



MINUTES

EDC-VC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

September 3, 2025

Location:	4001 Mission Oaks Blvd., Suite P, Camarillo, CA 93012
Attendance:	Bob Engler, <i>Chair</i> – City of Thousand Oaks Dee Dee Cavanaugh—City of Simi Valley Harold Edwards—Limoneira Company John Bandek —Economic Roundtable Representative, City of Moorpark Janice Parvin—County of Ventura
Absent:	Dr. Cynthia Herrera, <i>Vice Chair</i> — Community Colleges of Ventura County Peter Zierhut — Haas Automation Kristin Decas —Port of Hueneme/Oxnard Harbor
Guests:	None
Staff:	Bruce Stenslie—President/CEO Alondra Gaytan—Director of Strategic Relations
Call to Order:	3:34 p.m. Board Chair Bob Engler welcomed everyone and expressed thanks for attending.
Amendment to the Agenda:	N/A
Public Comment:	N/A
Approval of Executive Committee Minutes:	Bob Engler called a motion to approve August 6, 2025, meeting minutes. Bob Engler moved to approve the motion and Supervisor Parvin seconded the motion. All members in attendance in favor, motion passed.

Administration

A. Recommendation to Delegate Authority to the President/CEO to Sign Approval to Grant Agreements for Small Business Development Services with Long Beach City College, Funding from the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development, Estimated \$140,000 for the Capital Infusion Program and \$700,000 for the Technical Assistance Program, Both for the Term October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026

EDC has served as the Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties Small Business Development Center (SBDC) since 2010. The primary funding is through the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

The core SBDC program is funded separately on a calendar year term at approximately \$480,000 annually. The 2026 SBDC grant will be taken up separately in either November or December, after we receive the notice of award and agreement or, if delayed, a solid estimation of the amount and projected date of award.

These two funds recommended for approval today, CIP and TAP, augment our core SBDC funding, putting our total SBDC annual and *recurring* state and federal revenue at about \$1.3 million. This projected funding for program year 2025-26 is down slightly from current years, owing to a small, anticipated reduction in our TAP funding, as the state is now including more grantees to be funded out of the existing pool of funds, which results in a reduction in funding to existing programs.

The SBA requires that grantees provide a dollar-to-dollar value match to the core SBDC federal funds, *previously* not less than half of the match in cash, but under the current administration requiring the match fully in cash, not by in-kind contributions. The CIP grant contributes some \$140,000 to that estimated need of \$480,000 in cash annually, with the balance now being allowed to come through some to be determined share of the TAP program and our state funded "Accelerator" program, plus continuing contributions of local city and county funds. Our proposed budget for our 2026 SBDC program exceeds the cash match requirements.

The Capital Infusion Program (or CIP, the subject of recommendation #1 above), was established by the Governor's Office under various titles dating back some ten years has ranged historically from as low as \$45,000 up to \$140,000 annually. These funds are specifically intended to improve local SBDC capacity to facilitate business access to capital. This year's estimated funding of \$140,000 is the same as recent prior years.

CIP funding is delivered to us through the same regional structure as for our regular SBA funding, that is, through grant agreement from the regional lead center, Long Beach City College. Today's recommended action is to assure we can access the funding as soon as possible as this is new funding for the period starting October 1, 2025 (though we have not yet received the grant agreement, the funding is approved at the state level).

Technical Assistance Program (TAP): This was a new program starting in October 2018 (initially branded "Technical Assistance Expansion Program," or TAEP), also funded through the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development and, like the CIP program noted above, with funding distributed through our lead SBDC center, Long Beach City College.

The program's purpose continues to be to leverage and supplement existing federal programs, expanding our reach to a larger number of firms and resulting in more

outcomes in capital infusion, job growth and retention, increases in business revenue, and new business starts.

Unlike the Capital Infusion Program (CIP), TAP is not specifically targeted to one aspect of small business assistance (CIP being all about access to capital), the purpose of the TAP program is to more broadly augment and expand the work of Small Business Development Centers, Women's Business Centers, Minority Business Centers and other programs funded by the federal government to serve small business. As noted above, the past two years GO-Biz has added other business service programs as eligible to receive TAP funding, which reduces the amount of awards to the existing programs.

Our funding for the year ending September 30 was \$700,000. Our estimated funding this year remains the same \$700,000, which may be optimistic given the increasing number of eligible applicants to the fixed total pool of funds.

As the current program period of performance does not end until September 30, we are still accumulating final data, though we project we will meet and exceed our annual performance outcome metrics for businesses served, number of capital infusions, and business startups. Staff will provide up-to-date detail at the time of our meeting.

Approval of a delegation of authority today helps assure we can access the funding with no interruption to program services.

Bob Engler called a motion to delegate authority to the President/CEO to approve receipt of the TAP and CIP grants as recommended. Harold Edwards moved to approve and Dee Dee Cavanaugh seconded the motion. All members in favor, motion passed.

B. Recommendation to Delegate Authority to the President/CEO to Sign Approval of an Anticipated Grant Agreement with the County of Los Angeles, and/or the State of California, Up to \$800,000 for a Two-Year Term, for the Provision of Workforce and Economic Development Services in Response to Prior Wildfire Impacts and for Investing in Economic Resilience in Anticipation of Economic Disruptions Going Forward

Background:

- AB 338 is authored by Assemblymember Jose Luis Solache, Jr. (D Lynwood/Paramount, also Chair of the Assembly Committee on Economic Development, Growth and Household Impact), with an initial purpose to appropriate \$50 million in workforce and economic recovery funds in response to wildfire impacts in Los Angeles County.
- Lead Consultant Staff at the Economic Development Committee, with the support of the Speakers office, helped re-frame the bill to include EDC to receive a share of the funds for Ventura county, recognizing the impacts of the Mountain Fire.
- The Assemblymember invited staff from EDC and LA County Office of Economic Opportunity to testify in support of AB 338 at the Labor & Employment Committee. The bill passed successfully out of the policy committee, though

stalled—as did most member requests for new funding—at the Appropriation Committee.

- Though held back at Appropriations, the Assemblymember’s staff, along with support by Economic Development Committee staff, managed to squeeze \$5 million into the budget trailer bill, consistent with the purposes of AB 338.
- Unfortunately the trailer bill, authored by the Department of Finance, dropped “EDC Ventura County” and included only LA. In response to that oversight, the bill author, the committee staff and the Labor and Workforce Agency Secretary (responsible for distributing the \$5 million identified in the trailer bill) agreed to assure the bill’s intent would be honored, including an allocation to EDC.
- While the final amount of funding for EDC is not yet determined, here is what we know at the time of this writing:
 - The Department of Finance and Labor Agency have agreed for expedience they will write only one grant agreement, with LA County, and EDC will get whatever is its negotiated share of funds via subagreement with LA County. (This was not our preference, as it put us in a secondary position for negotiating the grant amount.)
 - The details for assuring EDC’s inclusion, and the amount, are at the time of this writing still being worked out on through final legislative clean up.
 - It appears our minimum share will be \$600,000 out of the \$5 million, though we are still working to increase that up to \$800,000 (and expect we’ll have the final amount determined by the time of our meeting).
 - We understand that our push for the higher amount has considerable support, but a lot to overcome considering the size of Ventura County compared to Los Angeles and the relative severity of fire impacts over the last year.
- That noted, we are extremely grateful for the leadership and consideration of Assemblymember Solache and his office, the Committee staff, the Speaker’s Office and leadership at the Labor & Workforce Agency.
- Finally, for programming the fund, without knowing the actual allocation, we have not finalized the service strategy, though the bill, attached, authorized a broad range of direct fire relief investments and investments in economic resiliency for the region’s disadvantaged workforce. At this point our draft notions include (subject to final negotiation and neither assured nor exclusively):
 - Continuation of our *Get Your Small Business Online* training, in collaboration with Women’s Economic Ventures, and as initially designed and launched through the “Digital Upskilling” funding secured by Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin.
 - Investing in skills credentials for Early Child Education workers, addressing the skilled labor shortage in our transition to accommodating Universal Pre-School and assuring quality care capacity for serving all low-income children.
 - Partnering with the Workforce Development Board for training pre-apprentices and/or other construction trades workers for securing certifications necessary for engaging in post-fire property clean up and remediation.

Today's recommendation is to delegate authority to the President/CEO to sign agreement at our earliest opportunity for securing this funding and launching the program.

Bob Enger called a motion to delegate authority to the President/CEO to sign approval for receipt of up to \$800,000 for Workforce and Economic Development Services in response to wildfire. Motion made by Harold Edwards, seconded by John Bandek, all members in favor. Motion carried.

C. Discussion of EDC Organizational Values and Principles

Over the last several months we have some discussion on the role and positioning of the EDC, relative to our member and partner organizations.

In short, the EDC was incorporated in 1996, with the primary notion being that one of the key leadership institutions the region of Ventura county was lacking was public/private partnership organization, dedicated to economic development.

Central to that formation was the shared agreement that no single government entity was to set regional economic priorities, rather the leadership would be through a collaborative model, a separate 501c3 nonprofit, its membership comprised of representation from all the cities, the county and private sector leads sharing in the investment and direction.

Over the nearly thirty years since our formation, it's to be expected that some of our formative principles, and many of the events and milestones that have shaped our identity, purpose and trajectory, have faded from the picture.

As part of today's discussion, staff presented a summary document of what has been distilled of our archives and history, for our grounding principles and key dates/milestones. The purpose is to bring the principles and history back into focus, to be shared with our members, partners, and stakeholders.

The principles are summarized below and are subject to final editing.

EDC's Organizing and Partnership Principles (1996-2025)

- 1) Ventura County Regional Economic Development **Strategy and Priorities** are set jointly by all 10 cities, the County and private sector leadership, via their participation on the EDC Board of Directors.
- 2) Regional Economic Development Strategy aligns with the **Guidelines for Orderly Development (GOOD)**:
 - urban development is maintained specifically within city limits, minimizing urban sprawl, and preserving agricultural and open space areas;
 - economic investment is likewise concentrated within cities, deferring to municipal leadership.
- 3) EDC is organized as an agent for **regional coordination**, with a dual purpose:

- to facilitate de-escalation of city/city and city/county competition and conflict, and
- to advance public/private partnership and collaboration.

These purposes are achieved by the regular convening of the region's:

- Public/private partnership EDC board of directors;
 - EDC economic developer's roundtable, the practitioner's table for professional sharing/guidance.
- 4) EDC is organized and charged not only for developing regional economic development policy guidance, but also, and most especially, for **efficiency in service delivery** (economies of scale, services and capacities complementary to what cities may invest in individually).
- 5) EDC is intentionally a **501c3 service-driven organization**; neither a forum for nor a driver of advocacy on local, state or federal regulation, taxation, etc.
- Each political jurisdiction (city and county) develops their own policies and priorities for housing, business regulation, permitting and taxation.

D. President's Report. Bruce Stenslie shared an overview of the various local, regional, and other community meetings and partnerships.

New and Unfinished Business: NA

Executive Committee Comments: N/A

Adjournment: Bob Engler called the meeting adjourned at 5:01 pm to October 1, 2025.