



## ECONOMIC AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT MEMORANDUM

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**TO: DEPUTY MAYOR, B. WARD AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

**FROM: D. HYDE, MANAGER, SMALL BUSINESS CENTRE OF BARRIE, SIMCOE COUNTY AND ORILLIA. X5236**

**NOTED: S. SCHLICHTER, DIRECTOR, ECONOMIC AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**  
**B. ARANIYASUNDARAN, RPP, GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

**RE: NEW TRANSFER PAYMENT AGREEMENT WITH THE MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, JOB CREATION AND TRADE**

**DATE: MAY 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

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The purpose of this Memorandum is to inform members of Council that the funding for the Small Business Centre of Barrie, Simcoe County and Orillia (SBEC) has been continued, and the City has entered into a new Transfer Payment Agreement with the Province of Ontario through the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade (MEDJCT). This agreement covers the period April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 – March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, with an option to extend for an additional fiscal year, and is under the same general conditions as the previous agreement. The agreement provides contributory funds to the SBEC in the sum of \$216,935 annually and will allow the Centre to continue its work in supporting local business owners and entrepreneurs in their goal of starting and growing a business as a partnership with the City of Barrie.

The Small Business Centre plays a central role in the local business support ecosystem by providing advice, guidance, referrals to public and professional resources and services, training, and mentorship on a variety of business topics to business owners whose enterprises are at the ideation stage through the first five years of their growth. Our core service consists of one-on-one consultations, supplemented by regular webinars on business topics, business plan reviews and connections to funding and resource opportunities. Our services are free at the point of delivery, and there is no limit to the amount of times that an entrepreneur can access the services of the SBEC. The Small Business Centre Team are ready and able to help local businesses and owners on as-needed and frequent basis.

The Small Business Centre also delivers the following three programs:

- Summer Company: this program provides accepted students aged 15 – 29 with mentorship, business training, and up to \$3,000 in funding to start and run their business for the summer;
- Starter Company Plus: this 4-month program is available to entrepreneurs who are starting, growing, or buying a business. Successful applicants receive mentorship and training; and upon completion of the program, they may also be eligible to apply for a micro-grant of up to \$5,000 to put towards their business; and
- Digital Main Street: now entering into its fourth round. Digital Main Street is a program and service that helps businesses achieve digital transformation. The program is built around an online learning platform, structured training programs, a Digital Service Squad, as well as a team of highly trained professionals who help businesses grow and manage their business through the adoption of digital tools and technology.

Additionally, the SBEC is able to draw on the resources of SBC Ontario, a network of 54 small business centres across Ontario that has recently formed into an independent Not-For-Profit Corporation in order to ensure consistency and quality in delivery of service.



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In terms of the impact of the SBEC on our local business community, a selection of highlights from 2021 include:

- **205** businesses supported;
- **413** one-to-one consultations delivered, and
- SBEC played a role in:
  - the launch of **60** businesses;
  - the maintenance of a further **109** businesses; and
  - the creation of **167** jobs.

Should members of Council have any questions regarding any of the services or programs offered by the Small Business Centre, or wish to refer a business owner for consultation, please contact the Centre at [smallbusiness@barrie.ca](mailto:smallbusiness@barrie.ca) or at 705 720 2445.