



Rutherfordton  
NORTH CAROLINA

# Business Resources



# Welcome



**Rutherforddon**  
A MINTED ORIGINAL



**Rutherford  
Town RISING**

So you are thinking about starting a new business! Congratulations!! There are many resources to assist a new business and we are so honored to assist you. Our history runs deep here, and we are a community of firsts. We hope that Rutherforddon becomes part of your entrepreneurial future.

Attached are information and resource lists for you. There are many resources, but these resources are the basic guides and local agencies that can assist you in your new business.

Running your own business is exciting and sometimes overwhelming and we want to make it as painless as possible. We can assist with a business plan, which is a roadmap for your business; tax information; legal references; financial planning and many other details that are required to make your new business a success.

Please do not hesitate to call or visit if you need assistance, guidance or a listening ear. We are here to make your dream come true.

Town of Rutherforddon  
Doug Barrick  
Town Manager  
828-287-3520 ext 7  
dbarrick@rutherforddon.net

Rutherford Town Rising  
Rebecca Blanton  
Executive Director  
828-429-7790  
rblanton@rutherforddon.net

# Rutherfordton Economic Development Resources for Businesses

## Downtown Resources

Rutherfordton Façade Grant Programs - For improvements to building facades including free design assistance. \$2,000 in Town funding is available to cover up to 50% of the cost of your approved façade renovations. This program is limited to qualifying buildings in the Downtown Rutherfordton. Once the project is approved the Town will reimburse you based on invoices for work. The Façade Grant is funded by the Rutherford Town Rising and the Town of Rutherfordton. Free design Assistance is available from the N.C. Main Street Center for buildings in Downtown. Contact Rebecca Blanton at (828)429-7790 or [rblanton@rutherfordton.net](mailto:rblanton@rutherfordton.net)

## Rutherfordton Quick Facts

- Town Population: 3,668
  - 5 Mile Radius: 19,527
- Median Age: 43.2
- Median Household Income: \$50,901
- Cost of Living Index: 85.1
- ISO Fire Rating of 4
- 2016 NC Rural Small Town of the Year
- Top 5 Employers:
  - Rutherford County
  - Rutherford Regional Health System
  - American Greetings
  - Trelleborg Coated Systems
  - Food Lion

# Rutherfordton Economic Development Resources for Businesses

## Are You Up & Growing

It is paramount to the Town of Rutherfordton to retain our businesses and to help them grow. It is our mission to promote the continued growth and prosperity of our business partners. Your needs as a local business are important to us as the Town wants nothing more than for you to become stronger and more efficient. There are a few ways we can help you thrive in Rutherfordton:

- Connecting allies that provide services and programs in areas such as training, grants, financing, government contracting, technical assistance, and export/international trade.
- Supporting business expansion needs for both real & personal property including financing, tax credits, utility and infrastructure support, worker training and recruiting.
- Providing custom research and current data on business and statistical information such as area demographics, wage information, occupational and other trends.
- Encouraging communication in the business community through visits, networking opportunities, press releases and focused seminars.

Town Hall is your one-stop shop to programs and resources offered through partnerships with local, regional, and state allies which may help your business thrive in Rutherfordton!

Contact the Town Manager, Doug Barrick, at 828-287-3520 or [dbarrick@rutherfordton.net](mailto:dbarrick@rutherfordton.net) to schedule a visit for your business or to learn more about the Business Retention and Expansion Program.

# Rutherfordton Economic Development Resources for Businesses

## Regional & State Resources

SBTDC - North Carolina's Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC) is the business and technology extension service of The University of North Carolina system. The SBTDC is committed to providing knowledge, education and other supportive resources that enable existing small and mid-sized businesses, emerging entrepreneurs and local/state leaders to innovate and succeed. Learn more about their resources at [www.sbtdc.org](http://www.sbtdc.org).

- The SBTDC's Capital Opportunities for Small Businesses provides information about financial resources available to small businesses in NC. [Capital Opportunities for Small Businesses](#)
- The SBTDC developed the Business Start-up & Resource Guide for those who are considering starting a business. The guide has seven sections with questions, worksheets and online resources to help you start the right way. [Business Start-up & Resource Guide](#)

VEDIC: Based in Valdese, North Carolina, VEDIC operates loan programs focused on helping entrepreneurs start businesses and existing businesses to expand. VEDIC bridges the gap for those businesses that need funding, but cannot qualify for a bank loan. It is our hope through this loan program that businesses will prosper and become credit worthy for bank funding in the future. [www.vedic28690.com](http://www.vedic28690.com)

# Rutherfordton Economic Development Resources for Businesses

## Regional & State Resources

**Mountain BizWorks:** is nonprofit CDFI specializing in small business lending and learning. Since 1989 the organization has invested over \$18m in loans helping 1100 businesses get started that have collectively created over 45000 jobs. The mission of Mountain BizWorks is to build a vibrant and inclusive entrepreneurial community in Western North Carolina by helping small businesses start, grow, and thrive.

For more information about Mountain BizWorks and its small business lending program, please contact Christopher Murrey, Chief Credit Officer, at 828.747.1979 or [christopher@mountainbizworks.org](mailto:christopher@mountainbizworks.org). More information on their lending and training programs is also available at [www.mountainbizworks.org](http://www.mountainbizworks.org).

**North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO):** For historic properties preservation, restoration, reuse and tax credit information, go to [www.ncdcr.gov/state-historic-preservation-office](http://www.ncdcr.gov/state-historic-preservation-office) Contact Jennifer Cathey at SHPO at 828-296-7230 Ext. 227 or at [Jennifer.cathey@ncdcr.gov](mailto:Jennifer.cathey@ncdcr.gov).

# Rutherfordton Economic Development Resources for Businesses

## Regional & State Resources

**Building Reuse Program, N.C. Department of Commerce:** Provides funding for job creation taking place in vacant buildings. Buildings must be vacant for at least three months prior to application deadlines. Mixed-use or adaptive reuse projects that include housing may be eligible, provided the building will be occupied by at least one private company committed to creating new jobs. Priority will be given to projects that create five (5) or more new full-time jobs. The renovation project must begin within six months of the grant award and should be completed within 18 months.

Grants of up to \$12,000 per full-time job are available, with a maximum award of \$500,000, if the following criteria are met:

New jobs will meet the county weekly wage standard

Company will provide 50% employer-paid health insurance

Grants of up to \$5,000 per full-time job available, with a maximum award of \$250,000, if the following criteria are met:

No wage standard is required

No employer-paid health insurance is required

No building improvements can take place until after the grant is approved and grant documents are signed. Eligible expenses dated after the grant award include, but are not limited to: materials and labor to install HVAC, electrical, plumbing, fire alarm/suppression system, roofing, flooring, carpentry, drywall, paint, etc. This is not an exhaustive list. The following costs are specifically prohibited under the program and may not be submitted for reimbursement or the matching funds requirement: building purchase, architectural costs, engineering costs, permit fees, surveys, legal fees, machinery & equipment, telephone hardware and software, computer hardware and software, furnishings, paving, fencing, kitchen equipment, refrigeration equipment, etc. This is not an exhaustive list. Contact Doug Barrick: 828-287-3520 ext. 7  
dbarrick@rutherfordton.net

# Rutherfordton Economic Development Resources for Businesses

## **Other Local Resources**

**Downtown Facade Improvements:** The Town of Rutherfordton and the Rutherfordton Historic Preservation Commission have grants available to assist with Downtown buildings for windows, doors, painting, brick repair and other building related activities. Any major changes would require Historic Commission Approval for funding. Projects are awarded up to \$2,000 in matching funds on a reimbursement basis. Contact Doug Barrick at 828-287-3520 or [dbarrick@rutherfordton.net](mailto:dbarrick@rutherfordton.net) for more information.

**Building Inspector & Planning Consultation:** The Town of Rutherfordton Code Enforcement Officer is available for consultation regarding potential projects within the Town of Rutherfordton. Contact Wendy Burch at 828-287-3520.

**Small Business Center at Isothermal Community College (ICC):** The Small Business Center at ICC offers free consultation, training, and referral services to Rutherford County. They constantly work to help potential business owners with start-ups and expansion.

**Industrial Recruitment/Expansion/Incentives:** The Rutherford Economic Development Association coordinated industrial recruitment, expansions and incentives within Rutherford County. Projects involving job creation and tax base expansion may be eligible for local, state and utility provider incentives. Contact Rutherford Economic Development at 828-287-6200

*The Town of Rutherfordton, Rutherford County, Rutherford Chamber of Commerce, Rutherford Economic Development Association, and Rutherford Town Rising are eager to assist with any questions concerning new or expanding business.*

Town Manager Doug Barrick at 828-447-6360 or [dbarrick@rutherfordton.net](mailto:dbarrick@rutherfordton.net)  
Main Street Manager Rebecca Blanton at 828-429-7790 or [rblanton@rutherfordton.net](mailto:rblanton@rutherfordton.net)



# Small Business Resources

Isothermal Small Business Center  
The Foundation @ Isothermal Community College  
286 ICC Loop Road  
828-395-1667

*Offering assistance with small business opportunities, business plans, available properties, and financing options.*

Federal Tax ID Number - [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) "Online EIN application"

North Carolina Tax ID Number - [www.dornc.com](http://www.dornc.com) - Form NC - BR for sales and use and income tax withholding.

Business Name Registration @ Rutherford County Register of Deeds - There is a fee.  
(See Certificate of Assumed Name.)

Town of Rutherfordton Requirements – For all business registrations, required sign permits, building permits and inspections and zoning compliance. Town Hall, 828-287-3520

Rutherford County Requirements - Only a limited number of business types require a permits and license. Contact Rutherford County Manager Steve Garrison at 828-287-6060

Rutherford County Tax Listing for Personal Property – Every business must list all business property every January. Contact Richard Lawson at 828-287-6000

Health Department Inspections - Must schedule an appointment. Rutherford County Environmental Services – 828-287-6100

NC Dept. of Agriculture - (919) 707-3000 – For commercial bakeries and home inspections

Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce – 828-581-9279

Isothermal Small Business Center – Faye Bishop 828-395-1667

SCORE – 800-634-0245. Or visit [www.score.org](http://www.score.org) for free confidential advice.

North Carolina Department of Commerce Business Link - [www.blnc.gov](http://www.blnc.gov) or 800-228-8443 Business Link North Carolina offer the business community a centralized information source for business start-up information, existing industry resources and state business regulations.

# Business Startup Checklist

After you evaluate your business idea, determine startup costs and research the market, you'll be ready to take on the next steps of starting your business.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepare a <b>business plan</b> that outlines your business goals, operation procedures, competitors, as well as the company's current and desired funding.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Register business name</b> at Register of Deeds office.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Incorporate your business</b> or <b>form an LLC</b> . It provides the owner with personal asset protection from the debts and liabilities of the company.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Obtain your <b>federal tax identification number</b> (also called employer identification number or EIN). It's used by the IRS to identify your business for all taxation matters.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Obtain a <b>state tax identification number</b> . Contact your state's taxation department to determine whether your state of formation imposes this requirement.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Obtain the <b>necessary permits</b> . Licenses may be required by your city, municipality, county and/or state. Contact your Secretary of State and local government to ensure you meet any requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Select an <b>accountant</b> and <b>attorney</b> you can turn to for advice when starting out, as well as throughout the life of the business.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Just like every personal relationship has its ups and downs, so do business partnerships. So before you tie the knot (so to speak), you need to enter into what is known as a <b>partnership agreement</b> to protect yourself and your business.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Open a <b>business bank account</b> and obtain a <b>business credit card</b> . Contact your bank about business banking requirements to ensure you have all the necessary paperwork.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set up your business accounting/bookkeeping. Be prepared to account for all disbursements, payments received, invoices, accounts receivable/payable, etc.

# Business Startup Checklist

After you evaluate your business idea, determine startup costs and research the market, you'll be ready to take on the next steps of starting your business.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Obtain <b>business insurance</b> . Discuss your particular industry and business needs with your insurance agent to obtain the appropriate type and amount of insurance.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure you comply with <b>government requirements</b> (e.g., unemployment insurance, worker's compensation, OSHA, payroll tax requirements, self-employment taxes, etc.).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine your <b>business location</b> and take these steps: -Home-based: Check zoning requirements - Other location: Lease office or retail space and obtain the necessary furniture, equipment and supplies.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Create any necessary forms:</b> contracts, service agreements and invoices so you can easily bill customers, track payments and keep records.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Obtain business <b>financing</b> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	Create a <b>logo, business cards, letterhead, envelopes, etc.</b> , to build business identity.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Secure your company's website <b>domain name</b> . <b>Create a website</b> . A company website allows you to establish your brand and will be the first opportunity to make an impression with customers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Create a marketing plan</b> for your products and services. Increase the likelihood for success with a plan for promoting your products and services to your target market.

# Marketing Plan Checklist

Small-business marketing is defined as using all the marketing channels and disciplines available in order to get exposure for your services or products.

No matter how big or small your business, the core principles of marketing are the same. Of course, a small business tends to have fewer resources and smaller budgets than a big corporation .

- Set measurable goals
- Get to know your target market
- Describe your goods and services in your own terms
- Assess the competition
- Determine your unique sales proposition
- Set your marketing budget
- Plan and begin your marketing campaigns
- Track results and make adjustments.

For more detailed information go to:

[www.shopify.com/blog/small-business-marketing](http://www.shopify.com/blog/small-business-marketing)

# Marketing Cardinal Rules

## Do:

- Base your plan on solid **MARKET RESEARCH**
- Focus on **TARGET CUSTOMERS**
- Build an action plan to achieve specific **OBJECTIVES**
- **LEARN** from experience
- **MEASURE** the effectiveness

## Don't:

- **SPREAD** your efforts too widely
- Make plans you can't **FULFILL**
- Make **UNREALISTIC** assumptions and forecasts

# Marketing Plan:

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Question	Answer
<p><b>Objectives</b> What are the specific goals of your business this year?</p>	
<p><b>Your Product/Service</b> What product or service do you offer?</p>	
<p><b>Customers</b> Who buys (or should buy) your product? What do they need it for?</p>	
<p><b>Positioning</b> Given your competition, what makes your business great and unique to customers?</p>	
<p><b>Pricing</b> How will you price your product?</p>	

# Marketing Plan:

Question	Answer
<p><b>Sales &amp; Support</b> How and where will you sell and service the product?</p>	
<p><b>Promotion</b> How will people find out about you and your product?</p>	
<p><b>Budget</b> How much money do you have to promote the product?</p>	
<p><b>Action Plan</b> What will you do and when to sell and promote your product?</p>	

# 7 Sins of Newbie Entrepreneurs

BY DANA BROWNLEE

Most entrepreneurs are familiar with the ridiculously high percentage of small businesses that will fail in the first couple years. The business owners who survived the odds will tell you that they didn't achieve success on sheer passion alone. It took hard work, and in most situations, it didn't happen overnight.

After spending the last decade running my own business consulting for companies and corporations, I have witnessed it all. Here's seven of the most common mistakes I've seen newbie entrepreneurs make with alarming consistency.

**1. Not setting aside enough cash reserves to support yourself.** I believe that one of the reasons why so many small businesses fail within the first few years is NOT because the business model isn't viable or the entrepreneur isn't "good enough" to make the business work, but it's the fact the financial ramp up time is a firm reality. Most entrepreneurs simply run out of money to support the business and/or themselves before the business is profitable enough to sustain itself.

Tip: Proactively set up a special fund intended to support yourself during the business startup phase. Be conscious of what you put into this fund as you may want to strive for an amount that can fully support you for a year or two to relieve pressure as you ramp up.

**2. Using assumptions that are overly optimistic during planning.** I see so many newbie entrepreneurs fall into this trap. They have a great idea and convinced their friends and family that it's a no brainer. They jump into the fray only to realize there were a few not-so-little details that they failed to consider or a few areas where their assumptions were overly optimistic and before they know it, that "no-brainer" business is hanging by a thread.

Be honest with yourself. Are you underestimating the time required to get the first client? Are you overestimating the demand for the product? Are you assuming zero risk by not allowing for what could go wrong?

Tip: Find three to five completely objective people (not friends or family) and specifically ask them to play devil's advocate to you to help identify vulnerabilities and then take steps to mitigate those.

**3. Not properly evaluating your business model.** Not everyone incorporates a business model into their planning. It's so easy to get really lathered up around the concept of your business, but it's quite another thing to put pen to paper to help you objectively evaluate your overall business model and its profit potential. The simple truth is that having a great idea is just a start – it doesn't necessarily translate into a profitable model.

Tip: Consider or a small-business development center to evaluate the business model and offer expert advice. Their perspective could identify a more viable structure that makes better business sense than what you've already established.



# 7 Sins of Newbie Entrepreneurs

**4. Trying to do everything yourself to save money.** If you try to do EVERYTHING yourself, you'll not only run yourself into the ground, your business will suffer, because you don't bring sufficient expertise in every area. Your time is money. Think about where you *must* personally invest your energies. Should you be developing and refining your content, products and services, cultivating relationships with key clients and stakeholders, developing credibility within your industry? No one can do this for you. That said, others can develop your website, handle your public relations, develop templates for your newsletters, make trips to printers and copiers and perform random administrative functions. Utilize them.

*Tip: The key is identifying what to outsource and what to keep. A good rule of thumb is if it's not part of the core competency of your specific business, you have little expertise in the area, it's time consuming and there are many suppliers who can provide the service at a reasonable cost, consider outsourcing.*

**5. Not being willing to work like a dog during the early days.** I'm amazed how often I run into people who've recently launched their businesses, but they seem shocked that they're not making six figures while working a 25-hour work week. They seem to have this glamorous view of entrepreneurship where they get to start at the top and skip all the hard work. The simple truth is if you want to make it, most startup businesses have to hustle early on. This might mean working another job while you're starting your business, volunteering or doing some work for free to gain experience and exposure. It also may mean working nights and weekends.

*Tip: Before jumping into the startup world, really evaluate your current lifestyle and realize you will most likely be giving up a huge chunk, if not all, of your free time.*

**6. Pricing your product or services too low or high.** In my business I often respond to request for proposals. Years ago, I'd been submitting proposal responses annually to a large governmental agency. After about four years of consistent rejections, I got a tip from a colleague that my pricing was too low to be considered seriously. That year I doubled my pricing on the same classes and was selected for the first time. On the other end of the spectrum, you don't want to charge \$20,000 a day and expect to get the job.

*Tip: Do your research to see what others are charging. It's much smarter to offer value pricing initially, prove your value and then raise prices over time. In many cases asking clients for their budget will not only give you an idea of what to charge, but it could minimize the risk of severely underpricing or over pricing your product or services. You may also consider providing different pricing options to increase the likelihood that you're offering something within your client's price range.*

# 7 Sins of Newbie Entrepreneurs

**7. Not having a growth strategy.** We all know of a restaurant that was great when it first opened but after expanding the food or service went downhill. They then developed a bad reputation and eventually closed. Don't be that business.

While most small businesses think the goal is to win as much business as they can, this isn't necessarily true. Sometimes, you can attract too much business and then have a completely different challenge that could threaten the longer term viability of the business completely.

*Tip: Think about how you want to grow and develop a high-level growth strategy fairly early on (even if it changes as time progresses).*

Find this article on [www.entrepreneur.com/leadership/7-sins-of-newbie-entrepreneurs/232021](http://www.entrepreneur.com/leadership/7-sins-of-newbie-entrepreneurs/232021)

**I have created a running document with useful links for you as a business owner. As I come across something that I find helpful I will add it here.**

**However never hesitate to reach out to me as not all resources are listed.**

**Thanks,  
Rebecca Blanton**



  
**SCAN ME** 