



KANSAS CITY MISSOURI

**Ordinance 240165 - Creating a Language Access
Office**

- **Ricardo Flores**, Lykins Neighborhood Association
- **Mary Allison Joseph**, KC Tenants
- **Working Team, 20 members:**

Impacted people, including immigrants, children of immigrants, and professional language access providers from **KC Tenants** and Advocates for Immigrant Rights and Reconciliation (**AIRR**)



THREE MAIN QUESTIONS

1. What have non-English speaking residents' experiences with the City been like with current language access procedures in place?
2. What is most important to non-English speaking residents for the City to include in their language access program?
3. What do non-English speaking residents want and need from the City long-term, in a language access program and beyond?

SURVEY

- **Published in 7 languages:**
Burmese, Somali, Swahili, Spanish
Arabic, Bosnian, and English
- **348 total responses**
- **Over 30 languages**
- **From nearly every zip code
in the city**



COMMUNITY FORUM #1

SPANISH, BURMESE, SWAHILI, TAGALOG, GERMAN AND ENGLISH



COMMUNITY FORUM #2

HELD IN SPANISH WITH SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION IN ENGLISH



KUOMBA UMC



YESU NI JIBU CHURCH



INVITED STAKEHOLDERS

KCMO Health Department
Kansas City Public Schools
North Kansas City Public Schools
ALAS (Association of Latin American Students)
Care Beyond the Boulevard
Catholic Charities
Communities Concerned for Immigrants and Refugees
Consulate of Mexico in Kansas City
Della Lamb
Don Bosco
Kansas City Public Library

El Centro Inc.
Guadalupe Center
Hispanic Development Fund
Jerusalem Farm
Jessica Piedra Law Firm
Jewish Vocational Services
KSMODA
Mattie Rhodes
Revolución Educativa
Teamsters
UMKC African Student Union
Vamos KC
Westside Neighborhood Association

RATIFICATION



RATIFICATION



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

750+ PEOPLE

39 LANGUAGES

NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGES

- **AFRICA**

Bangubangu, Bemba, Bembe, Chichewa, Dinka, French (Burundi, Congo, and others), Kinyamulenge, Kinyarwanda, Krio, Lingala, Nyanja, Portuguese (Mozambique), Rundi, Somali, Swahili

- **THE AMERICAS**

Creole, Mixteco, Portuguese (Brazil), Spanish

- **EUROPE**

Bosnian, Danish, German, Greek, Italian

- **EAST ASIA, SOUTHEAST ASIA, AND PACIFIC ISLANDS**

Burmese, Chin, Chinese, Chuukese, Indonesian, Karen, Pohnpeian, Tagalog, Thai, Vietnamese

- **SWANA (Southwest Asia and North Africa)**

Arabic, Kurdish, Persian



HIGHLIGHTS

- **54%** avoided City services altogether
- **61%** faced difficulties when trying to get City services
- **81%** had to rely on family or friends to interpret/translate or had to interpret/translate



HIGHLIGHTS

- A Need for **Multilingual Community Engagement**
- A Desire to Actively Participate in the **Democratic Process**
- A Need for **Culturally Competent and Multilingual** Interpreters and Staff
- A Need for **Plain Language Communication**



AUDIT OF CITY SERVICES

- Water
- Trash/Recycling
- Democracy
- Parks
- Healthy Homes
- Labor rights violation
- Rental assistance
- Court services
- Health - vaccines
- Housing rights violations
- Health - restaurant inspections



AUDIT OF CITY SERVICES

In total, only 1 out of 5 Spanish attempts
were successful.

In total, only 1 out of 15 Portuguese attempts
were successful.



LANGUAGELINE

- Current contract in place since 2018, set to expire this year
- The Health Department spent just under \$30k on the LanguageLine contract in 2023; meanwhile, 311 spent less than \$700.



OTHER CITIES // HOUSING LANGUAGE ACCESS

Ordinance 240165 is consistent with policies in

- Atlanta
- Los Angeles
- Chicago
- New York City



OTHER CITIES // STAFFING NEEDS

- Build relationships with diverse immigrant, refugee, and language communities
- Centralize data collection and reporting and make data-based decisions
- Provide Citywide coordination
- Oversee translation project management and serve as internal translation reviewers
- Provide some in-house interpretation support
- Ensure consistent quality of services and offer regular trainings
- Manage feedback and complaint processes



OTHER CITIES // ACCESS AT SCALE

THIRD-PARTY CONTRACTORS



STAFF

- Full-scale translation and interpretation
- In-person interpretation services
- City-wide quality standards
- Community buy-in
- Long term money savings



Questions ?





















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