



Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystems:

**A Bold Economic Development
Strategy for Rural Economies**

**EDFC Board Meeting
December 12, 2019**

Rural Economic Development is Challenging



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OPINION | GUEST COMMENTARY

Guest Commentary | Entrepreneurship is declining in rural areas

By **SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL** |
December 6, 2019 at 5:00 am

By Heidi Pickman

Javier Zamora lost his job as the regional manager of a golf course management company during the Great Recession. Through hard-work and entrepreneurial determination, he rebuilt his life and now owns a multi-million-dollar strawberry farm in rural Watsonville. And he owes much of his success to a strong local entrepreneurial ecosystem that provides capital, education and other resources to small business owners.

Unfortunately, Zamora's success in business is more the exception than the norm in the nation's rural communities.

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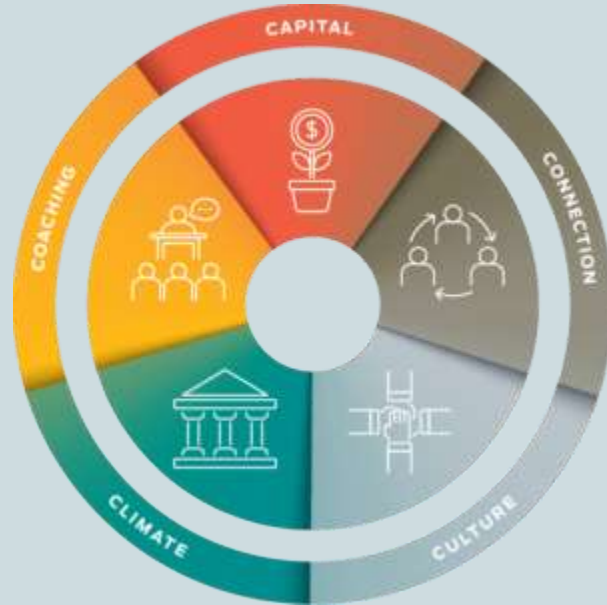
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Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

The What (in brief)



Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem The Mendocino Project

- Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Toolkit
- A survey of business owners, elected officials and community
- Community meeting and stakeholder meetings
- Digest the survey results and explore next steps

Goal: focus on the business ecosystem to support the County's plans to grow this sector

Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem The Team

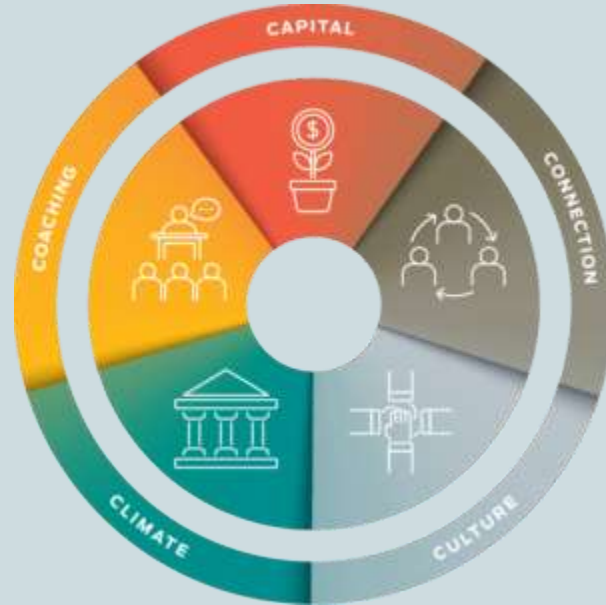
- Heidi Pickman, CAMEO
- Susan Brown, CAMEO
- Heather Gurewitz, EDFC

Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem



The Team

- Sheilah Rogers, West Company founder, Redwood Valley MAC
- Joel Soinila, Veikko Properties
- Amanda Reiman, Flow Kana
- Mary Anne Petrillo, West Company
- Kevin Williams, West Company
- Kate Maxwell, Mendocino Voice
- Catherine Marshall, CAP Builders, Nonprofit Consultant

Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem The Toolkit



Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem The Survey



C·A·M·E·O·

Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

EDFC, along with CAMEO (California Association for Micro Enterprise Opportunity) are working together to develop a strong Local Entrepreneurship Ecosystem (LEE).

This survey will help identify strengths and gaps in Mendocino County's business ecosystem provide information to be incorporated into Mendocino County's strategic 5-year plan. The survey was developed by a group of stakeholders and is a follow up to a January 31 meeting from economic development stakeholders and business owners.

Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Survey Results: Coaching



Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Survey Results: Capital



Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Survey Results: Connections



Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Survey Results: Culture



Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Survey Results: Climate



Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Survey Results: Key Takeaways

- Have coaching resources, but not well known
- Access to capital is an issue
- Need digital skills training: social media and website
- Mindset change to expand markets to outside county
- Good local culture, engage youth
- Most room for improvement: regulatory and policy

Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Dream Big

- Digital competency for branding, selling, networking (Coaching)
- Provide industry-specific expertise (Coaching)
- Expand business coaching services (Coaching)
- Bring in a Kiva Hub to provide zero-interest loans (Capital)
- Locally-owned broadband access (Connections)
- Create hacker, maker, and incubator spaces for entrepreneurs (Connections)

Local Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Dream Big

- Create a robust internally-facing “Produce/Buy Local” campaign (Culture)
- County Economic Development staff focused on small business (Climate)
- Create Task Force to ensure codes and ordinances are business friendly (Climate)

THANK YOU!!!



Heidi Pickman, hpickman@cameonetwork.org