



PLANNING DEPARTMENT

PO Box 40 • Irrigon, Oregon 97844
(541) 922-4624

May 15, 2024

TO: Citizen Involvement Advisory Committee (CIAC)
RE: Achievement in Community Engagement Award Nomination
FROM: Tamra Mabbott, Planning Director

I am pleased to nominate the Rural Engagement and Vitality (REV) Center and Euvalcree for the 2024 Achievement in Community Engagement Award. REV is a new non-profit organization that began as a special program within Eastern Oregon University and Wallowa Resources. <https://www.revcenter.org/> Euvalcree is a community-based organization advocating for Hispanic community members. <https://euvalcree.org/>

In 2023, Morrow County was awarded a Rural Transit Equity grant to study ways to engage traditionally underserved community members to identify opportunities to improve access to transit. The Planning Department's vision was also to learn how to engage traditionally underserved populations with planning. At the time, Morrow County operated a demand-ride bus service available to all residents. Ridership of Latinx community was low, yet Morrow County population is 39% Latino. <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/10e7b25c4c944dd181100d21c29a4180>

After being awarded the grant, Morrow County worked closely with DLCD Transit Planner, Madeline Phillips, to engage directly with Eastern Oregon University and specifically the REV Program Staff. This was important given the grant timeline and familiarity of REV with rural issues and Morrow County. Once the MOA was completed, Morrow County, REV and Ms. Phillips set up a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) comprised of businesses, special districts and KAYAK, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) who provides a free transit service throughout the region.

REV then engaged with Euvalcree to develop an outreach strategy to directly engage with Spanish speaking community members. Planning staff met with special districts, KAYAK and businesses who agreed to distribute the survey to their employees. The survey was translated into Spanish and Euvalcree conducted extensive outreach with individual community members where they met directly and assisted in completion of the survey. The result was over 200 surveys submitted! Very exciting for a county with a total population of 12,000.

REV staff, including Grace Donovan, Executive Director, and Dr. Daniel Costie, Assistant Professor of Public Administration, along with two EOU undergraduate students, carefully developed the survey with the input of county staff and the Technical Advisory Committee. Dr. Costie and his students then launched the ambitious task of understanding the survey results.

The results identified many ways to engage the public, particularly the non-English speaking Spanish speakers in Morrow County. The final report describes unique outreach methods and also includes a variety of recommendations for transit and for land use planning. County and REV staff involved in the process have utilized many of the techniques identified in the final report.

[https://www.co.morrow.or.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning/page/16730/rev -
_rtemc_report_2023.pdf](https://www.co.morrow.or.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning/page/16730/rev_-_rtemc_report_2023.pdf)

Since the project was completed, County Planning and Transit (The Loop) staff have implemented many of the recommendations that were derived from the planning project. For example, Planning now provides translation services and has engaged community members with current and long-range projects. The Loop now provides brochures and other information in both Spanish and English, especially valuable now that The Loop now includes a fixed-route service in and around the Boardman community.

Please consider this nomination for REV and Euvalcree for their unique approach to engage residents of Morrow County and for their insightful and thoughtful recommendations.

#6

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Page 2: ACE Award Application

Q1

Name of Project:

Rural Transit Equity

Q2

Jurisdiction or Local Government:

Morrow County

Q3

Applicant name:

Rural Engagement and Vitality (REV)

Q4

Contact email:

tmabbott@co.morrow.or.us

Q5

Contact phone number:

5415615011

Q6

Name of organization or agency:

Morrow County

Q7

Optional: Upload a cover letter or memo describing your project. Please limit document length to less than one two-sided page.

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Page 3: Project Team and Partners

Q8

Community based organization

Who led the community engagement effort for this project?

Q9

Project start date: Generalizations acceptable: e.g. "Spring 2021" or "2019"

Fall 2022

Q10

Target project completion date:

Spring 2023

Q11

What organizations participated in the project team and/or as project partners? If a project team or partnership includes a community based organization as a fundamental project team participant, please include them here.

Rural Engagement and Vitality Center and Euvalcree.

Q12

If community-based or community-serving organizations were involved in community engagement efforts, please identify the community or communities they represent in your response.

Euvalcree works in rural Oregon, Washington and Idaho.

Q13

To what extent were Oregon's tribes or tribal voices engaged in this conversation?

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) were part of the technical advisory committee. Additionally, CTUIR operates a free transit service in the region and therefore provided insight into the service and access. Staff involved included JD Tovey, Planning Director and Dani Schulte, CTUIR Transportation Planner and interim KAYAK Administrator.

Q14

No

Was a compensation model used for participation? If so, briefly describe.

Q15

Yes, this project received grant funding from::
DLCD

Was this project supported through grant funding?

Page 4: Project Description

Q16

Please describe the area affected by this project.

Morrow County

Q17

93

Where is your project in the planning cycle?

Q18

What is the desired outcome of this planning process? What will this land use planning effort accomplish?

Desired outcome was to better understand the needs of traditionally underserved communities and identify methods and programs to increase use of transit service.

In terms of land use, the project provided valuable insight and many tools county will utilize in the future to engage certain communities, especially

non-traditional and non-conventional forms of communication as a method to reach especially Spanish speaking residents. Many of the techniques invoked by Euvalcree have already been implemented as a way to meet with Spanish speaking residents and to get their input into planning work.

Page 5: Community Engagement

Q19

What are the community engagement objectives for this plan or project?

The primary objective was to connect with traditionally underserved populations and better understand their transit needs and opportunities. The primary planning objective was to learn methods to learn methods to engage traditionally underserved members of the community.

Q20

How did decision-makers use or consider this information in the decision-making process? (if applicable)

County was able to adapt the location of transit stops and transit schedule based on input from the report. The transit organization, "The Loop" also implemented bi-lingual marketing materials. The Loop implemented fixed route service in Boardman to the Port of Morrow and more service for Hispanic residents. Continuing to look at ridership data over the next year.

Q21

What tools did you use for communication and community engagement? Refer to Putting the People in Planning for descriptions of the tools below.

Translation Services,
Advisory Committee or Group,
Fact Sheets, Brochures or Flyers,
Other,
In person presentations,
Community Listening Session

Q22

If you answered "other" to the previous question, please describe what additional communication and community engagement tools were or are used.

Euvalcree went out into the community and met one on one with many non-English speaking residents. They met at restaurants, laundromat, stores, and at churches.

Page 6: Active Outreach and Engagement

Q23

Please describe the commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and how it influenced or is influencing this work.

Morrow County complies with all federal and state requirements. Additionally, Planning Department has implemented additional programs to be more inclusive based on the recommendations of the study. Finally, Morrow County recently updated policies.

Q24

What process did you use to identify priority populations/underserved communities affected by this work?

County and REV provided general input to Euvalcree, however, Euvalcree was already familiar with underserved communities in county based on their prior work during COVID.

Q25

What intentional efforts did you make to include priority populations/underserved communities?

Multiple outreach efforts were utilized by Euvalcree staff and county, including distributing bi lingual flyers and surveys, meeting one on one with people and working with the school district to distribute the survey to families.

Page 7: Monitoring, Evaluation and Documenting Your Community Engagement Program

Q26

What assessments/evaluations have you conducted of the community engagement work to date?

Tracking public meeting attendance,

Project team debrief after events,

Multiple opportunities for communities, individuals, or organization to express concerns about engagement

,

Synthesis of public comments and feedback

Q27

If the project is ongoing, describe assessments or evaluations planned as the project moves forward.

Project is complete and county is implementing.

Page 8: Lessons Learned

Q28

What did you learn through the assessment and evaluation of the community engagement process?

We learned that the traditional process for public involvement, e.g. public notice to adjacent property owners, or Legal Notice is not a good approach to engage non English speaking populations. The variety of recommendations will be utilized for long range planning.

Q29

Do any lessons learned have the potential to inform other, future phases, or new community engagement efforts? If so, please explain.

Yes, especially for long range planning (not land use decisions) county will utilize newly learned tools such as bi lingual flyers and outreach, direct calling of stakeholders.

Q30

How does the community engagement for this project align with overall community engagement efforts for this organization?

County will update Goal 1 to better implement the recommendations. Current Goal 1 makes broad reaching commitments to public engagement.
