

Report to Council

Report Title:	Govstack Website Refresh Proposal		
Prepared By:	Sarah Johnson, Deputy Clerk		
Department:	Clerk's		
Date:	November 28, 2023		
Report Number:	CLKk2023-25	File Number:	C11CL, M10
Attachments:	N/A		

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number CLK2023-25 – Govstack Website Refresh Proposal, prepared by Sarah Johnson, Deputy Clerk, and in doing so grants pre-budget approval for the Municipality to enter into an agreement with GHD to implement the Govstack Content Management System and further approves the cost of implementation in the amount of \$28,409.60 to be funded from the website reserve fund with ongoing annual costs of \$6,429.60/year to be included in the 2024 Municipal Budget, and further approves an exemption from the Purchasing and Procurement Policy to remain with GHD.

Report:

Background:

The Municipality of Brockton's current website was implemented in June 2018, including a new homepage design after completing a new municipal branding campaign. The Municipality has used the same website provider, GHD (formerly known as eSolutions) since 2013, and underwent a website refresh with GHD in 2018 to coincide with the branding campaign for Brockton (which was budgeted at \$30,000).

Staff update content on the website on a regular basis; however, maintenance updates, design or template changes, or changes to the functionality of the website must go through GHD (usually at a cost to the Municipality). Past examples were updating the News Manager in 2021, and changing the search to Cludo in 2023.

We launched our Municipal App in 2022 to reach a more diverse demographic of residents with timely, effective communication and respond to the broader community needs, as well as providing the most sought out information, as per the Strategic Action Plan action #72.

It is common practice to refresh a website every five (5) years. The Municipality has considered when to refresh our website, suggesting that it would be the best time to refresh our website as 2023 is our fifth (5th)

year maintaining the same design. Staff feel the change is warranted as we have recently been informed that **our current content management system (CMS), iCreate, is being phased out.**

We collect feedback from both staff and residents regarding the content they are looking for on the website and use analytics to assist in guiding updates. Staff bring forward bi-annual and annual reports to Council identifying website statistics and do our best within the limitations of our current website design and interface abilities to make information available and current for residents.

The Purchasing and Procurement Policy states that services between \$25,000 - \$75,000 have a formal Request for Quotes (RFQ) – with a minimum of three, or Request for Proposals (RFP). Due to the complexity of the software platform and various options, staff would typically go issue and RFP for such services. However, in this case staff are requesting an exemption from the Purchasing and Procurement Policy for continuity of the services and the Town of Hanover recent quote of \$50,000 suggesting a more expensive cost for the service.

Analysis:

In November 2023, the Municipality was presented with the proposal to refresh our website using GHD’s new content management system (CMS) called [Govstack](#). The proposal offers the Municipality the ability to switch our current CMS system (iCreate) to Govstack (since iCreate is being phased out), which would allow the Municipality to take advantage of a new website design, which features:

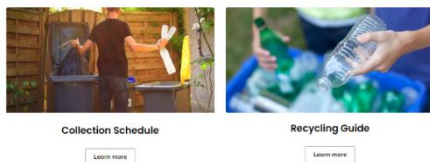
- User-friendly interface
- Design tools
- Migration of existing calendar events, forms, news subscriptions
- Migration of 200 existing webpages, or a refresh using Sitemap Management
- Update search provider
- Add-ons for future consideration

A [demo site](#) showing some of the features of Govstack is available to view.



Homepage Example and Interior Page Template Examples

Garbage and Recycling



Garbage Collection

The City of Prestige and our landfill contractor Prestige Service Centre, service the community with weekly curbside garbage collection and landfill site operation.

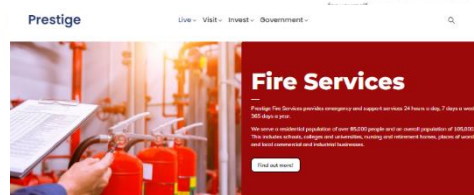
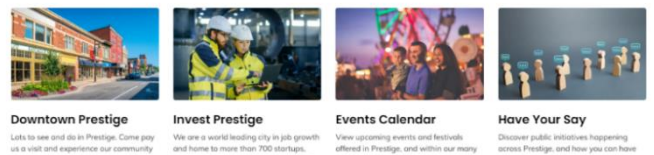
We collect regular household waste through curbside collection every Tuesday. There is a weekly limit of four garbage bags per household at no cost and you must place your garbage receptacles at the end of your driveway.

Preparing Your Garbage for Collection Non-collectible Waste Hazardous Waste

All garbage, except ashes (solid residue of any fuel for heating, cooking and chimney cleaning), must be placed in plastic bags no larger than 36 inches by 24 inches and properly tied at the top.

You must place the bags in covered metal, plastic, wood or durable containers with proper handles and a water-tight cover, which prevents flies and odors. The containers must be no larger than 36 inches in height or 12 inches in diameter and weigh no more than 50 pounds.

Preparing Your Garbage for Collection
 Non-collectible Waste
 Hazardous Waste



Prestige Fire Services is committed to keeping our community safe and educated on fire safety.

6 Community Fire Stations
710 Community Engagements
10K+ Annual Calls

Quick Links

Become a Firefighter
 Learn how to become a firefighter with the City of Prestige. We offer a variety of training and support for our firefighters.

Station Locations
 Stations are located conveniently across the City, both north of your address and within your neighborhood.

Fire Safety
 Smoke detector batteries should be changed every 6 months. When you change your smoke, change your batteries.

Some highlights include:

A user-friendly interface making website management easier for staff to maintain, and allow visitors to the site to access our content in a more engaging, and accessible way.

Design tools to allow staff to create unique designs and layouts on both the homepage and interior pages which allows visitors to engage with the Municipality in a more visual way, and give staff the opportunity to customize the content on each page, adding featured components which minimize the amount of information listed in a text format, add photos/videos, feature buttons or calls to action for related content/pages, embed related news or events on pages. Govstack also allows staff to make updates on a regular basis at no additional cost to the Municipality, rather than the current structure on iCreate, where staff are restricted on how else we can change the content, without paying GHD to add additional modules or design changes.

Municipalities Who Have Implemented Govstack:

A number of Municipalities, including several Bruce County lower-tier Municipalities have switched from iCreate to Govstack:

- [Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula](#)
- [Township of Huron-Kinloss](#)
- [Township of Algonquin Highlands](#)
- [Township of Scugog](#)
- [Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan](#)
- [City of North Battleford](#) (Saskatchewan)
- [City of Lethbridge](#) (Alberta)

The Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula began their project in February 2023 and was launched to the public in June 2023. Staff at Northern Bruce Peninsula stated that the website refresh using Govstack “provided a clean, updated, accessible website that is much easier to maintain compared to our previous iCreate site”.

The Municipality of Huron-Kinloss began their project in June 2023 and launched their website in September 2023. Staff at Huron-Kinloss kept their website sitemap relatively the same; however, staff acknowledged that the migration to Govstack increased the efficiencies and time involved in editing the website, as well as the benefit in flexibility of design. It was also noted that the support from GHD increased at no additional cost, unlike the processes involved in iCreate.

The Municipality of Kincardine is currently implementing Govstack, and a number of other Municipalities will be launching Govstack soon:

- City of Kingston
- City of Orillia
- Greater Napanee
- Clarington Public Library
- Hamilton Police Board and Peel Police Services Board
- Town of Gander (Newfoundland)
- Quispamsis (New Brunswick)

Goal of the Website Refresh

The website refresh will include updating our layout to a more modern appearance, as well as evaluating content to ensure it is effectively conveying current and accurate information. The new layout will allow for simple navigation, along with familiar, popular tools such as the calendar and news modules. The new platform also provides enhanced capabilities to easily embed content from other applications, creating a more flawless link between the website and our other social media sites. The design options and additional embedding of content will allow staff to increase our engagement with the public and look at other website improvements as requested in the Strategic Action Plan action #72.

The proposal requires Brockton to commit to the new transition and sign a contract with GHD by December 31, 2023, (although the implementation of Govstack would not occur until 2024) to obtain this pricing which also included a free refresh of the website homepage three to be implemented within the next three (3) years.

Costs Associated with the Proposal

The proposal to switch to Govstack is approximately \$28,409.60 for the transition, with ongoing annual licensing and maintenance costs of \$6,429.60/year.

The Municipality's current contract for GHD to host and licence our website and staff intranet using iCreate is \$5,638.25/year - This current contract expires October 31, 2024. GHD has confirmed that if the Municipality launches our website using Govstack prior to October 2024, Brockton would receive a credit towards Govstack's annual fees.

For comparison, the Town of Hanover recently redid its website through a competitive RFP process which cost \$50,000 plus an annual hosting fee.

As iCreate CMS is being discontinued, staff recommend accepting the proposal from GHD to switch our CMS to Govstack now as we have reached our five (5) year refresh timeline, and Brockton is being offered new features to make our website more engaging to residents, with the option of a free theme refresh within the next three (3) years.

Strategic Action Plan Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Strategic Action Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

- | | |
|---|-----|
| • Recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Heritage, Culture, and Community | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Land Use Planning and the Natural Environment | N/A |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Development | Yes |
| • Recommendations contribute to achieving Municipal Governance | Yes |

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

The proposal to switch to Govstack would be to pay \$28,409.60 for the transition to be funded from the website reserve fund which currently has a balance of \$48,022.86 (leaving \$19,613.26 in the reserve fund) and include the annual licensing cost of \$6,429.60/year in the 2024 Municipal Budget. This replaces the \$5,638.25/year currently paid for an increased monthly cost overall of \$791.35 for the website administration.

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Sarah Johnson, Deputy Clerk

Reviewed By:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer