



## ECONOMIC AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT MEMORANDUM

Page: 1  
File:  
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**TO:** MAYOR J. LEHMAN AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

**FROM:** D. HYDE, MANAGER OF SMALL BUSINESS CENTRE OF BARRIE, SIMCOE COUNTY AND ORILLIA EXT. 5236

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

**RE:** ONLINE ACCESS TO SMALL BUSINESS CENTRE RESOURCES

**DATE:** MARCH 8, 2021

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The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide members of Council with information concerning a recent improvement to service provision by the Small Business Centre, offered in partnership with Barrie Public Library. These changes enhance public access to the information needed when planning, launching and growing a small business and are in alignment with Council's Strategic Priorities to support small business and using technology to deliver services more effectively.

Specifically, the Small Business Centre has added both of its two main informational webinars (Starting Your Business Basics and Business Plan Basics) to the library's Niche Academy platform. The online platform allows for public access on a 24-7 basis and offers subject matter in a modular format, providing the opportunity for viewers to proceed through the information at their own pace. Supplementary business information and resources are also provided in the relevant modules, and voice notes will shortly be recorded and added to provide greater value and depth of information to the viewer.

Since launching in December, over 50 local residents have accessed the courses. This is done via a simple log-in process on the library web site, allowing the user to pause and return to their course at any time. This process also provides the Small Business Centre with valuable data regarding the most popular modules and areas that may need further development.

Should you have any questions regarding any of the services or programs offered by the Small Business Centre, or should you wish to refer a business owner to us for a consultation, please do not hesitate to contact us at [smallbusiness@barrie.ca](mailto:smallbusiness@barrie.ca) or at 705 720 2445.

### About the Small Business Centre of Barrie, Simcoe County and Orillia

Funded in partnership between the City of Barrie and Province of Ontario and located in the Sandbox Centre, the Small Business Centre provides more than 350 consultations annually with current and prospective business owners, is an integral service provider within the local entrepreneurial ecosystem and is a co-partner with the Henry Bernick Entrepreneurship Centre in delivering the annual Xcelerate Business Summit, which this year delivered 69 speakers to 376 attendees virtually.