



CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW

MEMORANDUM

Public Works Department

DATE: June 11, 2019

TO: City Council

FROM: Dawn S. Cameron, Assistant Public Works Director

VIA: Daniel H. Rich, City Manager

SUBJECT: **Feminine Hygiene Products at City Facilities**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a response to the City Council as requested at the Narrative Budget Study Session on April 25, 2019.

BACKGROUND**City Facilities**

There are 50 City-operated facilities with restrooms: 28 facilities with employee offices, including City Hall, Library, the Center for the Performing Arts (CPA), Municipal Operations Center (MOC), Fire stations, Senior Center, and Community Center; and 22 public-only spaces which are generally parks and recreational facility restrooms. There are a total of 71 women's and unisex restrooms in the 28 facilities with employee offices of which 6 facilities have both public and nonpublic restrooms, 6 facilities have public-only restrooms (no separate employee restrooms), and 16 have nonpublic (employee-only) restrooms.

The high-use public facilities (e.g., City Hall, Library, CPA, Senior Center, and Community Center) have vending machines selling feminine products for 25 cents each. These vending machines are lightly used; less than \$150 in product has been used in the last year to restock the machines.

The Teen Center has a small supply that they hand out free of charge to visitors when requested.

Other Cities

Of the cities contacted, some provide free product to employees, but none provided free products to the public as follows:

- San Jose: Provides no-cost feminine products in all of the gender-neutral, employee-only restrooms at City Hall (approximately 40 restrooms). Annual cost: less than \$1,000.
- Menlo Park: Provides free dispensers in nearly all female restrooms in employee-only areas. Public restrooms have dispensers that require money. They did not know what this program cost.
- San Francisco: Offers reimbursement to their employees through their benefit package. Money is placed by the City in an MRA (medical reimbursement account), and an employee that purchases feminine hygiene products for themselves or dependents can submit a claim to get reimbursed.
- Cities contacted that do not have any program in place for either employees or the public were Palo Alto, Los Altos, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale, and Redwood City.

PROGRAM OPTIONS

Staff has evaluated the following three options for a program to provide free feminine products at City facilities:

Option 1: Provide free product to employees only.

- Estimated annual cost: \$250 to \$500.
- Implementation:
 - Existing vending machines in nonpublic restrooms can be converted to dispense free product by Facilities staff at no cost.
 - A container with product can be provided in nonpublic restrooms without vending machines.

- A supply of product can be provided in employee work areas for the six facilities that only have public restrooms.
- Janitors will restock as needed as they currently do for the vending machines.

Option 2: Option 1 plus free product for public use at all City Hall restrooms.

- Estimated annual cost: \$750 to \$1,000 (similar to San Jose).
- Implementation: Same as for Option 1 plus convert all City Hall vending machines to dispense free product.

Option 3: Provide free product at all 50 City-operated facilities with restrooms (over 100 restrooms throughout the City, including City parks).

It is difficult for staff to estimate the annual operating cost for Option 3 because we cannot estimate demand nor base this on another city's experience. Free product in public restrooms throughout the City could lead to the City restrooms becoming a regular supplier of feminine products in place of purchasing them at stores; therefore, staff does not recommend this option.

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