



How to enhance and promote the bilingual character of the Byward Market?

Dialogue Canada is putting forth a set of proposals aimed at enhancing and highlighting the bilingual character of the Byward Market. The Byward Market is a tourist site par excellence in the heart of Ottawa. We advocate making it easier for Byward Market visitors to experience Ottawa's bilingual culture.

Each proposal could be a separate project to be undertaken by an individual player or players already involved in the Byward Market sector.

1. Consultation for a bilingual Byward Market

Dialogue Canada proposes the organization of a consultation meeting to take note and discuss the recommendations aimed at enhancing and highlighting the bilingual character of the Byward Market. This consultation would take place online before the end of November 2020. Representatives of the following organizations should participate: the City of Ottawa (City Manager, French Language Services Directorate, Economic Development), Ottawa Markets, the Byward Market Business Improvement Zone, Invest Ottawa, Ottawa Tourism, the Société Économique de l'Ontario (SÉO), the National Capital Commission, the Regroupement des gens d'affaires (RGA) of the national capital, La Cité, ACFO Ottawa and Dialogue Canada.

Rationale: The Byward Market is the city's most central tourist commercial area, frequented by thousands of people every day. This sector already has Francophone and bilingual businesses and restaurants, as well as an increasingly bilingual "Place du Marché". The consultation of stakeholders for increased bilingualism at the Byward Market could foster their commitment and support within the framework of their respective mandates and programs as well as a new synergy.

2. Bilingual welcome resources for the Byward Market

Web sites, information kiosks, as well as the Ambassador student program at the Byward Market must offer a bilingual welcome to new visitors. The National Capital Commission, Ottawa Tourism, the City of Ottawa and Place du Marché are already displayed in both languages at the Byward Market. Hiring bilingual information officers and students is essential for an effective offer of bilingual services at the Byward Market, even if it means forging partnerships with bilingual or francophone educational institutions in Ottawa. They should be equipped with a bilingual Byward Market map and an information kit called "Visit the *Bilingual Byward Market* !". A weekly newsletter on the bilingual and French-speaking activities of the week should be produced.

Rationale: Bilingual, well-trained and properly equipped welcome resources are essential.

3. **Bilingual management in the Byward Market**

Continue to support key Byward Market organizations, including the Byward Market Business Improvement Zone (BIA), Ottawa Markets and the Byward Market Stall Holders Association (BMSHA), in their efforts at bilingualism. Their websites, e-commerce platforms, membership and business directories, official communications and meetings with members must be bilingual.

Rationale: Leadership for bilingualism must come from senior managers of the organizations bringing together the Byward Market.

4. **Support for bilingualism in the Byward Market**

Government programs to support bilingualism in Ottawa, such as those of ACFO Ottawa and the Regroupement des gens d'affaires (RGA) de la Capitale nationale should prioritize the Byward Market to help promote showcase bilingualism in Ottawa.

Rationale: The new Byward Market website is bilingual thanks to a grant from ACFO Ottawa. French is hardly present on the Byward Market ZAC website. Other needs in terms of translation, training and the hiring of bilingual staff were expressed in the survey conducted by Dialogue Canada.

5. **Bilingual security**

Make a formal and concerted request to the City of Ottawa, the Ottawa Police and all employers of security guards to prioritize the assignment of bilingual personnel to the Byward Market.

Rationale: Public and private security personnel have an essential role to play in the experience of linguistic duality at the Byward Market.

6. **Bilingual digitization of Byward Market businesses**

Equip organizations and businesses in the Byward Market with a view to favoring bilingual or multilingual digital platforms for online commerce. Invest Ottawa's Digital Main Street program is ideal for providing assistance to small and medium-sized businesses in the Byward Market.

Rationale: Bilingualism should be part of the strategic planning of any digital shift or upgrade of Byward Market businesses, and this should be part of Invest Ottawa's offer. Customers most often search the web in their language and wish to be served in their language. The algorithms of web search engines will find a multilingual website more easily and this is excellent for developing outside markets.

7. **Bilingual posters and menus in the Byward Market** Provide concerted and priority support for the translation of posters and menus of the Byward Market establishments, as part of the program to promote the offer of bilingual services of the RGA and / or in collaboration with the translation schools in the region.

Rationale: The businesses and restaurants of the bilingual "*Byward Market!*" must have the means to serve the public in both languages.

8. **L’Espace de La Francophonie au Marché By**

Make a formal and concerted request to the National Capital Commission for the creation of an "*Espace de La Francophonie*" in Les cours Sussex. It would be a privileged place for meetings, artistic events and relaxation with a French presence and animation.

Rationale: Anyone looking for an impromptu Francophone experience at the Byward Market, whether visitors, Francophiles or French immersion students, would know that there is a good chance of finding a Francophone presence there.

9. **Bilingual and volunteer citizen presence in the Byward Market**

Develop and coordinate a bilingual and volunteer citizen presence program to be offered to community organizations and groups in the Byward Market. A website, generic documents, information packages, a pin for identification, and a recognition program for dedication.

Rationale: Service clubs and retiree groups in the region are often on the lookout for cultural activities to stimulate the engagement of their members and serve the community. Among the possibilities: group excursions, welcoming visitors, entertainment at L’Espace de La Francophonie.

10. **Visit *The bilingual Byward Market!***

Orchestrate a promotional campaign focused on the experience of Canada's bilingual culture at the Byward Market. A logo, a slogan, a song, mascots, a hashtag and activities that create a "buzz" and target various audiences according to language (English, French), age (families, young people, singles, seniors) and interests (tourism, weekends, dating, nightlife, school visits).

Rationale: Stimulating traffic is the top priority for Byward Market merchants and, in doing so, we point out that linguistic duality and the Francophonie are very much present in the Byward Market (substantive message). In 2021, we expect tourism to the Byward Market to be mostly Canadian, both francophone and anglophone.

Context

Dialogue Canada's activation project for the promotion of bilingualism at the Byward Market was made possible thanks to a micro-grant from ACFO Ottawa's "Ottawa bilingual" program, received in February 2020. Due to the pandemic of Covid-19, which is still ongoing, the initial idea of studying the feasibility of an interactive electronic kiosk as a tool to promote the Francophonie in the Byward Market quickly transposed into a consultation by way **of survey of business owners** in the Byward Market. Despite the low response rate, useful contacts were made, suggestions communicated to us and we were able to come up with **a set of recommendations**.

The mission of **Dialogue Canada** is to provide Canadians of all regions, cultural and linguistic backgrounds with opportunities to know each other better and acknowledge their differences, to share their respective concerns, and to exchange their vision of the future of the country, based on communication and civic education, in order to ensure its prosperous and peaceful development.

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For more information

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