

Language Access Plan

City of Reno

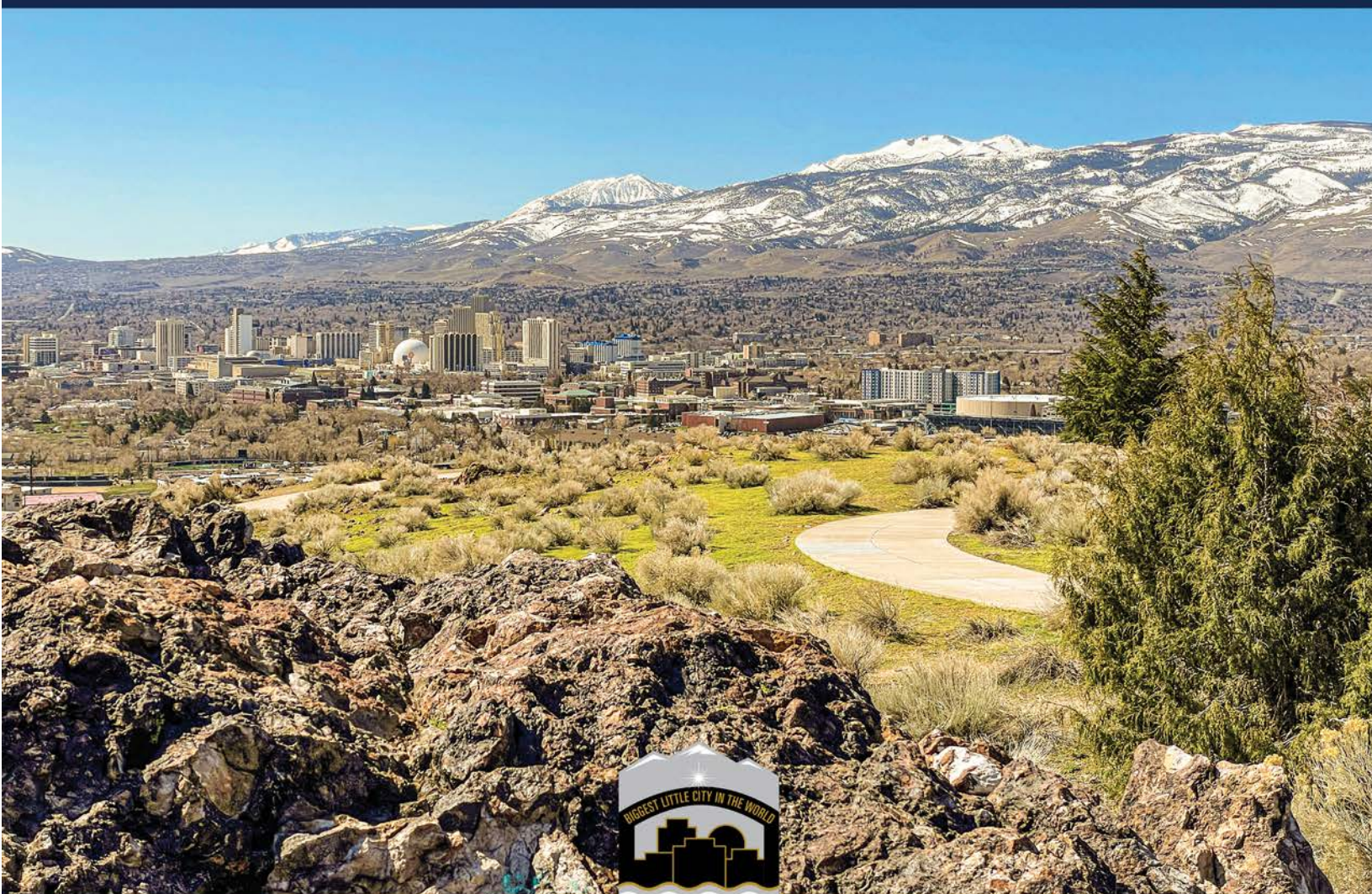


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Introduction

The City of Reno Language Access Plan (LAP) serves the purpose of ensuring equitable access to government services, programs, and information for individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP). This document provides a framework in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for the provision of language assistance to LEP persons who come in contact with the City of Reno, and fulfills the Assembly Bill (AB) 266 mandate.

As Reno experiences population growth and community diversity, it's vital to implement tools to facilitate meaningful access to public services and resources. The City of Reno is committed to transparency in governance and delivering quality customer service. This commitment includes making reasonable efforts to ensure that City services and related information are accessible, pertinent, and timely for constituents. Over the years, the City of Reno has augmented accessibility for members of the community and in compliance with Nevada AB 266, this plan captures ongoing efforts and establishes a vision for the future.

The following are the primary objectives:

Access to Services: Ensure all members of the public can receive the services they need, regardless of their language proficiency.

Improve Service Delivery: Ensure all members of the public can access and navigate government services more easily to increase utilization of services, better outcomes, and increase levels of satisfaction.

Civic Participation: Ensure all members of the public have the opportunity to civically engage and participate with the City of Reno.

Social Cohesion: Break down barriers between different language groups to promote understanding, empathy, and collaboration among community members.

By accommodating and 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

The City of Reno is committed to developing a comprehensive language access policy to complement the provisions outlined in AB 266. This plan is a aspirational and robust framework of procedures that will guide language access across the organization.

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.

Assessment of Language Needs

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. 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 brief community survey has been developed to gather insight into the language needs and what members of the public find important for the plan to include. The survey is available in English, Spanish, Tagalog/Filipino Language, and Mandarin. Survey conducted as part of the plan will remain live online. Reference survey analysis for results.

Language Access Services

The City of Reno has made significant investments in language access services and public accessibility to overcome language barriers. Below are current language resources available to the public at-large and City staff to enhance service delivery.

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.

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 Communications Department hired a full-time Public Communications Specialist of Inclusive Communications in August 2022, focused on growing inclusive communication efforts with all residents of Reno's diverse community and a heavy commitment to government bilingual Spanish communications and outreach.

The Communications Department has worked to provide bilingual graphics for events and services, include a Spanish option for all outgoing press releases, and manage Spanish content for the City of Reno en español Facebook page, where according to a Facebook IQ study, Facebook is the primary platform for US Hispanics to communicate as of June 2022.

The communications team works to ensure surveys for community engagement efforts are translated and are accessible. Projects such as the Spanish and English Reno Fire Department safety videos and Municipal Court Spanish and English arraignment rights videos.

The communications team also has invested in two paid Spanish advertising contracts with Juan 101.7 FM for a bimonthly Nuestro Reno radio segment and with ABC KOL8/Telemundo Reno for a biweekly 60-second Su Reno En Un Minuto Spanish television segment about local government services, programs, events, and initiatives.

These Spanish communications and outreach efforts continue to evolve and work in greater collaboration with all City departments to better engage and communicate with all residents of Reno's diverse community.

Public Comment Assistance

The City Clerk's Office has implemented a procedure to ensure broad community involvement in City governance. Voicemail and emailed 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.

Universal Language Services

This is a premier interpreter and translator referral service agency offering experienced certified professionals for over-the-phone interpretation (OPI), video remote interpretation (VRI), on-site interpretation, and document and multimedia translation in over 200 languages including sign, tactile and captioning, on-demand 24/7/365.

- A. Each City department will be responsible for covering the cost related to the service used. View [Language Identification Guide](#) and [Language List](#)

The City has a contract that is effective until 2026. Below is a list of interpretation and translation services available with rates.

Service	Language	Cost
Over the Phone Interpretation (OPI)	Spanish	\$1.09 per minute
Over the Phone Interpretation (OPI)	All Other Languages	\$1.19 per minute
Video Remote Interpretation (VRI)	American Sign Language (ASL)	\$1.39 per minute
Video Remote Interpretation (VRI)	All Other Languages	\$1.25 per minute
Document Translation Services	Spanish	\$0.19 cents per word
Document Translation Services	All Other Languages	\$0.32 cents per word

Epic Translations

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

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.

ALTA

This is a language and cultural solutions provider. Translation and localization services available. This service is currently available in Municipal Court.

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](#).

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

Allocation of Funding for Language Access Services

To identify a detailed budget for language access, several key considerations must be considered. City staff will work to gather comprehensive data and financial information to accurately reflect the needs of both the community and various departments. Key considerations include:

1. Translation and Interpretation Services:

- Costs for hiring professional translators and interpreters for different languages.
- Services for both written and oral translation, including in-person and remote options.
- Emergency and on-demand translation services.

2. Integrated Technology Solutions:

- Software for translation and interpretation, such as automated translation tools and multilingual websites.
- Hardware needs, such as headsets, microphones, and video conferencing tools for remote interpretation.
- Maintenance and upgrade costs for technological solutions.

3. Staff Training and Development:

- Training programs for staff to effectively use language access tools and interact with non-English speaking residents.
- Costs for hiring multilingual staff or providing language training to existing staff.

4. Outreach and Community Engagement:

- Developing and distributing multilingual materials to ensure community awareness and accessibility.
- Organizing community events and meetings in multiple languages to engage non-English speaking residents.

5. Legal and Compliance Requirements:

- Ensuring compliance with local, state, and federal regulations regarding language access.
- Potential costs associated with legal consultations and audits to ensure compliance.

6. Evaluation and Monitoring:

- Regular assessment of language access needs and the effectiveness of current resources.
- Budget for surveys, feedback mechanisms, and other evaluation tools to continuously improve language access services.

City staff will need to collect data on the language needs of the community, the specific requirements of each department, and the financial implications of the above considerations. This thorough analysis will take place in 2024 – 2025 and will address the language access needs of all stakeholders.

City of Reno Language Access Plan Timeline

Objective	Initiatives	FY 23/24	FY 24/25	FY 25/26+
Assessment & Planning	Conduct Comprehensive Needs Assessments to Identify the Linguistic Needs of the Community	X	X	X
Assessment & Planning	Establish a Language Access Task Force	X	X	
Assessment & Planning	Develop and Update a Language Access Plan in Accordance with AB266		X	X
Assessment & Planning	Develop and Update a Language Access Landing Page on the City of Reno Website	X	X	X
Assessment & Planning	Update Staff Language Inventory	X	X	X
Policy Development	Create a Language Access Policy			X
Resources and Language Support	Implement Interactive Technology		X	X
Resources and Language Support	Identify Language Accommodations for Public Meetings		X	X
Training and Capacity Building	Provide Staff Training on Language Access Protocols and Resources		X	X
Training and Capacity Building	Develop and Update Internal Landing Page of Language Access Services for Staff		X	X
Service Diversification	Conduct Inventory of Current Documents Translated and Develop a Standard Process		X	
Service Diversification	Identify Vital Documents that Need to be Translated		X	X
Service Diversification	Launch Community Awareness Campaigns about Available Language Access Services		X	X
Monitoring and Quality Assurance	Execute Public Policy Noticing for Reno Planning Commission	X	X	X
Monitoring and Quality Assurance	Host Language Access Committee to Monitor the Quality and Efficacy of Language Services and Make Improvements as Necessary		X	X
Monitoring and Quality Assurance	Establish an Assessment Tool to Measure the Effectiveness of Language Access			X
Monitoring and Quality Assurance	Perform Biennium Review and Update Language Access Plan		X	X
Monitoring and Quality Assurance	Submit Updated LAP Plan to the Office of New Americans by August 1 on Every Even Year	X		X
Sustainability and Innovation	Identify Financial Impact and Detailed Budget Reflecting Community and Department Needs		X	X
Sustainability and Innovation	Explore Funding Opportunities for Ongoing and Future Language Access Initiatives	X	X	X
Sustainability and Innovation	Explore New Technologies and Methodologies in Language Access		X	X

Language Access Community Survey Analysis

A total of 71 constituents took the survey. Of the total, 67 were in English and 4 were in Spanish. The following summary highlights the language access survey results.

Preferred Spoken Languages

The majority of respondents (93.85%) prefer to use English for communication with the City of Reno. Spanish is the second most preferred language, with 9 respondents

- **English:** 61 respondents
- **Spanish:** 9 respondents
- **German:** 1 respondent
- **Other:** 0 respondents

English Language Proficiency Ratings

A majority of respondents rate themselves as Advanced/Proficient in speaking (84.06%), reading (85.51%), writing (79.71%), and listening (82.61%) English.

Speaking:

- **Beginner Elementary:** 2 respondents
- **Pre-Intermediate:** 2 respondents
- **Intermediate:** 2 respondents
- **Upper-Intermediate:** 7 respondents
- **Advanced/Proficient:** 58 respondents

Reading:

- **Beginner Elementary:** 3 respondents
- **Pre-Intermediate:** 1 respondent
- **Intermediate:** 3 respondents
- **Upper-Intermediate:** 5 respondents
- **Advanced/Proficient:** 59 respondents

Writing:

- **Beginner Elementary:** 2 respondents
- **Pre-Intermediate:** 3 respondents
- **Intermediate:** 2 respondents
- **Upper-Intermediate:** 9 respondents
- **Advanced/Proficient:** 55 respondents

Listening:

- **Beginner Elementary:** 2 respondents
- **Pre-Intermediate:** 2 respondents
- **Intermediate:** 3 respondents
- **Upper-Intermediate:** 7 respondents
- **Advanced/Proficient:** 57 respondents

Language Use in Interaction with the City of Reno

Most respondents (91.55%) use English when interacting with the City of Reno. Spanish and ASL are also used, though to a lesser extent.

Most Often Used Language:

- **English:** 65 respondents
- **Spanish:** 4 respondents
- **Tagalog:** 0 respondents
- **Chinese:** 0 respondents
- **American Sign Language (ASL):** 2 respondents
- **Other:** 0 respondents

Preferred Language for Communication and Information Delivery:

- **English:** 59 respondents
- **Spanish:** 9 respondents
- **Tagalog:** 0 respondents
- **Chinese:** 0 respondents
- **American Sign Language (ASL):** 2 respondents
- **Other:** 1 respondent

Awareness of Language Services

A majority of respondents (78.87%) are not aware of the translation, interpretation, and ASL services offered by the City of Reno.

- **Yes:** 15 respondents
- **No:** 56 respondents



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

Most respondents (66.67%) feel very comfortable asking for help if they have difficulty communicating in English.

- **1 (Very Uncomfortable):** 7 respondents
- **2:** 4 respondents
- **3:** 9 respondents
- **4:** 5 respondents
- **5 (Very Comfortable):** 46 respondents

Encountering Language Barriers

While a majority (74.65%) have not encountered language barriers, 25.35% have faced such issues.

- **Yes:** 18 respondents
- **No:** 53 respondents

Requests for Non-English Services or Documents

- **Yes:** 11 respondents
- **No:** 60 respondents

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.

Efforts should be made to ensure residents are aware of these resources and feel comfortable seeking help with language barriers. Regularly assessing and addressing language barriers in accessing city programs and services is also important to ensure inclusivity.

By prioritizing these areas, the City of Reno can continue improving communication and service delivery, meeting the needs of all its residents.

Language Access Staff Survey Analysis

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

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.