



La Rinconada
Town Hall

Line 6: New green open spaces and natural environment regeneration

“El Abrazo”: the new green, leisure, and multifunctional space for the municipality's natural environment regeneration

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1. INTRODUCTION – SUMMARY

The ERDF funds are making a major contribution to the urban development of the municipality of La Rinconada (Seville). One of the most significant lines within this strategy is the contribution to the regeneration of new green spaces and the regeneration of the natural environment.

Among the different actions that have been developed, it is worth mentioning the one called: “Creation of the new Green, Leisure and Multifunctional Area “El Abrazo”, for the regeneration of the natural environment of the municipality”.

This operation consisted of the creation of a Green and Leisure Area between La Rinconada and the nucleus of San José de La Rinconada, in the new space called “El Abrazo”. This space of public use and domain was conditioned for the creation of a green area that favours the regeneration of the natural environment of the municipality. It has also served to promote leisure and recreational activities, as well as sports, using this area as a support for facilities at the service of the community.

“El Abrazo” opened its doors to the public on 1st June 2022, a multifunctional and multipurpose space of 81,862.15 m², where the green and leisure area (Park) programme has been developed, which is articulated through a large central square that can be accessed both by the main access from the North Area and by the access from the East boundary. These accesses structure and shape the entire configuration of the park and its routes. The park has been built with changing spaces, in such way as to give full polyvalence to the celebration of multiple activities, giving predominance to vegetation and facilitating the flexibility of change of use of all the spaces throughout the year.

The launch of "El Abrazo" is a further contribution to the "great cultural ring" of the municipality to develop, promote or host activities in different areas of culture, in any of its manifestations.



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The total investment in this action included in the Expression of Interest has been €2,026,387.39, of which €1,003,125.00 corresponds to ERDF co-financing, although other contracts financed by the Town Hall's own funds have had to be made, which have raised the budget to more than €3,000,000.00. The impact of the action is reflected on the one hand in the adaptation of the land for the construction of the Park of "El Abrazo" and its adaptation to the current demand for use, and on the other hand, in the use and enjoyment by the population of La Rinconada of this innovative and multifunctional space.

2. CRITERIA

This action meets all the criteria to be considered as a good implementation practice co-financed by ERDF.

2.1. The action has been adequately disseminated. *The role of the ERDF in the action has been adequately disseminated to beneficiary entities and to the public.*

In this operation a total of €3,125.00 has been invested in communication and awareness-raising actions on the operation implemented, i.e. 0.32 % of the Budget financed by FEDER – EDUSI.



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VIDEO

Production and editing of a video showing the opening ceremony of the new multifunctional space “El Abrazo”, being the first activity held at the Feria of the municipality
Published on the YouTube platform on 06/06/2022 and broadcast on the social media of La Rinconada Town Hall
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=97N_htrU52Q

<p>NEWS</p> <p>Publication of journalistic articles in different media.</p> <p>Digital Press: Europapress 30 May 2023; Diario de Sevilla 30 May 2023; Rinconada Web – News Section, 1 July 2022.</p>	<p><i>"La Rinconada (Sevilla) estrena este 1 de junio su nuevo recinto ferial tras cuatro años de obra y más de tres millones (europapress.es)"</i></p>
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The operation has deployed a wide range of face-to-face and online media to raise public awareness:

- A communication campaign was developed through several sponsored articles in the most popular digital newspapers among the population of La Rinconada.
- Being aware of the transformation, both visual and social, that the area of action was going to undergo, and the informative relevance that the audiovisual media have today, it was decided to make a video of the inaugural event, which was attended by both authorities and local residents, evidently demonstrating the substantial change in the environment. This video has been published on YouTube and disseminated through the municipality's social networks.
- Finally, a news article was published in the municipal newspaper.

It should be noted that all the communications made included the elements required by the reference regulations: the European emblem, the reference to ERDF co-financing and the slogan "A way for Europe". As well as appearing on the information poster of the works, these elements also appear on the reports, specifications, projects, invoices, etc.

<p>WORK POSTER</p>	<p>SHEET REFERENCE</p>

2.2. The action incorporates innovative elements. *The innovative nature of the action is linked to the methodologies, technologies or processes, the services provided and the different tools used. It is also considered innovative with regard to the territory or area of implementation.*

On the occasion of the creation of the new green, leisure and multifunctional area "El Abrazo", work has been carried out to improve the soil structure by clearing vegetation, cleaning debris and stones, tilling and raking. Topsoil and compost have been added to improve nutrient content. Land conditioning work was also carried out, which involved raising the elevation.

In relation to the green area, plant species were planted to create this green space, which combines leisure-recreational and entertainment purposes. In terms of the layout of these green areas, the plot has been divided into 3 clearly defined zones:



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- Zone I: Leisure-recreational area, consisting of an esplanade of trees, located in the western and eastern part of the enclosure.
- Zone II: Area of central space, consisting of the ornamentation and landscaping of the central square, located in the central area of the site.
- Zone III: Area consisting of an alignment of trees on the perimeter screen in the north and west of the enclosure.

The plot on which the operation was carried out is called “*Pago de EnMedio*”, located in the southern part of Pago, on the right-hand side of the Northern Access carriageway.

The most significant aspect of this site is undoubtedly the large area of land it covers, as according to the land registry and planning, it has 81,862.15 m². The layout of the plot is characterized by the fact that it is divided into two horizontal platforms with a difference in height of approximately two metres.

The areas with the highest level of completion are the large central square and the boulevard that runs east-west through the site. Around these two arteries are located the spaces that house the largest areas of green space and free esplanades that host the events held in the area.



EL ABRAZO ENCLOSURE, EU FLAG



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FAIR CELEBRATED IN "EL ABRAZO" ENCLOSURE

2.3. Adequacy of the results obtained to the established objectives. *The main objectives are highlighted, showing the added value of having received European Funds.*

Thanks to ERDF co-financing, the results that had been set at the outset have been achieved.

The main objective to be achieved with the operation was an ecological and environmental objective, as it was necessary to create this green area in a place of great environmental degradation. The natural resources of the area have been preserved and enhanced in an equitable process that guarantees access to them for all citizens.

The creation of this ecologically functional park interacts with the network of parks and gardens nearby. It is a natural phenomenon that enriches the biodiversity of the area. It is also easily accessible thanks to La Rinconada network of cycle paths and the good public transport system, which contribute to low environmental and noise pollution.

The second objective was to achieve efficiency in the use of resources. It has been possible to adapt the land and build the park using materials with low maintenance costs, high durability and great stability.

It is essential to highlight one of the great achievements of the operation, as it was intended to achieve more social and cultural harmony, which has manifested itself in the maintenance of the various social and cultural systems, as well as social equity between the two main population centres that make up the municipality: La Rinconada and San José de La Rinconada.

This space is very important, as it brings together individuals and the environment, always with the aim of seeking quality of life, recreational and sporting use in its maximum heterogeneity, and the leisure and enjoyment of an area that offers different opportunities, with an expansion of its services and facilities.



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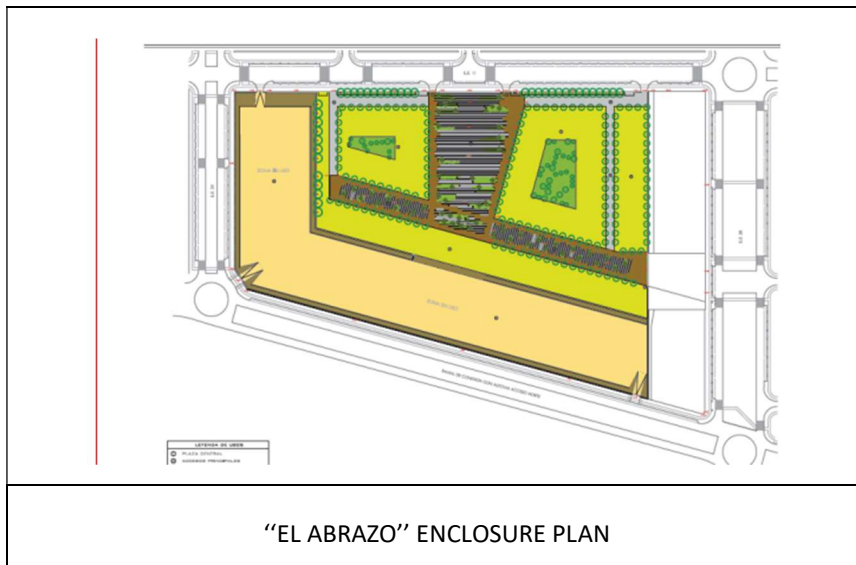
2.4. Contribution to the resolution of a problem or weakness detected in the territorial area of implementation. *A description is given of the problem that the Project presented responds to and how its implementation favours the development of the territory.*

There are many problems in the area of action that have been solved thanks to the contribution of the ERDF funds, but the most alarming was that the real existing vegetation in the area was practically non-existent.

In this sense, there has been an improvement in the urban environment in its environmental, landscape and urban planning dimensions, due to the impact it has on the well-being of the population, the promotion of social and territorial cohesion and competitiveness, which corresponds to a priority area of sustainable urban development. Problems of urban and environmental decline have been mitigated, and new development dynamics have been stimulated.

With regard to pollution reduction, very positive results are being obtained. Urban air quality has improved in line with the provisions of Law 34/2007, of 15 November, on air quality and atmospheric protection. Likewise, urban noise pollution has been reduced, in accordance with the noise quality objectives set out in Law 37/2003, of 17 November, on Noise.

We can therefore conclude this section by emphasizing that air and noise pollution has been considerably reduced, the protection of biodiversity in urban areas has been improved, and the state of urban land has been regenerated, recovering it for environmentally friendly public use.



2.5. High degree of coverage of the population. *Mention is made of the outreach, not only to beneficiaries but also to the general population.*

The implementation of this operation has a direct impact on the population of La Rinconada and San José de La Rinconada, which amounts to 39,509 citizens.



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This action is considered a success by all the neighbours of the locality, as it is the way to join both population centres in the aforementioned "Pago de Enmedio", located in the La Union Avenue.

Currently, the "El Abrazo" site hosts most of the macro leisure and even business events held in the municipality. Its location favours the meeting between the inhabitants, being able to move quickly and easily. If we take as reference points iconic spots in both places, such as the Town Hall in La Rinconada, or the iconic Calle Madrid in San José de La Rinconada, it only takes a few minutes to get there. From both points it takes only 9 minutes by bicycle or less than half an hour on foot.

It will also have an impact on residents of nearby towns, such as Brenes or Alcalá del Río, making it attractive for them to travel to La Rinconada to spend their leisure time at the activities and functions offered by this new space, which is accessible to all, thus benefiting from the wide range of cultural activities in our municipality.



2.6. Consideration of the horizontal criteria of equal opportunities and non-discrimination, as well as social responsibility and environmental sustainability. Indicate how these criteria have been applied in the corresponding action.

As with any SUD operation, the horizontal principles of the POPE have been taken into account for the implementation of this operation.

One of the fundamental pillars in the selection and execution of the operation for the Creation of the new Green, Leisure and Multifunctional Area "El Abrazo", for the regeneration of the natural environment of the municipality has been equal opportunities.

In fact, this principle has been taken into account from the very selection of the operation, since La Rinconada Town Hall has an Equality and Social Welfare Department that has actively participated in the creation of the site, providing corrective measures to favour its accessibility, and supervising the documentation generated in all its phases.



Moreover, in the execution of the project itself, the incorporation of non-sexist language and images has been considered, both in the documentation of the dossiers and in all the dissemination actions carried out.

We must also point out that one of the objectives of the area of Equality of our municipality is: "To activate the Local Plan against Gender Violence to continue improving coordination with the different agents linked to the prevention, guidance, support and safety of the victims". That is why in the events held at this venue you can always find a Violet Point.

One of the most important macro events that the town celebrates every year in June is the Feria. This year 2023 is the second consecutive year that it is held in the new enclosure of "El Abrazo". One of the novelties has been the establishment of a Violet Point. Previously, a Training and Awareness Day on Gender Violence was held for volunteers from Civil Protection, Youth, Women's Associations and for all those who wished to collaborate in this Point during the event.

Thus, the campaign "*El Abrazo, un espacio seguro para disfrutar en Igualdad*" was launched, with the aim of making the Fair a safe place for women. At this point, information, advice and protection was provided to women in case of need.



Earlier, a brief reference was made to accessibility.

On this issue, the Equality Department has also been responsible for ensuring that the new venue has accesses adapted for people with reduced mobility, as well as high traffic vinyl flooring and non-slip surfaces, with the aim of improving safety for people using wheelchairs or similar.

2.7. Synergies with other policies or public intervention instruments. *This takes into account that the intervention has reinforced the action of other policies and has contributed to reinforcing positive aspects of the same.*



This action is mainly based on the Strategic Objective No. 1 of the Urban Agenda of La Rinconada 2030, which is to "Organize the Territory and make a rational use of the land, conserve and protect it". Some of the main challenges it presents are:

- To promote the integration of the two large urban centres as a way of optimizing the territorial organization of the municipality. The most important step towards this integration is the urban and building development of "*Pago de Enmedio*".
- Link urban centres with the natural environment by consolidating a green infrastructure. To maximize the benefits of having a large area of urban green spaces, it is essential to connect these areas with each other, with peri-urban parks, with the river environment and with the metropolitan system of open spaces, thus creating a fully operational green and blue infrastructure.

It presents synergies with other policies or instruments of public intervention also included in the Urban Agenda of the locality, specifically with Strategic Objectives 2 and 3.

Strategic Objective 2 "Avoiding Urban Sprawl and Revitalizing the Existing City" contains a key purpose that is consistent with this operation:

- Increasing the compactness of the urban environment. Increasing urban compactness will be achieved through two actions:
 1. The development of the *Pago de Enmedio*, which will optimize the provision of urban public services by centralizing their location, as well as adapting their size and eliminating duplicities;
 2. The improvement of the various connections with the dispersed population centres.

Meanwhile, Strategic Objective 3 "Prevent and Reduce the impacts of Climate Change and enhance Resilience", proposes:

- Adopt new measures to prevent and adapt to the effects and impacts of climate change, as a result of new forecasts in planning and territorial planning instruments.
- To increase the green areas of the municipality, as well as to use bioclimatic criteria in the design of urban spaces, so that they act as CO₂ emission sinks.

In this regard, we should mention the synergy with the Action Plan for Sustainable Energy in the municipality (Covenant of Mayors), which outlines the lines to be followed to improve the environmental situation of the municipality, such as the revaluation and improvement of the urban space.

Last but not least, reference should be made to the synergy with the Cultural Policy of La Rinconada due to the nature of the venue, as it is prepared to host large cultural events. In this line, it is intended to promote the expansion of the performing arts programme, with attention to local companies, businesses and artists.



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We can conclude by stating that "El Abrazo", in addition to being a park, is a new public space considered as a generator of creative and cultural activity.