Regardless of how much you don't want it to be, the holiday shopping season is upon us.

With the prevalent economic chaos, the dollar is going to be heavily catered to.

Here's a few reasons to save a bunch of driving time you could use doing more productive and less expensive things from sustainableconnections.org:

1. Buy Local - Support yourself: Several studies have shown that when you buy from an independent, locally owned business, rather than a nationally owned businesses, significantly more of your money is used to make purchases from other local businesses, service providers and farms - continuing to strengthen the economic base of the community.

2. Support community groups: Non-profit organizations receive an average 250 percent more support from smaller business owners than they do from large businesses.

3. Keep our community unique: Where we shop, where we eat and have fun - all of it makes our community home. Our one-of-a-kind businesses are an integral part of the distinctive character of this place. Our tourism businesses also benefit.

4. Reduce environmental impact: Locally owned businesses can make more local purchases

requiring less transportation and generally set up shop in town or city centers as opposed to developing on the fringe. This generally means contributing less to sprawl, congestion, habitat loss and pollution.

5. Create more good jobs: Small local businesses are the largest employer nationally and in our community, provide the most jobs to residents.

6. Get better service: Local businesses often hire people with a better understanding of the products they are selling and take more time to get to know customers.

7. Invest in community: Local businesses are owned by people who live in this community, are less likely to leave and are more invested in the community's future.

8. Put your taxes to good use: Local businesses in town centers require comparatively little infrastructure investment and make more efficient use of public services as compared to nationally owned stores entering the community.

9. Buy what you want, not what someone wants you to buy: A marketplace of tens of thousands of small businesses is the best way to ensure innovation and low prices over the long-term. A multitude of small businesses, each selecting products based not on a national sales plan but on their own interests and the needs of their local customers, guarantees a much broader range of product choices.

10. Encourage local prosperity: A growing body of economic research shows that in an increasingly homogenized world, entrepreneurs and skilled workers are more likely to invest and settle in communities that preserve their one-of-a-kind businesses and distinctive character.

You know what to do now. Save some gas, save some time and help your community prosper.