

VOL. 5

THE MAIN THING

Shop Small,
Shop Local



COLORADO
Department of Local Affairs
Division of Local Government



Where you shop matters. Ensure that local dollars stay local.

Typically, November is full of “Shop Small, Shop Local” campaigns encouraging residents to do their holiday shopping at neighborhood businesses instead of box stores, national chains, or online. The weekend after Thanksgiving, Shop Small Saturday normally includes lots of events in the downtown cores and people enjoying the local fares. While the look of 2020 may be a little different, that doesn’t change the message. In fact, shopping small and local this winter is truly more important than ever.

Various communities in Colorado are changing the game in how local businesses are supported and how customers can shop with them. Examples and case studies from just a few of these communities are featured in this issue of The Main Thing.

Learn how to implement similar projects using our accompanying [How-To Guide](#).

ABOUT THE MAIN THING

During these times, focus can be tough to come by. *The Main Thing* is a collection of resources compiled by **Colorado Main Street** to highlight innovations, give a thumbs-up to local practitioners, and encourage the spread of positive news.

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VIRTUAL SHOPPING IN WINDSOR

MAIN STREET WINDSOR

COORDINATOR: MATTHEW ASHBY



PROBLEM



When COVID-19 hit this spring, businesses quickly closed their doors and in-person shopping was discouraged for several months. During the shutdown, Main Street Windsor started thinking about how downtown businesses could still be accessible when customers could not physically visit stores and browse their inventory.

Who was involved:

- Main Street Windsor
- Windsor Downtown Development Association
- Town of Windsor
- Colorado Department of Transportation

SOLUTION



- Brought technology into the mix to create the Virtual Shopping Fix
- Developed virtual tours of downtown stores for Mother's Day shopping
- Provided virtual walk-throughs for shoppers to browse stores, and find items to purchase by a phone call and pick-up or delivery



“
Allowing people to shop from the comfort of their homes was a huge help for some of our businesses. Being able to introduce new technology into the shopping experience was very exciting for the Windsor community.

— Matthew Ashby, **Main Street Windsor**

OUTCOMES



3 BUSINESSES PARTICIPATED IN THE VIRTUAL SHOPPING PILOT PROJECT



12 TOURS AVAILABLE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



BROUGHT SALES TO DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES WHEN SHOPPING IN-PERSON WAS DISCOURAGED

See the Virtual Tours

- [Memory Lane Antiques](#)
- [AEI Studio & Gifts](#)
- [Four and Twenty Blackbirds](#)

SECO STRONG

MAIN STREET LA JUNTA

COORDINATOR: CYNTHIA NIEB



PROBLEM



Most Shop Small campaigns focus on generating business in November and December. But how can businesses thrive beyond the busier holiday shopping season? La Junta knows that this is a concern not just for their community but for those throughout southeastern Colorado. Could regional partners work to build regional economic resiliency now and into 2021?

Who was involved:

- Main Street La Junta
- City of La Junta Economic Development
- Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero, and Prowers Counties Economic Development
- Southeast Colorado Enterprise Development

SOLUTION



- La Junta and surrounding counties came together to create SECO Strong (or Southeast Colorado Strong) to find solutions amid COVID-19
- SECO Strong will focus on selling local business gift certificates online this holiday season, encouraging more shopping to occur into the new year

- Businesses in the region can submit their details and offerings to be listed on a new webpage to sell gift certificates
- A two-hour webinar/Q&A session with Jon Schallert, an expert in helping businesses become consumer destinations, will be offered for free



“ Although we are all responsible for our own municipalities and counties, working together as a region is right for us. Our six counties are LOCAL. As Rick Klein, City Manager of La Junta always says, ‘What is good for the Arkansas Valley is good for La Junta!’

— Cynthia Nieb, Main Street La Junta

OUTCOMES



6 COUNTIES PARTICIPATING IN SECO STRONG



ONLINE LANDING PAGE LISTING ALL GIFT CERTIFICATE OPTIONS



OTHER LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS SPONSORING THE WEBSITE AND CREDIT CARD PROCESSING FEES



100 BUSINESSES PARTICIPATING IN THE JON SCHALLERT WEBINAR

The SECO Strong campaign is slated to launch on Nov. 20!
[Visit the website](#) after launch.

SMALL BUSINESS STORYTELLING

MAIN STREET CENTRAL CITY

COORDINATOR: LISA ROEMHILDT



PROBLEM



Central City is a small town full of history with fascinating stories passed down through the generations - It is one of the many reasons tourists love coming to Central City. But telling stories from the past cannot always move a community into the future. With that in mind, Central City asked how they could share stories of the present and help local businesses attract visitors during a very tough year.

Who was involved:

- Main Street Central City
- City of Central
- Colorado Tourism Office CRAFT program

SOLUTION



- Participated in the Colorado Rural Academy for Tourism (CRAFT) program to bring tourism and marketing ideas to the business community
- Reached out to all Central City entities with the opportunity for footage of them to be captured
- Received grant funding to support local businesses through photo and video footage to be used for marketing purposes



“*The CRAFT funds and this effort will really help our local businesses in building their online and social media presence and engaging with their patrons amidst the new norm.*”

— Lisa Roemhildt, Main Street Central City

OUTCOMES



PROFESSIONAL PHOTOS TO USE IN MARKETING EFFORTS



1-2 MINUTES VIDEOS FEATURING THE PEOPLE AND SERVICES OF LOCAL BUSINESSES



SHARED PICTURES AND VIDEOS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA AND OTHER TOURISM MARKETING VENUES

[See an example of a local business video](#)

ADAPTING SHOP SMALL SATURDAY

WOODLAND PARK MAIN STREET

COORDINATOR: GAIL WINGERD



PROBLEM



Woodland Park is known far and wide for its annual Shop Small, Shop Local initiatives and how they lead into the holiday season - American Express even recognized them last year for the campaign. Now the question is, how can Woodland Park encourage shopping at local businesses while keeping everyone safe?

Who was involved:

- Woodland Park Main Street
- Woodland Park Chamber of Commerce
- Lighter Side of Christmas event organizers

SOLUTION



- Consistently share the message that locals need to support other locals
- Work with partners to find new, safe activities that will drive activity to downtown
- Tie the Shop Small initiative closely with the holiday season by "setting the scene"



“We’ve been very proud of the Shop Small efforts we’ve done the past three years. This year, those efforts are even more important to help our local businesses.

— Gail Wingerd, Woodland Park Main Street

OUTCOMES



FREE “SHOP SMALL SATURDAY” SWAG BAGS TO GIVE OUT TO SHOPPERS



“WELCOME STATION” DOWNTOWN WITH GOODIES AND FREE COFFEE AND HOT CHOCOLATE



VIRTUAL HOLIDAY CONCERT WITH THE WOODLAND PARK WIND SYMPHONY FOR ALL BUSINESSES TO PLAY