

## Shop Local

I recently had the need to purchase some lumber for a project at home. On my lunch break I was heading to Lowes in a neighboring City to pick up the needed 2x4's. As I left the office and headed East, it hit me like a ton of bricks, "Why in the world am I driving to Suffolk when everything I need is just across the street?" Not only did Windsor Hardware have the supplies I needed, they were actually cheaper, and I didn't have to burn fuel to get to Suffolk and back. How many times have you left your community to buy something that was, in fact, available in your own community? Between our hardware store, pharmacy, grocery store, farmer's supply store, and other businesses, there are very few things that you can't get here in Town. By the time you factor in fuel and your valuable time, you are often saving yourself money by shopping in Town. Every dollar you spend in Town helps your neighbors and local businesses. I want to challenge each of you to stop and think before you leave your community to buy something. Ask yourself, "Can I get that here?" If the answer is yes, then stay in Town and support your local businesses. Not only does shopping local help keep the coffers full, it also promotes a sense of community. As you go into local businesses, they begin to recognize your face. They know who you are, and you begin to build relationships. What better way to engage citizens than with face to face interactions. Local businesses can be the best place for this type of engagement. It can be seen as neutral ground, and can provide a place for meaningful conversations and interactions.