Creating Resilient Communities through the Entrepreneurial Communities Activation Process (ECAP)
What is ECAP?
Entrepreneurial Communities Activation Process

• ECAP is a holistic approach

• ECAP helps communities understand
  – unique characteristics,
  – community assets
  – potential opportunities for growth
Why ECAP?

• Communities
  – Visionary thinking
  – Entrepreneurial leadership
  – Build synergistic relationships
  – Increased ability to leverage resources
  – Attract and retain a working age population
  – Empower community economic growth
Background

- Eight pilot communities
- Funded by the Rural Futures Institute
- Four facilitated conversations focused on eight characteristics
- The Discovery Tool gathers input from the entire community on these characteristics
ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITIES

- Leadership
- Sense of Place
- Infrastructure
- Entrepreneurial Support Systems
- Education/Workforce IQ
- Digitally Connected
- Community Vision
- Culture of Change

Funding Provided by
The Process

Getting Ready

Leads to Entrepreneurial Thinking

Discovery Tool

Engaging the Community

Action Planning

Community Conversations

Steering Team
Community Characteristics

If there are some questions you aren’t familiar with or if you can’t answer them, you can leave them blank and move on to the next question.

1. To what extent do the following items describe your community?
My community...

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<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Mostly</th>
<th>Completely</th>
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<td>Has a strong identity</td>
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<td>Is open to new ideas</td>
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<td>Has leaders who engage and empower citizens</td>
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<td>Includes a majority of residents who strongly identify with the community</td>
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<td>Provides and maintains adequate infrastructure for agriculture, business, manufacturing and industry</td>
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<td>Has leaders who use technology for governing and managing the community</td>
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Community Conversations

- **Focus on the Eight Characteristics**
  - *Evidence, Build Vitality and Strengthen*

- **Discovery Tool Results**
  - *Conversation on results and their implications*

- **Priorities**
  - *Discuss initial priorities*

- **Action Plan**
  - *Community members create an action plan*
Entrepreneurial Community Characteristics

Leadership

- The community environment is open and creative
- Leaders are motivated to improve the economic and social well-being in the community
- Collaboration exists between elected officials, business leaders, schools, community organizations and others to address challenges and establish goals
- The community trusts its leaders
- Potential leaders are identified, developed and nurtured
- Policies are established which support entrepreneurial development

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• Evidence
  – *Where do you see evidence that the characteristic is in your community?*

• Build Vitality
  – *How can the characteristic build vitality?*

• Strengthen Your Community
  – *How can characteristic be strengthened in community?*
What Participants Said

“I was new to the community when the ECAP process began, and I frankly can’t imagine a better way to get to know a community in a hurry. I feel a sense of connection to and investment that it might have taken me months or years to achieve without this process.” Community Participant
Benefits
Entrepreneurial Communities Activation Process

• Engagement
• Increased Communication
• Shared Vision
• Empowerment of Community Members
• Motivation to Take Action
Outcomes
Entrepreneurial Communities Activation Process

• Economic Development Corporation Formed
• Young Professional Group Organized
• Community Vision Statement Developed
• Community Calendar Created
Keys to Success

• Forming a Steering Team
• Using an Outside Facilitator
• Getting People to the Conversations
• Creating and Sharing a Vision
• Keeping People Engaged
• Documenting the Process
• Maintaining the Momentum
• Celebrating Success
Nebraska CEC Conference

- McCook, Nebraska – April 19 and 20, 2017
Join Us In McCook!
More Information
Entrepreneurial Communities Activation Process

• Go online to:
  http://communityvitality.unl.edu/ecap

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