

**Report to
Rapport au :**

**Finance and Economic Development Committee
Comité des finances et du développement économique
6 June 2017 / 6 juin 2017**

**and Council
et au Conseil
14 June 2017 / 14 juin 2017**

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**Submitted by
Soumis par :
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Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE File Number: ACS2017-CCS- GEN-0017

SUBJECT: 2016 REPORT ON FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES

OBJET: RAPPORT SUR LES SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS 2016

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

**That the Finance and Economic Development Committee recommend that
Council receive this report.**

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

**Que le Comité des finances et du développement économique recommande au
Conseil de prendre connaissance du présent rapport.**

BACKGROUND

On May 9, 2001, the Council approved the continuation of the Bilingualism Policy which reaffirmed the City's commitment to support the delivery of services in both official languages to residents and to staff: (ACS2001-CMS-OCM-002). In addition, Council recognized the "bilingual character of the City of Ottawa" which is outlined in By-Law No 2001-170. The Policy applies to all staff as well as services and focuses on the designation of bilingual positions, translation services, complaint resolution, promotion and the provision of services to the public in French. The Policy also requires that each Department prepare annual operational plans, describing future goals and initiatives to improve the departmental provision of services in French, for approval by Council. The purpose of this report is to provide an update of City-wide achievements since the last annual report: (ACS2016-CCS-GEN-0020) submitted on October 26, 2016. The Department name changes as a result of the corporate alignment that occurred in July and October 2016 are reflected in this report.

DISCUSSION

In 2016, City Departments demonstrated their commitment to providing quality services to staff and residents in French and English. Set below is a summary of those services.

Service Delivery

The City promotes the delivery of services in both English and French. Initiatives undertaken by Departments in 2016 have continued to have a positive impact on the overall delivery of bilingual services City-wide. As noted in greater detail below, in 2016, Departments have undertaken steps to completing the four Council approved standards as part of their operational plans. The objective is that Departments meet all four standards by the end of 2017. Additionally, the number of French language complaints received by the City in 2016 decreased by 72 per cent from the previous year from 83 in 2015 to 23 in 2016.

The French Language Services (FLS) Branch, works in close partnership with City Departments to ensure the official language of preference of City clients, staff and the public is respected when accessing City services. Departments have been proactive in incorporating the principles of the Bilingualism Policy in their service delivery models and by being responsive to the evolving needs of the francophone community and staff. Set out below are examples from various Departments.

Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services Department (RCFS)

The Department of Recreation, Cultural and Facilities Services (RCFS) strives to deliver high quality recreational and cultural services to residents, both in English and in French. In collaboration with community partners, RCFS offers programs, classes, courses, camps, productions and events in both registered and participatory formats. RCFS is also responsible for managing numerous facilities that provide residents with opportunities to lead healthy and active lifestyles.

Since the launch of its six Francophone Hubs in 2015, RCFS continued the promotion of these hubs in 2016 as important centres of activity for the francophone community. The purpose of the hub model is to create strategic locations focused on sustainable program delivery which allows for additional francophone programming and an improved mechanism to engage with Francophone residents. The hubs offer a wide array of Francophone programs such as swimming lessons, camps, artistic and cultural programs, sports and fitness programs as well as specialized programs. Although the hub model gave encouraging results in 2016, a decrease in registration rates was noted for programs offered by the City in French and in English. This can be attributed to the fact that the 2015 summer season included an additional week of programming, giving the impression of a drop in 2016 registrations, since the summer is a particularly busy period in terms of programming. Comparing 2014 registrations with those from 2016, there was an increase of about 3.2 percent in registrations for Francophone programs, which actually reflects normal trends for RCFS. Moreover, the extended closure of the swimming pool at the Bob MacQuarrie Recreation Complex, which has a significant Francophone clientele, reduced the number of swimming classes and programs that could have been offered during the 2016 programming season.

- Approximately 9,000 participants registered in Francophone programs, including 2,400 registrations in the 316 various camps offered in French;
- Of these registrations, 4,848 were participants in Francophone swimming classes, enjoying the 1,080 various courses offered;
- Shenkman Arts Centre and its partners offered 75 Francophone and 91 bilingual programs, attracting a total of 780 registrations; their *À la Carte* school program showcased 19 Francophone events in which involved 353 students.

Moving forward, RCFS will focus on outreach initiatives to the Francophone community in order to evaluate their needs and potential new opportunities for additional French programming. The Department is currently working with its Francophone partners and the community to assess how Francophone programming can be improved and expanded, with a focus on the west end of the City. RCFS is currently developing new programming initiatives for seniors, pre-schoolers and youth in that area.

In 2016, one of the focus areas for RCFS was to enhance the recruitment of bilingual staff. RCFS participated in numerous events in an effort to reach out to Francophone youth as part of an outreach strategy to recruit bilingual staff for entry level positions. Recruitment material was created and distributed to the participants at high school and post-secondary institution career fairs, the SIX-UN-TROIS event and through guidance counsellors at schools.

In 2016, RCFS continued to play an active role in the Francophone Recreation Partners' Project, which now operates under the name *Coalition of Francophone Recreation Service Providers (COFRSP)*. The COFRSP's purpose is to maintain an ongoing network of collaboration between French recreation service providers and to develop effective and sustainable programming strategies. The *COFRSP* was created in 2015 when community organizations joined efforts to complete a study on the recreation needs of French speaking residents. This study was funded by the Trillium Foundation.

Community and Social Services Department (CSS)

The Community and Social Services (CSS) Department's mandate is to ensure an integrated continuum of supports that includes long-term care, affordable housing, emergency shelters, homelessness prevention, financial assistance, child care and employment services for residents. In collaboration with community partners, CSS develops and funds services, programs and strategies that are responsive to the needs of the community and that foster inclusion, self-sufficiency and strive for improved quality of life.

In 2016, initiatives undertaken through the Municipal Immigration Strategy included the ongoing improvement of communications through the Ottawa Immigration Portal, a centralized bilingual website containing information for newcomers on available

municipal and community services. The website includes a Francophone community profile, which describes living in French in Ottawa which includes specific content developed by the Francophone community representatives. Also, the City continues to be a member and partner with the *Réseau de soutien à l'immigration francophone de l'est de l'Ontario*.

A bilingual International Student Welcome Event took place in 2016, aimed at connecting international students with municipal services, community organizations, settlement service providers and private sector stakeholders in Ottawa. The event offered a Francophone specific workshop that detailed how students could connect with the local francophone community.

The 4th annual Community Conversation Forum took place in 2016. All information was made available to participants in both languages. In addition, 4 table discussions were hosted in French exclusive to francophone organizations.

Information continues to be offered in French on both the Youth portal and the Older Adult Portal for our residents. These portals centralize City information relevant to both groups.

Services provided in French and English as part of the Children's Services branch included updating the Child Care Provider User Guide and Parent Guide to Licensed Child Care providers, improving and updating the Child Care Registry and Waitlist technology to include French job aids and instructional videos, as well as consultations and presentations on Francophone child care programs.

The Children's Services branch hosted two consultation sessions in French for the licensed child care and early years' service providers, offering updates and eliciting feedback on key changes in the sector. In 2016, more than 15 per cent of subsidized child care placements continued to be available for Francophone programs (1,320 of 7,440 spaces), translating to 17 per cent.

The Community and Social Support Centres developed client engagement strategies to target Francophone students to participate in the *Youth Futures / Avenir jeunesse* program. *Youth Futures* is a seven-month program intended for high school students, aged 16 to 21 from low-income families and communities. The program provides skills development, information, support and practical experience to succeed in college,

university and the workforce. In 2016, 73 participants completed *Youth Futures* program and 34 of the youth were bilingual.

CSS outreach activities in 2016 included the participation of Community Liaison Officers (CLO) on Francophone committees, presentations to community agencies and attendance at external forums that serve Francophone clients. These included developing and maintaining bilingual Community Hub partnerships that responded to service needs in priority areas (i.e., mental health, addiction, employment, settlement). In addition, the CLOs distributed CSS bilingual booklets at various community events to over 2000 residents. These booklets highlight the various benefits and programs offered by the Department, including contact information for applying for these services.

The annual bilingual Income Tax Clinics initiative held 13 bilingual tax clinics for *Ontario Works/Ontario Disability Support Program* clients and low income residents through the West Social Support Centre's Community Hub.

Other initiatives included the continued availability, accessibility and quality of services offered in both French and English in the Applications and Benefits Unit. In 2016, a significant increase was observed in the number of French calls for child care: 3,637 French calls for child care services. This represented a 25 per cent increase from 2015.

The Ten Year Housing and Homeless Plan developed key resources and ensured Francophone representation on committees established as part of its Plan, as well as ongoing engagement and consultation that included translated information and Francophone discussion tables. A new project is the construction of a new 48-unit supportive housing development in Orléans in partnership with Montfort Renaissance, which opened in May 2017.

Service Innovation and Performance Department (SIP)

ServiceOttawa is the first stop for City information and services for residents, businesses and visitors through ottawa.ca, by phone through 3-1-1, and in person at the seven ServiceOttawa Client Service Centres and three Provincial Offences Act offices. ServiceOttawa is responsible for providing a consistent, accessible and high quality client experience in both English and French. In 2016, ServiceOttawa engaged in a number of initiatives to enhance residents' experience of services provided in French.

Through the recent upgrade to ottawa.ca, ServiceOttawa worked closely with FLS to improve the quality of the existing content on ottawa.ca prior to relaunching the website. This work will continue through 2017.

ServiceOttawa has also created a Web Improvement Program which can help ensure that all ottawa.ca content complies with legislation and corporate policies including the Bilingualism Policy. This program can be implemented by Departments who have their own websites, in addition to information provided on ottawa.ca, in order to provide consistent and quality website content. The Web Services Branch also manages corporate web standards, by providing education and promotion of web criteria which includes standards related to providing improved quality content in French and English.

The ServiceOttawa Knowledge Base is the central repository for information regarding resident facing programs and services offered by the City of Ottawa. It is used by staff across the City to ensure that consistent information is provided to residents, businesses and visitors. The Knowledge Base Coordinator ensures French and English versions of the articles provided by departmental stakeholders are uploaded.

ServiceOttawa web data shows that there were over 25,000 more French transactions on ottawa.ca in 2016, representing an increase of 2 per cent from last year.

Public Information and Media Relations (PIMR) provides information to residents in both French and English to keep them informed about City programs and services by using various communication channels such as social media (Twitter and Facebook), media products (public service announcements, media advisories and news releases), graphic services (posters, digital and corporate signage), feature stories on ottawa.ca and advertising.

In 2016, approximately 450 media products were issued, more than 6,000 social media messages posted and 75 media events were held in both French and English. From posting tweets about snow removal or answering a social media inquiry on how to use pedestrian crossovers, to issuing a public service announcement for spring and summer recreation programs or hosting a media event about the next stage of Light Rail Transit, PIMR delivers a variety of bilingual City communications that are relevant and informative to Ottawa residents. The Media Relations and Outreach Branch and the Legislative Affairs Branch work with City Departments to identify spokespersons who can speak in both French and English at committees, public meetings and in interviews

with reporters. In addition, the branches develop speaking notes for elected officials and City staff in both official languages.

The Media Relations and Outreach Branch also works with Francophone reporters to ensure interviews and media responses are available in French.

The Human Resources Services is responsible for the delivery of second language testing and training for employees. The training program offered by Human Resources Services assists employees in developing their English or French language proficiency skills to meet bilingual requirements. The majority of training delivered is to develop proficiency in French, with only 8 per cent of training for English proficiency.

The following table illustrates the participation rate in the second language self-directed and group training sessions over the past six years:

Session	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Winter	379	347	349	292	306	255
Spring	324	355	324	276	289	251
Fall	379	384	297	296	271	257
Total	1082	1086	970	864	866	763

In 2016, 444 language proficiency assessments were conducted primarily for staffing competitions and/or employee transfers to designated bilingual positions. Depending on the requirements of positions and work units, candidates can be assessed in one or more language skill areas - oral expression, oral comprehension, reading, or writing.

The following table illustrates the overall volume of language assessments conducted over the past six years:

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total	529	370	340	483	421	444

The designation of bilingual positions is a process by which managers identify the number of bilingual positions within their work units to ensure provision of service to the public and staff in English and French. Human Resources Services assists managers in the designation process by providing annual position designation, training and testing history reports. French Language Services work in collaboration with Human Resources Services to provide recommendations and/or advice in the determination of designated positions and their linguistic profiles. Managers are responsible for ensuring that employees who do not meet bilingual position requirements register for training and that progress is monitored.

As of December 2016, 16 per cent of the City's positions were designated bilingual. This is consistent with the 2015 percentage.

French Language Services

The French Language Services Branch (FLS) plays an important role in supporting City Departments in providing quality municipal services in French to its residents and its staff, bearing mutual respect and recognition of official languages.

Important changes occurred to the City's administrative structure in 2016 with a new organization alignment consisting of eight Departments, each led by a General Manager, as well as an Office of City Clerk and Solicitor. As a result, the French Language Services Branch reports to the City Clerk and Solicitor.

The City's Bilingualism Policy identifies a number of priorities for action by the FLS Branch such as: translation services; complaints resolution; coordination and support in the development of annual departmental operational plans; and the promotion and active offer of French language services. The FLS Branch also provides support to the French Language Services Advisory Committee in achieving their Annual Work Plan Objectives.

(1) Translation Services

In 2016 the Translations Services Unit received 31,256 requests for service. The breakdown of the services requested by type in 2016 is presented in the table below:

Number of requests for translation	20,145
Number of requests for comparative revision	1,586
Number of requests for proofreading	979
Number of documents quality controlled	8,546
Total requests for service	31,256

(2) *Complaints Resolution*

The FLS Branch is responsible for managing complaints regarding the quality and provision of French language services by the City of Ottawa. In 2016, the City of Ottawa implemented a new Corporate Complaints Procedure by introducing an online complaint submission form for residents. This new complaint process allows for the distinction of what constitutes a complaint, a claim to the City, a request for service, a request for information, feedback, compliments and suggestions. The City of Ottawa's Corporate Complaints Procedure defines a complaint as being an expression of dissatisfaction related to a City of Ottawa program, service, facility, or staff member, where a person believes that the City has not provided a service experience to the customer's satisfaction at the point of service delivery 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; and
- collaborate with Departments to ensure necessary measures are taken to prevent the recurrence of such complaints.

In 2016, the number of French Language complaints received decreased by 72 per cent for a total of 23 complaints last year from 83 in 2015. In 2016, the City of Ottawa received 5 non receivable complaints (e.g. complaints about other organizations). For two consecutive years in a row, the number of French language complaints has decreased from the previous year. All complaints received in 2016 were resolved and closed.

The decrease in the number of French language complaints from 2015 to 2016 can be attributed to a number of factors including:

- Departments continue to consult regularly with FLS on best practices regarding the provision of bilingual services;
- Departments are committed and continue to include French language requirements in a proactive manner in their service delivery models; and
- departmental operational plans and standards continue to have a positive impact on the delivery of French language services to residents and staff.

As a result of these efforts, it is worth noting that the Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services Department's French Language complaints decreased by 44 per cent from 16 complaints in 2015 to 9 in 2016. For the second consecutive year, the Transportation Services Department's French Language complaints has seen a 70 per cent decrease from 10 complaints in 2015, to 3 in 2016 and the Service Innovation and Performance Department has seen a drop of 40 per cent in their French language complaints, from 5 to 3.

(3) Operational Plans

The Bilingualism Policy requires that each Department prepare annual operational plans, describing future goals and standards for the improvement of services provided in French and approved by Council.

In 2016, as part of the Report on French Language Services, (report # ACS2016-CCS-GEN-0020) submitted to Council on (November 9, 2016), four new standards were adopted for 2016–2017. The objective is to achieve 100 per cent compliance by the end of 2017.

The four 2016-2017 standards are:

1. To ensure that Departments review and make necessary adjustments to their designated bilingual positions to meet their operational requirements for providing services in French to staff and residents;
2. To ensure that a bilingual contact is included and updated regularly in all 3-1-1 department-specific Knowledge Based Articles to ensure seamless customer service to clients in the official language of their choice;
3. To create an inventory of all generic e-mail addresses within the Department and ensure they are displayed in a bilingual format or in each official language on all City internal and external websites, electronic media and publications; and
4. To develop a department-specific lexicon of terms that will be published on Ozone pages to ensure the use of consistent City terminology for communications and publications in French to staff and residents.

Each Department produced a report indicating they are progressing well on achieving the Council approved standards.

(4) Promotion and ongoing initiatives

French Language Services' ongoing efforts to accentuate service excellence through the provision and promotion of quality services and events in French are evident in many ways:

- Organization of the 10th Annual Francophone Rendezvous with the Mayor, providing a platform for City and Francophone leaders to come together to discuss issues of importance within the community and for the City to highlight its Francophone municipal accomplishments and services. The 2016 Rendezvous showcased the 10th anniversary of the Vanier Museopark and their annual Sugar Festival. Newly established Syrian refugee families participated and enjoyed their first maple taffy on snow experience.
- Celebration of Franco-Ontarian Day and the 41st Anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian Flag at City Hall, in collaboration with *l'Association des communautés francophones d'Ottawa*. On the morning of September 25, 2016, Mayor Jim Watson joined leaders from the Francophone community for a Franco-Ontarian picnic concert at Marion Dewar Plaza where close to 1,500 participants from the two French Language School Boards and members of the public gathered to celebrate.

- Publication of FrancoForum was made available in English as well as in French as of January 2016. Twelve editions of this bulletin were distributed to close to 700 subscribed staff in 2016. The FrancoForum Bulletin is an internal newsletter for staff highlighting activities and events happening in French within the organization and throughout Ottawa;
- Monthly publication of Faux Pas quizzes in the City staff newsletter entitled “In the Loop”. In June, the monthly quizzes became interactive, with multiple choice questions and detailed explanations for the correct answers, making learning French more fun;
- Provision of continued support to Departments by communication and reaching out to staff, by helping in the development of common approaches to data collection, and by developing tools to achieve progress on the 4 standards in the Departmental Operational plans; and
- Advising to Departments on the most effective ways of providing services in both French and English, especially as it relates to emerging new social media trends, applications and products.

French Language Services Advisory Committee

The mandate of the French Language Services Advisory Committee (FLSAC) is to provide recommendations to Ottawa City 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.

Members of the FLSAC selected the following priorities as part of their 2015-2018 work plan:

- Economic prosperity – Promoting Ottawa;
- Service Excellence - Increasing the provision of recreational activities in French; and
- Advancing equity and inclusion for the City’s diverse population.

In 2016, the FLSAC, in collaboration with the City and Ottawa 2017 focused on the first identified priority: supporting the development of a fully bilingual program and promotional activities for the City of Ottawa celebrations surrounding the 150th anniversary of Canada’s Confederation in 2017. The FLSAC provided a report

containing 15 recommendations to Ottawa 2017 in February of 2016. In November 2016, Ottawa Celebrations Inc. provided a status report to the FLSAC on the successful implementation of those recommendations.

In May of 2016, the FLSAC received a presentation from the Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services Department (RCFSD) on the current programs, courses and activities offered in French by the City. In September 2016, the FLSAC endorsed their report which contained recommendations to staff from RCFSD on the work plan objective which aims to support and enhance recreational activities in French in the West end of Ottawa, while maintaining the quality programming already provided in other communities. This report was subsequently received for information by the Community and Protective Services Committee (CPSC) at its meeting of October 20, 2016.

In September of 2016, the FLSAC also received a presentation from the Economic Development Services Branch (EDS) of the Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department. The presentation provided information regarding current services provided by the City to local businesses in our community. In November 2016, the FLSAC endorsed their report which contained recommendations to staff from EDS on the development of a communications strategy aiming at forming strong links within Ottawa's Francophone and Francophile business community. This report was subsequently received for information by the Finance and Economic Development Committee (FEDC) at its meeting of February 24, 2017.

MOVING FORWARD

The City of Ottawa has continued its commitment to improving services in French in 2016. Departments continue to demonstrate their commitment towards service excellence in both English and French. Moving into 2017, FLS will continue to support Departments in providing quality services in both French and English and seek opportunities to enhance how and where services can be made available in French to staff and the public as part of the 2015-2018 cycle.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

This is an update only; therefore, there is no requirement for consultation.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

This is a City-wide issue; therefore, comments from individual Ward Councillors have not been solicited.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS

The French Language Services Advisory Committee received regular updates at its meetings in 2016.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications to receiving this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no accessibility implications associated with this report.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The development of departmental operational plans to improve the delivery of French language services throughout the organization impacts one of the 2015-2018 Term of Council Priorities: Service Excellence.

DISPOSITION

With 2017 celebrations well under way, the FLS Branch will continue to support City Departments when communicating and providing services to residents and tourists alike in both French and in English. This will be achieved by working collaboratively with Departments on developing operational plans, providing expert advice and best practices for service delivery in French that can be incorporated in current service delivery models and by providing quality translation services City-wide.

Staff will action any direction received as part of consideration of this report.