

In case you haven't already noticed, I'd like to bring your attention to the changes and improvements we've recently made to the Town Plaza. The renovations began in early fall with the Columbus monument triangle beautification project. One of our local businesses, RAC Landscaping, generously donated time and materials and worked with the staff of the Department of Public Works to upgrade the landscaping, build a block wall around planted sections, set brick pavers on walkways and install park benches. Additionally, we moved several monuments from the grounds of Town Hall to that location. Another upgrade that I'm very proud of is the installation of large directional signs on both sides of Paterson Plank Road and at the intersection of Paterson Plank and Flanagan Way. These highly visible tall black and white signs were designed and made in-house – right in our own DPW garage. Our master welder fabricated the steel and then we sent the signs out to a car-painting shop for the high gloss finish. This improved signage will help motorists find their destination and avoid the pitfall of taking the wrong turn at the intersection. The next large improvement we are planning is the installation of a full-sized historic street clock, which I envision as the focal point of the downtown business area. The Town is currently conducting a fund-raising campaign to pay for the purchase of the clock so that no tax dollars will be used. In addition, funds will be set aside for its upkeep and maintenance. You and your family can have a permanent place in the history of Secaucus by contributing to our “Adopt the Clock ... Making Tomorrow's History Today” fundraiser. Sponsorship opportunities are available at various contribution levels. If you are interested, please call me at 201 330-2005 or go online to the Town's website at www.secaucusnj.org.

The improvements I've described and those we are planning are part of an overall initiative to revitalize the local economy and strengthen the downtown business community. During this holiday season, I want to encourage residents to support your locally-owned businesses, shops and restaurants for all your shopping, dining and entertaining needs.

There are numerous benefits to the community that result from patronizing local businesses, many of which are owned by families who also happen to be your neighbors. Local businesses employ residents and pay taxes that support the community. Buying goods in your work and home neighborhoods keeps the local

economy vibrant, maintains the safety of the retail district, builds relationships – and is convenient. Shopping close to home can reduce pollution created by driving out of the area, and can support public transportation. In addition, when you spend close to home, more of your money stays within the community. In fact, studies show that for each \$1 spent at a local business, 45 cents is reinvested locally, as opposed to non-local purchasing which keeps, at most, 15 cents within the community. Among the ways retailers and other businesses give back to the community are by sponsoring recreational programs and events and donating to charitable organizations that help our citizens and enhance our quality of life.

Shopping locally offers many advantages to the consumer also. Small business owners get to know their customers personally and can provide better service than large chain stores. They depend on their reputation and customer loyalty to keep a competitive edge. In addition, small shops create a distinctive shopping experience by carrying the products that meet the needs of their clientele. Very often, local stores are running specials that you can only learn about by stopping in. And, as a further incentive to stay close to home, the parking meters in the Town Plaza will be suspended every Saturday in December.

I encourage you to show your support of our local businesses by thinking first of our local economy, shopping in our local stores and buying from local companies who give back so much to our community.

The Town is now on facebook. Be sure to check out news and upcoming events at [facebook.com/Secaucus](https://www.facebook.com/Secaucus).

Have a Happy Holiday Season!