



October 22, 2025

Council File: [22-1262](#), [24-0688](#)
Council District: All
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Honorable Karen Bass
Mayor, City of Los Angeles
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Attn: Legislative Coordinator

Honorable Members of the City Council
City of Los Angeles
c/o City Clerk, City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Attention: Jason Lopez
Legislative Assistant

TRANSMITTAL: REQUEST TO ESTABLISH A NEW QUALIFIED LIST OF LANGUAGE ACCESS VENDORS FOR CITYWIDE LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR TRANSLATION, INTERPRETATION, TRAINING, AND CONSULTATION SERVICES; REPORT BACK ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCORPORATING TECHNOLOGY TOOLS TO ADDRESS THE LANGUAGE NEEDS OF ANGELENOS

SUMMARY

The General Manager of the Community Investment for Families Department (CIFD) respectfully requests that your office review this transmittal and forward it to the appropriate committee for further consideration.

Through this transmittal, CIFD seeks approval of: (1) the evaluation results from the Citywide Language Access Plan (LAP) Implementation Request for Qualifications (RFQ) issued in May 2025, (2) authority to establish a qualified list of LAP Implementation consultants (Attachment A) selected through the RFQ process, for a term of three years, authority for CIFD and other City departments to solicit bids from the qualified list of consultants and execute contracts on an as-needed basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the City Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor:

- I. **APPROVE** the qualified list of consultants for as-needed Language Access Plan (LAP) implementation services for City departments recommended in Attachment A of this transmittal and identified through the Request for Qualifications issued by CIFD in May 2025 for a term of three years, effective on the date of final Council and Mayor approval;

- II. **AUTHORIZE** the General Manager of CIFD, or designee, to solicit bids from the qualified list, detailed in Attachment A of this transmittal, and execute contracts on an as-needed basis, subject to funding availability, in compliance with the City's contracting policies, and City Attorney approval as to form;
- III. **AUTHORIZE** General Managers of City departments, or designees, to solicit bids from the qualified list, detailed in Attachment A of this transmittal, and execute contracts on an as-needed basis, subject to funding availability, in compliance with the City's contracting policies, and City Attorney approval as to form;
- IV. **AUTHORIZE** General Managers, or designees, of City departments, upon execution of the contracts, to encumber and disburse funds to the contractors for services, in accordance with the terms set forth in the agreements; and,
- V. **AUTHORIZE** CIFD to prepare Controller instructions and/or make technical adjustments that may be required to implement the actions approved by the Mayor and Council on this matter, subject to CAO approval, and **AUTHORIZE** the Controller to implement these instructions.

BACKGROUND

As part of an ongoing effort to expand language access for underrepresented communities within the City of Los Angeles, the City Council instructed CIFD to advance this work through Council Files (C.F.) 22-1262 and 24-0688. C.F. 22-1262 directed CIFD to prepare and release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to establish a list of qualified vendors capable of providing indigenous language services and other essential language support, including translation, interpretation, training, and consultation. Staff were also instructed to return with the RFQ results, and a detailed plan for expending funds allocated to the Citywide Language Access Program. In parallel, C.F. 24-0688 called for a report on recommendations for incorporating technology tools to increase language access for Angelenos.

This report summarizes the three efforts that informed CIFD's approach to strengthening Indigenous language access and advancing the Citywide Language Access Program (LAP). These include the USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute and Comunidades Indigenas en Liderazgo (CIELO) report *Indigenous Migrants in Los Angeles County*, research conducted by the Paragon Policy Fellows, and the Citywide Language Access Annual Report prepared by CIFD.

The USC-CIELO report highlighted the presence of more than 36,500 Indigenous migrants in Los Angeles County, representing at least 24 communities and 36 different Indigenous languages. Many of these residents speak neither English nor Spanish and are frequently left out of public service delivery due to the lack of translation and interpretation in their native languages. This structural language barrier prevents equitable access to critical City services and reinforces social and economic exclusion.

In parallel, the Paragon Policy Fellows evaluated the potential use of artificial intelligence (A.I.) in addressing Indigenous language access gaps. Their research concluded that existing A.I. tools lack meaningful support for most Indigenous languages, rendering them inadequate for immediate implementation. In response, the fellows conducted a landscape analysis to identify alternative, community-rooted solutions. They developed a vetted list of community-based

organizations and vendors with expertise in Indigenous languages based on criteria such as language coverage, community trust, cultural competency, and service delivery capacity. This list was used to support targeted outreach for the City's Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for language services, ensuring that capable, mission-driven entities were included in the procurement process.

To promote consistent practices and improved coordination across departments, CIFD leads the City's Language Access Working Group, a cross-departmental body focused on implementing the Citywide Language Access Program. In February 2025, CIFD published the first Citywide Language Access Annual Report, based on submissions from 41 departments. This report provided the first citywide baseline of language services, revealing key gaps, including the absence of vendor coverage for at least two Indigenous languages on the City's threshold and emergency language lists. It also identified unmet needs in training and consultation services, as well as continued reliance on in-kind support from community-based organizations.

These combined findings informed the development of the RFQ criteria, guided targeted outreach strategies, and supported a more equitable and informed vendor selection process aligned with the City's language access goals.

DISCUSSION

CIFD currently contracts with Focus Language International Inc. through City contract C-143391, to provide interpretation and translation services. This contract, which is set to expire on May 26, 2026, supports departments in meeting the City's language access mandates. To ensure the continuation and expansion of these services, CIFD issued an RFQ on May 19, 2025, to establish a qualified list of vendors to deliver language access services, as part of the Citywide Language Access Plan.

The RFQ sought translation and/or interpretation services for the following threshold languages: Khmer/Cambodian, Bengali, Hindi, Arabic, Thai, Japanese, Vietnamese, Russian, Farsi (Persian), Filipino/Tagalog, Chinese (Traditional and Simplified Chinese), Armenian, Korean, and Spanish. Additional languages included Chinantec, K'iche', Zapotec, Ayuujk, Q'anjob'al, Haitian Creole, Italian, Ukrainian, Yoruba, Pashto, Portuguese, Ilocano, Urdu, Punjabi, Amharic, French, and Hebrew. Respondents were also instructed to describe any A.I. tool or software used to provide translation and/or interpretation services.

Informed by department feedback and findings from the Annual Report, CIFD, working closely with language access liaisons, also identified a critical gap in the availability of training and consultation services. These services are vital for building departments' internal capacity to meet the complex and evolving linguistic needs of the communities they serve. As a result, training and consultation were formally added to the RFQ scope, reflecting a more comprehensive approach to language access—one that extends beyond direct service delivery to include institutional capacity-building.

Procurement Process

On February 23, 2024, Council authorized CIFD to prepare and release an RFQ to establish a list of qualified vendors to provide indigenous language and other essential language services. These services include, but are not limited to, translation, interpretation, training, and consultation.

On March 24, 2025, CIFD requested a determination from the Personnel Department based on the provisions of Charter Section 1022. On March 25, 2025, the Personnel Department

determined that the City does not have any classifications available with the specific experience or expertise needed to operate the services for the Citywide Language Access Plan and that other departments are not able to provide the resources required to perform the work outlined in the anticipated contracts.

On May 19, 2025, CIFD issued a Request for Qualifications to establish the first prequalified vendor list for the Citywide Language Access Plan Implementation, covering translation, interpretation, training, and consultation services for a three-year term. The RFQ outreach included its issuance to over 14,000 vendors across nine (9) North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes through the City's Regional Alliance Marketplace for Procurement (RAMP ID 213349). There were 132 unique views of the RFP opportunity. On June 3, 2025, CIFD conducted a Proposers' Conference with 50 registered attendees.

Proposers were invited to submit questions via email through July 1, 2025. A total of 80 questions were received, and responses were posted for all vendors to review. CIFD received a total of seventeen (17) proposal submissions by the RFQ deadline of July 8, 2025. Four (4) proposals did not meet the threshold requirements. The remaining thirteen (13) were evaluated based on experience, qualifications, capacity to serve underserved languages, and proposed costs. Ten (10) proposals scored above the minimum score of 70 points for one or more of the service components: Translation, Interpretation, Training, and Consultation.

Procurement Process Timeline: Key Dates and Milestones

EVENT	DATE
RFQ Released	May 19, 2025
Proposer's Conference	June 3, 2025
RFQ Submission Deadline	July 8, 2025
RFQ Review Period Completed	September 11, 2025
CIFD notified proposers of scores	September 12, 2025
Appeals Process Completed	September 17, 2025

Evaluation Process

Each proposal underwent a threshold review to ensure the proposal met the minimum eligibility criteria. Only those proposals that passed threshold review were eligible for consideration. Eligible proposals were then evaluated and scored by a panel of reviewers, who completed the RFQ Reviewer Training. During this training, reviewers received an overview of the RFQ process, trained on the use of the RFQ scoring tool, and reviewed and signed the Conflict of Interest/Non-Disclosure Statement.

Following individual evaluations, reviewers convened to discuss and establish a consensus score for each proposal. To qualify for placement on the list of "Professional Service Providers," a proposal needed to receive a minimum score of 70. Evaluations were based on the relevant experience of the proposers, quality of responses to the narrative questions, and the reasonableness of the proposed costs compared to those of other proposers. Proposals were evaluated according to the following categories:

EVALUATION CRITERIA	Points
<i>Demonstrated Experience</i> Quality and depth of the Proposer's experience and expertise as it relates to the services for which the Proposer is applying: training of assigned personnel, including education and certifications; work experience with the City of Los Angeles, other government agencies and private contract activities; description of services; references; and other items as outlined in the Proposal Package section of the RFQ.	30
<i>Demonstrated Capacity</i> Proposer's capacity to provide the required services, including assigned program staff size, program staffing capabilities, major accomplishments, work plan, methodology and procedures, knowledge of applicable regulations, capacity to complete citywide projects within a reasonable amount of time, and other items as outlined in the Proposal Package section of this RFQ.	50
<i>Cost Reasonableness</i> The reasonableness and appropriateness of the proposed costs in relation to all other proposals.	20
TOTAL POINTS	100
Local Business Preference (see Section III., A., 21. Local Business Preference Program for details)	Up to 10
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	110

A minimum threshold review was conducted immediately following the submission deadline of July 8, 2025. During this review, CIFD determined that five of the 17 proposers had not completed the mandatory Business Inclusion Program (BIP) requirements on RAMP. CIFD contacted each proposer to confirm their compliance status and provided an opportunity to submit documentation demonstrating completion of the required BIP outreach activities. Of these five proposers, one presented documentation clearly demonstrating that the proposer completed the BIP outreach. As a result, 13 proposals proceeded to scoring by independent reviewers. At the conclusion of the scoring process, all proposers were notified of the scoring results.

Of the 13 proposals evaluated, 10 firms were deemed qualified in at least one of their selected areas, having met the minimum score of 70 out of 110 points. One firm was deemed not qualified in one or more of its selected services, and three firms were determined not qualified in any of the services they proposed. A summary of the number of proposals received for each service, along with the number deemed qualified, is provided below.

Service	Total Proposals Received	Total Qualified	Provide Services for Indigenous threshold languages
1. Translation	10	9	4
2. Interpretation	9	9	5
3. Training	5	3	
4. Consultation	7	4	

Appeals Process

On September 12, 2025, CIFD notified all proposers of the results of the proposal review process. Each notification included the scores received for each selected service area and included detailed instructions regarding the appeals process. Proposers were informed that appeals could only be submitted on procedural issues, such as, if CIFD failed to follow the published process for posting information or collecting applications and attachments. A disagreement with, or objection to, the scores awarded does not constitute a basis for an appeal. Differences of opinion about the merits of the proposal do not constitute grounds for submitting an appeal. Appeals may not include any new or additional information that was not submitted with the original proposal. The deadline to request an appeals hearing was September 17, 2025; no appeals were submitted.

Summary of RFQ Results

Attachment A lists the qualified vendors and their proposed services. The qualified list will be effective for a three-year term. When services are required, the City will issue a request for bids to vendors on the list, based on the specific scope of each assignment. Contracts will be awarded on an as-needed basis to the vendor deemed most responsive and cost-effective for each assignment.

Notably, none of the respondents proposed the use of AI tools or software for translation or interpretation services. However, should the City choose to explore the use of AI tools in the future, Attachment B provides an overview of commonly available AI-based translation tools, including their key features, limitations, and costs associated with basic plans.

NEXT STEPS

The purpose of this RFQ is to establish a list of qualified vendors to provide language access services. Services may be provided through departmental contracts or on an as-needed basis, depending on the needs of the City. Upon approval of this report by the City Council and the Mayor, the qualified vendor list will be made available to all City departments and will remain in effect for a three-year term, starting from the date it is approved by the City Council. While the list is active, City departments may contract for the services solicited from any of the vendors on the approved, prequalified list.

CIFD has approximately \$486,000 available to support language access services. Of this total, CIFD plans to allocate roughly \$120,000 for translation and interpretation services, an amount aligned with the previous year's spending. The remaining \$366,000 will be dedicated to training and consultant services to support the City's 41 departments. Requests for services

and support will be assessed and provided to ensure that resources are fully expended in a targeted and equitable manner with the goal of strengthening language access across all departments.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The recommendations in this transmittal have no impact on the General Fund. The funding is currently available in CIFD's budget.



ABIGAIL R. MARQUEZ
General Manager

Attachment A— Proposed Qualified List of Vendors to Support Citywide Language Access Plan Implementation

Attachment B— List of A.I. Tools

List of Qualified Vendors to Provide Language Access Services

Service 1: Interpretation Services

Avantpage, Inc.
Cal Interpreting & Translations
Focus Language International Inc.
Key Translations International
Language Line Services
Special Service for Groups, Inc.
Sway B Access LLC
TaikaTranslations, LLC
TransPerfect Translation International

Service 2: Translation Services

Avantpage, Inc.
Cal Interpreting & Translations
Focus Language International Inc.
Key Translations International
Language Line Services
Special Service for Groups, Inc.
Sway B Access LLC
TaikaTranslations, LLC
TransPerfect Translation International

Service 3: Training Services

Sway B Access LLC
TaikaTranslations, LLC
TransPerfect Translation International

Service 4: Consultation Services

Poder Consulting Group
Sway B Access LLC
TaikaTranslations, LLC
TransPerfect Translation International

List of A.I. Tools

Tool	Features	Limitations	Cost
Wordly	Provides real-time translation, live captions, transcripts, summaries, and audio output. Compatible with virtual, in-person, and hybrid settings. Supports over 60 languages and more than 3,000 language pairs. Users can choose between audio output and on-screen captions for improved accessibility and readability.	As with all AI-based tools, accuracy may decrease in cases of rapid or overlapping speech, strong accents, or significant background noise. The system may struggle to capture nuanced meaning or precise legal and technical terminology, and human oversight is often recommended. Additionally, support for some languages may be less robust than others.	\$6,000 to \$12,000, depending on the languages required and the number of participants (ranging from 50 to 500 users).
Maestra	Provides live translation and captioning for meetings in real time, supporting over 125 languages. Ideal for virtual and hybrid events, ensuring accessibility and engagement across diverse audiences.	Free or lower-tier plans may experience increased latency and reduced accuracy. Output quality is influenced by speech clarity, microphone quality, and background noise. Slang, idioms, and informal expressions may be misinterpreted or mistranslated.	Basic and Premium plans range from \$39 to \$79 per month, depending on the number of usage minutes and included features.
Transync AI	Claims an error rate of less than 5%, with strong performance in handling fast speech, diverse accents, and specialized terminology. Offers low latency, making it well-suited for meetings and live events.	May miss contextual nuances or misinterpret overlapping speech. For legal proceedings or formal public meetings, human review or oversight is strongly recommended.	Annual subscription \$80/year
Palabra AI	Offers speech-to-speech translation with accompanying captions. Voice output is designed to sound natural, with latency reportedly under one second. Claims high accuracy across various settings and provides secure, encrypted communication. Well-suited for hybrid events.	While performance claims are strong, real-world effectiveness should be tested within your specific community, considering common accents, dialects, and typical background noise. Certain edge cases, such as legal precision or rapid speech, may present challenges. Additionally, voice cloning or translation features may produce unnatural prosody or phrasing in some languages.	Basic plan \$50/month for 60 minutes/month Pro plan \$250/month for 300 minutes/month