calendar in the spring in both languages and distributed through the City's Client Service Centres. The online version on ottawa.ca is also available in English and French.
- 246,000 weekly collection reminders were sent-out as well as need-based service alerts to residents who have signed up to receive them in either French or English;
- Community and Social Services (CSS) operates one Francophone and one bilingual Long-Term Care Home. Throughout the pandemic all outbreak communications, newsletters, resident/family/staff updates and engagement opportunities were conducted in both languages across all four homes.
- Children's Services continued to provide General Operating funding to 61 Francophone child care programs to help reduce the wait list, increase quality, and provide affordable child care. Over 19 per cent of the total amount of child

care fee subsidies were allocated to families with children attending licensed Francophone child care programs. The CSS-run Municipal Child Care *Centre éducatif Tournesol* offered emergency child care to Francophone essential workers.

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

Examples of these types of initiatives in 2020 include:

- Bilingual Paramedic Service's Week (PSW) and National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week (NPSTW) celebrations took place virtually and included multiple staff interviews released in both languages;
- A new Para Transpo online booking system is now available in both official languages;
- The O-Train Ambassador program is ramping down, and a permanent full-time Station Attendant position will be replacing the O-Train Ambassadors. All Station Attendant positions have been designated bilingual, in line with other TSD Customer Service positions;
- A streamlined, more intuitively navigated list of automated bilingual announcements has been developed for Electric Rail Operators (EROs) to use when communicating with the public on LRT;
- A new registration/booking system is being developed by RCFS using the Active Net software, ensuring the bilingual capacity of this new system is a key factor; and
- OPH launched two brand new social media channels this year: Aging Well in Ottawa (Facebook.com/AgingWellinOttawa / Facebook.com/BienVieilliraOttawa) for older adults, and The Link Ottawa/Le Lien Ottawa TikTok account (tiktok.com/@thelinkottawa / tiktok.com/@lelienottawa) for youth and young adults.

Public awareness, outreach and collaboration

The City regularly reached out to the community with public awareness campaigns and consultations. Here are a few examples of how the City ensured engagement and visibility with the community and its partners to provide a Francophone inclusion lens:

- The Public Policy Development Branch of the Emergency and Protective Services Department conducted outreach activities to consult with the Francophone Community on the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (CSWB). An engagement webpage was created, and engagement activities were promoted in areas with high francophone populations. Due to COVID restrictions, outreach continued through the French CSWB e-newsletter, *Participons Ottawa* webpage, and Francophone publications, such as the *Mouvement d'implication francophone d'Orléans* (MIFO) newsletter;
- The lead-free public awareness campaign was launched to those residents impacted by a lead water service pipe. Communications tactics included bilingual FAQs on ottawa.ca, a bilingual letter and pamphlet mailed to impacted residents, and customized bilingual water bill message;
- An Ottawa Ward Boundary Review was conducted in 2020 and based on direction from City Council, an independent, third-party consultant team was hired to conduct the review and ensure the process was objective and impartial. The project included two rounds of consultation where the team consulted extensively with the public, members of Council and stakeholder groups, including school boards. Residents and businesses shared their thoughts through surveys and discussions. All tools were developed in both official languages; in-person and online consultations were held in English and in French, with simultaneous interpretation available to the public;
- The Transportation Master Plan engagement materials such as display boards, surveys, white papers and videos were published in both official languages. In 2020, this also included:
 - The launching of the Transportation Master Plan community engagement on the City's Engage Ottawa platform; and
 - A presentation for the Eastern wards in French on the Brian Coburn Extension Environmental Assessment study;
- The launching of actively bilingual hiring campaigns for Paramedic positions including Call Taker Trainees, Public Training Instructors, and Primary Care Paramedics;
- Continued stakeholder engagement conducted by CSS, using surveys in both official languages: one addressing community agencies and their service

resumption challenges and one targeted to low income residents of Ottawa asking about health and wellbeing, income, service needs and barriers to service; and

- Collaboration with 2SLGBTQ+ community organizations in January to host a public consultation to inform the Women and Gender Equity Strategy with an estimated 160 participants. In its final report, a recommendation was made to increase 2SLGBTQ+ community, health, and social services to support to under-represented populations within the 2SLGBTQ+ community, including Francophone communities.

Below are some examples of awareness campaigns and slogans developed and adapted in both languages:

- Be COVID wise / Soyez COVID avisé – slogan to encourage residents to go their daily activities while protecting themselves and others;
- Be COVID Kind / Soyez COVID Agréable – slogan to promote masks, civility and respect in indoor public spaces;
- Be Social Wise / Soyez Social Avisé – slogan developed to promote social gathering guidelines; and
- I dig Elgin / Elgin renaît – slogan developed for the Elgin Street Renewal project.

Special COVID-19-related measures that have been undertaken in response to the pandemic

2020 was a challenging year for the City, with many facilities being closed or operating at reduced capacity and a significant number of staff being redeployed to support other departments. The City continued to offer key programs and services to its residents.

- Although the offer of recreational programming was significantly reduced, an effort was made to ensure programming in both languages was available to our residents. The following programs were offered successfully in French:
 - Learn to Skate successfully ran seven French programs;
 - Summer camps were offered in a very reduced format, with 70 weeks being offered in French;
 - Summer Learn to Swim offered over 100 classes in French;

- The French Integrated Recreation program was kept operating at the Ray Friel Complex, thus offering recreational opportunities to young adults with special needs;
- City Wide Sports ran two new French Saturday programs in partnership with *Le Patro d'Ottawa*, offering multi-sports programs to neighbourhood kids to engage them in positive skill development activities;
- The Park Ambassador program was developed by RCFS in the summer as a mechanism to engage with the local communities and promote safe outdoor activities. A good number of these ambassadors were bilingual, and every effort was made to deploy French-speaking staff in higher density Francophone communities;
- Bilingual Partner organization communications continued throughout the pandemic, ensuring that Partner organizations continued to have all the pertinent information to operate under the current requirements and regulations;
- A Human Needs Task Force (HNTF) was assembled to work in conjunction with the Emergency Operations Centre and community agencies ensuring vulnerable residents had access to basic human needs like food, washrooms and showers. Housing Services, in partnership with OPH, quickly set up and made operational various respite centres, isolation centres and physical distancing centres. This Task Force consists of both internal and external partners that include francophone service providers. Numerous bilingual fact sheets were developed to provide the public and the local social service sector with updated information on local services including food security, EarlyON online children's programs, and when to use 3-1-1, 2-1-1 and 9-1-1. For easy access, these were posted to ottawa.ca. All FAQs and signage for respite centres, isolation centres and physical distancing centres were provided in both official languages;
- By necessity, Ottawa Public Health's efforts in 2020 focused primarily on the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Communications with the public, with elected officials and with partners and stakeholders proved to be an important aspect of the pandemic response and, pursuant to its continued commitment to bilingualism, OPH made ongoing and sustained efforts to ensure information was always available in both official languages and that messaging was culturally adapted so that it would resonate with the intended audience.

- OPH created a designated COVID-19 webpage on its website, which has been updated almost daily throughout the pandemic response. In addition to providing the latest information on the local situation, this webpage includes reports and data, infographics, factsheets, FAQs, downloadable handouts, forms and checklists, videos and other resources, all of which are available in both official languages, some of which are available in multiple languages, while some have been posted using the American Sign Language (ASL) and the *Langue des signes québécoise* (LSQ);
- OPH participated in 80 media availabilities, always ensuring that statements included French content and that staff were able to respond to media questions in both official languages;
- The Finance Services Department launched a COVID-19 supports page in English and French to provide information on COVID-19 relief options available to businesses and residents; the Chief Financial Officer and Deputy City Treasurer provided COVID-19 financial updates to Council and media in both English and French and the City offered the Hardship Property Tax Deferral program to the public in both English and French;
- During COVID-19 the City has been committed to keeping staff informed and engaged on the pandemic with messages that are timely and disseminated simultaneously in both official languages through the following actions:
 - Senior leadership continues to communicate that the safety of our people is our number one priority, share updates on the City's role and impacts to staff, and recognize the commitment of our people to keep our community and each other safe;
 - The City is committed to highlighting the important work our people do by recognizing the role our people play in the pandemic to continue delivering the services or residents rely on every day;
 - The City shares mental health and wellness supports for staff and any new tools, policies and procedures to protect and preserve our workforce;
 - Employee Communications also shares public health guidance with staff through the employee blog In the Loop by linking to OPH updates and educational videos; and

- By-law and Regulatory Services' COVID-19 and mask promotion, education and enforcement social media campaign used bilingual or language-free images and staff distributed bilingual COVID-19 information pamphlets to residents.