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City offers 2 departments to assist developers & small biz owners

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As regular readers of this column know, despite a challenging economy, the city of Warwick is enjoying continued economic growth, both in new businesses, expansion of existing facilities and company growth. To ensure that local businesses remain successful, our Department of Tourism, Culture and Development (TCD) and our Planning Department continue to offer their expertise and assistance as developers or small business owners wend their way through the permitting, licensing and approval processes.

In fact, for the past three years, our Planning Department has had a staff person, Trish Reynolds, dedicated to assisting the business community. The planner/coordinator position was established during a restructuring of city departments. In this capacity, Reynolds is responsible for helping existing businesses with development and expansion projects navigate the city's Planning, Zoning and Building permitting processes. She also provides the same assistance to new businesses that already have a location secured.

Meanwhile, TCD staff also continues to promote Warwick as a viable, convenient and affordable business location to out-of-state entities through focused direct mail pieces. Our most recent mailing, to companies looking to expand within New England, touts Warwick's central location, its proximity to Rtes. 95 and 195, our consumer demographics and skilled labor pool among the reasons to consider locating here.

Increased efforts to expand and more easily update our database of commercial properties for sale or lease are also underway. TCD staff has been working to revamp our economic development website to make it even more user friendly. Once several security and technical features have been implemented, our website will allow Realtors to input their listings directly on our site. New visuals and design are also in the works, with a completed target date of September 1.

In addition, TCD is preparing for the annual Stay, Park & Fly campaign, which will kick off this fall. Geared toward travelers flying into and out of T.F. Green Airport, the program also provides a direct economic and promotional boost to participating Warwick hotels.

For more information visit www.movetowarwickri.com, or call TCD director Karen Jedson at (401) 738-2000 x6402.

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