

## Staff Report 2022-0189

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Meeting Date: June 21, 2022

Subject: Proposed Program to Provide Free Menstrual Products in Town Facilities

Submitted By: Kevin Kyle, Manager, Community Facilities, Community Services

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### RECOMMENDATION

That the proposed program to provide free menstrual products in Town facilities be approved; and

That Staff be authorized to procure and install product dispensers to provide free menstrual products in washroom facilities operated by the Town as selected by Staff, with an unavoidable 2023 operating budget impact of \$40,515.

### REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The Red Mvmnt is a local grassroots, youth-led nonprofit organization focusing on advancing sustainable menstrual equity while reducing period poverty.
- They recently presented on the provision of free menstrual products in public facilities to the Region of Peel, City of Brampton and the City of Mississauga and issued a call to action for the Region of Peel to join the Red Mvmnt.
- In an effort to provide a more welcoming, equitable and inclusive environment within public facilities, many municipalities throughout Canada and around the world are now providing free menstrual hygiene products within public washrooms.
- Offering free menstrual products throughout Town facilities will help fight 'period poverty' in our community by providing greater access, increased quality of life and overall comfort to our residents and visitors.
- The initial plan is to provide access to free menstrual hygiene products available by installing seventy-four (74) dispensing units throughout forty-seven (47) town-operated facilities including community centres, corporate facilities, fire stations, libraries and key park washroom facilities by Fall 2022.
- Each dispensing unit is \$400.00, for a total of approximately \$29,600. In researching similar programs, estimated costs per product is \$0.30 and at an average of (five) 5 per day, per unit, the ongoing operating costs are estimated to be \$40,515 annually.
- The annual operating costs of \$40,515 to support this program is requested to be approved as an unavoidable 2023 operating budget impact spread throughout various cost centres within the Community Services and Operations Departments.
- Implementation target date is in the Fall of 2022.

### DISCUSSION

The Red Mvmnt is a local grassroots, youth-led nonprofit organization focusing on advancing sustainable menstrual equity while reducing period poverty. The Founder and Executive Director of the Red Mvmnt recently presented on the provision of free menstrual

products in public facilities to the Region of Peel, Brampton and Mississauga and issued a call to action for the Region of Peel to join the Red Mvmnt. The City of Brampton Council approved their free menstrual product program in 2021 and the City of Mississauga just recently approved their program in April of 2022. The Region of Peel is finalizing their jurisdictional scan and is bringing their plan forward in the very near future.

In an effort to provide a more welcoming, equitable and inclusive environment within public facilities, Brampton, Toronto, London, St. Catharines, Guelph and Kitchener have all initiated the program in municipally operated facilities. The Region of Peel has completed a thorough environmental scan and will be bringing forward their plan in 2022.

The Government of Ontario recently announced that free menstrual hygiene products will also be available in schools across the province as a result of a partnership with Shoppers Drug Mart. Although this initiative will help to improve access for students across the Region of Peel, there will still be a gap in access to free menstrual products within this community that this program could help address.

With the exception of a couple coin operated dispensing units, menstrual products are not currently available in Town facilities. With the increasing number of municipalities taking part in this initiative, including our Regional partners, staff are recommending the delivery of free menstrual products within Town facilities. The term “free” in this case means there is no cost to recipients for the products. There is a cost to the Town for the products as well as the purchase and installation of product dispensers.

Staff identified 47 sites to install 74 menstrual dispensing units throughout 58 washroom and 16 changeroom amenities within the Town’s recreation, corporate and outdoor parks’ washroom facilities. Each unit costs approximately \$400.00 for a total of \$29,600. In researching similar programs, estimated costs per product is \$0.30 and at an estimated average of five per day, per unit, the ongoing operating costs are estimated to be \$40,515. Staff will also be exploring possible partnership and sponsorship opportunities to help support this program. The intent to implement the initiative by Fall of 2022.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The initial one-time cost to supply and install these units is approximately \$29,600 and will be funded from Recreation Fixture, Furniture & Equipment capital project #20-078. The annual operating costs of \$40,515 to support this program is requested to be approved as an unavoidable 2023 operating budget impact throughout various cost centres within the Community Services and Operations Departments. Further partnership opportunities will also be reviewed to help support this program.

## **COUNCIL WORK PLAN**

This initiative supports all four pillars of the Council Work Plan which include Sustainable Growth, Connected Community, Improved Service and Good Governance. Specifically

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supporting the plan through community safety and well-being, increased quality of life, breaking down barriers, applying a diversity lens to services and managing community expectations.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

None.