

Spending your dollars on local businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic means more because of the people you're supporting, says Melissa McFarland.

"People forget these are real people operating these businesses, these are your friends and neighbours," says the executive director of the [Lindsay Downtown Business Improvement Area](#).

And supporting local in new ways helps small and large downtowns in the Kawarthas may help them overcome the financial hardships of the pandemic.

McFarland says Lindsay has been hit with a "double whammy" of major street reconstruction downtown, alongside COVID-19.

But the pandemic has meant businesses have had to innovate and add online storefronts, instead of just their physical ones, when they otherwise may not have, she adds.

"We didn't lose any businesses who closed their doors and said 'we can't operate due to COVID-19,'" she says.

Customers can continue to support local by going to [Downtown Lindsay's website](#), where all the businesses and their social media are linked.

While it may take a bit more effort to support small business, McFarland says it's worth it due to the benefits it brings the community and to keep the downtown vibrant.

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"Shop local is key," says [Bobcaygeon and Area Chamber](#) manager Denise Benning-Reid.

Shops are still open, and more businesses are "finding their feet" and figuring out the complicated and changing policies around operating safely, she says.