



Town of Needham, Massachusetts Media Release

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Needham Residents Encouraged to Shop Small this Holiday Season

Community Also Invited to Join Holiday Passport Program to support local businesses and be entered to win prizes

NEEDHAM – Wednesday, November 17, 2021 – Ahead of the holiday shopping season, the Town of Needham is encouraging residents to support local retailers and restaurants by shopping and dining locally. In addition to joining American Express for its 12th annual [Small Business Saturday](#), the Town is teaming up with the [Charles River Regional Chamber](#) to support the Holiday Passport Program, a fun way to support locally owned businesses while earning a chance to win several prizes.

This year's Small Business Saturday, which will take place on November 27th during Thanksgiving weekend, is an important part of the holiday season for small merchants as they work to recover from the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. American consumers spent an estimated \$19.8 billion at independent retailers and restaurants on Small Business Saturday, according to American Express.

"Small businesses help ensure that local economies stay strong and vibrant," said the Town's Economic Development Manager Amy Haelsen. "Making a decision to patronize the independently owned shops and restaurants throughout Needham really does matter. By purchasing holiday gifts, dining, and seeking services from these small businesses, you're not only supporting the hard-working people who contribute to our local schools and community organizations, but you're also supporting our own local economy."

Haelsen noted that, according to the National Main Street Center, 60 cents of every dollar spent at an independently owned business is retained or recirculated in the same community. Just one-third of that, 20 cents of every dollar, remains in a community when it is spent at a chain store. "When money is spent at a local business, a larger percentage of it stays right here in our community," she said. "If you spend it here, you help keep it here."

To mobilize the power of social media heading into this year's Small Business Saturday and all holiday season long, shoppers are invited to Shop Small at their favorite small merchants – both in-store and

online – and share their support on social media. Simply tag the small merchants that you shop at on social media and share what you love about them – from a favorite product to the great service they provide – it can really go a long way to support a small business this holiday season.

“We hope that Needham residents will make the extra effort to support the small, independently owned businesses in town on Small Business Saturday and throughout the holiday season,” said Eileen Baker, co-owner of [Proud Mary](#) in Needham Center. “When you make purchases at local businesses, it really does make a difference. Strong year-end sales help carry us through what is always a traditionally slower period during the first quarter,” said Baker. “Now more than ever, holiday sales are critical to many businesses being able to keep their doors open.”

In addition to Small Business Saturday, shoppers can do good by participating in the [Needham Holiday Passport Program](#). Pick up a passport at any participating local retailer and collect stamps when you shop and dine around Needham from November 20th to December 24th. Fill your passport with stamps from three different participating establishments – 36 businesses in all - to qualify to be entered into a prize drawing (one grand prize and two runner up prizes, all valued over \$200). Add bonus stamps for more chances to win. Turn in your completed passport at one of the three drop off locations: [Barre3 Needham](#), [Volante Farms](#) or the [Needham General Store](#). (You’ll even get a special thank you gift when you drop off!). The Passport Program is being coordinated by a group of Needham small businesses in partnership with the Town of Needham and the Charles River Regional Chamber.

ABOUT SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

November 27th is the annual Small Business Saturday, backed by American Express. Dedicated to supporting the diverse range of local businesses that create jobs, help boost the economy, and enhance neighborhoods around the country, Small Business Saturday was created by American Express in 2010 in response to small business owners’ most pressing need: getting more customers.

ABOUT SHOP SMALL

Shop Small is an international movement to support small, independent businesses and call attention to the valuable and distinct contributions they make to their communities and the economy. Shop Small celebrates small businesses ranging from retail stores and restaurants to fitness studios and salons, and everything in between. The Shop Small movement was spurred by the widespread participation in Small Business Saturday, a day founded in 2010 by American Express in the U.S. This national holiday shopping tradition is dedicated to celebrating small businesses and driving more customers through their doors on the Saturday after Thanksgiving.

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