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**Go Local,  
Go B.I.G.**  
A Local Business Initiative

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Thriving local businesses keep small economies humming. Since our founding in 1963, the Greater Seminole Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) has been charged with the purpose of promoting and supporting new and existing businesses through a wide variety of resources, while building a strong community through civic engagement, outreach programs, and various events. The Chamber has and will continue, to fulfill our duties to the best of our abilities; But now, we're placing some of the duty into the hands of the community.

The Chamber has created an initiative, "GO LOCAL and GO B.I.G." B.I.G. stands for "Buy In Greater" Seminole. This initiative is being launched in order to educate and remind the community of their responsibility to spend money locally to support recovery of our local economy. It is important now more than ever for us to shop local businesses, due to the effects of COVID-19, which has left many shops scrambling to revive and reimagine.

The Chamber and the City of Seminole (City) urge area consumers to shop local. It is understood that not everything needed can be found in a locally owned retailer, shopping at well know "big box" stores or chains also helps the community. We would encourage consumers to spend in the Greater Seminole area, rather than outside our community or online. To assist with finding what local consumers need the Chamber hosts a local directory on their website at [www.MySeminoleChamber.com](http://www.MySeminoleChamber.com).

Below are additional reasons why it is important to "GO LOCAL and Go B.I.G":

1. **Money spent locally stays local:** When you buy from locally owned businesses significantly more of your money stays in your local economy.
2. **Support community groups:** Non-profits receive an average 250% more support from small business owners than they do from large businesses. Large firms often contribute to the area where the corporation is headquartered, not necessarily, where they do business.
3. **Local character:** The local one-of-a-kind businesses where you live eat and have fun are a major part of your local community's character and identity.
4. **Reduce environmental impact:** Locally owned businesses are often located in a downtown or city center. This means less development on the fringes, contributing less to sprawl, energy use and pollution. Additionally, local businesses source more of their purchases locally, meaning less transportation of goods and more dollars staying in the local economy.
5. **Create more good jobs:** Local merchants are the largest employer nationally and in communities, providing good opportunities for residents.

6. **Better service:** Local merchants take time to know their customers, and often have a better understanding of the products they are selling.
7. **Invest in the future:** Local businesses, often owned by local residents, are more invested in the community's future, and less likely to leave.
8. **Put your taxes to good use:** Businesses in town centers or downtowns generally require less investment in infrastructure and make better use of public services as compared to nationally owned stores.
9. **Products geared toward residents:** Local merchants are more in tune with their communities and customer base, leading to a product offering best suited to the local environment.
10. **Attract the innovators:** In an increasingly standardized world, it is not surprising that highly skilled thought workers and entrepreneurs prefer to settle and invest in communities with unique character and a distinctive environment. (Yiftee)

Go Local and Go B.I.G. is just one of the many efforts to support recovery and reopen of the economy within the City of Seminole as well as the Greater Seminole area. The Chamber, the City, St. Petersburg College-Seminole (SPC) along with support from Pinellas County, created a collaborative working group in order to share ideas for relief and keep communication lines about resources open to businesses, students, and residents. Other efforts to support business and community included the City's eased restrictions of various ordinances and providing special permitting for outdoor seating, while SPC provided special monetary and food assistance to their students. County wide Pinellas County Agencies have provided endless resources to business and residence alike. The Chamber continues to stay focused on providing assistance to businesses by providing constant updates related to reopen, diligently working to create relevant training and education, promotions and networking opportunities to not only members but all businesses in the Greater Seminole area.

Visit [MySeminoleChamber.com](http://MySeminoleChamber.com) or give us a call at (727) 392-3245 to learn more. Help us continue to build a strong community, together.