



## ECONOMIC AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** MAYOR J. LEHMAN 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  
A. MILLER, RPP, GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

**RE:** SMALL BUSINESS CENTRE IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020/21

**DATE:** JUNE 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide members of Council with a summary of the annual reporting metrics of the Small Business Centre for the fiscal year ended March 31<sup>st</sup> 2021. The Small Business Centre is part of a network of more than 50 offices across Ontario with funding support from the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade in partnership with the City of Barrie. As part of the funding agreement with the Province of Ontario, the Small Business Centre is required to report on its performance metrics and targets to the Province on a semi-annual basis.

The efforts of the Centre during the reporting period were focused on supporting businesses affected by COVID, in an effort to their survival through the Provincial restrictions and promote economic recovery and resilience. The Centre played an integral role in the construction and implementation of the City's COVID-19 Recovery Action Plan within the Economic & Creative Development Department, designing and launching such initiatives as the *Going Digital* program and playing a lead role in the formation and distribution of the City's COVID-19 Recovery Kits. The Centre also attracted \$117,000 in additional funding from outside sources to support area small businesses, a record amount for the 19 years that the Small Business Centre has been in existence.

Some highlights from our impact report include:

**Business Consultations:** The Centre conducted a total of 380 consultations over the fiscal period. Of those, 115 were one-on-one consultations with business owners looking for guidance in launching their business, and 96 with business that were already in existence. A further 169 follow-up consultations with new and existing businesses took place, demonstrating the value of the Centre's relationship with the local business community.

**Businesses and Jobs Maintained:** The Centre plays a role in helping company owners remain open, retain employees and grow their business. For the reporting period, the target for assisting with continuing operations was 40 businesses and 100 jobs, a number which was far exceeded through a focus on follow-up consultations, recovery kits and one-to-one outreach to the local business community as part of the pandemic response. The actual amounts achieved were 369 businesses and 415 jobs 'maintained'. We also saw an increase in number of **Jobs Created** in our client base, up from a target of 110 to a total of 123.

**Digital Main Street 2.0:** Building on the success of round one of the Digital Main Street Program the Centre applied for funding to participate in the renewed program and was successful in obtaining \$50,000 to fund the second round of this program. This funding allowed the Centre to expand the program to all C1 and C2 zoned businesses in the City of Barrie and those within a 1-kilometre radius of those zones. A further expansion was granted to all areas zoned C3 – C5 Commercial within Barrie city limits due to demand for digital assistance as well as the high profile of the program. As of the end of this reporting



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period, 378 businesses had inquired about the program with 188 of them have either completed service, in process of receiving service, or confirming eligibility to proceed with service.

Additional highlights of results and impacts of an expanded Starter Company Plus program and the Centre's role in the most successful Xcelerate Summit to date are included as an attachment identified as 'Appendix A' to this Memorandum.

With the recent funding support from the Province and City to add a resource role of a Small Business Consultant, combined with the forthcoming launch of both the Summer Company and Starter Company Plus 2021 programmes, in addition to implementing a much anticipated renewal of the Digital Main Street program, it is anticipated that the Small Business Centre will experience continued growth in community impact and upcoming year of assisting local people realize their dream of entrepreneurship and business ownership.

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.

## APPENDIX 'A'

### Highlights from the 2020-21 Annual Report

Small Business Centre of Barrie, Simcoe County & Orillia

Results on business/job maintenance and job creation in the Barrie, Simcoe County & Orillia communities that directly tie to an initiative delivered by the Centre:



**Number of businesses retained who received services from the Centre**

**Projected:**  
40 businesses



**Actual:**  
369 businesses



**Number of jobs that were created from businesses that received service from the Centre**

**Projected:**  
110 jobs



**Actual:**  
123 jobs



**Number of jobs that were sustained by businesses receiving service from the Centre**

**Projected:**  
100 jobs



**Actual:**  
415 jobs

\*measured through regular 3, 6 and 12-month follow up schedule.



#### Quick facts:

The Centre is a trust entrepreneurial resource. In 2020, the Centre:

- Completed **380 consultations** in total (including with existing businesses)
- Attracted **\$80,000 in additional funding** to further invest in digital support for business
- Assisted local businesses in accessing a total of **\$30,000 in digital support funding**

### Select key events & programs delivered by the Centre

#### Xcelerate Summit virtual conference (October 2020)

Jointly delivered with **9 other partners**

**35 hours** of content

**69 speakers** (28 from Barrie)

**\$6200** in ticket sales

**\$40,000** raised in sponsorships

**376 attendees**

#### Starter Company Plus (2020-21)

**30 participants**

**16** available grants, totalling **\$80,000** invested in the community

Virtual facilitation led to **increased attendance and engagement** throughout the program

Emphasis on **COVID-19 recovery and growth**

barriebusinesscentre.ca • smallbusiness@barrie.ca • 705 720 2445



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