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## **Operations of brantjobs.ca winding down to refocus and optimize resources**

Upon completion of a thorough and comprehensive service review of the BrantJobs database and website, the Social Services Committee of both the City of Brantford and County of Brant Councils have approved a recommendation to wind down operations of brantjobs.ca by the end of this year.

The April 2017 report details Public Health, Safety and Social Services staff's analysis of the current functionality and usage of the website and costs associated with redeveloping the site to meet current digital standards, specifically citing that the current BrantJobs database and corresponding website is outdated, non compliant with the legislative directives dictated by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and operating with functionality deficiencies. Given the obsolete system architecture, if the service is to continue, a complete redeveloped site would be required.

The yearlong review process, conducted from March 2016 – April 2017 included an online survey of users from all database and website user groups supplemented by in depth focus groups with staff and high frequency users. A competitive analysis of key features of similar job banks was also completed.

The analysis revealed that since 2012, the number of unique visitors to the BrantJobs website has steadily decreased. The staff report identifies that the number of mobile users continues to climb each year and since the Brantjobs site is not fully mobile compatible, users are being lost to comparative sites. Two major such services, Service Canada ([www.jobbank.gc.ca](http://www.jobbank.gc.ca)) and Indeed ([www.indeed.ca](http://www.indeed.ca)) are free to use, and provide features not available on BrantJobs such as resume upload, automatic alerts and social media integration.

Susan Evenden, Director of Social Assistance & Homelessness Services, comments that "rapid advances in technology and the influence of the digital media on the job market cannot be overemphasized. At the time it was introduced in 1999, Brantjobs was one of the few options for local employers and job seekers that was accessible without cost and built a large and loyal following in the community. The City found a competitive advantage in offering the website to serve the recruitment needs of existing and new businesses, and a single point of access to employment for local job seekers."

"In today's digital economy, traditional job boards such as BrantJobs are evolving into approaches that are more aligned with social media as demonstrated by the entry of Facebook and LinkedIn to the recruitment space. Companies are using multiple recruitment platforms. In the current employment market, the opportunity to create a single, local, online one stop access point for employers and job seekers simply no longer exists. As such, after careful

consideration, both Councils were satisfied that there was no longer a viable business case to invest municipal resources in a costly overhaul of this website,” Evenden explains.

Over the next few months, staff will ensure that existing users of Brantjobs are assisted to migrate to a replacement service.

Evenden added, “We will continue to work with relevant departments and other community agencies to ensure that residents continue to receive support services in obtaining and securing employment. Brantford and Brant County are fortunate in that we have many of the right players at the table when it comes to labour force development, such as the Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie, educational boards and institutions and the Six Nations of the Grand River.”

A comprehensive communications plan is being implemented now to advise users of the timelines in place to gradually decommission the website between now and December 31, 2017.

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