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Economic Development News

These are challenging times for individuals and businesses in Vermont. Despite the challenges there are opportunities available. If you have the inclination to start a business: manufacturing a product, providing a service, or a retail operation providing a Vermont product you do not have to go into the venture alone. There are a range of business consulting services out there that are free for the asking. They provide an opportunity to investigate and ask questions of experts who will provide serious and astute observations.

The first thing you should do as a budding entrepreneur is to come into the Brandon Town Offices and talk with us about what your potential business idea. Our telephone number is 247.3635 or you can reach me, Steve Beck, Town of Brandon Economic Development Officer at brandondoesit.beck@gmail.com. Although I work on a part-time basis for the town my schedule is flexible and I am available at your convenience.

A second resource is the Vermont Small Business Development Center. Their website <http://www.vtsbdc.org/> provides all the information you could possibly want to know as you get started. A good place to start the investigation is at the “Frequently Asked Questions” link, <http://www.vtsbdc.org/about/faq>.

The VtSBDC provides no-cost business consulting and training services to all VT residents who are thinking about starting a business or working to grow their business. They have an office in Rutland with a staff of advisors and can be reached at 802.773.9147. Because agriculture plays a significant economic role in Rutland County, there is an agri-business consultant at the Addison County VtSBDC who can be reached at 802.388.7593. All consultations are done on a confidential basis and will provide direction as your idea moves toward fruition.

The SBDC can also make connections for you with other individuals, resources and State and Federal agencies who are working to promote economic development. Those links are at the SBDC website. The process of developing your idea is half the fun. You may have a great idea, but talking with others you are more pragmatic will give you opportunities to look at your idea in a different light.

The process of starting a business is often fraught with anxiety and concern on the part of an individual; it is a big risk requiring time, energy and investment. However, as one of the VtSBDC advisors said, “You can be in business for yourself, but you don’t have to be in business by yourself.” You do have to have enthusiasm and a belief in what you are trying to do and VtSBDC can provide the direction and guidance to put you on the road to success.