



Interpretation Pilot Proposal

Presented by: Amy Snider

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Purpose:

By providing interpreters upon request for City Council and Planning Commission meetings the City hopes to enable residents with limited English proficiency to further engage with our City and to more easily share their perspectives with City leadership.

Top 6 Languages Spoken at Home

Language Spoken	Estimate
English	37,917
Spanish	7,809
Other Indo-European (e.g. French, Haitian, Italian, German, Greek, Urdu, Punjabi, Nepali)	1,016
Russian, Polish or other Slavic	789
Chinese (including Mandarin, Cantonese)	654
Arabic	532
Total population	50,335

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Top 5 Languages Spoken at Home Other than English: Percentage unable to speak English “very well”

Language Spoken	Estimate	Percentage
Spanish	7,809	
<i>Speak English less than "very well"</i>	4,184	54%
Other Indo-European (e.g. French, Italian, German, Urdu, Punjabi, Nepali)	1,016	
<i>Speak English less than "very well"</i>	403	40%
Russian, Polish or other Slavic	789	
<i>Speak English less than "very well"</i>	453	57%
Chinese (including Mandarin, Cantonese)	654	
<i>Speak English less than "very well"</i>	380	58%
Arabic	532	
<i>Speak English less than "very well"</i>	347	65%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Simultaneous Interpretation



- Speech is interpreted into another language in real time with minimal delay
- Broadcast through use of specialized equipment, including headsets and headphones
- “Conference interpreting”

Consecutive Interpretation



- An individual speaks typically in shorter segments while the interpreter listens and then the interpreter delivers the speech in another language

Pilot Proposal

City staff recommends the creation of a one-year pilot program to provide simultaneous and consecutive interpretation service upon advance request for both City Council and City Planning Commission meetings.

City Council

Up to 24 meetings

Planning Commission

Up to 12 meetings

Total 36 meetings

Proposed Pilot Languages

Initial pilot program languages are proposed to be:

- Spanish
- Arabic
- Kurdish

Final languages provided depend on the City's ability to secure qualified interpreters.

Interpreter Vendors

- All interpreters will be vendors.
- \$30 per hour
- Interpreters need to have experience with simultaneous interpretation.
- **Minimum Qualifications Required:**
 - training, education, and experience equivalent to graduation from high school or GED.
 - 1 - 3 years experience professionally interpreting.
 - Professional interpretation training highly preferred.

Interpretation Program Parameters

- Requests must be received by the City Clerk four (4) days in advance of the meeting at which the service is needed.
- Requesting individual must arrive prior to 7:15pm.
- Two interpreters scheduled per meeting. They will rotate providing simultaneous and consecutive interpretation.

Interpretation Equipment

Thank you to Harrisonburg City Public Schools for allowing the City to borrow its simultaneous interpretation equipment as-needed for the pilot program.

Start Date

- Staff is aiming to for interpretation services to be available in June.
- Exact date still to be determined.
- Public announcement will be made once the services are available.



Questions?