

*“Diversity is not only a moral imperative, it is a strategy for success”  
–Cornell Belcher*

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# Engaging Latin@s in Independence

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*Community Liaison report to the City of  
Independence in Oregon.*

The report provides city officials with information about the Latino population of Independence, barriers to engagement, and specific recommendations to better engage the Latino community in city events, programs, etc. Any recommendations that are adopted will be implemented by the community liaison with the support of city staff.

**By: Elizabeth Calixtro**

*8/21/2014*

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## **About the Community Liaison Position**

The creation of the Community Liaison position is the product of strategic planning among city officials who identified a need for better communication and improved engagement with Latino constituents in the City of Independence. The position was designed as a full-time paid internship with goals set forth by the intern, City Manager, and Economic Development Director. The Community Liaison's primary responsibility is to develop strategies to improve communication and collaboration with the Latino community. The Community Liaison:

1. Networks with community organizations, local businesses, and the general public.
2. Assesses community needs and facilitates community collaborations in response to those needs.
3. Makes policy recommendations to city manager, mayor, and city council.
4. Implements and continues adopted programs/ initiatives.
5. Pursues additional funding sources to assist municipality in defraying the cost of new projects.

## **About Independence, OR**

Independence, Oregon is a small city located 3 miles away from Western Oregon University, a campus located in the City of Monmouth, with the highest percentage of Latino students among all Oregon University System (OUS) campuses. 12.2 percent of WOU (compared to 5.3 percent for all other OUS campuses) are Latino students. Independence is also 12 miles away from the Oregon state capitol, Salem. Independence is a largely agricultural community, and historically known as the "Hop Capital of the World", a history that owes part of its roots to the Latino presence and agricultural contributions dating back to as early as the 1540's. Today, the City of Independence proudly boasts a growingly vibrant downtown, new development, technological advancement initiatives (MINET), and a strong culture of volunteerism. The city is constantly collaborating with community members to improve livability, economic opportunities, and to stay current with technological and demographic changes underway.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides city council and staff with a summary of the Community Liaison's findings regarding Latino engagement in city and community affairs. The report includes a brief history of Latinos in Independence, an overview of demographic details, challenges that the city faces in effectively communicating with the Latino community, and opportunities to better communicate and collaborate with the local Latino community. The report also outlines recommended action items, and describes the progress that has been made from November 2013 to September 2014.

The internship was targeted at answering the following questions:

- What is the City's vision relating to the fourth strategic goal of improving access to participation in city government/services by all members of the community?
- What does leadership mean to various stakeholders?
- What are the barriers and opportunities to increased communication and collaboration with the Latino community in Independence?
- What strategies can be employed to achieve the city's vision in a way that is compatible with the Latino community's needs and interests?

Identified barriers to engagement include:

1. The Need to Build Long-term Relationships of Trust
2. Tokenism
3. Language Barriers
4. Communication
5. Access
6. Cultural Competence
7. Competing ideas of Engagement/ Leadership
8. Listening to Articulated Needs & Opportunities

The opportunities outlined in this report for improved communication and collaborations with the Latino community are:

1. Empowerment
2. Access & integration
3. Network and outreach
4. Dialogue and collaboration
5. Diversity and cultural competence
6. Policy and resources

The action items proposed have been identified by the community liaison as politically feasible through her involvement in the community, knowledge of

local resources, and acquaintance with regional change agents. Lastly, the progress reported at the end of the report has been led by the community liaison under the supervision of the economic development director and City Manager from November 2013 through September 2014. The incoming Latino Outreach Intern will move forward pending items starting on September 2014.

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide the City of Independence staff and elected officials with recommendations to improve communication and collaboration with the Latino community. Specifically, this report is an overview of the strategies that can be used to implement the vision set forth by City Council in the city's 2014 strategic plan:

Goal 4 - explore barriers to participation in city government and services by all members of the community. Create and implement process to improve access and participation in City boards, commissions, activities and services by people of all demographics.<sup>1</sup>

The Latino community represents over 35% of the total population and is currently underrepresented in city government, decision-making, and event planning, among other things. The reasons for this lack of representation include issues of access, language, cultural difference, community priorities and skepticism/fear of government entities. An increased representation is critical in the improvement of city services for this segment of the population, and for effective communication/collaboration.

The barriers, opportunities, and action items outlined in this report are based on research and observations by the community liaison. Further dialogue and the implementation of recommended action items will require the participation of Latino community members, those who are currently involved, and those who are not, as well as a cross section of change agents that include business leaders, service providers, elected officials, city staff, non-profit organizations, and the public at large (Latino & Non-Latino). This strategy will ensure that any progress that is made in terms of increasing communication and collaboration with the Latino community becomes self-sustainable and embedded in the culture Independence.

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<sup>1</sup> City of Independence 2014 Strategic Plan; Adopted May 13, 2014

## DEFINITIONS AND METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of this study, the term **Latino** refers to all individuals whose ethnic origin traces back to Spanish-speaking countries of Latin America.<sup>2</sup> Latinos may identify as such independent of their race, immigration status, nationality, etc. The term “Latinos” describes a diverse group of people with different religions, languages, political ideologies, occupations etc. This community continues to experience steady population growth and evolving identity articulations. The findings described in this study are not meant to generalize the experience of Latinos in the United States or Independence, and should be understood as a compilation of observations made from a multitude of angles.

The term **community engagement** in this study is used broadly to describe community involvement in Independence (e.g. volunteerism, event planning, community meetings) and government affairs (e.g. city events, programs, initiatives, boards/commissions). The primary areas of concern for the city currently are improved communication and collaboration between Latino residents of the Independence City area and City Government officials. The City of Independence engages the larger community primarily through service projects and volunteerism, organization partnerships, and economic development efforts. Latinos in Independence are underrepresented in these areas but are highly involved in other respects. Competing ideas of the meaning of community engagement will be discussed further in this study as a challenge to the city’s understanding of Latino participation in city/community affairs.

### Methodology

The community liaison conducted preliminary research for a period of 6-8 weeks targeted at answering the following questions:

- What is the City’s vision relating to the fourth strategic goal (of improving access to participation in city government/services by all members of the community)?
- What does leadership mean to various stakeholders?
- What are the barriers and opportunities to increased communication and collaboration with the Latino community in Independence?
- What strategies can be employed to achieve the city’s vision in a way that is compatible with the Latino community’s needs and interests?

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<sup>2</sup> García Bedolla, L. 2009. *Latino Politics*. Malden, MA: Polity.

The community liaison's research drew from case-study literature, historical accounts, and city archives to explore the history of Latinos in Independence and to identify best practices for community engagement among Latinos. Secondly, the liaison conducted a series of informational interviews and conversations with Latino community leaders, city personnel, elected officials, academics, and civic engagement experts. The goal was two-fold: answering the above questions and getting acquainted with local change agents/trusted community leaders in order to build a robust network for future collaboration. Lastly, the liaison made a focused effort to immerse herself in the community, foster relationships, and develop an understanding of the culture, leadership, interests, needs, & assets in the Independence Latino community. Her findings informed a set of recommendations that have been included in this report. Some action items listed in this report are currently being implemented and others are longer-term endeavors.

### **City Personnel & Elected Officials**

In an effort to develop a clear understanding of the city's vision/goals, informational interviews with city personnel and elected officials were arranged. The liaison interviewed several city council members, the City Mayor, the City Manager, the Economic Development Director, and several Police Officers. She also held informal conversations with administrative staff members. The community liaison sought to identify previous efforts, successes/challenges, and gauge their understanding of what civic engagement and leadership constitutes. This would guide the direction of her research, strategies, and goals throughout the following months.

### **Academics & Civic Engagement Professionals**

Following interviews with city officials and after gaining a better understanding of the city's vision she consulted with academics and professionals in the field on best practices for civic engagement, particularly in local Latino communities. The liaison interviewed academics and civic engagement professionals who had in-depth knowledge about the culture and history of Latinos in Independence. These interviews provided her with

1. Guidance on the strategies to apply in the Independence community,
2. An informed perspective on the feasibility of certain methods, and
3. An understanding of the various dynamics at play in the culture of the independence community.

## **Latin@ Leadership**

The community liaison interviewed various Latino leaders, community members, and elders from the community, mostly on an informal basis. She received some referrals from previous interviews and continued to request more from informal conversations. She actively pursued opportunities to attend community events/meetings catered to Latinos in order to get acquainted with the community. She also began attending and volunteering at the local Catholic church, which became a great way to learn more about the community and one of the best vehicles to communicate important information.

## CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### Historic Overview

*“The border crossed us.”*

From 1542 to the 1800’s Hispanic maritime expeditions “explored, mapped, and laid claim to much of the Pacific Northwest coast, including Oregon.”<sup>3</sup> In 1819, the United States assumed all Spanish claims north of what is now the California-Oregon Border through The Transcontinental Treaty. Immigrants traveled continuously to Oregon from Mexico, crossing the U.S.-Mexico border just a few miles south of Ashland, contributing to the development of the livestock economy. One of the most important events in Mexican-American histories was the signing of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe between the United States and Mexico. Through this treaty, the United States acquired more than half of Mexico’s territory, including California. At this point, the Oregon Territory ceased to be U.S. Border Territory.<sup>4</sup> This event had numerous implications in the identities of Mexican families who resided in what later became known as the “land of Aztlán” (Chicano culture). Often times, those who are mistakenly assumed to be or descend from immigrant families invoke the saying “We did not cross the border. The border crossed us”.<sup>5</sup>

### *Immigration*

Early in the 1900s, an influx of mostly Mexican immigrants entered the United States, including some who were self-exiles from revolutionary Mexico. During the Great Depression, as unemployment soared, and Anglos avoided labor farm jobs, Oregon farmers had to recruit substantial numbers of Hispanic laborers to sustain their farms, thereby attracting migrants from the southwest who would pursue job opportunities in Oregon. During World War II, the combined effects of white men contributing to war efforts and the incarceration of ethnic Japanese farmers led to increased labor recruitment, particularly through the “bracero” program with Mexico.<sup>6</sup> Finally, the shift in the timber industry away from clear-cutting and towards more labor-intensive reforestation sparked recruitment of mostly Mexican laborers on US Forest Service lands.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Gamboa, Erasmo. (1995). A personal Search for Oregon’s Hispanic History. In Erasmo Gamboa and Carolyn M. Buan (Eds.), *Nosotros: The Hispanic People of Oregon* (pp. 11-20). Portland, OR: Oregon Council for the Humanities.

<sup>4</sup> University of Oregon, Center for Latino/a, Latin-American Studies Latino Roots Timeline

<sup>5</sup> e.g., Anzaldúa, G. 2012. *Borderlands/La Frontera: the new mestiza*. Fourth ed: Aunt Lute Books.

<sup>6</sup> Pulido, L. 1996. *Environmentalism and economic justice: Two Chicano struggles in the Southwest*: University of Arizona Press Tucson, AZ.

<sup>7</sup> Sarathy, B. 2012. *Pineros: Latino Labour and the Changing Face of Forestry in the Northwest*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

## *Agriculture*

Independence is located in the County of Polk where Agriculture is one of the largest economic contributors with gross farm sales of over \$120 million.<sup>8</sup> According to a 2004 market study, there are approximately 4,500 - 4,800 farmworkers employed in the county, approximately 1,500 live and work here year-round.<sup>9</sup> This agricultural community has been home to immigrants of primarily Mexican descent for many generations, and was the destination for a significant proportion of farmworkers entering the United States through the Braceros program in the 1940's. Between 1942 and 1947 the federal government recruited an estimated 15,136 Mexican men to the state through the Braceros program to alleviate the farm-labor shortage caused by World War II. By 1960, the official Bracero program ended, but informal labor recruitment continued unabated.<sup>10</sup> Although seasonal life at Independence was far from ideal, jobs were plentiful. "Nearby at Buena Vista, young and old men and women entered the fields several times to strip the rows clean of mature beans. The golden Gate Hop ranch, located south of Independence, had facilities for an estimated 1,500 adults."<sup>11</sup> The hop farms in Independence have housed Mexican-American families who traveled from Texas, Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico, Washington and California for generations.

## *Naturalization*

In the 1950's farmworkers from Mexico were increasingly bringing their families with them and settling in small towns, including Independence. They worked in various farms like the Green Villa Farm, Stonebrook Farm, 4D Farm, Mitoma Farm, Loug Acres and El Jardin, harvesting asparagus, strawberries, pole beans, mint, hops, and cane berries.<sup>12</sup> In 1965 congress passed the Immigration and Nationality Act, which gave naturalized U.S. Citizens and permanent residents the opportunity to petition to bring their families and immediate relatives to the United States.<sup>13</sup> This opportunity contributed to the exponential growth of the Latino community in Independence.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.fhdc.org/story/colonia-amistad>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Akers Chacón, J., and M. Davis. 2006. *No One is Illegal: Fighting violence and state repression on the US-Mexico border*: Haymarket Books.

<sup>11</sup> Gamboa, Erasmo. (1995). A personal Search for Oregon's Hispanic History. In Erasmo Gamboa and Carolyn M. Buan (Eds.), *Nosotros: The Hispanic People of Oregon* (pp. 11-20). Portland, OR: Oregon Council for the Humanities.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Bedolla G., Lisa. 2009. *Introduction to Latino Politics in the U.S.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

## *Cultural Clash*

The diversity of people living, migrating, and settling in Independence inevitably changed various aspects of the cultural dynamics of the city. “As the Chicano population grew in Independence, conflict began to develop between the agrarian-based, long-time resident Anglo population and the newly arrived, farm working Spanish speaking Chicano”.<sup>14</sup> In the 70’s, for example, tensions raised due to deliberations and the subsequent implementation of bilingual education in Central School District 13J. The value conflict was, according to Dr. Juan Guzman, assimilation vs. cultural pluralism. “School boards endorsed assimilation while Chicano groups favored pluralism.”<sup>15</sup> The community, contributing to the maintenance of the status quo, repeatedly disregarded this value conflict. District Officials finally proposed bilingual education in August of 1974; the first year of bilingual education was completed in June of 1977. Independence was one of the first three communities in Oregon to have implemented bilingual education programs in 1975, after Woodburn (1970) and Salem (1974). During this time, the Latino presence was evidenced by their multifaceted roles in the community as farmers, business leaders, landscaping contractors, volunteers, and more.

## *Language Retention*

Latinos constitute 35.4% of the Independence population today (see Appendix A). 93% of Latinos in Independence are of Mexican descent, and some have lived in Oregon for many generations (see appendix B). 30.09% of students in the school district speak Spanish as their first language according to central 13J school district data. 31.6% of the entire Independence population speaks Spanish as their primary language (15.1% speak English less than “very well”).<sup>16</sup> Mexican-Americans in Independence, are retaining Spanish at a rate much higher than previous immigration waves, according to in-depth interviews of 120 Latino families led by Professor Susana Rivera-Mills. She has “found that children of immigrants are either retaining the Spanish language, or going back to reacquire it.”<sup>17</sup> Professor Rivera-Mills describes it as a “completely new trend”. She adds, “fifteen years ago... the native language was almost completely erased by the third generation.” Two reasons are cited to explain this phenomenon: “a desire for cultural preservation by fourth- and fifth-generation Latinos; and in the case of more recent immigrants, economic and cultural benefits of being bilingual.”

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<sup>14</sup> Guzman, Juan. 1978. *Community Conflict: A case study of the implementation of a bilingual education program*. Corvallis: Oregon State University.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>16</sup> [http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/11\\_5YR/DP02/1600000US4136150](http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/11_5YR/DP02/1600000US4136150)

<sup>17</sup> <http://oregonstate.edu/ua/ncs/archives/2012/oct/oregon-latinos-retaining-spanish-language-more-previous-generations>

## Housing

Agriculture continues to be one of the largest contributors to the County's economy, In the 2000's the Farmworker Housing Development (FHDC) recognized Polk County as an area with substantial need for farmworker housing. FHDC is a community-based non-profit organization dedicated to serving mid-Willamette Valley farmworkers and their families. FHDC was established in 1990 to develop affordable housing for low-income farmworkers across the state. In 2007, FHDC opened Colonia Amistad in Independence, a beautiful 38-apartment complex with various amenities and services at an affordable price for low-income farmworker families. <sup>18</sup>

| Independence Recent Events Timeline  |
|--|
| 1982: First Latino City Councilor (Socorro "Scotty" Martinez", appointed (1982 – 1984). Followed by Raul Vasquez (1984), Vickie Valdez (1989-1993), Flora Rubio (1989-1990), Marcelina Cedillo (1990-1997), and Diana Lindskog (2006-Present). <sup>19</sup> |
| 1987: Cultural Awareness City Commission forms.  |
| 2001: I-M Community Forms to plan Annual Fiesta Mexicana   |
| 2007: Farmworker Housing Development Corporation Opens Colonia Amistad   |
| 2012: Henry Hill School Closes   |
| 2013: Central High School LATINO Parent Action Committee forms. Plans its first successful family event at the Central High School.  |
| 2013: City joins informational radio show on Spanish channel   |
| 2013: City of Independence hires Community Liaison to do Latino Outreach   |
| 2014: City hosts Festival Informativo (Spanish resource fair) at civic center. 200+ community members, and 20+ organizations attend.   |
| 2014: City begins monthly Roundtable Discussions with community members and service providers on "Serving the Latino Community".   |
| 2014: City of Independence creates Latino Outreach Internship Program  |
| 2014: 30 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Independence Community Fiesta (formerly known as Mexican Fiesta, Fiesta Patria, and community "Kermes").   |

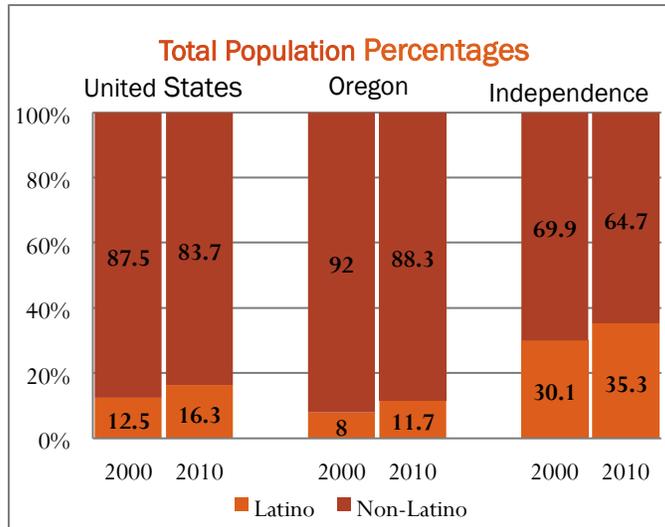
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<sup>18</sup> <http://www.fhdc.org/story/colonia-amistad>

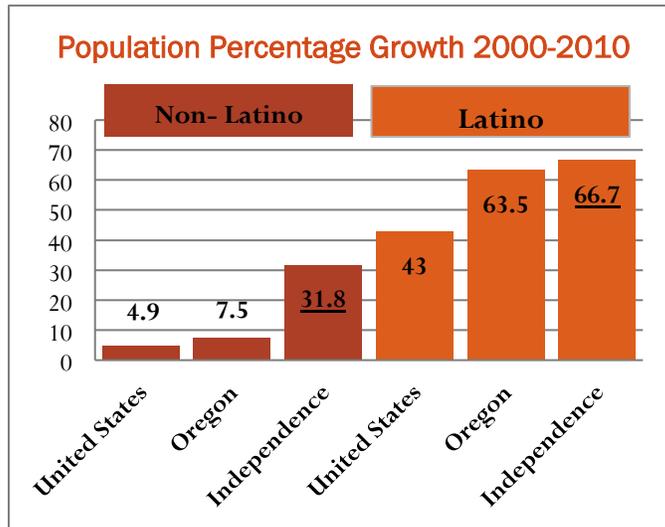
<sup>19</sup> Based on best information available in city records.

**Demographics:**

According to the United States 2010 Census, the Latino population comprises 16.6% of the total United States population, 11.7% of the total Oregon population, and 35.3% of the population in Independence (more than twice the proportion in the United States and more than three times the proportion in Oregon).<sup>20</sup>



Independence is experiencing a period of population growth at much higher rates than the national and state's growth. Much of the demographic change in Independence can be attributed to the Latino presence accounting for 47.5% of the city's total growth. The Latino population has grown 66.7% in Independence from 2000 to 2010 (more than twice the population growth of non-Latinos, which was 31.8%).



<sup>20</sup> United States Census Bureau. <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/41/4136150.html>

## BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT & COLLABORATION

*The challenges described in this report are specific to the Independence community. A number of these, however, have also been cited in case studies around the country.*

### **Need to Build Long-term Relationships of Trust**

Trust is a fundamental element in fostering relationships and in community building. As such, any government organization that seeks to engage communities of color in their projects, initiatives, and events must first establish relationships of trust. There are various reasons why historically underserved communities and the Latino community specifically, may be skeptical and/or fearful of government entities.<sup>21</sup> This is a phenomenon that is not unique to Independence, but a pattern that must be considered and further explored by city staff and officials who seek to improve communication with this sector of the population. The explanations for this lack of trust and increasing fear vary. Academics and civic engagement practitioners have popularly cited the following: political skepticism, voting status, and criminalization of Latinos (based on perceived immigration status, regardless of citizenship).

In the case of immigrant families, there are additional barriers to trust and legitimate reasons to fear government entities. While the reasons for migrating vary, some immigrants entering the United States do so to escape violence and corrupt governments in their home countries. In some of these cases, immigrants have personally witnessed or been victims of impunity from law enforcement authorities, providing them with a negative view of government and law enforcement in general. Additionally, increased border security since the 1990's and integration of Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) with local policing have served to erode trust of local authorities as well.<sup>22</sup> As such, Latinos who either lack legal resident status or have close relationships with community members who are subject to detention and deportation procedures may actively avoid government office and officials. Unfortunately, this reasonable individual response has the aggregate effect of producing an oppositional relationship between the Latino community and their elected government officials.

Best practices show that an effective method of establishing long-standing relationships with underserved communities is to build partnerships with non-

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<sup>21</sup> Chavez, L. 2013. *The Latino Threat: Constructing immigrants, citizens, and the nation*: Stanford University Press.

<sup>22</sup> Nevins, J. 2002. *Operation Gatekeeper: the rise of the "illegal alien" and the making of the US-Mexico boundary*. 2nd ed ed: Routledge.

profit and community organizations who have an already established relationship of trust and accountability in these communities. A challenge in pursuing this strategy at Independence is that there are virtually no Latino-focused organizations that fit the mold described in previous research. Fortunately, similar niches have been created through the formation of informal community groups, primarily stemming from the churches, schools, and service agencies. These groups tend to be scattered due to the rural nature of the community, making communication and collaboration challenging. The community, for example, often trusts Service providers, but many agencies that serve the Independence community are located outside the city limits in Dallas, Monmouth, Woodburn or elsewhere. This means that city officials need to work particularly carefully to include agency representatives in planning and events in order to reach out to Latino constituents.

## Tokenism

Related to the task of trust building are the ways that Latinos understand calls for their representation in elected and representative boards in Independence. For example, since the 1970's school board members and district personnel have agreed that Latinos in Independence "probably had the least influence in community affairs."<sup>23</sup> According to Professor Guzman, non-Latino leaders reasoned this was not due to language but to a "lack of unity among the Chicano community and its inability to speak with one voice."<sup>24</sup> This problematic rationalization was used as justification to move forward on important decisions without Latino input. In the 1970's this reasoning was used to refuse pursuing bilingual education more earnestly although data collected in a series of 76 interviews revealed that 100% of the Latino parent's interviews were in support of enrolling their children in a bilingual education program with varying concerns regarding the *implementation* of it. While the Latino community does not always speak with a singular voice and identity, it is important to note that the needs they identify often remarkably coalesce.

Today, the Latino community in Independence continues to agree and disagree on a wide variety of issues like any other community (e.g. contraceptives in school, focus on a cultural center, event planning methods, etc.). It is important to acknowledge this diversity of perspectives and understand that the Latino community is not a politically/ideologically

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<sup>23</sup> Guzman, Juan. 1978. *Community Conflict: A case study of the implementation of a bilingual education program*. Corvallis: Oregon State University.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 116.

homogenous group.<sup>25</sup> Latinos may in fact share some similar interests, but no one leader should be tokenized (assumed to be the spokesperson for an entire community). The voice of one or few Latino leaders/community members will not suffice in accurately representing the interests of the entire Independence Latino community.

## **Language Barriers**

A significant proportion of Latinos in Independence are most comfortable communicating in Spanish. Latinos have resided in Independence for as many as 6 or 7 generations, if not longer (according to historical accounts and data). Despite their long history in this community, Professor Rivera-Mill's research (not yet published) has revealed Latinos are retaining Spanish in Independence at high rates. According to Rivera-Mills, fourth- and fifth-generation Mexican-Americans in Independence are actively fighting against language loss. As previously mentioned, 30.1% of the students in the school district speak Spanish, 31.6% of the entire Independence population speaks Spanish as their primary language, and 15.1% of those whose primary language is Spanish speak English less than "very well."<sup>26</sup> Therefore, a lack of sufficient bilingual staff (about 15% currently), translators, and city representatives can present a significant challenge in the city's ability to conduct effective communication and build relationships with the Latino community. Translating vital resources in a timely manner (e.g. forms, informational packages, website content, ads, etc.) is a challenge that the city can avoid by developing a hiring strategy to increase staff diversity over time.

## **Communication**

Communication challenges between the city and the Latino community extend beyond language barriers. In order to effectively communicate with the Latino community, the city must utilize culturally appropriate outreach strategies. The city must actively seek opportunities to learn about past strategies that have been in/effective, potential changes that can be made to communicate effectively, and ways to empower Latinos to express their concerns/priorities with the city (see access and cultural competence sections). Andrea Miller, executive director of CAUSA Oregon explains that, in her experience, it is extremely important to communicate a clear message and objective when requesting a meeting with Latino community members. Effective meetings will provide attendees with a forum to express and discuss their concerns and will conclude with a commitment to use their feedback for decision-making

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<sup>25</sup> Beltran, Cristina. 2010. *The Trouble with Unity: Latino Politics and the Creation of Identity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>26</sup> [http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/11\\_5YR/DP02/1600000UIS4136150](http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/11_5YR/DP02/1600000UIS4136150)

purposes, initiatives, and programs. This process will best reinforce the importance of the community's input and participation.

The city does not currently have substantial knowledge of Latino leadership in the Independence community. Having a limited network is the primary challenge the city faces in understanding the level and scope of Latino involvement in community affairs. With such few contacts, the city is also unable to disseminate information widely among the community in an efficient manner. Often times, the best way to communicate important information in the community is by word of mouth, however, this requires personal knowledge of/contact with key leaders and groups. A small network with the Latino community also limits the city's ability to identify talent for boards and commissions in order to better reflect the city's diversity.

### **Access**

One of the issues that local governments must consider when trying engage historically underserved communities is access. Access can refer to a wide variety of things including transportation, communication outlets, childcare, time, language, etc. Historically underserved communities often face challenges that prevent them from attending, for example, city council meetings, town halls, community events, leadership opportunities, and workshops. This issue is exacerbated when events and meetings are not designed with the community's needs in mind. Examples include: locations that are accessible and trusted by the community, meeting times that are compatible with the community's typical work schedule, conflicting cultural events/holidays, lack of translation services, lack of childcare or family-friendly environments, etc. Therefore, general knowledge and understanding of the demographics is critical. Event planning in a primarily farmworker community, for example, requires managing and planning around seasonal work schedules to hold well-attended and productive meetings.

### **Cultural Competence**

City staff and city officials should strive to pursue opportunities to develop cultural competence with regard to the Latino community that resides in Independence. 93% of Latinos in Independence are of Mexican descent (i.e. Mexican, Mexican-American, Indigenous Mexican, and Chicano). Nonetheless, this community is diverse in terms of immigration status, language, education level, occupations, etc. Many of the families who have resided in Independence for various generations are Latinos of Mexican ancestry whose roots trace back to the states of Texas & California, former Mexican territory (they never actually "migrated" but became legally American through the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe). Some of these families have retained Spanish as

a primary language, while others have adopted English for generations. Other families who have been here for generations did in fact migrate from Mexico to the United States and their im/migration experience is likely to influence them in different ways. The experiences of recent Mexican immigrants are also not homogenous, as cultures vary from state to state in Mexico.<sup>27</sup> Lastly, family dynamics in mixed-status homes are unique due to the varying levels of opportunities available to the different family members and the pressing immigration concerns they face daily.

It is extremely important for the city to develop an understanding of the diversity and sensitivities present among Latino families in Independence in order to effectively communicate and collaborate. This will prove helpful when trying to communicate cross-culturally in meetings, events, and daily at the service desk. For example, given that the police department is in the same building as the civic center, the city should explore ways to address the history of fear to law enforcement that Latinos and other communities of color experience in order to develop mechanisms that ameliorate (ideally eliminate) this fear. Tackling this issue will directly address part of the reason why Latinos do not typically attend City events/meetings. Meeting formats that are culturally appropriate and relevant in terms of content should also be considered.

### **Competing Ideas of Engagement/Leadership**

The interviews conducted with various city officials, staff, and community members as well as the community liaison's involvement in community affairs revealed that there were competing ideas of leadership and civic engagement in the community. These were not mutually exclusive ideas but rather ones that prioritized different things in the long-term vision of an engaged community.

City officials generally expressed higher interest in civic participation and representation in city council, city boards, and committees, as well as in volunteer opportunities. Recognizing that getting more Latino representation on city council is a long-term goal; generally city officials and city staff agreed that it would be ideal to (in the shorter-term) acquire an increased representation of Latinos in city events, and volunteerism opportunities. This representation is most likely to be achieved if Latino leaders are involved in the planning process.

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<sup>27</sup> Beltran, Cristina. 2010. *The Trouble with Unity: Latino Politics and the Creation of Identity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

From the community liaison's involvement in Latino community events and groups, it was evident that the Latino community was, in fact, highly involved and participated in a wide variety of volunteer opportunities. Respected leaders in the community are typically community elders who have lived in the community for many years. Some Latino community members have spent an extensive amount of time in volunteer roles at the church, in school parent groups, and in cultural event planning committees. Although they are not typically present at official city meetings, they are nonetheless impacting the livability of Independence and investing time in improving the community.

These competing ideas of civic engagement are not mutually exclusive; they co-exist, even when they are not acknowledged as such. The city must find ways of bridging these forms of engagement by getting involved (to the extent that they are welcomed) and most importantly by supporting the types of engagement that the Latino community currently prioritizes. Additionally, the city should establish long lasting relationships, support leadership development, and create opportunities for Latino's to take part in official city affairs (e.g. city council, city boards, city committees, city events).

### **Listening to Articulated Needs & Opportunities**

Several community leaders from longstanding organizations that engage Latino communities agreed one of the most important aspects of their work is collecting feedback from the community, identifying the priorities, and addressing those first and foremost. Similarly, the city should seek feedback, input, and collaborative partnerships with *various* community members, leaders, and groups. The city should make intentional, focused efforts to understand what the issues of primary concern are even if they are not directly related to city services. The city should offer support, make every reasonable effort to build partnerships, and assist in advancing the Latino community's goals. Practicing this form of accountability will set the basis for long-term relationships of trust with the community.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASED ENGAGEMENT/COLLABORATION

### Empowerment

Empowering the local Latino community historically, culturally, and economically is the most vital ingredient to a more engaged, integrated, and equitable community. Professor Juan Guzman observed in his research on bilingual-education in Independence that increased Latino participation would only take place when the community could see a positive role for itself in decision-making processes.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, in government affairs, Latinos should be empowered to take part in the City's decision-making processes, events, and more. Latino participation in such activities is an imperative for success in a city where Latinos now constitute over 35% of the population.

The Independence Latino community is incredibly dynamic, talented, and diverse. This community has aspirations and goals like any other community. As a historically underserved population, Latinos in the United States often face institutional barriers to flourish and achieve their goals. Provided the right set of resources, however, they can advocate for themselves and define their own priorities.

One way in which the city can support the historical, cultural and economic empowerment of the Latino community is by supporting cultural events, community-building projects, professional development opportunities, youth leadership training, etc. In other words, rather than expecting Latinos to participate actively in existing city events, City leadership may want to consider changing its plans of public events to better reflect community dynamics. This will provide community groups with additional tools to reach agreement on important decisions, create action plans, and build productive partnerships with organizations of interest, including but not limited to the city itself.

Leadership development classes can provide current leaders with a better understanding of city functions and a framework to improve their own effectiveness. There are various organizations that focus on the kinds of training that are designed to also build community (see CAPACES 101)<sup>29</sup> and that are provided in culturally appropriate formats with cross-cultural communication in mind (see CIO).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Guzman, Juan. 1978. *Community Conflict: A case study of the implementation of a bilingual education program*. Corvallis: Oregon State University.

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.capacesleadership.org/about/programs/>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.interculturalorganizing.org/?p=3788>

One important ingredient to keep in mind is the importance of developing leaders from a young age and exposing them to career opportunities in the city. This exposure will enable local youth to envision themselves serving their own community in the future and to seek local positions of leadership as adults. Often, in the Latino community, youth and children take on the role of liaisons to their families, translating documents and interactions as they navigate systems or institutions. Therefore, connecting with youth provides the city with a fantastic avenue to reach entire families and develop trust.



*City Council presents Latino youth volunteers with Good Neighbor Awards for their contributions to the city.*

## Access & Integration

Improving access to city events, meetings and facilities can take on many different forms. Taking in consideration the basic needs of the community is the most important aspect. Location of meetings will play a major role. The city should consider holding meetings in areas where the community is likely to attend, that is, in a location where they feel comfortable. Good locations might be in organizations that have established trust with this community and/or that Latinos frequent: schools, churches, non-profit organizations, etc. The Independence Civic Center, for example, may not always feel the safest to the community due to its shared location with the police department (as explained in pg. 15). In order to ameliorate this issue, the city should strive to make the civic center a welcoming facility to the Latino community (e.g. hiring bilingual receptionists, putting up bilingual signage, acquiring culturally relevant art work).

Picking a central location for meetings with the Latino community is also important in order to ameliorate issues of transportation. Another option is to offer a shuttle service with city vans occasionally for important city meetings/events. Language access can be achieved by providing bilingual facilitation, materials, and information. Some families may not be able to attend due to lack of childcare- in these cases the city should seek to either provide childcare or a family friendly environment where families could bring their children along.

In terms of time, the city should consider the stakeholders' typical work schedule and plan accordingly. This might also take into account the time of day and meal times. If a community member is asked to go to a meeting after work they might be forced to choose between heading to dinner or going to the meeting. In this case the city could provide a snack or a meal in order for them to be able to attend. Evidently, when the city is trying to reach working families, the city's work schedule may not always be compatible with Latino families' "free time." Therefore, the city should be conscious that there may be a need for evening and weekend work to effectively reach these families.



## **Network and Outreach**

City officials and personnel should acquire a robust contact network with local Latino groups, community leaders and change agents. As a city that is looking for improved communication and collaboration with the Latino community, staff and elected officials must necessarily invest time to develop long lasting relationships of trust from a variety of angles. This is a long-term endeavor that requires accountability. Building a robust network can be achieved by committing time to attend various Latino events (be they cultural, educational, or other) and making an effort to discuss with issues of interest to the Latino community. Getting acquainted with a network of non-profit organizations that specifically serve Latinos and communities of color and welcoming their work in Independence is highly recommended (city currently lacks a robust network of Latino-specific resources and support organizations).

Although there are no Latino-serving institutions, there are great opportunities to connect with largely Latino organizations like FHDC and local churches. However, budget cuts in recent years have impeded FHDC from providing additional programming outside of their main duties (residential services/management). This presents both a limitation and an opportunity, because the city can collaborate to bridge the gap by partnering on grant applications or putting together events/programs. Additionally, the city can reach Latino leadership niches at the schools, service provider groups, soccer leagues, and event planning committees.

The dissemination of information to the Latino community in Independence should include: partnering with Spanish radio stations for public service announcements, partnering with local businesses to hang posters and distribute flyers, and partnering with churches to disseminate important messages by spoken announcements and/or canvassing. Additionally, the most powerful tool to disseminate information in this community is word of mouth, which can be done through grassroots efforts (e.g. door knocking).



*Students from W.O.U. and C.H.S. conduct grassroots outreach for Festival Informativo.*

Secondly, the city should develop a network with key change agents and leaders across the state. This will prove helpful in learning the strategies that can be applied to better serve this community and the resources/collaborations that the city could take advantage of. City staff will begin to get access to information that is of interest from across the state including job postings, community events, personal development opportunities, strategic meetings, conversations, networking opportunities, and more. This is extremely valuable, particularly for rural cities who have limited access to resources and information. Developing a broader network state wide with Latino advocacy organizations and state leaders can be achieved by attending Latino networking events, focus groups, panel discussions, presentations, conferences, and signing up for e-mail listservs.

## **Dialogue & Collaboration**

Some of the communication challenges the city faces may stem from the community's lack of understanding about the city's functions. It is therefore important to create an inventory of primary and secondary functions that the city carries in order to explore which of these are of primary interest and concern to the Latino community. The city can then develop a more focused effort to communicate with the Latino community on issues that are of interest to them for decision-making purposes.

The City of Independence staff and elected officials should strive to create opportunities to discuss critical issues affecting the Latino community internally. This might be devoting some time during department head meetings to discuss the progress that has been made in advancing communication and collaboration with the Latino community, identify cross-

departmental collaborative opportunities, and have frank conversations about what else can be done. This is an effective way to maximize resources as it will prevent different departments from reinventing the wheel on their own and, instead, will encourage staff to work together in a more efficient manner.

The city must guide its course of action based on the community's needs. Frank conversations about the needs, challenges, opportunities, and assets with a cross section of change agents are the best place to start. These conversations should be had with members of the community that represent the city's racial/ethnic diversity, members of the community, Latino leaders and elders. The city could host or attend conversations that are directed at addressing the issues that the community is currently facing and the ways in which various local agencies and organizations can collaborate. These meetings should also eventually involve non-Latino community members, leaders, and city personnel. A willingness and conscious effort to listen, be open to criticism, and navigate sensitive topics is critical in order to have productive conversations that get at heart of the issues.



*Service providers and community groups collaborate on local resources video. Monthly Roundtable discussions follow.*

## Diversity & Cultural Competence

The City of Independence should seek to improve diversity in all areas of operation and actively recruit bilingual staff to better serve monolingual Spanish-speaking community members (see King County's equal employment opportunity plan).<sup>31</sup> This will not only serve to more efficiently communicate with this portion of the community but will also serve to establish trust in the long term. By reflecting the diversity of the community the city will be sending a clear message that this community celebrates the community's diversity of talents and backgrounds. This will make the civic center itself a more welcoming/comfortable space for all, including staff of color who might otherwise feel isolated due to cultural differences and for community members who visit on a daily basis for city services.

There are various organizations that provide cultural competence training and workshops that might be useful to city personnel and elected officials. Some of these will require time and money. Cultural competence opportunities and

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.kingcounty.gov/jobs/diversity.aspx>

dialogue should be made available to all staff and could take the form of video trainings, interdepartmental discussions, webinars, conferences, etc. (see King County's Tools and Resources).<sup>32</sup>

Cultural competence training that the city provides should include a section on the conceptualization of leadership and civic engagement across different cultures. The city would benefit from a more nuanced understanding of the various forms of leadership present in this community and the various ways in which certain communities have stayed involved in the betterment of this city. As of current, the Latino community in Independence seems to be most engaged in issues of education, cultural events, and religious groups. For example: CHS LATINO PAC, IM-Community, Polk County Service Integration Team, and various church groups. However, they are not very much involved in city affairs, due to previously discussed challenges. The city should develop a realistic vision in which both interests can be bridged, which would inevitably involve cross over from both ends, city staff time to engage in Latino affairs, and resources to empower the Latino community to take part in city government affairs.

### **Policy & Resources**

The city should adopt and implement policy that is relevant to a more equitable and integrated community that empowers Latinos and facilitates collaboration. Passing city resolutions that are meaningful to the Latino community is a tangible way in which the city can exercise its powers to advance the interests of this community. It is also an excellent way to communicate the message of equity and inclusion that the city is pursuing.

Additionally, with a more engaged public the city will also be expected to be more accountable to the needs that the constituency communicates. The city should be prepared to direct the necessary resources in favor of initiatives that advance the fourth strategic goal and Latino priorities. Directing resources can take the form of devoting staff time to write grant proposals for city initiatives regarding diversity and inclusion or collaborating with different organizations to fundraise and or make certain services more accessible/affordable.

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<sup>32</sup> <http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/equity/toolsandresources.aspx>

## ACTION ITEMS

### 1. Empowerment

- A. Identify, Promote, and Celebrate Latino Leadership*
- B. Support Cultural Celebrations and Community Events*
- C. Create Youth Volunteerism Opportunities*

#### ***Progress:***

- ✓ Community liaison has attended a wide variety of Latino community events and group meetings. Has introduced city staff and elected officials to Latino community leaders.
- ✓ City hosted Festival Informativo event catered to Latino families in the Event Center. Provided city and local resources information.
- ✓ Community Liaison circulates employment opportunities and other resources from a variety of sectors among Latino community partners.
- ✓ Community Liaison collects Stories of Independence to promote Latino leadership and businesses.
- ✓ Community Liaison recruited CHS & WOU volunteers for Festival Informativo and presented them with Good Neighbor Awards at city council meeting.
- ✓ Community liaison attends CHS Latino PAC meetings occasionally & offers support (education is a priority issue in this community).
- ✓ Economic Development Director and Community Liaison continually meet with Community Fiesta organizers to ensure city meets their needs and supports with planning process.

#### ***Pending/Suggested:***

- Youth advisory board to promote young leaders and create pipelines for city governance and jobs (see City of Sweet Home and City of Hillsboro models).
  - City ambassadors in their community by disseminating information on the city structure and resources.
  - Spanish tutors to city staff, mentees to city staff.
  - Aid in the collection of community feedback.
  - Facilitate workshops on civic education.
  - Obtain civics credit or use as a senior project.
- Leadership development classes for the Latino community (see Beaverton's 2013 CIO Leadership Program, CAPACES 101, and CAUSA Oregon Information sessions).
- Continue Festival Informativo event annually.
- Collaborate with CHS Latino PAC to provide workshop on City Services or Law Enforcement Programs at one of their meetings.

## **2. Access & Integration**

### ***A. Increase Meeting accessibility***

### ***B. Strive to Make Civic Center more Welcoming to Latinos***

#### ***Progress:***

- ✓ Held Chief of Police Town Hall at St. Patrick Catholic Church with translation services available (by Community Liaison).
- ✓ Hosted University of Oregon CLLAS Latino Roots exhibit in Independence Civic Center to make civic center aesthetics more welcoming to the Latino community (11 weeks).
- ✓ Community Liaison coordinated and hosted family-oriented Latino-focused event in the Event Center to draw Latino families to Civic Center (Festival Informativo).
- ✓ Community Liaison created a Spanish language Local Resource Directory in partnership with Mid-Valley parenting (printed & online).
- ✓ Community Liaison created a City Services Manual in Spanish & English (printed & online). Distributed at various locations.
- ✓ Promoted Internet access opportunities with MINET in the local television channel in Spanish.
- ✓ Community Liaison translated 2014-2015 Independence Parks System Master Plan Asset Inventory to Spanish.
- ✓ Community Liaison coordinated Spanish/Bilingual focus groups to gather community's input on the future of the Parks Master Plan.

#### ***Pending/Suggested:***

- Hold a few city council meetings per year in a Latino concentrated area (similar to the yearly city council meetings at the Central High School) to engage Latino families in City affairs.
- Hold informational sessions on the importance of sitting on city commissions. Requirements and time commitment. Will require strategic recruitment of Latino leaders and follow up to remind them of the event. Personal invites will be most effective.
- Hold a few Spanish town hall meetings to discuss important issues. Community conversation format will be most effective (e.g. family friendly, community circle, casual, café y pan dulce, minimal paperwork, etc.).
- Provide bilingual signage at civic center ("Centro Cívico" so families can better identify it for future events, a "Bienvenidos" sign, a visible "Se Habla Español" with bilingual staff names and information, etc.).
- Promote events like the Spanish book club (already in place).
- Add a Spanish movie day to current movie series with English subtitles, and develop more strategies to increase Latino access/participation in various city events/opportunities.
- Display community Latino art in civic center (another way to potentially engage the youth through art contest).

### **3. Network & Outreach**

#### ***A. Build network***

#### ***B. Employ Culturally Appropriate Outreach Methods***

##### ***Progress:***

- ✓ Community Liaison led grassroots outreach efforts for Festival Informativo and the dissemination of community resources/opportunities information (e.g. announcements at church, canvassing, door knocking, word of mouth, fliers, etc.).
- ✓ Community Liaison produces a Spanish resources video in partnership with MINET, WIMPEG, and various local organizations.
- ✓ Community Liaison made TV and radio announcements in Spanish for Festival Informativo in partnership with WIMPEG, MINET, and La Campeona Radio Station.
- ✓ Community Liaison attended various community events/meetings (e.g. CHS Latino PAC, bible groups, Latino Business Alliance, Hispanic Pros, IZO networkin' It, Service Integration Team Meetings, Hispanic Human Services Council, W.O.U. club meetings, C.H.S. club meetings, etc.).
- ✓ Liaison made Spanish banner for Festival Informativo for downtown.
- ✓ Community Liaison made personal phone calls to disseminate information about city events and job openings via word of mouth (See Appendix E on the power of word of mouth).
- ✓ Economic Development Director has attended Spanish radio talk show as guest to disseminate important city information.
- ✓ Community Liaison has built and maintained an e-mail contact listserv of Spanish-speaking service providers, Latino leaders, and community partners.

##### ***Pending/Suggested:***

- Assign city council liaisons to various Latino community groups/meetings/initiatives.
- Invest time in making personal invites to Latino leaders for particularly relevant city meetings, planning committees, stakeholder discussions, etc. as needed.
- Continue grassroots methods for community events.
- Continue to engage youth in grassroots outreach efforts.
- Continue to attend radio talk show to disseminate important city information.
- Collaborate with WIMPEG and MINET to create more TV PSAs in Spanish as necessary.
- Develop a system to measure various outreach methods/techniques' effectiveness (e.g. poll at festival Informativo to learn how they found out about certain events).

#### 4. Dialogue and Collaboration

##### *A. Create Opportunities to Discuss Critical Issues*

##### *B. Pursue formal and informal collaborations with Latino-serving organizations and/or community groups*

##### ***Progress:***

- ✓ Community Liaison established a monthly Roundtable Discussion series to discuss challenges and successes in serving the Latino community.
- ✓ Community Liaison attended weekly department-head meetings, an opportunity to discuss progress in Latino Outreach and relevant issues.
- ✓ City collaboration with 4-H program: “Reaching the Latino Community through Soccer” stakeholder meeting.
- ✓ City collaboration with Farmworker Housing Development Corporation (Colonia Amistad) on HEAL Cities Small Grants application for Mi Tierra youth education program around community gardens.
- ✓ Community Liaison drafted and submitted letters of support for Lin-Benton Community College Bridges theatre project (Latino story-telling).
- ✓ Community Liaison attended Ford Family Foundation’s Pathways to Community Vitality Forums - advocate for Latino integration.
- ✓ Mid-Valley Parenting collaboration (for local resource directory).
- ✓ Collaboration with Polk County Service Integration Team, to gather contacts for local resources video.
- ✓ WIMPEG/MINET collaboration to produce Spanish resources video.

##### ***Pending/Suggested:***

- Partner with local colleges/universities and non-profit organizations to provide different kinds of classes/workshops in Events Center. Cater to Latino community’s interests/needs to increase their usage of and familiarity with Civic Center building and acquaintance with city staff.
- Continue monthly roundtable discussion series.
- Continue annual Festival Informativo.
- Promote Latino Outreach Internship Program.

## 5. Diversity & Cultural Competence

### *A. Hiring Diverse and Bilingual Staff*

### *B. Provide cultural competency training opportunities to city staff and elected officials*

#### ***Progress:***

- ✓ City hired bilingual/bicultural public works employee.
- ✓ City hired part-time bilingual/bicultural library employee.
- ✓ City hired bilingual/bicultural police officer.
- ✓ City implemented Latino Outreach Internship Program.
- ✓ City currently provides incentives for language skills.
- ✓ City funded community liaison attendance to the Governing for Racial Justice Conference. Liaison reported back to council.
- ✓ City is currently exploring cultural competency training programs with the city mayor.
- ✓ Community Liaison employed culturally appropriate methods in the planning of Festival Informativo (e.g. all in Spanish, on a Sunday, culturally appropriate food/music, family oriented, etc.).
- ✓ Community Liaison produced a Spanish resources video. Mayor and Economic Development director explained the city's objectives with regard to Latino outreach to the community.

#### ***Pending/Suggested:***

- Develop and adopt a diversity plan for hiring (to increase diversity in staff over the years). Consult King County's model.
- Provide cultural competence training opportunities for employees and elected officials.
- Network with other cities undertaking similar efforts to strategize together – via e-mail, host conference call discussions, etc.
- Consider developing Latino Outreach Internship into a permanent full-time position. Duties may include assisting Economic Development Director, managing city website, maintaining social media communications, and developing PR materials for various city initiatives/projects (e.g. related to tourism, workforce development, etc.).

## 6. Policy and Resources

### A. Pass policy

### B. Direct Resources

#### **Progress:**

- ✓ City Council passed resolution to collaborate with Farmworker Housing Development Corporation on a HEAL Cities Small Grants application.
- ✓ City has submitted letters of support for initiatives relating to Latino community empowerment.
- ✓ City is directing resources (staff time, food, meeting space) for monthly roundtable discussions on serving the Latino community.
- ✓ City implemented Latino Outreach Internship Program (paid internship = increased access for underserved students to explore careers in local government).

#### **Pending/Suggested:**

- Encourage city staff from various departments to take part in Latino affairs activities/events/dialogues. Law enforcement involvement, in particular, would help in ameliorating issues of fear in the Latino community and developing relationships of trust.
- Pass a safe haven resolution clarifying that the city does not enforce immigration law (ice holds). Would also address issues of fear of law enforcement and government entities stemming from immigration status (see recent “immigration detainer” changes in Oregon).<sup>33</sup>
- Develop a strategy to better integrate Latino businesses/culture in the vision and goals of city projects/initiatives (e.g. business development projects, parks and recreation, etc.).
- Join Welcoming America Cities Initiative.<sup>34</sup>

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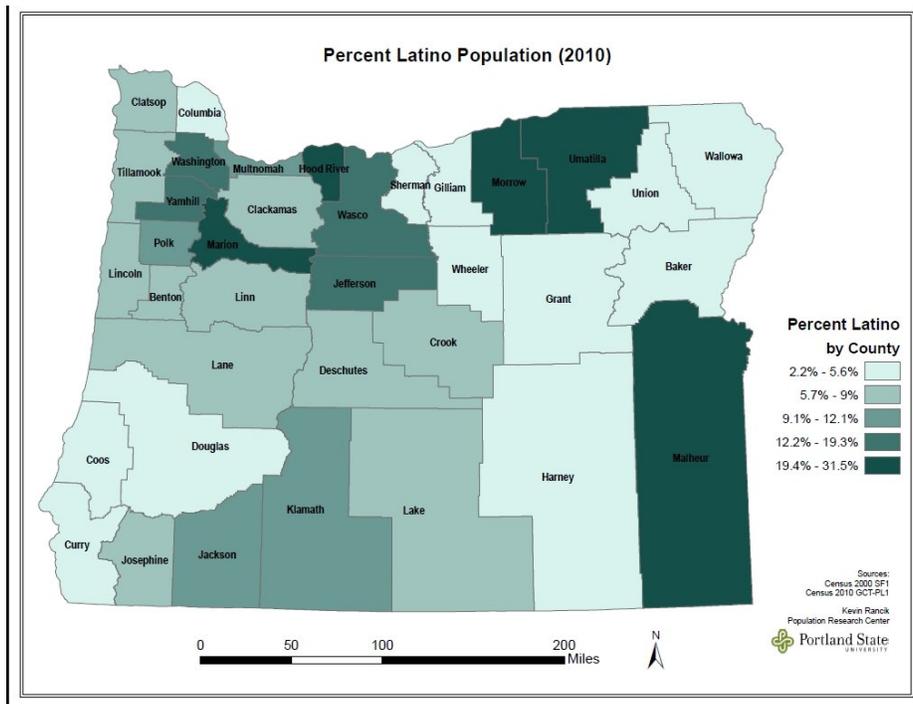
<sup>33</sup> [http://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/index.ssf/2014/04/federal\\_ruling\\_sparks\\_halt\\_on.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/index.ssf/2014/04/federal_ruling_sparks_halt_on.html)

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.welcomingamerica.org/about-us/cities/>

APPENDIX A:

## Latino Census Data

|                      | 2000               |      | 2010               |      | Percentage Change |      |
|----------------------|--------------------|------|--------------------|------|-------------------|------|
|                      | Number             | %    | Number             | %    | Number            | %    |
| <b>United States</b> | <b>281 421 906</b> | --   | <b>308 745 538</b> | --   | 27 323 632        | 9.7  |
| Latino               | 35 305 818         | 12.5 | 50 477 594         | 16.3 | 15 171 776        | 43.0 |
| Non-Latino           | 246 116 088        | 87.5 | 258 267 944        | 83.7 | 12 151 856        | 4.9  |
| <b>Oregon</b>        | <b>3 421 399</b>   | --   | <b>3 831 074</b>   | --   | 409 675           | 12.0 |
| Latino               | 275 314            | 8.0  | 450 062            | 11.7 | 174 748           | 63.5 |
| Non-Latino           | 3 146 085          | 92.0 | 3 381 012          | 88.3 | 234 927           | 7.5  |
| <b>Independence</b>  | <b>6 035</b>       | --   | <b>8 590</b>       | --   | 2 555             | 42.3 |
| Latino               | 1 818              | 30.1 | 3 031              | 35.3 | 1 213             | 66.7 |
| Non-Latino           | 4 217              | 69.9 | 5 559              | 64.7 | 1 342             | 31.8 |



## Mexicans in the United States

**Immigration status:** More than one-third (35%) of Mexicans in the United States are foreign born compared with 13% of the U.S. population overall. About two-in-three immigrants from Mexico (65%) arrived in the U.S. in 1990 or later. About one-quarter (24%) of Mexican immigrants are U.S. citizens.

**Language:** Two-thirds of Mexicans ages 5 and older speak English proficiently. The other 34% of Mexicans report speaking English less than very well (equal to the share among all Hispanics).

**Age:** Mexicans are younger than the U.S. population and Hispanics overall. The median age of Mexicans is 25; the median age of the U.S. population and all Hispanics are 37 and 27, respectively.

**Educational attainment:** Mexicans have lower levels of education than the Hispanic population overall and the U.S. population overall. Some 10% of Mexicans ages 25 and older—compared with 13% of all U.S. Hispanics and 29% among the entire U.S. population—have obtained at least a bachelor's degree.

**Poverty status:** The share of Mexicans who live in poverty, 28%, is higher than the rate for the general U.S. population (16%) and slightly higher than the rate for Hispanics overall (26%).

**Health Insurance:** One-third of Mexicans (33%) do not have health insurance compared with 30% of all Hispanics and 15% of the general U.S. population. Additionally, 14% of Mexicans younger than 18 are uninsured.

**Homeownership:** The rate of Mexican homeownership (49%) is higher than the rate for all Hispanics (46%) but lower than the 65% rate for the U.S. population as a whole.”

-PEW Hispanic Research Center based on US Census Data

APPENDIX C:

**2013-2014 INTERNSHIP TIMELINE**

*OBJECTIVE: To create a robust network of communication between the Latino population of Independence and City Government Officials.*

| Phase | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1     | 1A  | 1B  | 1C  | 1C  |     |     |     |     |     |
| 2     |     |     |     |     | 2A  |     |     |     |     |
| 3     |     |     |     |     | 3A  | 3B  | 3B  | 3B  |     |
| 4     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 4A  |

**Phase 1: Research**

*A. Preliminary Research: Literature Review*

Analyze literature on Latino citizen engagement and capacity building to highlight some of the theoretical and practical challenges of collaboration. Identify best practices and applicable case studies to inform development of survey and interviews.

*B. Interviews: Civic Engagement Experts, City Officials, and Community Leaders (Businesses, Churches, non-profits, etc.).*

Identify key people and organizations of interest. Find contact information and schedule interviews/events. Meet with at least 5 in each category by the end of February. Collect and analyze relevant information for recommendations phase.

*C. Community Immersion*

Meet community leaders, attend community events, and identify areas of opportunity to create new lines of communication between the community and city officials. Acquire knowledge of community concerns and areas of community involvement, etc.

**Phase 2: Recommendations**

*A. Recommendations Development*

Draft a set of recommendations for the city manager to consider. These will be informed by the survey, interviews, and academic research described above. Each recommendation should include a proposed plan of action and a tentative budget.

**Phase 3: Implementation**

*A. Securing Resources*

If necessary, present findings and recommendations to city manager and/or other city officials to request funding for selected initiatives.

*B. Execute Plan of Action:*

Carry out recommended plan of action for selected initiatives. To be further developed.

**Phase 4: Transition**

*A. Prepare Transition Documents*

Prepare instructions for further implementation of programs.

APPENDIX D:

## **2014-2015 LATINO OUTREACH INTERNSHIP PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

*Internship start date: 9/15/2014 (flexible)*

*Internship length: 9-12 months*

*Full time (flexible for current students)*

*\$10/hour internship stipend (paid on a monthly basis)*

*Reimbursement for eligible expenses*

*College credit hours as applicable*

The City of Independence Latino Outreach Internship Program is a full time (30-40 hr.) paid position under the City Manager department. The Latino Outreach Intern works closely with city staff, community leaders, and the economic development director on projects and activities designed to improve communication and collaboration with the Independence Latino community. Intern identifies ways to empower the Latino community to make use of city/community resources and to participate in local events, leadership roles, and city jobs.

Intern is responsible for the creation and execution of special programs/initiatives and acts as a liaison between the municipality, various community/business organizations, and the general public. The intern should develop knowledge about services and programs offered by the municipality and develop an understanding of community needs. In addition, the intern may seek business/community funding sources which could assist the municipality in defraying the costs of programs and projects. Consistent interactions with municipal personnel, public officials, community and business leaders, and the general public is a critical aspect of this position. Intern should be able to assess/identify community needs and develop programs or facilitate community collaborations in response to those needs.

### **Professional development:**

Interns will have the opportunity to build a robust professional network in Polk County, surrounding cities, and in the state. Interns will be able to participate in and observe a wide range of city meetings and to provide administrative support in pertaining city projects. Examples include attending economic development meetings, planning meetings, stakeholder meetings, or meetings that are relevant to the intern's career aspirations. Intern may also have an opportunity to develop grant writing skills to the extent that this is of interest to them. The internship is meant to offer interns with an opportunity to explore the wide range of careers and services available in city government and to develop desired professional skills.

APPENDIX D (continued):

**Examples of work:**

- Coordinating special programs/events within the community or municipal government (E.g. Community Resource Fairs, Roundtable Discussions, Service Provider Meetings)
- Establishing and maintaining contact with Independence families by bringing visibility to the position at community events, church services, schools, parent groups, etc.
- Translating informational documents for Spanish-speaking families as needed and distributing informational material to residents.
- Updating the Latino Outreach city website
- Participating in / coordinating video promotion for local events (in collaboration w/WIMPEG).
- Recruiting and leading teams of volunteers for outreach efforts as needed (e.g. to communicate event details, services available, etc.)
- Maintaining contact with business and community leaders by attending networking events, community meetings, introducing self to various networks and leaders, etc.
- Researching and submitting letters of inquiry/grant proposals for related projects

**Qualifications**

- Candidates must be able to commit to at least 30 hours of work (may include evenings and weekends)
- Candidates must have a strong interest in working with issues affecting underserved communities in general, and the Latino population in particular
- Self-motivated and able to work independently\*
- Strong organizational, and time management skills
- Ability to prioritize tasks, take initiative and set/meet expected timelines
- Ability to envision, propose, and execute special programs/projects/events\*
- Ability to work collaboratively with staff, volunteers, partner agencies and visitors
- Ability to recruit and lead volunteer teams for outreach projects
- Ability to conduct grassroots outreach when needed (i.e. door knocking, church announcements, canvassing, etc.)
- Ability to work with diverse groups
- Proven ability to communicate effectively in English and Spanish, and superior verbal and written communication skills in both languages\*
- Ability to speak effectively in front of larger groups (occasionally, as needed), with individuals from the general public, as well as government and non-profit employees
- Good judgment and discretion on confidential matters
- Excellent e-mail/phone etiquette

## APENDIX E:

### ON THE POWER OF WORD OF MOUTH

*“Overall, findings show that word of mouth was the single most powerful tool in recruiting Spanish-speaking Latino families in a rural community to participate in a research study on parenting practices. Participants were said to be recruited through word of mouth when they reported enrolling in the study as a direct result of the encouragement of a former study participant to benefit from word of mouth, researchers must be able to attract participants who will later become recruitment agents for study. Most successful were recruitment activities from research assistants who were longtime members of the Latino community. They were able to reach out to friends, family, and acquaintances to encourage their participation in the research. Their status as “insiders” in the research enterprise and in the community facilitated their recruitment. Also critical was that these two team members were males and were able to reach out to men. One RA specifically noted that he had the most success in recruitment when he took time to establish rapport with men. This RA’s parents were first-generation immigrants from Mexico, and he found it easy to connect with the local men by talking about Mexican soccer teams and the immigration experience.... Participants’ reports suggested that the referrals from friends were important because they were reassuring. Church announcements, although not overwhelmingly successful, brought in enough participants to make the low-level effort (i.e., a quick announcement at the end of mass) worthwhile. Similarly, flyers, whether posted at the library, pediatrician’s office, or local laundromats, did not result in a significant amount of recruits. However, given participants’ reports of seeing these flyers and becoming aware of the project prior to their friends’ contact, it is likely that these flyers were indeed helpful in recruitment by making it easier for potential participants to solidify intentions to participate when personally contacted by a person who had participated in the study.”<sup>35</sup>*

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<sup>35</sup> Rodriguez, Melanie D., Jesus Rodriguez, Melissa Davis. 2006. *Recruitment of First-Generation Latinos in a Rural Community: The Essential Nature of Personal Contact*. Family Process, Vol. 45, No. 1.

APPENDIX F:

**CONSIDERATIONS: WHEN HOLDING A MEETING WITH  
THE LATINO COMMUNITY IN INDEPENDENCE, OR**

- Best times of day to meet (typically evenings and weekends)
- Seasonal farmworker schedules (summers are typically the busiest days)
- The best locations to meet (trusted/frequented/central)
- Best media sources to communicate event information (e.g. grassroots, radio, church announcements, word of mouth)
- Key community leaders to contact (depending on meeting topic to assist in recruitment of participants)
- Child care needs (provide childcare or family-friendly environment)
- Information in Spanish (e.g. translation materials)
- Concrete goal for the meeting (define and communicate)
- Transportation (if needed, consider providing)
- Food (consider providing culturally appropriate food)