

Bilingual Community Connector Program

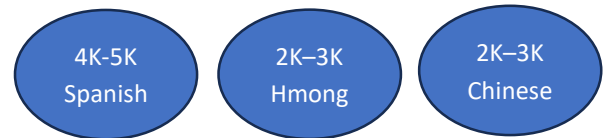
Building trust, access, and equity through language and connection. Translation ≠ Connection

— real engagement requires trusted relationships

The Need

- ❖ 1 in 10 Madison residents prefer a language other than English.
- ❖ Yet 90% of interpretation calls are in Spanish — **showing major access gaps for Hmong & Chinese communities.**

- ❖ 4,000–5,000 Spanish speakers, 2,000–3,000 Hmong speakers & 2,000–3,000 Chinese speakers **report limited English proficiency.**



The Model

Since the end of 2022, Permanent Community Connectors: Spanish, Hmong, Chinese

60% FTE, part-time positions with benefits

What They Do:

- Provide in-language outreach & liaison services, building trust
- Connect residents to city services (housing, transit, childcare)
- Use culturally relevant media (radio,

social, YouTube)

- Co-design engagement strategies with city agencies
- Support emergency & inclusive communications

Community Impact

- 1,000–2,500 views per Spanish-language La Movida **radio episode.**
- Increased bilingual childcare licensing applications.
- Hmong-language WORT radio series fosters intergenerational engagement.

- Chinese-language YouTube & WeChat channels distribute city updates.
- Connectors guide first-time public transit users and City Council participants.

Expansion Proposal

Increase from 0.60 FTE to 0.80 FTE

- Adds 1,200 h/year of community-facing
- Enables expanded outreach, deeper partnerships, and stronger follow-up

From 24 to 32 Hours/Week

Aligns with:

- Madison's Language Access Plan
- RESJI
- Title VI Civil Rights Act

The Ask: The Community Connector Program transforms language access from transactional to relational. We are asking for the Finance Committee to sustain and expand this program — ensuring that language is never a barrier to participation, trust, or belonging in the City of Madison.