



## Report to Council

Department: Community Services  
Division: Parks and Facilities  
Date: April 19, 2021  
Prepared by: Doug Sweet, Dir. Community Services/Deputy CAO  
Report Number: Parks and Facilities-2021-02  
Subject: Free Menstrual Products at 2 Recreational Facilities  
Number of Pages: 4

### Recommendation(s)

The following two (2) recommendations are provided for Council's consideration:

- I. That Community Services Report 2021-004 entitled "Free Menstrual Products at Two Town Recreational Facilities" be received, and further
- II. That Council approve the installation of menstrual dispensers and disposal containers at the Essex Centre Sports Complex and Harrow and Colchester South Complex for one year beginning in August 2021 as a pilot project to provide free access to menstrual products in Town of Essex recreation facilities.

### Purpose

To provide a recommendation to Council on providing menstrual dispensers and containers at two high traffic recreation facilities on a one year pilot project.

### Background and Discussion

Essex Council requested Administration to prepare a report on options in regards to providing

menstrual products in municipal facilities and the costs associated to do so.

Over the last few years a number of public institutions such as universities, school boards and municipalities across Canada have introduced free menstrual products in public washrooms at their facilities.

While menstrual products are not necessarily a health issue, this initiative is likely to provide social benefit to the community. Menstrual products are very expensive, yet necessary.

A recent survey of over 2000 women and girls by Plan International – Canada found that 35% have had to sacrifice something else in their budget in order to afford menstrual products. It was reported that when students who menstruate cannot access menstrual products, it can prevent them from participating in sports or extra-curricular activities

In order to administer and manage the project, Administration determined that the Town should focus its efforts in locations where the facilities are continuously serviced by staff and in facilities that service the most amount of people on a year round basis. Based on this criteria it was determined that the project can be first implemented at the Essex Centre Sports Complex (4 washroom locations) and the Harrow and Colchester South Complex (2 washroom locations) for a one year trial.

Administration is recommending to have these 2 locations ready to implement the program in August 2021 when both complexes are expected to reopen to regular users.

Administration will monitor the usage throughout the one-year pilot to determine the need and report back to Council the possibility of expanding the program to include all Town recreation facilities in the future.

## **Financial Impact**

The estimated costs to implement the pilot project from August 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022 is \$4,854 for these 2 facilities based on the number of dispensers required at the two facilities and the anticipated restocking of product for each dispenser approximately every 3 months. Each dispensing unit holds 22 tampons and 15 pads.

No new funds are recommended for this pilot project as the funds for this project would be absorbed in the annual janitorial operating budgets for each of these facilities.

<b>Building</b>	<b>Number of Washrooms/ Dispensers *</b>	<b>Cost to Install/Replace Dispensers in each Washroom (@ \$245/unit)</b>	<b>Estimated Annual Cost to Fill Units (Approx. every 3 months)</b>	<b>YEAR 1 COST (Dispenser + Supplies)</b>
Essex Centre Sports Complex	4	\$980.00	\$2,256.00	\$3,236.00
Harrow and Colchester South Complex	2	\$490.00	\$1,128.00	\$1,618.00

## Consultations

Finance Department

## Link to Strategic Priorities

- ☒ Manage, invest and plan for sustainable municipal infrastructure which meets current and future needs of the municipality and its citizens.
- ☒ Create a safe, friendly and inclusive community which encourages healthy, active living for people of all ages and abilities.
- ☐ Provide a fiscal stewardship and value for tax dollars to ensure long-term financial health to the municipality.
- ☐ Manage responsible and viable growth while preserving and enhancing the unique rural and small town character of the community.
- ☒ Improve the experiences of individuals, as both citizens and customers, in their interactions with the Town of Essex.
- ☐ **Improve the Town's capacity to meet the ongoing and future service needs of its citizens** while ensuring the corporation is resilient in the face of unanticipated changes or disruptions.