

ZENA NEWS

Lead the Change You Want to See

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ZENA CONSULTING

Your Favorite Neighborhood Small Business Needs Help Now



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Here are some reasons why buying local is so much bigger than personal habits. In late 2025 the Seattle nonprofit *Intentionalist* surveyed (in English only) 136 independent brick-and-mortar micro-businesses. The poll was limited to cherished neighborhood anchors,-- cafés, retail shops, salons, and studios. About 70% of them employ fewer than 10 people and 80% generate <\$1M in annual revenue.

Financial Stress Is Worse Than the Pandemic

The respondents noted that government subsidies helped their tiny slice of America stay afloat during COVID. With support now gone they reported:

- 67% are under more financial stress now than during the pandemic.
- 71% see less foot traffic than 2025 and 63% experience declining sales.
- Only 12% said that demand covers their current cost structure.

Meanwhile, costs (rent, labor, insurance, utilities, and debt payments) continue to rise. With limited access to affordable working capital many owners to tap into personal savings, raise prices, cut staff hours, or take on new debt just to stay open. Their situation may be unsustainable.

Step into Cross-Sector Leadership to Make a Difference

When small local businesses close communities don't just lose appealing store fronts. They forfeit gathering spaces, local jobs, cultural identity, tourist attractions, and pathways to entrepreneurship-- all of which hit socio-economically disadvantaged or frontline communities harder.

Nonprofits, foundations, and public agencies can step up to bridge the gaps in many and mutually beneficial ways. Demand-driving partnerships, intentional procurement, flexible capital, and policy advocacy aren't "extras." They're regional stabilization strategies. Resilient communities require coordinated, cross-sector leadership. If you value vibrant neighborhoods and equitable local economies, invest not in programs, but also leadership capacity and systems that help small businesses thrive. Call me to learn more or host a facilitate a conversation at your organization.

EVENTS



2/13

9:00-10:00 PST

How to Help Local Governments Break Up With Amazon and Support Small Biz

The title says it all. Learn the why and how to shift public purchasing to local providers. FREE! Sign up or get ILSR's free Citizen Guide [here](#).



2/17 to 3/10

1-2:30 PST

FREE Small Business Cybersecurity Webinar Series

Get tools to protect operations, secure equipment. avoid scams, and prepare for cyber incidents [Register here](#).

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