

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE **DATE:** 2019 Dec 06

FROM: DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION AND
CULTURAL SERVICES **FILE:** 01600-05

SUBJECT: PERIOD PROMISE CAMPAIGN

PURPOSE: To implement a pilot project for supporting United Way's Period Promise Campaign.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** the Financial Management Committee recommend Council support the United Way Period Promise Campaign by providing free menstrual products over a 6-month pilot project as outlined in this report.

REPORT**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

At the Financial Management Committee held on 2019 September 19, the Committee reviewed correspondence from the United Way of the Lower Mainland and their request that the City commit to the Period Promise Campaign and support efforts to expand access to menstrual products in City facilities. Arising from discussion, the Committee adopted the motion that the request made by the United Way be referred to City staff to report on the feasibility and funding implications of supporting the Period Promise Campaign.

This report provides information and proposes a pilot program that would support the United Way's Period Promise Campaign to provide free menstrual products in civic facilities.

2.0 STRATEGIC GOALS

Providing adequate and appropriate access to menstrual products within City facilities supports the City's strategic goals and objectives of:

Goal

- An Inclusive Community
 - Serve a diverse community –
Ensure City services fully meet the needs of our dynamic community

- A Healthy Community
 - Healthy life –
Encourages opportunities for healthy living and well-being

3.0 BACKGROUND

Period poverty, which affects girls, women, and transgender individuals, refers to having a lack of access to sanitary products due to financial constraints. The inability to afford these products is considered by some to be a health equity issue that disproportionately affects persons who menstruate. Having access to menstrual products is essential for the health, well-being, and full participation of persons who menstruate in society, however, if an individual is living in poverty, access to these essential products can be challenging. The cost and availability of these products is of particular concern to those who are poor and often face the choice of purchasing needed menstrual products or buying other essentials, like food.

3.1 United Way's Period Poverty Campaign

The United Way's Period Promise Campaign aims to remove the financial barriers that some people face in accessing menstrual products and increase access of these products to vulnerable populations, including addressing period poverty in communities. The campaign has been successful in increasing the awareness around the need for universal access to such products and has led to a number of organizations that have recently committed to providing these products for free. For instance, in February 2019, the New Westminster School Board was the first school district in B.C. to vote in favour of providing free menstrual products in washrooms in the school district, which include the installation of dispensers in all girl's and universal/transgender washrooms. Moreover, on 2019 April 05, the B.C. government announced that all public schools in the province would be required to provide free menstrual products for students in school washrooms by the end of 2019. This new policy aims to provide students with convenient access to these products to help support their full participation in school activities, reduce stigma, and promote gender equality.

In June 2019, the City of Victoria became the first municipality in B.C. to commit to the United Way's Period Promise Campaign and is currently providing free menstrual products in select civic facility public washrooms. A full roll-out of the service will be implemented in 2020.

3.2 Growing Support for Free Menstrual Products in Public Spaces

According to a Plan International Canada survey, the majority of Canadian women (81%) and men (75%) support making menstrual hygiene products available for free in public spaces, including park facilities, libraries, and community centres. Plan International conducted the survey amongst 2,000 women and girls (age 14-55) and a total of 1,000

men and boys (ages 14-55) to better understand women's and male's views of menstruation in Canada.

Support for free and accessible menstrual products has been growing in Canada over the past year. Many public sector organizations, including school boards, libraries and municipalities currently provide free menstrual products in their public washrooms and/or are currently studying this initiative through implementing pilot projects. For instance, in April 2019, the City of London, Ontario, was the first municipality in Canada to provide free menstrual products in women's, men's and universal civic public washrooms.

The Government of Canada who is also studying this initiative, published a Notice of Intent on 2019 May 04 to seek feedback on the possibility of the government providing free menstrual products in federally regulated workplaces. The Government is of the opinion that providing workers with access to these products will support better health outcomes and workplace productivity, while helping to reduce the stigma associated with menstruation. Current regulations under Part II of the Canada Labour Code require employers to provide supplies, such as toilet paper, soap, warm water, and a means to dry one's hands. The Government of Canada is considering adding menstrual products to that list. **Attachment # 1** provides an overview of the implementation approaches some public sector organizations across Canada have used to address this societal issue.

4.0 CITY OF BURNABY WASHROOM FACILITIES

There are approximately 38 civic facilities within Burnaby that currently provide washroom facilities to the general public that are potentially viable locations for providing free menstrual products. Within these facilities, there are approximately 168 public washrooms of which 57 are designated for women, 57 for men and 54 are designated as universal/disabled.

There are approximately 65 outdoor public washrooms located throughout Burnaby, however staff do not recommend menstrual products be provided in these washrooms as they are not serviced by janitorial personnel throughout the day. Experience indicates that outdoor public washrooms are subject to higher incidents of vandalism due to the lack of on-site staffing. For instance, the City has been forced to remove paper towel dispensers and have replaced them with hand dryers to minimize vandalism and the potential clogging of toilets. As such, staff determined that the City should focus its efforts in locations where public washroom facilities are continuously monitored and serviced by staff.

There are approximately 12 facilities that currently have coin-operated menstrual product dispensers that are installed in women's and/or universal/disabled public washrooms. While not advertised, there are approximately 12 facilities that keep a supply of product which are provided to individuals in emergency situations, free of charge. These products are typically located at the front counter of the facility or in a central location.

5.0 PROPOSED PILOT PROJECT

As there is no precedent in place to assess the full financial impact of this initiative, it is proposed that the City consider proceeding with this initiative as a pilot project in order for staff to assess the uptake and the total cost of rolling-out this potentially new service on a city-wide basis at a future date. This approach would be similar to other public sector organizations across Canada who have chosen to proceed with this initiative as a pilot project.

To ensure that staff can properly monitor and manage the pilot project, it is determined that the City should focus its efforts in locations where facilities are continuously serviced by staff and in facilities that service the most amount of people on a year-round basis. Based on this criterion, it was determined that the following 6 facilities would be recommended candidates for the pilot project as they would provide a broad demographic and cross-section of customers throughout the City.

City Facility	# Women's Public Washrooms	# Men's Public Washrooms	# Universal/ Disabled Public Washrooms	Total
Beresford Warming Centre	0	0	3	3
Cameron Community Centre	3	3	1	7
Edmonds Community Centre	4	4	6	14
Eileen Dailly Pool	2	2	1	5
Metrotown Public Library	1	1	3	5
Shadbolt Centre for the Arts	4	4	3	11
	14	14	17	45

The pilot project would run for 6 months between 2020 March 01 to 2020 August 31. The objective of the pilot would be to obtain data and feedback of the service. The results of this pilot project would be presented to Financial Management Committee and Council for information and feedback.

Under the pilot program, the City would rollout menstrual products through the installation of 12 coin-free, dual-dispensers (tampons and sanitary pads) in women's and universal public washrooms at the 6 identified Civic Facilities. In addition, the City would convert the dispensers in the 12 facilities that currently have coin-operated menstrual product dispensers in women's and/or universal/disabled public washrooms to coin free dispensers.

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Engineering Facilities Management would be responsible for the installation of dispensers and janitorial staff would be responsible for replenishing supply. The installation of dispensers would address the broad demographics and needs of civic facility clients.

The estimated capital costs to acquire 24 coin-free, dual dispensers, estimated at \$500 per unit would amount to a one-time capital outlay of approximately \$12,000. The cost of acquiring these dispensers will be funded through the contingency funds. The annual cost to maintain and repair menstrual product dispensers is difficult to estimate at this time without historical data from which to draw from. The cost could be absorbed within the operating budget, at least for the pilot period.

Through the pilot project, data would be collected on the number of menstrual products used so that ongoing operating costs to replenish products and budget implications can be determined.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

Staff have reviewed the feasibility and financial implications of supporting the United Way's Period Promise Campaign and recommend providing free menstrual products through dispensers in women's and universal public washrooms of those civic facilities chosen to participate in a 6-month pilot project as well as convert all current coin operated dispensers to coin free dispensers. The 6-month pilot project would run from 2020 March 01 to 2020 August 31.

The pilot project would provide an opportunity for availability of free menstrual products, while allowing staff to assess and monitor product usage, quality and costs. The information obtained from the pilot would allow the City to make an informed decision on the future roll-out of this potentially new service to the community. Information from the pilot project would be presented to the Financial Management Committee and Council in the fall of 2020.



Dave Ellenwood
DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES

CC:dc

Attachment: 1 – Survey of Canadian Public Sector Implementation Approaches to Providing Free Menstrual Products

Copied to: City Manager
Director Engineering
Chief Librarian

City of Burnaby

Survey of Canadian Public Sector Implementation Approaches to Providing Free Menstrual Products

Organization	Implementation Approach	Estimated Cost of Pilot Project	Civic Facility	Product Dispenser	Menstrual Offering	Location of Product
City of Coquitlam	4-month pilot project Oct 2019 to Jan 2020	\$20,000	Multiple washrooms in 5 select civic facilities	Coin-free, dual-dispenser	Tampons and pads	Women's and universal public washrooms
City of Victoria	Soft roll-out of 4 high traffic washrooms in 2019; remainder of 30 washrooms in 2020.			City Hall – Open-trays; All others – dual dispensers	Tampons and pads	Women's and universal public washrooms
City of Toronto	Immediate roll-out at City-funded shelters, drop-ins, respite centres, and some neighbourhood community centres.			Coin-free, dual dispensers	Tampons and pads	Women's / universal washrooms
City of Cambridge	12-month pilot project Dec 1 2019 to Nov 30 2020	\$4,000 - \$4,600	1 washroom in 6 select civic facilities	Coin-free, dispenser	Sanitary pads	Universal & women's washrooms
City of London	Immediate roll-out in all city-owned facilities			Combination of coin-free, dual dispensers and stainless-steel metal trays mounted to wall	Tampons and pads	Women's, men's and universal washrooms
St. Catherines	6-month pilot project January 2020 to June 2020	N/A	10 select civic facilities	Coin-free, dual-dispenser	Tampons and pads	Women's and universal public washrooms
Halifax Public Libraries	Immediate roll-out to all 14 branches			Combination of clear plastic containers on counters or mounted on the wall	Tampons and pads	Women's, men's and universal washrooms