

Impact Report 2020

— The Year of Together —

To view in full-screen mode, click  on the menu bar below.



A Year Unlike Any Other

2020 was truly one of a kind. The impacts of COVID-19 spared nothing and no one, including Be Local – Calgary’s only network of community-focused businesses.

The pandemic shone a light on our city’s fractured elements and the unhealthy parts of our economy. The fragility of international supply chains reminded us of the value of local products, services and businesses. But more than just local, we as a society experienced the importance of community and our reliance on neighbours. It became fundamentally clear that how we show up for one another — both in relationships and business — matters. Now, more than ever before, we need businesses that stand for community, not just capital. It’s time for us all to Be Local.

This is not a story of hardship but resilience. It is a story about showing up, responding to opportunities and coming together. Be Local membership increased sixfold in 2020, but maybe more significantly, our community grew in heart. While the year may have been nothing like we could have ever imagined, we can say that looking back, 2020 was a year that made us proud.

A WIDER NET

Large-scale change requires as many businesses to be part of the movement as possible. Not everyone has a long track record of impact, and that’s okay. So instead of asking you what you’ve done, we want to know who you are, what you care about and where your heart is. Even if you aren’t an expert at creating an impact today, if there’s an aspiration to do good with your business, we’ll help get you there in the future.

NEW STEWARDS

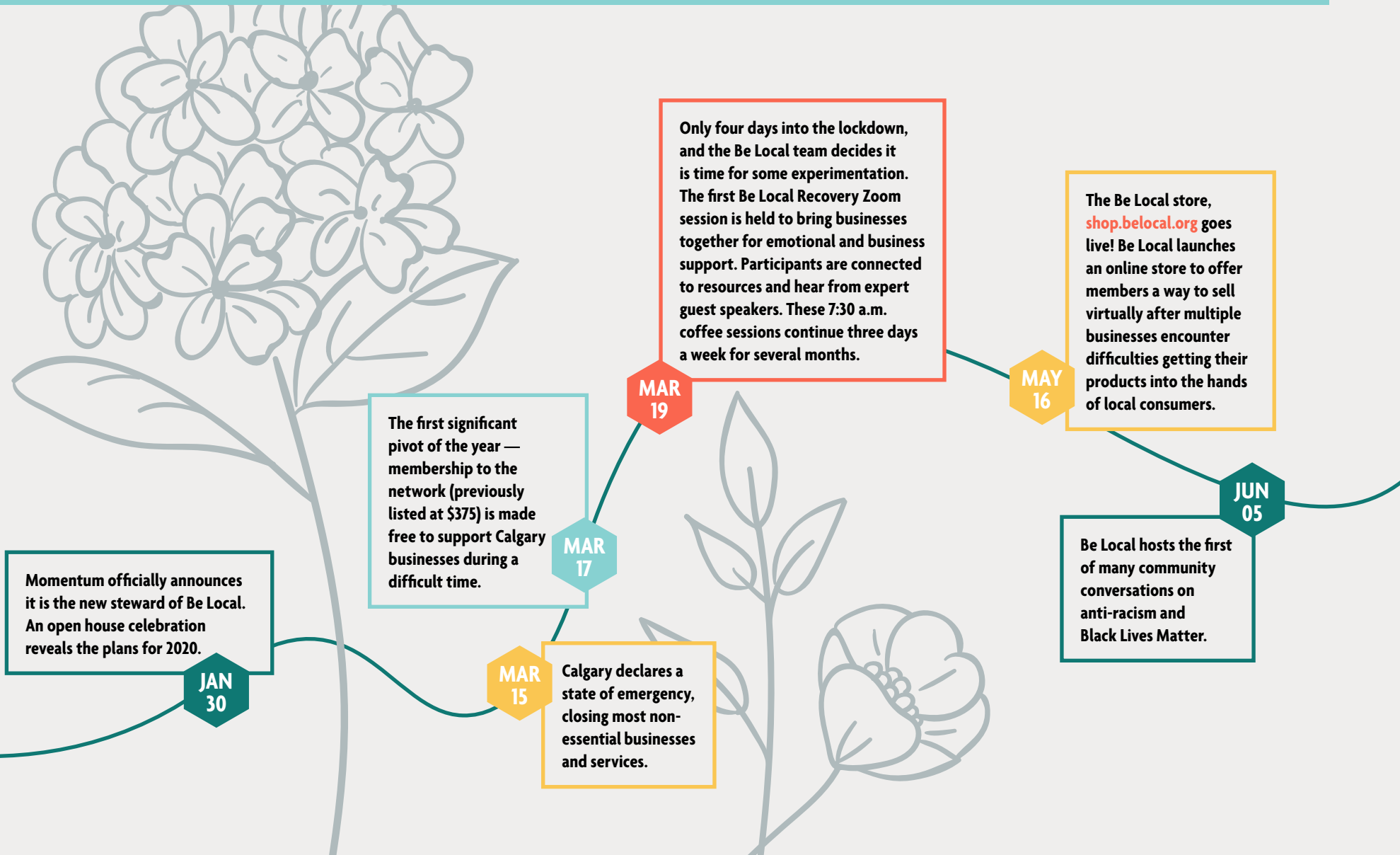
In January of 2020, Be Local transitioned to Momentum, a local, award-winning charitable organization that takes an economic approach to poverty reduction and adds a social perspective to economic development initiatives. Be Local is thrilled to be powered by **Momentum**, which is no stranger to the work — it has been a long-time member and supporter, with Momentum staff volunteering as board directors for the network during its 14-year tenure.

NEW BUSINESS LANDSCAPE

With COVID-19, March 2020 marked new territory for many Be Local members. Businesses had to be nimble and responsive, and so did Be Local. This year of change called us to reimagine how we could truly show up for our community.



Pivots, Pilots and Experimentation: A Timeline of 2020



JUN 09

Media coverage boosts the Be Local brand on CTV and social media. Be Local launches a public relations campaign to help Calgary spread the word about businesses in the network and drive sales to them through the new online store.

SEP 12

A brief reason to smile — the first and last in-person networking event of the year is held outside in the garden of member-business River Café.

OCT 26

Be Local launches the Strengthening Impact Workshop Series, one of many pilots for the year. This eight-part learning opportunity for members, put on in partnership with Vibrant Communities Calgary, helps businesses create even more meaningful impact in the community.

NOV 15

Buy Local Prime Days launches! This cheeky promo encourages Calgarians to cancel their Amazon Prime account to receive a \$79 credit to the Be Local store. The Be Local team is inundated with demand, with hundreds of Calgarians eager to ditch Amazon for local. The catchy campaign is an overwhelming success, and the story is picked up by CTV, CityNews, CBC and other outlets. Even Calgary's mayor tweets his support, and national media outlets, including the *Huffington Post*, share the Be Local store in shop-local stories.

NOV 29

12 Days of Local campaign launches. It reminds holiday shoppers that just because they're shopping online, doesn't mean they can't shop locally. The campaign reaches 10,364 people. The Be Local store made \$35,000 in revenue over the holiday season.

DEC 31

We ended the year with 251 members joining Calgary's only network of community-focused businesses!

Join us at belocal.org

BE LOCAL



Supporting Local Made Easy

Consumers prefer the convenience of going to the Be Local online store to support local and find businesses that care about more than just making a buck.

The store vendors love it too.

Put your money where your values are, shop.belocal.org



Evelyne Nyairo

Ellie Bianca

“When I think of Be Local, I almost want to cry because here is this group fighting to make sure we keep our doors open. Nothing is more exciting than seeing an order come through on Be Local because you know whoever is coming to shop is intentional and cares about community. We’ve definitely built new long-term customers through the shop that we wouldn’t have connected with otherwise, and it’s incredible to have another revenue stream and distribution channel.”

The Goods:

Ellie Bianca produces Canadian-made, all-natural skincare products formulated with shea butter harvested by women’s co-ops in Africa.

Founder Fact:

Evelyne Nyairo grew up in Kenya, where she became frustrated at the levels of gender inequality. Nyairo realized her life’s mission was to empower women. Ellie Bianca’s shea butter and oil are sourced personally from Africa, nurturing not only the skin but also the souls of the communities from which they come. It also funds the Ellie Bianca Woman Scholarship.



Pushpa Javaji

Pushpa Pyrography

“Without direct access to customers due to lockdowns and restrictions on public gatherings, there was no way I could have made any sales unless I went online to sell. Thanks to the Be Local online store, what would have taken me months to set up took only a few weeks. The online registration and vendor setup was very quick and easy, allowing me to list my products and reach a large number of customers. It also provided me the opportunity to collaborate with other businesses. The weekly order drop-off to a central location and the local delivery managed by Be Local members have made it so convenient and cost-effective.”

The Goods:

Pushpa Pyrography offers handcrafted, wood-burnt functional art pieces that are inspired by natural elements.

Founder Fact:

Pushpa Javaji realized the healing power of art after experimenting with wood burning during her struggle with depression. She continues to be a mental health advocate and offers art therapy opportunities for at-risk youth.



Herman Van Reekum

Bear Bait Honey

“I joined the Be Local network about one year ago. I was thrilled because we were in the beginning of a very scary pandemic, and we were suddenly faced with an uncertain future. It seemed like selling our honey through Be Local would be a very positive way of not only improving our business but staying engaged with our community. It’s been great to be connected with other members of the network and to share ideas and support throughout these challenging times. I think it’s entirely appropriate that Be Local uses a bee in their logo — as a beekeeper, I know that bees work together to survive.”

The Goods:

Bear Bait Honey is a family owned and operated business that produces all-natural, premium raw honey sourced from hives in the foothills south of Calgary.

Founder Fact:

Herman Van Reekum is passionate about educating his customers on how we can sustain bee populations. Though his greatest obsession is caring for bees, he understands that sticky situations are inevitable in his line of work — two of his early beehives were destroyed by a bear, which inspired the name ‘Bear Bait Honey’.

Local Action. Big Hearts.

Currently, in 2021, Be Local has more than **350 members** in the network, each committed to more than just making money. These businesses are community-focused and driven by their values. They are locally owned and operated, striving towards a local economy that is sustainable, resilient and works for everyone. Each has incredible stories of how they are making a difference in the lives of Calgarians. Meet three Be Local Members creating positive change.

HOPE CLEANING

- This commercial cleaning and sanitizing company creates employment opportunities for women coming out of vulnerable situations, domestic violence or exploitation.
- Its first employer partnership was with Calgary Housing. It now also works with caseworkers from 10 agencies, including the Mustard Seed and the Centre for Newcomers, to support women who are ready for employment to start building their financial independence.
- Hope Cleaning has employed over 60 women, 75% of whom have transitioned into full-time career positions.



KENT OF INGLEWOOD & KNIFEWEAR

- Donates half of the money from sharpening each year to charities like Browning Bagging for Calgary's Kids and The Centre for Autism Services Alberta.
- Staff incentives include being paid a living wage, profit sharing for all levels of employees, health spending accounts, paid sick days, opportunities for advancement, and supporting staff development and education.
- After being on the team for 10 years, staff are rewarded with a three-month paid leave.
- Gave the entire staff a pay raise in the middle of COVID.



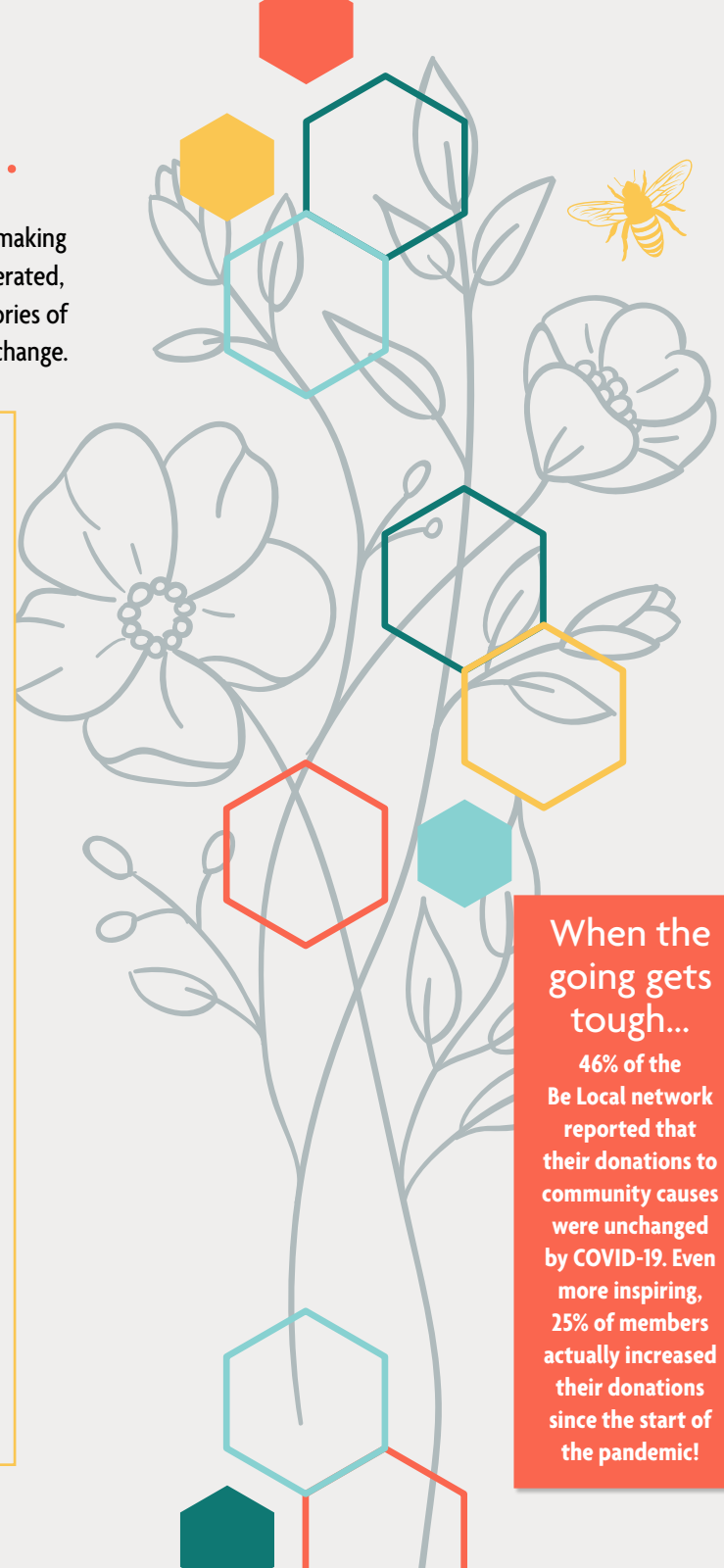
THE DANDY BREWING COMPANY

- Launched in 2014, Dandy has not only grown in size, but has made sure to expand its reach within the community.
- The restaurant and production area's design highlights inclusivity and offers a barrier-free space that makes it accessible to people of all abilities.
- Dandy also works hard to be a responsible community member and takes great pride in its partnerships with and support for non-profits and charities such as Mealshare, Cyclepalooza, and Huddle Up For Suicide Prevention, among others.



When the going gets tough...

46% of the Be Local network reported that their donations to community causes were unchanged by COVID-19. Even more inspiring, 25% of members actually increased their donations since the start of the pandemic!



In 2020:

Donations by network members to local charities exceeded

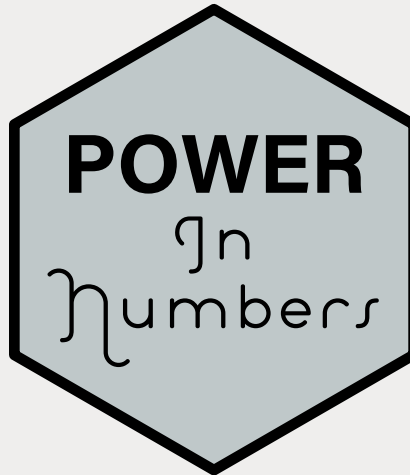
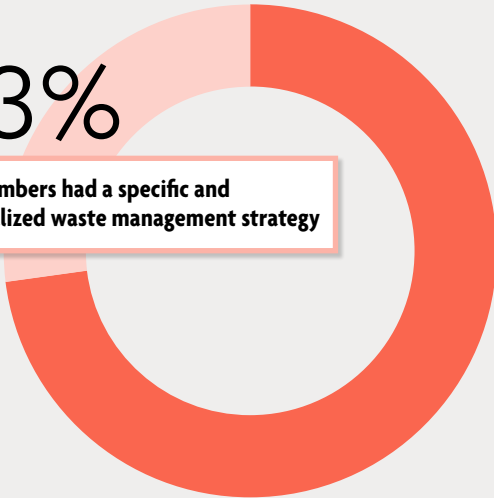
\$1.5 million

with 75% of members reporting they donated

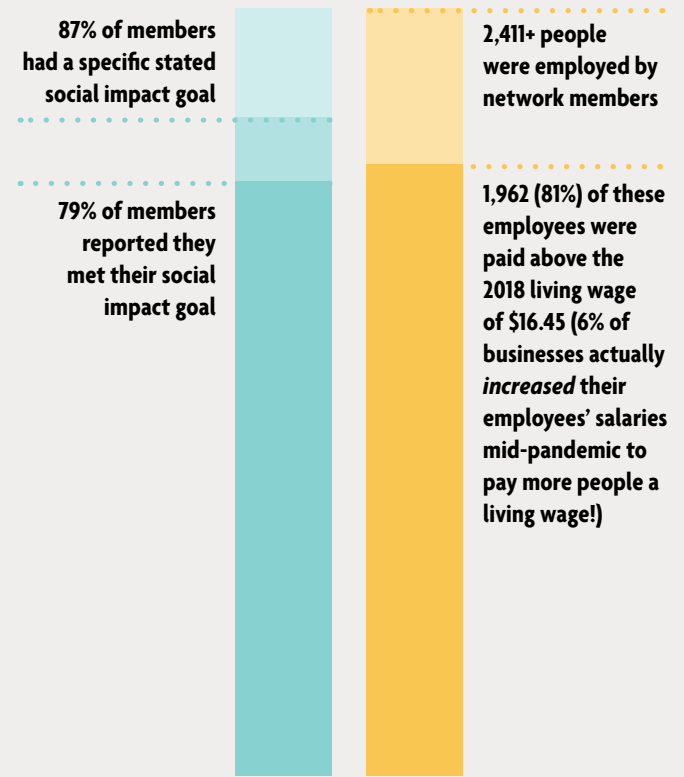


73%

of members had a specific and formalized waste management strategy



of waste was diverted from landfills by our members



Members spent

\$8,529,900

on locally procured input goods and services

Oh, the Possibilities!

5 Ways Be Local Works for You

1



Collaboration

Be Local can help you partner with like-minded entrepreneurs who share your values.

coRISE Superfood partnered with Nudemarket to offer a joint Coconut Peanut Butter Cookie Mix. This **collab** is one of the most popular items on the Be Local store today!

The Allium (a cooperatively owned, plant-based restaurant) partnered with Universal Access (an accessibility company that reduces barriers), GenerousSolutions (an online ticketing company), BRND'D (videography) and Claudia T (photography) to put on virtual cooking classes and community dinners. These initiatives generated over \$13,000 in revenues when many other restaurants were closed!

2

Be Local Store

What started as a quick, side-of-the-desk response to member concerns has turned into an online store that's generated \$59,557 for local businesses in just over seven months.

Over the holiday season, *\$21,185 was generated in Be Local gift cards* — mainly from people and corporations looking to support local businesses that care. These customers were looking for a great gift that could be redeemed at a variety of local businesses rather than just one.



3



Learning

In 2020, Be Local members had the opportunity to learn together through exclusive opportunities, including the Impact Learning Series, Be Anti-Racist Taskforce, Indigenous Foundational Learning & Partnership, and the Be Local Recovery sessions. These workshops invited guest speakers and experts from the City

of Calgary, University of Calgary, Calgary Economic Development and more.

Be Local is also one of the main producers and hosts of Social Venture Institute, North America's top gathering of social venture leaders. This past October, we lined up speakers such as founder and CEO of Saffron Road, Adnan Durrani, CEO of Rocky Mountain Soap Company, Karina Birch, and 2020 Canadian Business Hall of Fame inductee Zita Cobb.

In total, Be Local offered 24 different workshops and gatherings in 2020, with 727 unique entrepreneurs and leaders in attendance!

To learn more, visit belocal.org



Exposure

A collective voice matters.

Media outlets prefer connecting with one contact who can put them in touch with many different stories. In 2020, we were able to secure approximately \$25,000 worth of media coverage. Government officials and funders also appreciate

the efficiency and speed of engaging with a network.

Meanwhile, customers increasingly want to support local businesses rooted in community — businesses with an ethical philosophy. Be Local amplifies your message in ways that wouldn't be possible individually.

4

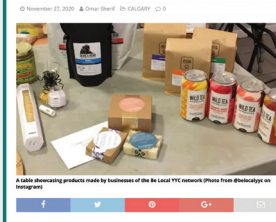
Connections

Impact isn't possible without relationships. With over 30 years of history in Calgary, **Momentum**, the organization behind Be Local, has diverse and useful connections for your business. Whether it's with Vibrant Communities Calgary, B Corp Alberta, the Alberta Living Wage Network, Local Investing YYC, Calgary Dollars, United Way of Calgary and Area, Mount Royal University, almost all the charities in Calgary or any level of government, we've got you covered.



5

Calgary business network is offering Calgarians a prime chance to shop local



#BeLocalYYC



JOIN

SHOP

BE SOCIAL

