



DLCD

Department of
Land Conservation
& Development

Rural Transit Equity in Morrow County

Achievement in Community Engagement Award Winner
Small Jurisdiction - Most Outstanding Project 2024

SUMMARY

In 2023, DLCD awarded Morrow County a Rural Transit Equity grant to study ways to engage traditionally underserved community members, with a goal to identify opportunities to improve access to transit. This grant-funded study won an ACE Award for their success engaging the community. Morrow County worked with Euvalcree and Eastern Oregon University's Rural Engagement Vitality (REV) Center to develop and distribute community surveys on transit accessibility.

DLCD Transit Planner Madeline Phillips engaged directly with REV program staff, set up a technical advisory committee which included the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation who provide free transit service throughout the region.

"We submitted our application for the ACE Award on behalf of these community-focused organizations, because we felt strongly that they deserved recognition for this amazing contribution to our county. The level of engagement we had from our community was outstanding."

TAMRA MABBOTT

Morrow County Planning Director



AT A GLANCE

Who?

Morrow County Planning Office

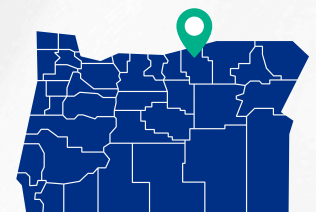
Euvalcree

Eastern Oregon University's Rural
Engagement Vitality (REV) Center

Oregon Department of Land
Conservation and Development

Where?

Morrow County



What?

Surveyed community members on
how to make existing transportation
opportunities more accessible

Why?

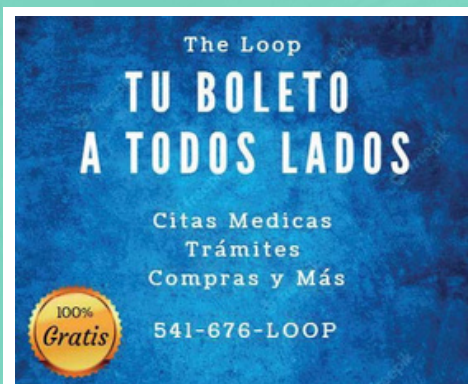
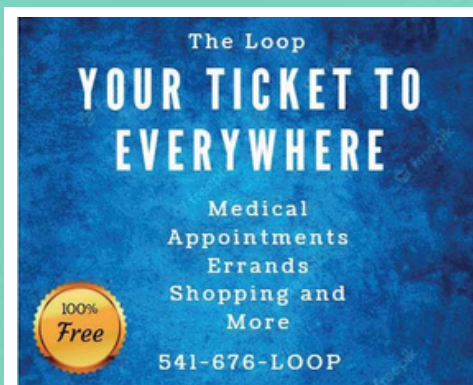
Low ridership of the Latinx
community, despite 39% of
the population being Hispanic

39%

METHODS

The project team distributed culturally-appropriate surveys throughout the county with help from Euvalcree, a Latinx community and advocacy organization, and local employers sharing the survey with their workers. The survey consisted of 60 questions, asking about current transportation habits, awareness of and barriers to transportation services, and demographics.

This project met community members where they were at, engaging non-English speakers at restaurants, stores, the laundromat, and churches.



New flyers promoting The Loop in English and Spanish

ACE Award Applicant Contact
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HIGHLIGHTED PRACTICES

Creative Collaboration and Local Partnerships

This community engagement effort was so successful because of its high level of collaboration between local community partners. For example, Euvalcree played a pivotal role in connecting with Morrow County's Latinx community. As a trusted community organization, they used existing relationships to help distribute the survey, strengthening engagement with this priority population. Additionally, a professor and two research students at Eastern Oregon University played a significant role in developing the survey and analyzing responses for key themes.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

287 community members responded to the survey, identifying gaps in local transit accessibility, including:

- More information on current transit systems
- More accessible information for non-English speakers
- More reliable transportation options
- Easier transportation options to reach work, to shop, and to reach medical care

Since the project was completed, Morrow County Planning and Transit (The Loop) staff have implemented many of the recommendations derived from survey responses. The county now provides translation services, such as brochures and flyers for The Loop in Spanish and English. The community survey also resulted in a new fixed-route bus service in and around the Boardman community. This project helped inform and engage community members, and it provided guidance for current and long-range local transit planning projects in Morrow County.



Learn more by reading the project report "[Rural Transportation Equity in Morrow County](#)".