

October 2016

Open letter to Mayor Watson,

You are a good mayor M. Watson. Your bold decision to launch the go-train, the development of Lansdowne Park -fine examples of your ability to rally council and the public around a vision. And cheers for telling the Chateau Laurier to go back to the drawing board. But one dimension of our community seems to escape you and quite frankly, I don't get it. Neither do most people I know, English and French.

Ottawa has a rich, diversified, educated population that includes a wealth of young people studying or already in the work force who like you, are determinedly forging ahead towards their dreams and ambitions. Most have studied their second official language and like so many of their parents, they speak or understand that language. Countless English speaking and immigrant families have had the wisdom to register their children in French or immersion schools, a gift to them and to our community. You know very well that being open and receptive to languages, cultures, indeed to all the diverse elements that constitute a community enhances quality of life and appeals to employers seeking to set up in Ottawa.

Why you stubbornly refuse to grasp the situation and come out as the inspiring leader of an officially bilingual Ottawa is unimaginable. You, Jim, are in the best position to lead a new culture of pride and openness, to motivate young people by valuing their bilingual/trilingual skills! You know very well that the federal and provincial governments will contribute generously. The time has come. You can do this Mister Mayor.

Jacqueline Pelletier  
Ottawa