EV Peer to Peer: Small Business

How to actually bring new businesses to our small communities? Joint efforts? How?
Examples?
- Offer commercial amenities as well as spaces
- Housing availability
- Credible MainStreet reputation
- Work with realtors, chamber and city
- “Not so vacant” shin dig
- Post vacancy on social media
- Marketing
- Nicely badgering
- Wine and dine
- Encourage building owners to update and design

How to attract or develop a specific type of entrepreneur? In a particular industry, i.e. outdoor recreation
- Incubators
- Help them identify resources
- Professional development opportunities
- Communicate with other communities
- Provide easy entry opportunities
- Project in MRA plan and issue an rfp
- Mural that fits the vibe
- Create training or programming to fit industry
- Create event
- Provide funding assistance
- Identify grants to support and target desired industry

How to recruit to a struggling district?
- Find ways to lower entry cost
- Speak with existing businesses
- Get property owners to improve property and lower costs
- Find city and county services
- Leverage on what you have
- Identify what are the barriers/struggles
- Market analysis
- Host an event
- Address inconsistent hours of operation
- Use NMMS consultants
- Collaborate with community partners
- Social media
• Fix infrastructure
• Use SBA, chambers, etc.
• Map ecosystem
• Find leakage areas

How to recruit a needed business?
• Demonstrate market need
• Talk to community members (word of mouth is power)
• More housing
• Education

How to work with building owners who leave their building vacant/unrented because they expect a certain pay rate/Building owner expects a certain rate and won’t budge?
• Find other owners
• Show building owners cost of their stubbornness ($750 rent is less that $1000, but 0 x $1000 = $0)
• Incentivize
• Education for community
• Education on “How to Landlord”
• Adopt city ordinances
• Get city buy in for enforcement
• Create a report with average price per square foot for building owner
• Provide funds for repairs and updates
• Build relationships with building owners
• Provide training sessions
• USDA funds
• Overlapping networking (lessor and leasee)

Encourage renovations vs new builds?
• City incentives
• Show negative aspects vs benefits
• Promote accessibility
• Infill plans
• Promotion
• Address parking
• People will walk
• Blind presentation with potential developers
• All this plus MRA workshop
• Elevate downtown design/look
• Encourage zoning body to T.I. for downtown
• Make MainStreet the place to be
• Distribute and filter info/grants/support $ to business owners
• City partnership
• Research zones, ACD, MRA as MainStreet
• Learn about funding