

4. 2014 REPORT ON FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES  
RAPPORT SUR LES SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS 2014

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive this report for information.

**RECOMMANDATION DU COMITÉ**

Que le Conseil prenne connaissance du présent rapport.

**DOCUMENTATION / DOCUMENTATION**

Steve Box, Director, Corporate Programs and Business Services report dated 29 June 2015 / directeur des Programmes municipaux et Services opérationnels, rapport daté du 29 juin 2015 (ACS2015-CMR-OCM-0003)

**FINANCE AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
REPORT 6  
8 JULY 2015**

**135**

**COMITÉ DES FINANCES ET DU  
DÉVELOPPEMENT ÉCONOMIQUE  
RAPPORT 6  
LE 8 JUILLET 2015**

**Report to  
Rapport au:**

**Finance and Economic Development Committee  
Comité des finances et du développement économique**

**and Council  
et au Conseil**

**June 29, 2015  
29 juin 2015**

**Submitted by  
Soumis par:**

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**Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE      File Number: ACS2015-CMR-OCM-0003**

**SUBJECT: 2014 REPORT ON FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES**

**OBJET: RAPPORT SUR LES SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS 2014**

**REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

## **RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT**

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

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **BACKGROUND**

On May 9, 2001 the City of Ottawa enacted the Bilingualism Policy, which reaffirms the City's commitment to support the delivery of services in both official languages to residents and to staff (ACS2001-CMS-OCM-0002). The Policy applies to all staff and services and focuses on designation of bilingual positions, translation services, complaint resolution, promotion and active offer of services in French. The policy requires that each department prepare annual operational plans, describing future goals and initiatives to improve the provision of services in French, for approval by Council. The purpose of this report is to provide an update of departmental achievements completed since the last annual report (ACS2013-CMR-OCM-0004) submitted on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014.

### **DISCUSSION**

In 2011, all departments with the City identified initiatives aimed at improving the provision of French language services and enhancing service excellence in their operational plans. Since the development and subsequent implementation of these plans, progress has been made toward service delivery and day-to-day operations in French. Part of the strengthened process includes the incorporation of seven core standards applied to all departments in 2014. These standards/benchmarks will help measure the level of improvement on providing quality services in French across departments year after year.

### *SERVICE DELIVERY*

The City promotes the delivery of services in both official languages. Initiatives undertaken by departments over the past year have positively impacted the overall delivery of bilingual services City-wide. For instance, 100% of OC Transpo's centralized voicemail and e-mail auto-reply greetings are in both official languages. A total of 94% of centralized voice and e-mail greetings now contain messages in both official

languages for City employees in designated bilingual positions. Departments holding public events and consultations are achieving close to 100% conformity with the standards established for bilingualism.

Many departments have been very pro-active with respect to incorporating the spirit of the Bilingualism Policy into their French language departmental operational plans, as well as being responsive to the evolving needs of the francophone population within both the organization and the community at large. Below are a few examples:

### ***Community and Social Services***

The Community and Social Services Department, Housing Services Branch, improved its services offered in French through the following:

- By funding organizations that serve the francophone community, including affordable housing development;
- By offering support to organizations funded by the City to offer and promote comparable accessibility and quality services in French and English;
- By evaluating the needs of organizations supported by the City and offering resources and tools to build a bilingual workforce; and
- By developing a lexicon to improve and promote consistency of terminology across the Department for bilingual presentations, texts published on the web and to assist staff in their contact with the public.

### ***Older Adult Plan 2012-2014***

In 2012 the Older Adult Plan was adopted by the City. The purpose of the plan is to implement concrete actions to assist the City in effectively serving and being responsive to the specific needs of older adults today and in the future. Accomplishments were achieved in the following areas:

#### ***Improved communications***

- 2,000 French copies of the City of Ottawa's Guide to Services and Programs for Older Adults were printed and distributed. A list of French community seniors' centers was inserted in each guide;

- Created an Older Adult 50+ portal (English and French) on ottawa.ca. Recorded 2,500 hits per month on the portal, which serves as a central source of information; and
- Developed and distributed a bilingual one-pager on City services for older adults living on a low income.

*Program innovations in both official languages*

- Delivered a Better Strength Better Balance prevention program at six Ottawa Community Housing Aging in Place buildings and 31 community sites;
- 1,111 older adults participated in a computer literacy and Internet safety course for older adults developed by the Ottawa Public Library;
- 2000 copies of the Caregiver Resource Guide were distributed and an e-learning module was developed. Both are available on ottawa.ca; and
- 2,947 community members were trained to identify isolated older adults through the Community Connect program.

*Facilitated access*

- Issued newsletters to 800 subscribers in both official languages, based on the subscriber's preference;
- Launched the JoinOttawa web application that provides a single location where older adults can view all recreation and leisure activities and programs provided by Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services, Ottawa Public Library, and seniors' centres;
- Ensured effective francophone representation on the Seniors Roundtable through the inclusion of representatives from the Centre de services Guigues and Réseau des centres d'aînés francophones d'Ottawa;
- Launched a new Volunteer Portal on ottawa.ca that provides older adults with an easy way to search and select volunteer opportunities; and

- Provided seven well attended Meet Your City Services sessions, to all areas of the city.

### ***Transit Services***

OC Transpo has made the following provisions to promote bilingual services:

- Information on all public facing channels is provided in both official languages. All inquiries are responded to in the language in which they are received;
- 100% of the departments' centralized voicemail and e-mail auto-reply greetings are in both official languages;
- In 2014, OC Transpo conducted a formal review and needs assessment of the department's designated positions and candidates are now able to interview in their preferred language for the job;
- OC Transpo has designated bilingual training instructors' positions and the positions of Customer Relations Officers at Transit Sales and Information Centres for in-person or over-the-phone inquiries are filled with bilingual staff; and
- 100% of public events project a bilingual image simultaneously and comply with the City's Bilingualism Policy.

### ***Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services***

Management actively demonstrates its commitment to increasing the number of programs and services offered in French, as well as the participation rate in these programs. This commitment is reflected in the overall results achieved in 2014: improved dialogue with residents, and an increase of 174 active programs offered in French resulting in 200 additional participants over a six month period. Additionally, there was a 50% increase in the number of francophone summer camps offered in Ottawa's west end in order to meet the growing needs of francophone communities in this area. Some examples of this commitment include:

- Dedication of full-time staff resources assigned to FLS (French Language Services) program development and priorities;

- New francophone pre-school programs are currently being developed at 2 sites for the Spring program session;
- The implementation of six hubs throughout the City in order to more effectively serve and respond to the needs of the francophone community. The hub model consists of grouping together programs where the demand and the resources for francophone services are high;
- A significant increase in French summer camps throughout the City (167 weeks in 2014, to over 200 weeks in 2015, representing an 18% increase);
- The complete Leader in Training program will be offered in French in three locations in 2015 (east, central and west);
- 66% increase in the number of students who participated in the Shenkman Arts Centre's Art à la Carte school visits and workshops program from 242 students to 402 in 2014; and
- Audience levels increased by 930 individuals for the MIFO Presents series at the Shenkman Arts Centre, featuring 47 shows with a total audience of 13,950 in 2014.

### ***Arts and Culture***

The City supports arts and culture in French, including groups like the community radio station UNIQUE FM. A major funding contribution was made towards the expansion of La Nouvelle Scène, which is a major contributor to the advancement of francophone arts and culture.

### ***City Clerk***

The City Clerk's commitment to the Bilingualism Policy was reaffirmed during the 2014 municipal election. Volunteers were recruited and deployed in order to ensure bilingual staff was in place at all polling stations. The Elections Office continues to collaborate with French Language Services to explore additional innovative measures that can be implemented in anticipation of the 2018 elections. These include:

- Clearly identifying francophone staff and having bilingual visual aids at greeting tables; and
- Including more training on the active offer of services in both official languages for all Elections personnel.

### ***Community Support***

The City supports the Coopérative Maison de la francophonie d'Ottawa (CMFO), formerly known as the Centre multiservices francophone de l'Ouest which, over the next year, will offer many services in French to a growing community in Ottawa's West End, which represents 15% of the residents in that area. The City of Ottawa's donation of the former Grant school, which will house the Maison de la francophonie, is assessed at nearly two million dollars. The mission of the CMFO is to serve as a meeting place, promote services in French and enhance the vitality of the French language for the francophones who live in the area west of Bronson Avenue.

### ***Human Resources: Second Language Training***

The second language training program is delivered in 3 sessions per year (winter, spring and fall). The majority of training delivered is to develop proficiency in French, with 7-10% of training to develop proficiency in English. The participation rate in second language training fluctuates year over year, typically in the 10% range.

The following table shows the participation rate in the self-directed and group training sessions over that past five years:

Session	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Winter	273	379	347	349	292
Spring	355	324	355	324	276
Fall	339	379	384	297	296
Total	967	1082	1086	970	864



In 2014 there were 483 language proficiency assessments conducted primarily related to 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 delivered over the past 5 years:

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total	632	529	370	340	483

### ***Ottawa Public Health***

Some key accomplishments in 2014 include:

- Launched Santé Ottawa on Twitter;
- Launched French Facebook Parenting page in November 2014;
- Launched the prevention exercise program Better Strength, Better Balance/ En force, en équilibre in September 2014. The program delivered four times in French aims at increasing muscle strength, balance and coordination;
- With funding from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Ottawa Public Health and the Eastern Ontario Health Unit lead the Public Health French Language Services Community of Practice, which includes a central inventory of 914 French-language tools and resources. Membership has increased to 80 public and community health professionals from 12 Public Health Units in Ontario and 10 community agencies; and
- Launched the Residents' Rights and Responsibilities Policy. The intent of this policy is to: "define residents' rights and responsibilities; inform employees, learners and volunteers of residents' rights; meet legislated standards of practice related to residents' rights; identify contact information to provide to residents in

case they want to contact OPH regarding their rights and responsibilities, or other related issues and enhance client satisfaction, safety and service quality.”

### ***French Language Services***

The City’s Bilingualism Policy identifies five priorities for action by the French Language Services branch: designation of bilingual positions, complaints resolution, translation services, promotion and active offer of French language services, and coordinate and provide support in the development of annual departmental operational plans.

#### ***Designation of Bilingual Positions***

The designation of bilingual positions is a process by which managers can secure an adequate number of bilingual staff in key positions. As of December 2014, 16% of the City’s FTE positions were designated bilingual. This excludes certain pooled positions as well as some identified jobs (i.e. Transit supervisors, bus operators, paramedics, firefighters, lieutenants and captains). It is consistent with the 2013 percentage.

#### ***Complaints Resolution***

FLS is responsible for managing complaints regarding the quality and the provision of French language services by the City of Ottawa and for reporting to senior management and City Council. French Language Complaint Resolution Procedures were approved by senior management in May 2012. The procedures outline the measures that City employees and residents must follow to submit complaints. Complaints reporting and data collection allows FLS to:

- help improve the quality of French language services;
- better meet the needs and concerns of residents and staff; and
- work with Departments in ensuring that necessary measures are taken to prevent the recurrence of problems.

In 2014, the number of complaints increased by 34% over 2013, for a total of 119 complaints. All complaints received have been resolved and closed.

This increase in French language related complaints can be attributed to several factors. In addition to being housed within the French Language Services section of the

ottawa.ca website, the FLS Complaints Form is now accessible directly through the *ServiceOttawa* website, as part of the “Reporting” transaction type. In addition, the Association des communautés francophones d’Ottawa ACFO Ottawa’s website has increased the visibility of the FLS Complaints form by displaying a direct link to the form on their website.

Of the 119 complaints in 2014, 34 complaints pertained to OC Transpo’s social media and web publications, signage and active offer questions. Signage issues with the Department of Public Works were also the subject of 13 complaints.

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services’ complaints were cut by almost half. Only 11 complaints were filed compared to 19 the previous year, the majority of which pertained to signage and promotion.

Complaints regarding the access of accurate content in the City’s website in French also diminished in 2014, with 10 complaints to *ServiceOttawa* compared to 13 the previous year. These improvements can be attributed to new quality assurance guidelines developed jointly with Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, *ServiceOttawa* and other City departments regarding web content.

### ***Translation Services***

Translation requests decreased in 2014 by 4.7% from 28,049 requests in 2013, to 26,720 requests in 2014. This reduction is due to French Language Services’ initiatives aimed at encouraging City employees to make use of the available tools such as Antidote, Termium and other dictionaries and pre-translated messages, for some internal communications. These measures will, in the long term, increase Translation Services’ efficiency and encourage francophone and francophile staff to use their knowledge of French. They are reflected in the following initiatives.

### ***Promotion and Active Offer***

French Language Services’ constant efforts to promote service excellence through the provision of an active offer of services in French are evident in many ways:

- E-learning modules, ‘One City Two Languages’, were specifically designed for City employees to support their efforts in providing quality services to the francophone population;

- The updating of Annual Departmental Operational plans;
- Celebration of the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Rendez-vous francophone du maire;
- Celebration of the Franco-Ontarian day with the introduction of the Franco-Ontarian marche in 2014;
- Publication of a Franco Forum bulletin to subscribers;
- Introduction of *Le Faux Pas* series in the internal publication: In the Loop; and
- Introduction of Translation Procedures and Guidelines.

### ***Operational Plans***

In 2014, departments developed their Departmental French Language Operational Plans with a refreshed and strengthened planning and reporting process. This year was the final year of the current 2011-2014 four-year cycle. Part of the improved process included the incorporation of an established citywide baseline for the provision of French language services, which helped measure the level of improvement in providing quality services in French across departments year after year, and will continue to do so during the next planning cycle.

### **MOVING FOWARD**

City Council is in the process of identifying and adopting its Term of Council Priorities, which will form the 2015-2018 City Strategic Plan. Following this, departmental and operational plans for the improvement of French language services will be refreshed to ensure they align and advance the Council established priorities in the 2015-2018 City Strategic Plan.

Moving forward, French Language Services is confident that Managers and staff will continue to be proactive in seeking opportunities to enhance how and where services can be made available in French to staff and the public in the 2015-2018 cycle.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Bilingualism Policy states: "That the City Manager, the General Managers, Directors and Managers all be accountable for the implementation of this action plan

and related measures.” This report marks the end of a four-year planning cycle during which departments have established a baseline and subsequently advanced the development and improvement of services in both official languages.

With the upcoming celebrations for Canada’s 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary and international events such as the FIFA Women’s World Cup, the City of Ottawa will be leading the way with prestigious national and international events that will attract tourists and residents alike.

### **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.

### **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.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

### **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

### **TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

The development of departmental operational plans to improve the delivery of French languages services throughout the organization impacts two of the 2010-2014 Term of Council Priorities: Service Excellence and Employee Engagement.

### **DISPOSITION**

Departmental managers are responsible for the implementation of their relevant action plans. Staff will action any direction received as part of consideration of this report.