



SOMERSET WEST
COMMUNITY
HEALTH
CENTRE

January 27, 2017

Mayor Jim Watson
Ottawa City Hall
110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 1J1

Subject: Support for the City of Ottawa's Official Bilingual Status

Dear Mayor Watson,

Somerset West Community Health Centre (SWCHC) is proud to add our voice to the thousands of citizens, as well as numerous local organizations, who want the City of Ottawa to become officially bilingual before Canada's 150th celebrations this year.

As you probably know, the #BilingualOttawa initiative wishes to officially recognize Ottawa's bilingual character in the *City of Ottawa Act, 1999*. Furthermore, the movement aims to protect the City's existing Bilingualism Policy by incorporating it into the Bilingualism By-Law. With no added costs to the City, this approach will ensure the sustainability of French-language services in Ottawa while recognizing the equal status of both of Canada's official languages in municipal services.

SWCHC's funding agreement with the City of Ottawa includes a clause that recognizes and respects the City's Bilingualism Policy. An officially bilingual Ottawa would reinforce the importance of this policy and help strengthen our collective responsibility and ability to respond to the needs of the francophone community.

Thank you, Mayor Watson, for your attention to this important initiative. We sincerely hope that you will see this as an exciting opportunity to reiterate your commitment to the unique linguistic duality of the Nation's Capital.

Sincerely,

Dick Stewart
Chair of the Board of Directors

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