

Language Access Plan

City of Reno



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Introduction

The City of Reno Language Access Plan (LAP) establishes guidelines to ensure members of the public with limited English proficiency (LEP) have access to City programs, services, information, and public meetings.

This plan supports compliance with Nevada Assembly Bill 266 (AB 266), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It outlines the City's approach to identifying language needs, providing language assistance services, and improving access for all community members.

The City of Reno is committed to providing clear, accessible, and timely information so all members of the public can participate in City services and civic activities, regardless of language ability.

The goals of the Language Access Plan are to:

- **Improve Access to Services:** Ensure residents can access City programs, services, and resources.
- **Improve Communication:** Provide language assistance options that help residents understand and navigate City services.
- **Support Civic Engagement:** Ensure residents have opportunities to engage with the City and participate in public processes.
- **Access:** Reduce language barriers and support communication with Reno's diverse community.

By implementing effective tools to increase linguistic diversity, communities can unlock their full potential and contribute to the development of a stronger, more vibrant, and inclusive Reno community.

Legal and Policy Framework

City Policies - Language Access

This Language Access Plan is an aspirational and robust framework of procedures that will guide language access across the organization and supports the following requirements:

Compliance Requirements and Responsibilities

Pursuant to AB 266, the City of Reno must adhere to the following requirements:

- **Developing & Biennially Revising LAP**

- Section 6.1 of AB 266 requires the governing body of a city whose population is 25,000 or more located in such a county (currently the Cities of Henderson, Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Reno, and Sparks) to designate one or more employees of the county or city, as applicable, to be responsible for developing and biennially revising an LAP for the county or city.
- Council authorized the City Manager to designate one or more employees to be responsible for developing and biennially updating an LAP for the City pursuant to AB 266.
- A developed and revised LAP will be submitted to the Office for New Americans in the Office of the Governor on or before August 1 of each even-numbered year.

- **Assessing Existing Needs for Language Services**

- City of Reno staff will evaluate community needs through surveys and proactive communication with staff and constituents to determine language needs to access governmental resources and services. Upon identifying these needs, City staff will proactively address the gaps to enhance language services accordingly.

- **Public Notice Requirement**

- Sections 2 and 7 of AB 266 require the governing body of a city whose population is 25,000 or more to ensure that any public notice which is issued by the planning commission of the city, as applicable, sets forth a link to the internet website of the city, as applicable, that includes the public notice in every language in which voting materials are required to be prepared in the county pursuant to federal and state law.
- Make good faith to find certified translators to translate information for public notices by the Planning Commission.

Language Needs Assessment

Identification of Primary Languages Spoken

According to the 2020 United States Census Bureau, the population in Reno, Nevada, is approximately 261,259 individuals. Among this population, 78.5% reported that they communicate solely in English, while 21.5% speak a language other than English, equating to 56,292 individuals.

The following table represents a breakdown of languages spoken at home in Reno, Nevada, based on the United States Census Bureau data.

Language	Estimate	Percent of Population 5 Years and Over
English	204,967	78.5%
Spanish	42,255	16.2%
Asian Pacific Island	7,237	2.8%
Other Indo-European	5,744	2.2%
Other Languages	1,056	0.4%

[Source: United States Census Bureau – S1601 Language Spoken at Home – Data](#)

Evaluation of Language Barriers and Challenges

Feedback from both the community and staff was gathered through a combination of surveys and public outreach in 2024 and ongoing input opportunities available on Reno.Gov. From the insights gathered, the key language access barriers and challenges were categorized as follows:

Limited Communication Channels: Difficulties accessing information or engaging with City services due to language barriers. This can result in a lack of awareness about the available resources, programs, or integrated technology available.

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity: Reno's diverse population brings with it a multitude of languages and cultural backgrounds. Ensuring effective communication and accessibility for all residents requires sensitivity to these diverse linguistic needs, including communication styles and methods.

Resource Constraints: Budgetary limitations and resource constraints may pose challenges in implementing comprehensive language access initiatives. Adequate funding and staffing are essential to providing translation services, interpreter services, and other language access accommodations.

Addressing these barriers and challenges requires a proactive approach that emphasizes inclusivity, equity, and accessibility for all members of the public.

A community survey was developed to better understand language needs and identify priorities for the Language Access Plan. The survey was available in English, Spanish, Tagalog/Filipino, and Mandarin. The survey has remained open since 2024 to collect ongoing feedback and help identify changes or updates needed to improve language access services. Survey results and analysis are included in the appendix.

City Language Access Services

The City of Reno has made significant investments in language access services and public accessibility to reduce language barriers. The City continues to evaluate and improve these resources to better serve the community. Below are the current language resources available to the public and City staff.

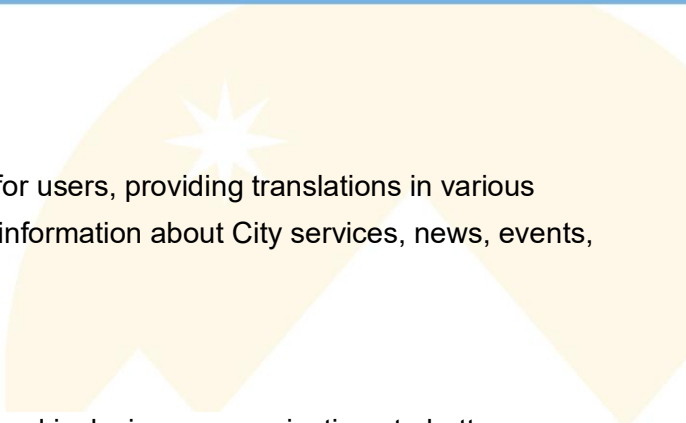
Bi/Multilingual Certified Staff

The Labor Relations Agreements and Benefits Resolutions abide by the following protocol related to bilingual pay and responsibilities for certified staff as of July 1, 2024.

- **Unrepresented Employees:** \$40 per pay period for a Level 1 Certification (write). \$60 per pay period for a Level 2 Certification (speak/write).
- **Local 39:** Requires Department Head approval for bilingual pay and certification through a third-party service. \$40 per pay period for Level 1 Certification, \$60 per pay period for Level 2 Certification.
- **RAPG:** Requires City Manager (or Human Resources Director) approval for bilingual pay and certification through a third-party service. \$40 per pay period for Level 1 Certification, \$60 per pay period for Level 2 Certification.
- **IAFF:** Requires Fire Chief approval and certification through a third-party service. 2% of employee's base wage.
- **RFDA:** Requires City Manager approval. \$50 per pay period.

If applicable, individuals interested in being considered for bilingual pay should make their request through the department head and they will notify Human Resources to implement the testing procedure. The City will use a valid means of examination to establish competency levels.

The bilingual pay provisions described above are based on labor agreements and benefit resolutions in effect as of July 1, 2024, and are subject to change through future labor negotiations, collective bargaining agreements, or updates to City policies.



Multilingual Website

The City's official website, Reno.Gov, offers multilingual support for users, providing translations in various languages. This ensures that non-English speakers can access information about City services, news, events, and resources

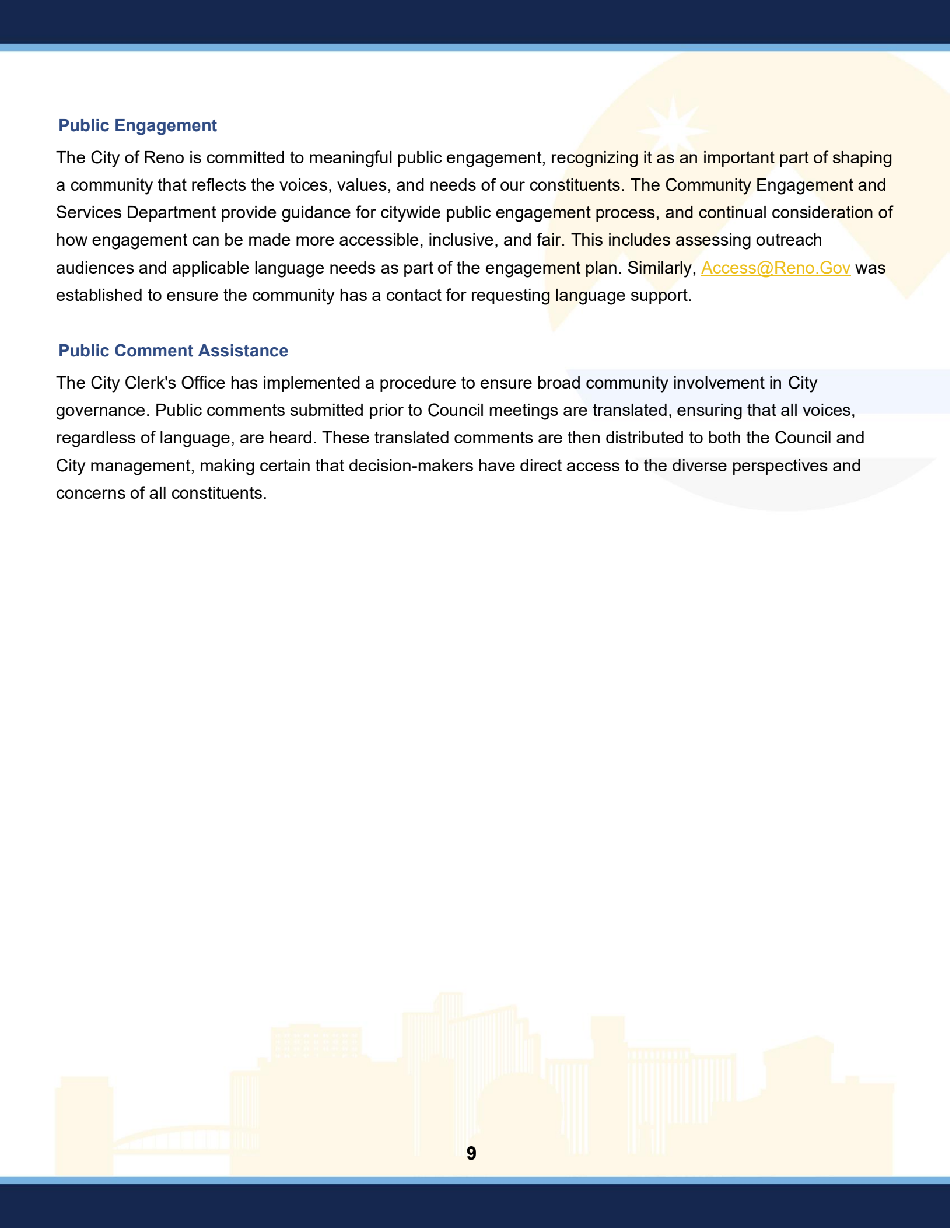
Public Communications

The City of Reno Communications Department continues to expand inclusive communications to better serve Reno's diverse community, with an ongoing commitment to providing bilingual Spanish communications and outreach.

The department develops bilingual graphics, flyers and other public-facing materials for City programs, services and events. All City press releases include a language translation option, and original content published on the City of Reno Government Facebook page is written with detailed copy to maximize the platform's built-in language translation features. According to Facebook IQ research, Facebook remains one of the primary social media platforms used by U.S. Hispanic audiences, making it an important tool for reaching Spanish-speaking residents.

In addition, the department actively works to increase awareness of City programs and services through Spanish-language media. The Communications team regularly pitches stories to local Spanish-language media partners. A recent investment into Spanish community outreach was a 10-month paid partnership with Telemundo Reno. The biweekly segment, Su Gobierno, Su Ciudad ("Your Government, Your City"), highlighted City services, programs, initiatives and community resources for Spanish-speaking audiences.

The Communications Department continues to build upon these efforts by working collaboratively with City departments to improve language access, strengthen community engagement and ensure that all residents have equitable access to important City information and services.



Public Engagement

The City of Reno is committed to meaningful public engagement, recognizing it as an important part of shaping a community that reflects the voices, values, and needs of our constituents. The Community Engagement and Services Department provide guidance for citywide public engagement process, and continual consideration of how engagement can be made more accessible, inclusive, and fair. This includes assessing outreach audiences and applicable language needs as part of the engagement plan. Similarly, Access@Reno.Gov was established to ensure the community has a contact for requesting language support.

Public Comment Assistance

The City Clerk's Office has implemented a procedure to ensure broad community involvement in City governance. Public comments submitted prior to Council meetings are translated, ensuring that all voices, regardless of language, are heard. These translated comments are then distributed to both the Council and City management, making certain that decision-makers have direct access to the diverse perspectives and concerns of all constituents.

Oral, Type, and Sign Language Services

The City of Reno currently has contracts and/or access to the following comprehensive language access services to ensure all members of the public receive the necessary language support.

AIT Worldwide Logistics

The Municipal Court currently contracts with this local interpreter firm. AIT provides Spanish Certified Interpreters and is available daily from 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. and from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. AIT also manages the court's document translation needs.

ASL Anywhere

With funding from the Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities and in coordination with the Nevada Commission for Persons Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, ASL Anywhere is now available for free for Nevada residents. Through the application, individuals can access live interpreter services to communicate with hearing people in the same room.

Read more about [ASL Anywhere](#).

CTS Language Link

Provides language services including translation, interpretation, and localization solutions. They service 300+ languages and dialects, utilizing an in-house network of professional talent and partners, industry expertise, and the latest technology. This service is currently available in Municipal Court.

Epic Translations

Provides language services including translation, interpretation, and localization solutions. This service is currently being used by Development Services.

Language Line Solutions

Provides on-demand remote video interpreting services that integrate with Zoom, enabling real-time language interpretation during virtual meetings and proceedings. The Municipal Court uses this service to support communication with individuals with limited English proficiency.

Municipal Court Spanish Interpreter

Municipal Court hired a full-time Spanish Interpreter to provide in-person interpretation for Spanish-speaking court users.

State-Approved Language Service Vendors

The City of Reno may utilize translation and interpretation service providers through the State of Nevada's statewide contracts when appropriate. The State maintains a list of approved vendors that provide spoken language interpretation, American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation, document translation, and related language services. Departments seeking contracted language services may reference the State of Nevada's approved vendor list when procuring services in accordance with applicable procurement requirements.

Voiance

Voiance provides language services including interpretation by phone/video and translation to over 300 languages. All Reno Police Officers cell phones have the application installed and can utilize Voiance when needed.

Accessibility of Digital Platforms

The City of Reno has invested in several digital platforms to enhance language access, reflecting the City's commitment to improving accessibility and inclusiveness for all members of the public.

Below are resources available to the public at-large and City staff to enhance service delivery for community members who are hard of hearing. Reference press release.

UbiDuo 3

The UbiDuo 3 device is a two-way communication platform that offers a person with a speech impairment or who is deaf or has a hearing impairment the ability to communicate with anyone by having typed text converted while still having a face-to-face communication experience.

The devices are located on the second floor of City Hall at the Business Licensing/Development Services counter, the City Clerk's counter, and on the first floor at the Security Desk. They are strategically placed in high traffic areas intended to maximize access and use.

Listen EVERYWHERE

Listen EVERYWHERE is a simple and cost-effective solution for assistive listening, language interpretation, and streaming of TV or video audio. The multiple-channel audio is delivered directly to guests' smartphones through a free, fully customizable application.

Budget and Resources Allocation

The City will continue to evaluate the resources needed to support language access services and ensure funding aligns with community needs and departmental requirements. Staff will collect data related to service usage, community language needs, and department requests to better understand current and future resource needs. Key areas for consideration include:

- **Translation and Interpretation Services:** Costs for written, phone, video, and in-person language assistance.
- **Technology Solutions:** Tools and equipment that support translation, interpretation, and accessibility.
- **Staff Training:** Training and resources to help employees provide effective language assistance.
- **Community Outreach:** Translation of public information and efforts to increase awareness of available services.
- **Monitoring and Compliance:** Evaluation of services to ensure alignment with federal and state requirements.

The City will continue reviewing language access needs, available resources, and funding considerations to support effective and sustainable language services across the organization.

City of Reno Language Access Plan Initiatives and Timeline

Upcoming Initiative

Objective	Initiatives
Language Access Policy	Develop a citywide administrative policy to standardize language access procedures across departments.

Standing Initiatives

Objective	Initiatives
Community Language Needs Assessment	Continuously evaluate community language needs using demographic data, service requests, and community feedback.
Language Access Webpage	Maintain a centralized public webpage with available language access resources and information.
Staff Language Inventory	Track bi/multi-lingual staff and language capabilities to improve service delivery.
Public Meeting Language Accommodations	Provide interpretation and translation support for public meetings, as needed and available.
Staff Language Access Training	Equip employees with resources and procedures to effectively serve individuals with limited English proficiency.
Internal Staff Resource Hub	Maintain an internal webpage with language access tools, guides, and resources.
Vital Document Translation	Identify and prioritize essential public documents for translation.
Planning Commission Public Notices	Continue multilingual public noticing practices for Reno Planning Commission meetings.
Biennial Language Access Plan Review	Review and update the Language Access Plan every two years.
State Reporting	Submit updated Language Access Plan to the Office of New Americans by August 1 of each even-numbered year.
Budget Planning	Evaluate funding needs to sustain language access services and future enhancements.
Funding Opportunities	Explore grants and other funding sources to expand language access initiatives.
Interactive Language Technology	Evaluate and implement technology solutions to improve translation, interpretation, and multilingual customer service.

Previously Offered Initiatives

Objective	Initiatives
Wordly Live Translation Pilot	Pilot program was not renewed after evaluation determined that the cumulative usage over a full calendar year did not justify the ongoing cost.

Appendix

Language Access Community Survey Analysis

The following survey analysis reflects all Language Access Survey submissions received from 2024 through July 2026. A total of 76 constituents completed the survey, including 70 responses submitted in English and 6 responses submitted in Spanish. The survey remains available on the City of Reno website to collect ongoing feedback and help inform future updates to language access services.

Preferred Spoken Languages

The majority of respondents prefer to use English for communication with the City of Reno. Spanish is the second most preferred language. Data is as follows:

- **English:** 70 respondents - (92.1%)
- **Spanish:** 9 respondents – (7.9%)
- **German:** 1 respondent – (1.3%)
- **Other:** 0 respondents – (0%)

The results reflect that English is the primary language used by respondents; however, the survey also identifies a continued need to provide language access resources for Spanish speakers and other language groups.

English Language Proficiency Ratings

Survey respondents were asked to rate their English speaking, reading, writing, and listening abilities. The results reflect a range of English proficiency levels among participants, with most respondents identifying as Advanced/Proficient across the four language areas. Responses also identified community members with varying levels of English proficiency, highlighting the importance of providing accessible communication options, including translated materials, interpretation services, and other language assistance resources to support effective access to City programs and services.

Speaking:

- **Beginner Elementary:** 3 respondents – (3.9%)
- **Pre-Intermediate:** 5 respondents – (6.6%)
- **Intermediate:** 2 respondents – (2.6%)
- **Upper-Intermediate:** 7 respondents – (9.2%)
- **Advanced/Proficient:** 59 respondents – (77.6%)

Reading:

- **Beginner Elementary:** 4 respondents – (5.3%)
- **Pre-Intermediate:** 2 respondents – (2.6%)
- **Intermediate:** 4 respondents – (5.3%)
- **Upper-Intermediate:** 6 respondents – (7.9%)
- **Advanced/Proficient:** 60 respondents – (78.9%)

Writing:

- **Beginner Elementary:** 4 respondents – (5.3%)
- **Pre-Intermediate:** 4 respondents – (5.3%)
- **Intermediate:** 2 respondents – (2.6%)
- **Upper-Intermediate:** 9 respondents – (11.8%)
- **Advanced/Proficient:** 57 respondents – (75%)

Listening:

- **Beginner Elementary:** 4 respondents – (5.3%)
- **Pre-Intermediate:** 2 respondents – (2.6%)
- **Intermediate:** 4 respondents – (5.3%)
- **Upper-Intermediate:** 7 respondents – (9.2%)
- **Advanced/Proficient:** 58 respondents – (76.3%)

Language Use in Interaction with the City of Reno

Of the 76 respondents, 66 (86.8%) reported using English most often when interacting with City of Reno staff. A total of 9 respondents (11.8%) identified Spanish as the language they use most often, and two respondents (2.6%) identified American Sign Language (ASL). These results provide insight into the primary languages used by community members when accessing City services and support the continued need for accessible communication options, including interpretation and language assistance services.

Preferred Language for Communication and Information Delivery:

A total of 60 (78.9%) indicated English as their preferred language for receiving communication and information from the City of Reno. Thirteen respondents (17.1%) preferred Spanish, while two respondents (2.6%) preferred American Sign Language (ASL). One respondent (1.3%) identified Korean or Russian as their preferred language

Awareness of Language Services

A total of 20 respondents (26.3%) indicated they were aware of translation, interpretation, and ASL services offered by the City of Reno, while 56 respondents (73.7%) reported they were not aware of these services. The results highlight an opportunity to improve outreach and education regarding available language access resources to ensure community members know how to request and access assistance when needed.

Comfort Level in Asking for Help with Communication (Scale of 1 to 5)

A total of 54 respondents (71.1%) indicated they would feel comfortable or very comfortable asking a City of Reno employee for assistance if they experienced difficulty communicating in English. A total of 9 respondents (11.8%) reported a neutral level of comfort, while 13 respondents (17.1%) indicated they would feel uncomfortable or very uncomfortable requesting assistance.

Encountering Language Barriers

Approximately one-quarter of respondents reported experiencing language barriers when accessing City of Reno programs and services. Feedback identified the need for continued access to translation, interpretation, and accessible communication options to support residents with different language needs.

Requests for Non-English Services or Documents

Most respondents reported they have not requested City services or documents in a language other than English. However, 15.8% of respondents indicated they have requested language assistance, demonstrating the continued need for accessible translated materials and interpretation services.



Executive Summary

Overall, the survey results highlight the need to raise awareness about the available translation, interpretation, and ASL services to ensure all residents are informed. Additionally, enhancing language support by making these services more accessible is crucial.

English remains the primary language used by respondents, residents identified the importance of maintaining and improving translation, interpretation, and accessibility services for individuals with limited English proficiency, ASL users, and residents who prefer information in another language.

Survey feedback highlighted the following areas of focus:

- Provide accurate written translations.
- Increase awareness of available language services.
- Expand interpretation options for in-person, phone, and virtual interactions.
- Improve accessibility of websites, videos, and digital content.
- Ensure translated materials are accurate and easy to understand.
- Use community data to identify language needs and prioritize resources.

The feedback supports the City's continued efforts to improve language access and ensure residents can effectively access programs, services, and information.

Language Access Staff Survey Analysis

Bilingual staff members were invited to participate in the language access survey in 2024. A total of 38 staff members responded. Among them, 36 confirmed they are receiving bilingual pay, while 2 reported they are not receiving pay.

The survey is intended to identify existing language resources, assess current needs, and inform future organizational goals.

Language Service Provided

- **Spanish:** 36 respondents

Primary Services Provided

Conversation (97.22%) and Interpretation (77.78%) are the most commonly provided services, followed by Translation (61.11%).

- **Interpretation:** 28 respondents
- **Translation:** 22 respondents
- **Conversation:** 35 respondents
- **Other:** 1 respondent

Frequency of Language Interpretation Services

Interpretation is most frequently provided 1-5 times per week (47.22%).

- **Less than 1 time per week:** 8 respondents
- **1-5 times per week:** 17 respondents
- **5-10 times per week:** 8 respondents
- **10-15 times per week:** 1 respondent
- **More than 15 times per week:** 2 respondents



Frequency of Language **Translation** Services

Translation services are typically provided either less than once a week or 1-5 times per week (41.67% each).

- **Less than 1 time per week:** 15 respondents
- **1-5 times per week:** 15 respondents
- **5-10 times per week:** 3 respondents
- **10-15 times per week:** 3 respondents
- **More than 15 times per week:** 0 respondents

Frequency of Conversations in a Different Language with Customers

Conversations in a different language with customers occur more frequently, with 22.22% doing so more than 15 times per week.

- **Less than 1 time per week:** 3 respondents
- **1-5 times per week:** 10 respondents
- **5-10 times per week:** 10 respondents
- **10-15 times per week:** 5 respondents
- **More than 15 times per week:** 8 respondents

Combined Hours per Week Providing Language Services

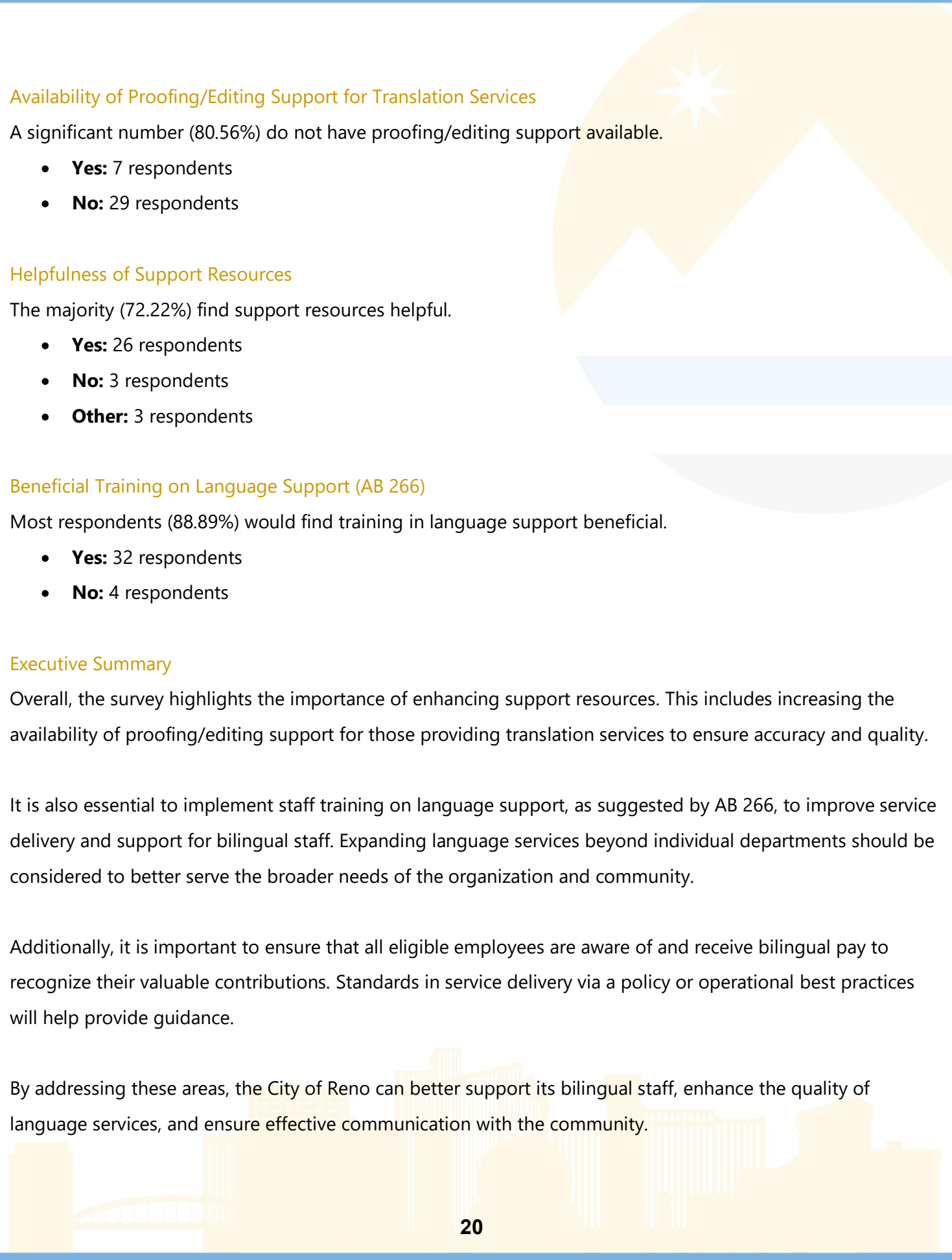
Most respondents (55.56%) provide 1-5 hours of language services per week.

- **Less than 1 hour per week:** 3 respondents
- **1-5 hours per week:** 20 respondents
- **5-10 hours per week:** 8 respondents
- **10-15 hours per week:** 2 respondents
- **More than 15 hours per week:** 3 respondents

Language Support for Department

The majority (77.78%) provide language support only for their own department.

- **Yes, only my department:** 28 respondents
- **No, also other departments:** 8 respondents



Availability of Proofing/Editing Support for Translation Services

A significant number (80.56%) do not have proofing/editing support available.

- **Yes:** 7 respondents
- **No:** 29 respondents

Helpfulness of Support Resources

The majority (72.22%) find support resources helpful.

- **Yes:** 26 respondents
- **No:** 3 respondents
- **Other:** 3 respondents

Beneficial Training on Language Support (AB 266)

Most respondents (88.89%) would find training in language support beneficial.

- **Yes:** 32 respondents
- **No:** 4 respondents

Executive Summary

Overall, the survey highlights the importance of enhancing support resources. This includes increasing the availability of proofing/editing support for those providing translation services to ensure accuracy and quality.

It is also essential to implement staff training on language support, as suggested by AB 266, to improve service delivery and support for bilingual staff. Expanding language services beyond individual departments should be considered to better serve the broader needs of the organization and community.

Additionally, it is important to ensure that all eligible employees are aware of and receive bilingual pay to recognize their valuable contributions. Standards in service delivery via a policy or operational best practices will help provide guidance.

By addressing these areas, the City of Reno can better support its bilingual staff, enhance the quality of language services, and ensure effective communication with the community.