



Brand Guidelines

Updated: July 2024

HOW TO USE

Evergreen Guidance

As the Economic Development Collaborative continues to evolve its offerings, how we communicate our brand and our action-based efforts to the community is imperative. In this guide, you'll see how we define our brand, how it should be used, and how it should live and appear in the world. Ensuring brand consistency when communicating to EDC staff, partners and broader audiences of Sonoma County sets the stage for increased awareness and understanding. Use this guide as a tool to strengthen your own knowledge on brand communication as well as reinforce the integrity of the Economic Development Collaborative's overall message.

Thank you for being a part of EDC and participating in its evolution and growth. We are excited to see what the future holds.



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Messaging

WHY NOW?

The Evolution of EDC

Since our inception, Economic Development Board has supported new businesses in accessing capital, applying for incentives and meeting regulatory requirements. While vibrant businesses remain a cornerstone of economic growth, in the past decade there has become a greater urgency to evolve our operating model beyond business partnerships. As we increase our economic development efforts in housing and workforce, we believe in bringing greater awareness to who we are and what we can provide.

As we expand our outreach, we must evolve into a stronger, more authentic representation of who we are in our visuals and how we communicate with our community. In our evolution as a board, we want to cement ourselves as a resource that is accessible and available to all. Our new name and brand will invite our broader audience in, no matter who they are, and represent us as a responsive partner, ready to help redefine and educate what economic development means to the community.



Confident

Passionate

Inclusive

Confident | Passionate | Inclusive

Confident

TURNING DREAMS INTO REALITIES

We have successfully helped build, sustain and support countless businesses and initiatives in Sonoma County. We are confident in our ability to provide individualized support directly to those who are ready to take the next step. We have gained the trust of our peers, partners, and community, giving our work more integrity and assurance.

Reason to Believe

- Providing support and resources for countless of thriving businesses in Sonoma County for over 60 years
- We are connectors — our partners and peers are confident in our abilities
- Success stories: many people find us from word of mouth
- Our experience + staff + resources allows us to create the best, action based plans and next steps
- We have the confidence to educate and provide assurance to any and all

Example Messaging

- Our vision is to bring yours to life.
- Creating an environment for all to thrive.
- Connect with us and we will connect you with the right resources for your business.
- Did you know your creative passion is a business? Connect with our team and let us help you take the next step.

Confident | **Passionate** | Inclusive

Passionate

HUMAN CENTRIC

We are a collaborative of locals invested in helping our environment and community flourish. Our passion is rooted in putting Sonoma County first — helping our community at an individual, business and institutional level through personal interactions.

Reason to Believe

- Providing tangible, realistic plans that individuals can *actually* put into action
- Every business, creative pursuit, and financial future is different. We support with individualized planning versus a blanket approach
- If we do not have the answers, or think someone would benefit from connecting with a different organization, we lay the groundwork to get them there. We will never leave anyone without resources

Example Messaging

- We are a team of locals focused on creating a Sonoma County where we all can work, grow and live.
- Cultivating a community of opportunity and belonging.
- We are grateful for this opportunity to help shape Sonoma County's future.
- There is no gatekeeping or glass ceilings to break here.
- Bringing peace of mind when the unexpected happens, our team and resources are always available.
- Preparing your business to combat natural disasters. Connect with EDC to find out how we can support you.

Confident | Passionate | **Inclusive**

Inclusive

PROGRAMS + INITIATIVES FOR ALL

We are invested in the communities we live and work in. We back the programs that are directly impacting our communities needs in business, housing and workforce development. When we support and hold up the diverse businesses and dreams of Sonoma County, we can enhance a greater quality of life for all.

Reason to Believe

- Serving all businesses, creatives and entrepreneurs, regardless of demographics
- Encouraging and creating action-based plans for underrepresented communities
- Our resources are accessible to all
- Speaking directly to individuals and tailoring our resources and programs to answer their needs

Example Messaging

- We are a local collaborative, invested in making our community stronger.
- Your work, your family, your creative passion contributes to our community. When you are thriving, our community continues to prosper. Connect with EDC and learn more.
- No matter your passion or business idea, we will help you pursue it.

Voice

The Economic Development Collaborative speaks with confidence and assurance, because we know we are filling in where the community needs us most.

We have experience in helping businesses grow successfully and are deeply connected with many nonprofit organizations in Sonoma County. We communicate from a place of empathy and humanness. We understand the economic challenges many individuals face, which is also why people continue to choose us.

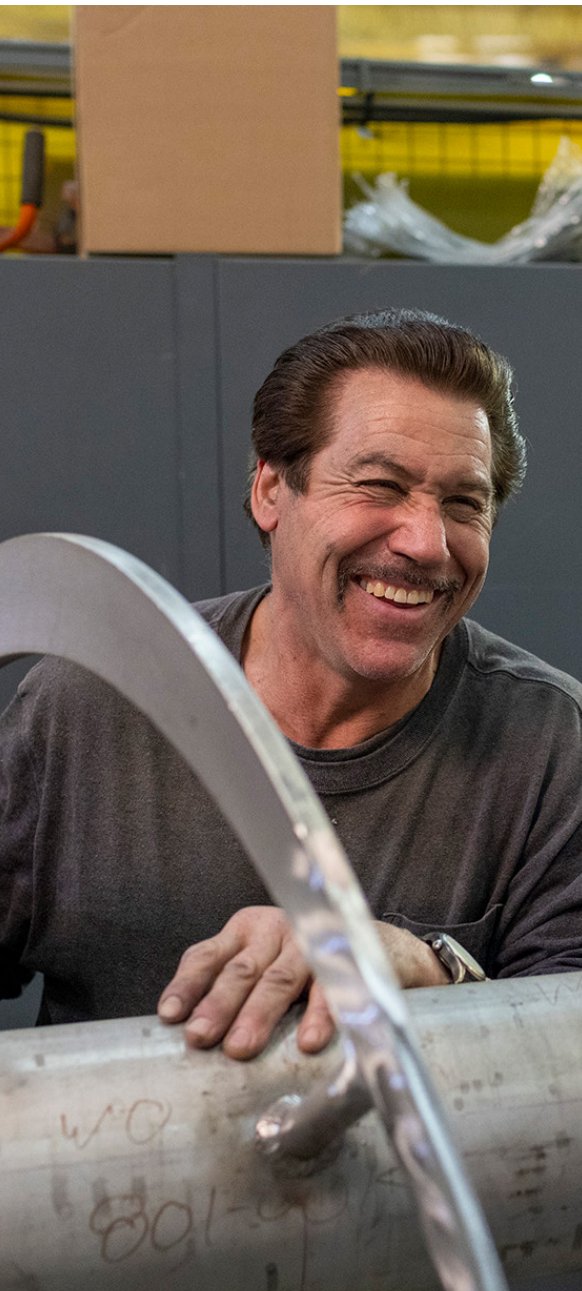
We represent our community and they know we are here to help them build a path forward.

Tone

Our tone can change based on our audiences, however we remain on brand with our mission, values, and how we support each audience's individual needs no matter who we are speaking to.

MANIFESTO

How We See The World



Having the resources to build economic prosperity should be available, attainable and accessible to all. Our job at the Economic Development Collaborative is to help you succeed.

This is why EDC is here. We believe in not just talking about dreams, but taking the actionable next steps to get there. We bring our expertise, connections and resources and help you build the next steps for your business, or creative endeavor, so you can leave feeling confident and self assured.

We are here to be your partner. To provide you the services you and your organization need to create and prosper. You started the foundation, now let us help you build.

AUDIENCES

How to Engage with Them

Our messaging is accessible, inspiring and encourages action to take for everyone; from our younger generations, to our local nonprofit, civic and cultural leaders.

We want to feel welcoming, friendly, and be known as a team who is *actually* there to connect and understand needs and goals on a personal level. When presenting information, we present it in a transparent, digestible, and optimistic way, so we can help them make an educated and informed plan forward.



Defining + Tailoring to our Audiences

In order to engage with a variety of different audiences, it is important that we tailor our approach depending on who we are connecting with. This approach will be represented in our messaging, our tone and education, and tactics on where and how to best reach them. Whoever we are communicating with, EDC will always be anchored under the unifying themes of who we are, our mission and how we support our community.

OUR AUDIENCES:

Board & County Leaders

Businesses

Community Partners + Peers

Broader Community



Board and County Leaders | Businesses |
Community Partners + Peers | Broader Community

Board and County Leaders

PERSONA

When communicating with multiple tiers of board and county leaders, it is imperative that we share just how vital our role is in Sonoma County. The EDC is uniquely set up to directly support the community and has accomplished many projects and initiatives. We belong among the decision makers and leaders of Sonoma County. The EDC is not just a resource, but a team of connectors between organizations and the community. We have the foresight to advise on the economic health backed by years of credible, balanced programs and work still being used today. We have the consensus of our peers, as well as community support.

EXAMPLE MESSAGING

- We are your reliable, supportive partner, approaching every project in the same way. We're proactive collaborators committed to ensuring that every project is a success from start to finish.
- We are here to solve problems through open-communication and active participation.
- Supported by countless businesses in Sonoma County, with a 66-year history — the Economic Development Collaborative brings foresight of economic health and stability to every project. Together, we'll accomplish more.
- The strength of our partnership paves the way to achieve more for the community.

Board and County Leaders | **Businesses** |
Community Partners + Peers | Broader Community

Businesses

ACTIVE + ORGANIZED BUSINESSES

PERSONA

Businesses need to be reminded of how imperative we are to their growth. As it stands, we are their connection to the government, but to a greater degree, we care and understand their needs, and are looking to make next steps to ensure their success. We want to represent as a confident and able asset, ready to bring businesses more opportunities and assure them that our work i.e. building resources, advocating for small businesses; continues to benefit them.

EXAMPLE MESSAGING

- We are committed to being your ally in growing your business and connecting you to the right resources when you need them.
- With the right resources and connections, you can set your businesses up with a stronger foundation.
- Our community is built by businesses like yours. Let us help you plan for its future.
- Connect with us and we will connect you with the right resources for your business.

Board and County Leaders | **Businesses** |
Community Partners + Peers | Broader Community

Businesses

SMALL BUSINESSES

PERSONA

For our smaller individual businesses, our goal is to remind and educate them on what working with us truly means. We are here to be their link to greater opportunities, promote networking and to be a strong advocate when it comes to securing grants, studies and reports when they are in need.

EXAMPLE MESSAGING

- We are your seat at the table, working behind the scenes so your business's needs are heard.
- When you partner with EDC, expect more opportunities and better solutions for your business.
- Grow your small business into something bigger. We are here to advocate for your business's future.

Board and County Leaders | Businesses |
Community Partners + Peers | Broader Community

Community Partners + Peers

PERSONA

One of our many goals is to always remain a part of conversations with our community partners. In order to accomplish this, we must present as allies to their work and expert opinions. Within every mission of any nonprofit or community organization, we are there to remind them that economic prosperity is essential to achieving their goal. By committing to work with EDC, we will not only help in their pursuit, but also remind them that their success is aligned with the success of our local economy.

EXAMPLE MESSAGING

- Partnering with experts in our community only makes our work stronger.
- Combining our resources with experts in our community allows us to tackle more projects with greater confidence.
- The growth of your pursuit is connected to the rise of our local economy.

Board and County Leaders | Businesses |
Community Partners + Peers | **Broader Community**

Broader Community

(INCLUDING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES + YOUNGER GENERATIONS)

PERSONA

The communities of Sonoma County want to feel represented in who they are, what they stand for, and to see their needs reflected in the programs we support and the initiatives we back. It is imperative we show up as the passionate citizens and public servants we are, upholding the mission of the county through our work at the EDC. We are committed to the community because we are a part of it, and it is at the foundation of all we do.

EXAMPLE MESSAGING

- Our mission is to answer your needs. Come to EDC for resources, education and connect with us on how we can help you achieve your goals.
- We are creating an environment where questions are asked, needs are met, and challenges are tackled, so you can continue to thrive.
- Your needs are what we bring to the table — advocating on your behalf, so you can keep pursuing, dreaming and building the life you deserve.
- We fight for you because Sonoma County should be the place where everyone can build, thrive, and access opportunities.
- Economic challenges are not easy. It's our job to fight for you and your future. Learn how the EDC can help you take steps towards economic prosperity.

Board and County Leaders | Businesses |
Community Partners + Peers | **Broader Community**

Broader Community

EXAMPLE MESSAGING CONT.

- Economic challenges are not easy. It's our job to fight for you and your future. Learn how the EDC can help you take steps towards economic prosperity.
- When you work with us, you are gaining a team. We work together to bring your pursuits to life. Learn more how we can help your business grow.
- The team at EDC works together to make sure Sonoma County is the place where you can pursue your creative passion from a foundation of economic stability. Let us help you start building.
- Our job is to help people in their communities find security in their work, housing and education; so they can keep focusing on reaching their highest potential. Learn about the steps you can take today to start building economic prosperity.
- Create from a place of prosperity. Let us help you reach your economic goals.
- When communities thrive — the people, their businesses and their dreams grow even bigger. At the EDC, we take active steps everyday to support our communities economic welfare, so we all can enjoy and make more opportunities for Sonoma County.



Brand Evolution Guidance

As the EDC begins to evolve, this guide is here to provide a few key tips for you and your team during the growth period of the organization.

HELPFUL TIPS

- A crucial differentiator when communicating about the brand evolution is to focus on the organization itself. We will tell the story of how the collaborative has grown, and where we are headed together — still rooted under the same mission and core values. By approaching the conversation in this manner, we can avoid the change feeling abrupt and impersonal, and more of a natural progression as our 3.0 plan moves forward.
- Remain rooted in the identity of who the Economic Development Collaborative is while the visual representations slowly begin to change (logos, colors).
- Encourage excitement and curiosity from the team.

****Note:** Keep in mind, this brand evolution could take up to a year or more depending on timelines, goals and budgets.

Phases of Brand Evolution Rollout

Below is a brief outline of how to guide stakeholders through each phase of the brand evolution. It's of importance that we start speaking the language of the EDC's new vision, and implement new branding as opposed to speaking to, or announcing the rebrand. We want to make the core focus of this change about the identity and strength of the EDC, and less about the look and feel of the brand.

Phase 1. Giving supervisors an early preview

Before the brand evolution is underway, alert, email and preview to supervisors of what they can expect in the near future.

Phase 1.5. Communications Audit

As all these changes are underway, staying organized is essential. We recommend building a Communications Audit Matrix ([editable template](#) here — tabs per department) that allows the entire EDC team to note items needing brand updates, in the moment, so as to not lose track.

****Note:** The Engine is happy to support these brand updates as they come in. We recommend backloging items and then bringing a group of tasks to our design team at once as we find there are cost savings in grouping tasks together versus coming to us consistently with one off asks.

Phases of Brand Evolution Rollout

Phase 2. **A staggered introduction of the new Economic Development Collaborative**

Begin to lead with how we will be presenting our new brand to the world through visual representations of:

- Website
- Email

However our teams and audiences should still be able to find old information and old URLs at this stage of the brand relaunch.

Phase 3. **Officially coming out as the new Economic Development Collaborative**

Focused on moving away from the old brand and push forward into the new brand assets by:

- Updating collateral and any additional assets
- All assets should be under DNR — *do not reorder anything as you begin replacing items.*

If you order envelopes for the office and you see you're running low, take note, look to re-brand and then re-order. The previous name/brand should be sunset at any feasible opportunity.

Visual Identity

Our Logo

The Economic Development Collaborative logo is emblematic of our board's identity and values. Our logo is welcoming, intentional and accessible to all. Encompassed by our "C," we convey a message of supporting our community. Each element works together to construct a more impactful image. We recognize the importance of every initiative at EDC, which are represented in our three warming colors. The typeface is intentionally converted into lowercase to further personalize and humanize our group to feel inclusive and team centric.



PRIMARY LOGO

Use the primary logo in most instances where a brand identifier is needed. If the logo appears over a photo or other background where sufficient contrast is needed, the version with white text may be used.



EDC MARK

Use the EDC mark in instances where "economic development collaborative" has already been clearly established within a piece of communication. This brand mark can be used as a large graphic or a small icon.



GRAYSCALE LOGO

When a grayscale logo is needed, the black or white versions of the logo may be used. However when possible, please maintain brand integrity by using the primary colors on logo as seen on pages 28 and 29.



CLEAR SPACE

To ensure readability, the clear space, or exclusion zone, is the required empty space area around the logo. This area is equal to or greater than the height of the letter 'E'.

In general, the logo should not be constrained, boxed in or placed too close to other design elements.



MINIMUM SIZE

For all logo usages, the height must not drop below the following measurements:

PRIMARY LOGO MINIMUM SIZE

Print .75"



Digital 1"



SONOMA COUNTY SEAL CO-BRANDING

The Sonoma County seal should live in harmony with the Sonoma County seal.

Placement should be EDC branding to the left of the County logo, or if stacked, EDC branding on top of the County logo.

COUNTY SEAL CO-BRANDING



LOGO DON'TS

Do not alter the logo. Avoid the following common mistakes.

Do not stretch.



Do not apply effects (drop-shadows, gradients, embossings, etc.) to logo.



Do not position on an angle.



Do not alter configuration of components.



Do not change colors within logo elements.



Do not display the logo on a graphic pattern or background that provides inadequate contrast or is overly busy.



Our Typefaces

EDC's typography choices are derived from a modern, sleek aesthetic that evokes a trustworthy vision of the future. Sans-serif fonts like the two below (Open Sans and Verdana) allow us to write in a voice that is clear and approachable.

OPEN SANS BOLD

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890!@#\$%^&*()

VERDANA REGULAR

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890!@#\$%^&*()

TYPOGRAPHY SPECIFICATIONS

HEADLINE

Open Sans Bold

Write all headlines in title case. Avoid fully capitalized words.

SUBHEAD

Open Sans Regular

For short copy that supports headlines and introduces body copy, use Open Sans Regular. Use title case.

BODY

Verdana Regular

Avoid fully capitalized words.

ALTERNATIVE

Microsoft PPT

When using Microsoft PPT, use Gill Sans in place of Open Sans.

LABEL

OPEN SANS BOLD

For introducing multiple sections of copy, use Open Sans Bold as a label font.

- Write labels in ALL CAPS
- Give labels wide tracking (~50)

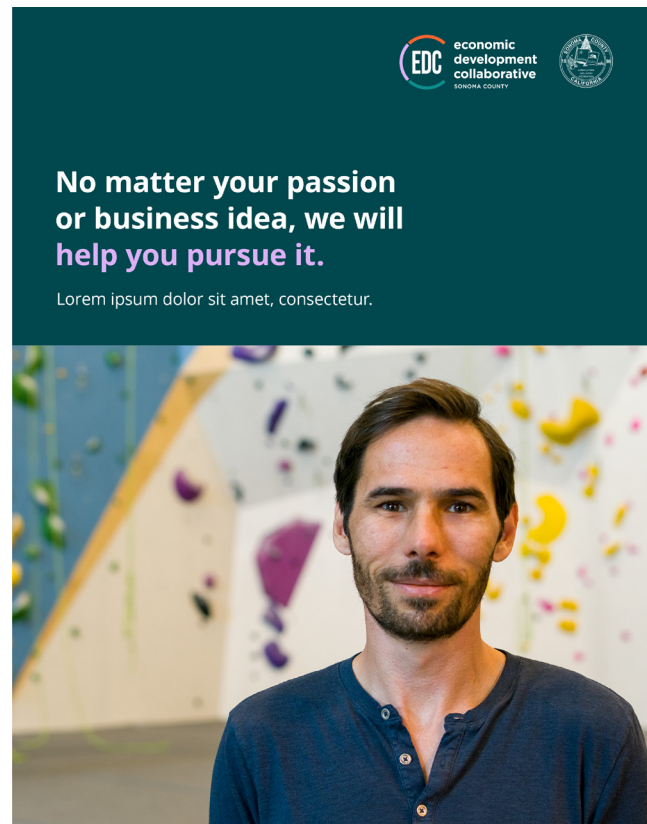
TYPOGRAPHY IN USE

Outward messaging is styled to maximize the impact of its wording. Ideal communication pieces use a very high amount of negative space around wording to ensure the reader's eyes read them quickly. Short, one-line headlines placed in areas that are otherwise sparsely occupied with visual content accomplish this well and make our words memorable. See example (right).

Colors within the brand's palette may be used for emphasis within a block of copy and can help elevate an important point if there is concern it will be lost amongst other text. This technique should be used sparingly within a single piece of communication.

Similarly, wording emphasis can be created using bold and italicized characters.

HEADLINE: OPEN SANS
BOLD, 28PT



SUBHEAD: OPEN SANS
REGULAR, 16PT

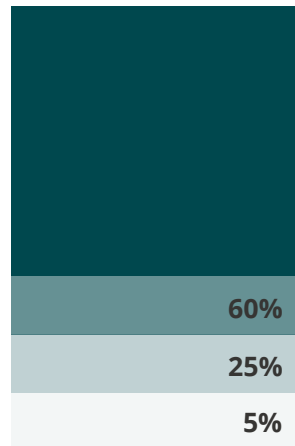
Our Colors

PRIMARY COLORS

Each swatch was hand selected, to match the vibrant nature of the RGB values of our “warm” colors. Programmatic translations of the PMS color to CMYK or the RGB value to CMYK will result in dusty, or washed-out interpolations of our colors. If your printer is using PMS inks use the PMS value in your document. Otherwise, set up your swatches as the CMYK value.

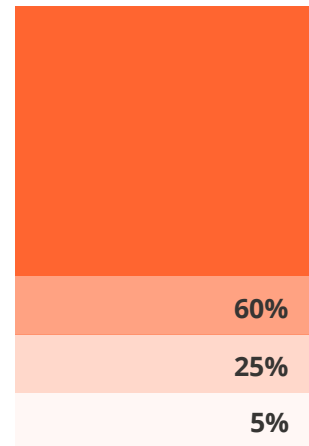
Color usage should appear in these approximate proportions, strongly favoring the EDC Green, complemented with orange, teal, and lilac.

The additional color values (tints) should be used sparingly as only subtle accent colors and supporting graphics to complete the overall look of our brand and keep it consistent across all channels.



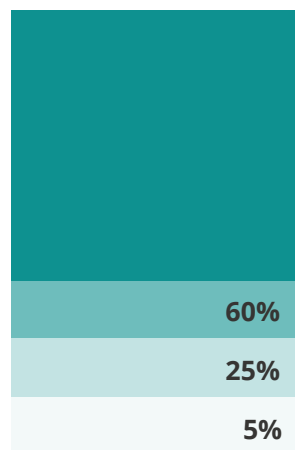
EDC Green

HEX	#00484e
RGB	0,72,78
CMYK	93,55,56,39
Pantone	316 C



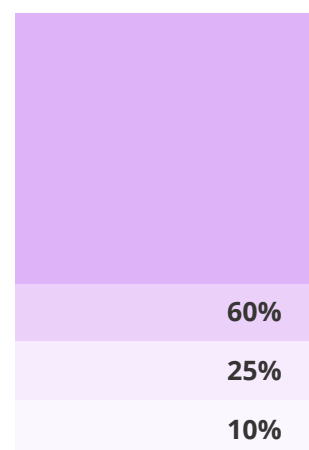
Orange

HEX	#ff6530
RGB	255,101,48
CMYK	0,75,87,0
Pantone	4012 C



Teal

HEX	#0E9190
RGB	14,145,144
CMYK	83,24,45,2
Pantone	320 C



Lilac

HEX	#DFB3F8
RGB	223,179,248
CMYK	15,31,0,0
Pantone	529 C

NEUTRAL COLORS

EDC Dark Gray or Medium Gray can be used in place of black text. The lighter gray tone or white can be used for background or foreground elements if a grayscale is needed, or to provide whitespace and contrast.



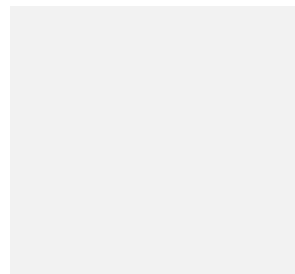
EDC Dark Gray

HEX #363533
RGB 54,53,51
CMYK 68,62,64,57
Pantone Black 7C



Medium Gray

HEX #6E6E73
RGB 110,110,115
CMYK 58,50,45,14
Pantone 4284 C



Light Gray

HEX #F2F2F2
RGB 242,242,242
CMYK 4,2,2,0
Pantone 663 C



White

HEX #ffffff
RGB 255,255,255
CMYK 0,0,0,0

Our Imagery

The photos used to depict our brand should focus on the down-to-earth, passionate and diverse individuals that make up the local business community with an emphasis on the companies that we have helped grow and thrive here. All of the photos should emulate a sense of authenticity — showcasing real people and real businesses in our community. They should be natural looking with high resolution for print and web use.



Expressions


Brand Expressions

The examples on the following pages illustrate a possible range the brand can be expressed.

We do not recommend the use of detailed illustrations or clip art as support graphics. Focused on serving the businesses in our community, we are also dedicated to showcasing the down to earth, hard-working companies that have made Sonoma County their home.

**Empowering people:
Economic prosperity for all**

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet



EDC economic development collaborative SONOMA COUNTY

Create from a place of prosperity.

Let us help you reach your economic goals.



EDC economic development collaborative SONOMA COUNTY

Grow your small business into something bigger.



Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet

EDC economic development collaborative SONOMA COUNTY

APPAREL



APPAREL





sonomaedc.org