EV Peer to Peer: Vacant Buildings

Vacant buildings: strategies to increase chances of occupancy
- Knowing contacts for property owners
- Good communication
- Strong MainStreet presence
- Letters of support from the community
- Meeting to bring the community together
- City events to rent with possible business owner
- Using social media pressure campaign
- Affordable housing plan/ordinance
- Vacant building ordinance
- Nuisance order
- Allow mixed use

How to assist in finding funds for owners whose buildings need work to function?
- MRA
- Apply for infrastructure grants for ADA access
- Apply to MS grant
- Resiliency grants
- Brownfields
- SHPO
- Grants w/ match waivers
- Crowd funding
- Volunteers
- Box stores donated materials
- Helping find contractors
- Service request
- Initial a loan program

We have a number of vacant buildings in the downtown area. How do we promote those as opportunities to the right parties?
- Build inventory
- Work/partner with realtors
- Partner with EDD and chambers
- Committee/network
- Building owner relationships
- Careful promotions
- Create connections
- Economic vitality education: “What does a Healthy town look like?” – NMMS service request – coffee chat/networking opportunity
- Create a program to attract those types of businesses
- Be a middle person
- MRA designation
- Traffic/audience
- Do homework on specific parties
- Vacant building registry
- Owner education
- Advertise vacant buildings via social media/FB video
- Property owners
- Social
- Educate stakeholders
- Posters
- Pop up art exhibits
- Window displays/clings
- SBPC

How to turn vacant buildings into housing?
- Mixed use zoning
- Grants for low income housing
- Title search
- Live/work spaces
- Free rent for repairs
- Look at Urban3
- Partner with Habitat for Humanity
- Homewise
- MRA designation
- Affordable Housing plan
- Motel conversion
- Artspace/housing for artists studio spaces artspace.org
- Seminar for building owner to present what is possible

How to negotiate with problem property owners?
- Competition
- Educate
- Give them a job
- Go to them, inspire
- Don’t give up, keep trying
- Plant a seed, then be patient
- Offer help
- Consider you audience when communicating
• Wine and dine
• Kindness
• Show benefits
• Find out what owners care about
• Vison of value
• Send an official letter
• Reach out to owner with concern and find out what is going on
• Code enforcement
• Help with moving

How to reach business owner? How to engage building owner?
Secretary of State
City Ordinance
County Clerk and County Assessor

How to know if a building can be fixed or should be demolished?
• Bad foundation
• Front wall is falling apart
• No buy in or funding
• Deed building to city – careful before accepting deed
• NM environment department
• Scope of work and estimate to adapt building for use
• Lean into “in kind” donations/knowledge
• Ask connections
• NMMS service request
• Local contractors
• Assessor
• Architect
• City Engineer for Infrastructure
• Owner
• Infrastructure issues
• Cost effectiveness
• Historic/community value
• Safety hazard

How to address a building that is affecting buildings around it?
• Condemn it
• Work on neighboring buildings
• Reach out to owner
• Make façade/window better to relieve eyesore
• Codes for vacancy or neglect.
• Provide renderings of restored building to inspire
• Find owners value in building
• Façade grants
• Go fund me
• Involve student volunteers
• Building ordinances
• Zoning planning
• Reporting unsafe conditions
• Start with façade
• Display art in vacant spaces
• Start small
• Service request
• Find funding
• Bring in stakeholders
• Board
• Blight Designation
• Must be in MRA
• Match property tax

Who can assist with brownfields? Can these agencies determine the usefulness of these buildings?
• EPA – can look, access funds
• NMMS Amy Bell
• Local watershed non profit
• Grants.gov
• Local Gov
• Council of Gov
• NM Environmental