French Language Services Review

Public Engagement Summary

December 2019

Background

French language and culture has played an important role in shaping Winnipeg. The City recognizes the value of French language and is committed to improving French language service delivery throughout Winnipeg.

We are undertaking a review of French language services (FLS review) to improve, update, and modernize the delivery of civic services and programs to French-speaking residents where resources are needed most.

Engagement

Public engagement for the FLS review began with stakeholder meetings with community groups that are committed to improving the delivery of services to French-speaking Winnipeggers. An online survey collected feedback from May 15 – June 12. Engagement also included a public online survey, stakeholder meetings, a public workshop, and coffee chat cards that were available online and at City facilities.

Promotion

Public engagement opportunities were promoted using the following methods:

- City of Winnipeg website – launched on May 15, 2019;
- News release – May 15, 2019
- Facebook posts with 23,535 followers - May 15 to June 24, 2019;
- Twitter posts with 91,800 followers - May 15 to June 24, 2019;
- Stakeholder invitations and reminder emails;
- City of Winnipeg public engagement newsletter with over 5,600 recipients - May 23, June 6, June 20.

Key Findings

- Most survey respondents identified as Francophone (90 of 99; 6 identified as Anglophone; 3 identified as 'other'; 8 skipped the question)
- Survey respondents said the City should focus on medical response, the bilingual service centre at any municipal office, and the City Hall 311 front counter for in-person French services.
- Survey respondents said the City should focus on Website and electronic news releases human resources, swimming lessons, and elements for French services online.
- Survey respondents said the City should focus on 311, 911, and the non-emergency police line for French services over the phone.
- Workshop participants thought the 911 call centre and Police Services are the highest priority to be provided in French.
- The greatest barrier to accessing municipal services in French for survey respondents had to ask to speak in French to multiple employees or departments to be able to receive information, clarification or ask a question.

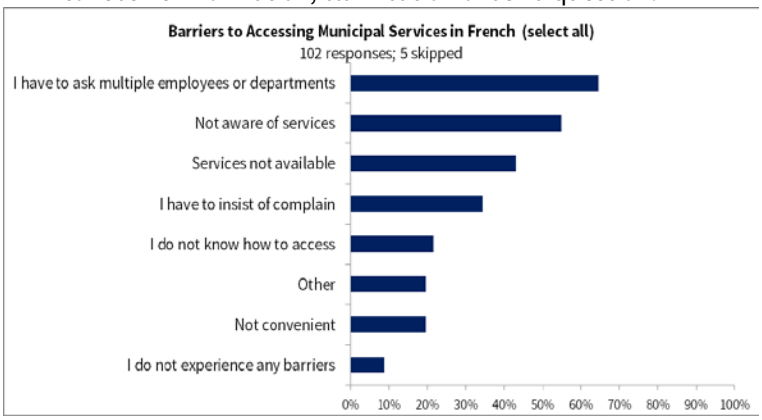

Figure 1 Barriers to accessing municipal services in French

Date	Activity	Details
May 15 to June 24, 2019	Public survey	107 completed surveys.
May 15 to June 24, 2019	Coffee chat carts	25 completed cards submitted.
May 15 to June 24, 2019	Stakeholder meetings	Ten meetings with organizations to discuss French language needs and their perspectives on current and future service needs.
May 19, 2019	Public workshop	Eight participants discussed their French language service use in group setting to prioritize their needs and identify barriers.

To learn more about the French Language Services Review, please visit winnipeg.ca/flsreview

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What We Heard

What We Heard	How It Was Considered*
With regards to in-person and telephone service, the French 'active offer' was brought up consistently by participants, either as a barrier when there was no offer, or as a potential solution to improving French Language Services.	The City will develop a 5-year French Language Services Strategic Plan by the end of 2021. The strategic plan will include: A detailed outline of the City's French language service priorities over the 5-year period and how they align with the Francophone community's priorities; and how the City plans to align its priorities as they relate to legislative requirements, including *By-law 8154/2002 for the Provision of Municipal Services in Both Official Languages*.
Improving access to French information (most notably through the website and 311) and awareness regarding how to find French information for residents was brought up by workshop, survey, and coffee chat card participants.	The City will develop a 5-year French Language Services Strategic Plan by the end of 2021, which will establish guidelines on how and under what circumstances the City will communicate with residents in both official languages.
There are not enough designated bilingual staff and not all those who are designated bilingual are able to speak and write in French at an appropriate level. Coffee chat card respondents indicated staff proficiency and availability as the most common barrier to accessing French services.	The City will identify designated bilingual positions throughout the organization and develop a staffing plan to ensure those positions are appropriately staffed with French-speaking employees. The City will also work to implement mandatory active offer sessions for all municipal frontline employees and/or backups.
The most prominent vision for the future of French language services in Winnipeg was a fully bilingual city. The most common response to the question "Which municipal services do you expect to be offered in French?" on the coffee chat cards was "all services." Participants recognized that French speaking residents are not confined to the Riel District.	The Public Service is recommending amendments to *By-law 8154/2002* for Council's consideration to ensure, when reasonably possible, that the City provides French language services upon request in areas of the City besides just the Riel District. An analysis of data gathered in 2016 by Statistics Canada revealed increased French speaking residents in other wards outside of the Riel District[1]. Currently, there are **bilingual facilities or offices** that may or may not be located in the designated areas (such as French Language Services Division and Translation Services Branch). They are entirely staffed with bilingual personnel so as to ensure services in both official languages at all times. There are also **partially bilingual facilities or offices** that have a bilingual staff in designated positions and in back-up positions to ensure an active offer and delivery of services in French at all times (such as the 311 Call Centre, Water and Waste Billing Centre). They are designated as such in the City's by-law on the delivery of municipal services.
Access to emergency services in French	The City will develop a 5-year French Language Services Strategic Plan by the end of

[1] Census information can be found here:

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is critical to ensure service and communication during a resident's most vulnerable moments.	2021, which will address emergency services.
Stakeholders noted the importance of partnerships with other levels of governments and other French speaking municipalities.	The City's Manager of French Language Services is the primary point of contact with respect to policies, goals, and targets for the provision of French language services, and will continue to work with key stakeholders to ensure continued collaboration.
Improving attitudes towards French and seeing French culture and language as an asset rather than a burden should be a priority.	The City will develop a 5-year French Language Services Strategic Plan by the end of 2021, which will examine opportunities to provide more education about the importance and role of French culture and language in our community.

*Recommendations related to a change in By-law or Winnipeg Charter will require Council consideration prior to implementation.

Promote more City activities in French and have more content in French. – coffee chat card participant

Remind the city that bilingualism is not a burden; that it is in fact an asset. We must encourage Francophones to value their language. – stakeholder participant

Next Steps

The feedback provided by stakeholders and the public will be considered along with the review of By-law 8154/2002 for the *Provision of Municipal Services in Both Official Languages* in order to make recommendations to improve, update, and modernize the delivery of civic services and programs to French-speaking residents. Recommendations will go before Executive Policy Committee and Council for their consideration.

Those who requested updates on the French Language Services review will receive updates as the review moves forward.

Appendices can be found on the Documents tab of the project webpage.

Appendix A – Promotional materials

Appendix B – Coffee chat cards

Appendix C – Workshop workbook and feedback

Appendix D – Stakeholder meeting notes

Appendix D – Survey results

Appendix E – Map of survey respondents

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