

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE **DATE:** 2020 November 16

FROM: DIRECTOR ENGINEERING **FILE:** 33000-15

SUBJECT: 2020 ANTI-GRAFFITI PROGRAM UPDATE

PURPOSE: To provide a progress report on the Anti-Graffiti Program.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** the Public Safety Committee receive this report and forward it to Council for information.

REPORT**INTRODUCTION**

The Anti-Graffiti Program was developed by the Mayor's Task Force on Graffiti and adopted by Council in 2007 February. This program continues to this day through the efforts of the Anti-Graffiti Program Coordinator. This report highlights some of the current work progress within the last two years.

POLICY SECTION

The Anti-Graffiti Program is aligned with the City of Burnaby's Corporate Strategic Plan by supporting the following goals and sub-goals of the Plan.

Goal

- A Safe Community
 - Crime prevention and reduction –
Ensure citizens and businesses feel safe in our community
- A Connected Community
 - Partnership –
Work collaboratively with businesses, educational institutions, associations, other communities and governments

- A Healthy Community
 - Community involvement –
Encourage residents and businesses to give back to and invest in the community

1.0 OVERVIEW

Over the last 2 years the Anti-Graffiti Program has worked to reduce the amount of graffiti in Burnaby as well as reduce the time it takes to remove new graffiti. This strategy leverages key community partners, public reporting and the use of technology to help identify and prioritize graffiti incidents. This approach has led to reported graffiti being removed from all municipal property within a week on average and 2 weeks for other locations. In contrast to some other municipalities, graffiti in Burnaby has significantly declined in the last five years from approximately 657 recorded incidents in 2016 to 170 incidents in 2019. This is due to the sustained initiatives from the Anti-Graffiti Program. Unfortunately, 2020 has seen an extraordinary increase in new graffiti (more than the previous three years in total) likely attributable to the pandemic. Fortunately, the program has achieved a 90% removal rate in 2020, meaning that almost all new graffiti is being removed within 2 weeks.

Graffiti Incidents

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Reported	657	413	414	170	1182

(2020 data is current to November 01)

2.0 IDENTIFICATION AND ERADICATION

A significant component to the recent success of Burnaby's Graffiti Program is the ability to quickly identify and prioritize graffiti for removal.

These include:

- Identification of areas of highest graffiti activity. These areas are then closely monitored and targeted with rapid graffiti removal protocols.
- Identification of prolific taggers. These individuals not only cause the most damage, but have the greatest influence on the graffiti subculture. Therefore their work is prioritized and rapidly removed, reducing the reward for the vandal and discouraging other vandals. This has helped to reduce the activities of prolific taggers in Burnaby, relative to other areas.

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- Identification of trending graffiti themes based on type, style or political message. These types of graffiti would then be prioritized to prevent proliferation.

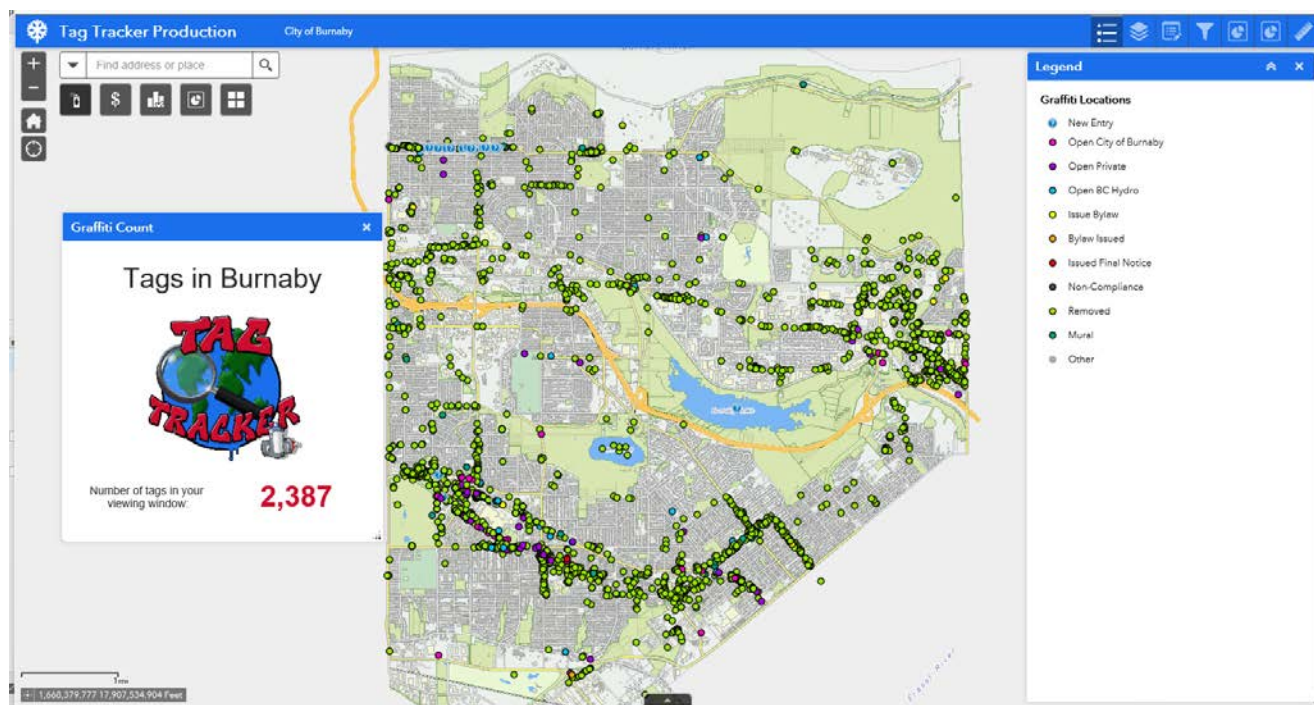
The use of technology has been instrumental in identifying and prioritizing graffiti incidents. In collaboration with the City's GIS team, a map based program has been developed to allow for accurate and easy recording and tracking of graffiti incidents in the field in real time. The collected data, along with photographic evidence, is then mined for useful information. The program has increased the efficiency of graffiti reporting and removal, tracking of graffiti patterns, profiling of prolific vandals, monitoring for bylaw compliance, and coordination of resources. Most recently, this has enabled the removal of the majority of reported graffiti within 48 hours and all within two weeks.

A sample of some of the information available from the program's dashboard is shown below:



Dashboard showing graffiti statistics from 2017 to current date.

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Dashboard showing location of all graffiti related activities

3.0 PARTNERSHIPS

The Anti-Graffiti Program has facilitated the development of two new partnerships which have been instrumental in the removal and prevention of graffiti on third party assets within the City.

After longstanding struggles with the removal of graffiti from BC Hydro assets, the City has facilitated an agreement between BC Hydro and Pacific Assistance Dogs Society (PADS), a local non-profit organization. The agreement has PADS volunteers remove graffiti from BC Hydro power poles and street box assets in exchange for BC Hydro funding to help PADS raise and train certified assistance dogs. This has resulted in approximately 350 BC Hydro assets being cleaned of graffiti in 2020 to date.

In 2019 a new partnership was established with Telus to wrap their newly installed street box assets on City boulevards with anti-graffiti decorative vinyl. Telus contributed \$55,000 to the Anti-Graffiti Program to help offset the cost of wrapping 80 boxes in 2020, and approximately 40 additional boxes in 2021. This partnership included the participation of secondary school students to help create the art work. This then provided the opportunity to educate students about the impact of graffiti on society, and how a positive social contribution can be made through legal art. Samples of the art work created and used are shown below.

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4.0 PREVENTION

Burnaby's mural program continues to be a pillar of graffiti prevention. The creation of street wall murals provides an effective graffiti prevention strategy while beautifying communities. In 2020 the program helped to support the creation of murals at 4 high graffiti locations. These are shown in the photos below.



Mural at 2150 Alpha Avenue (2020)

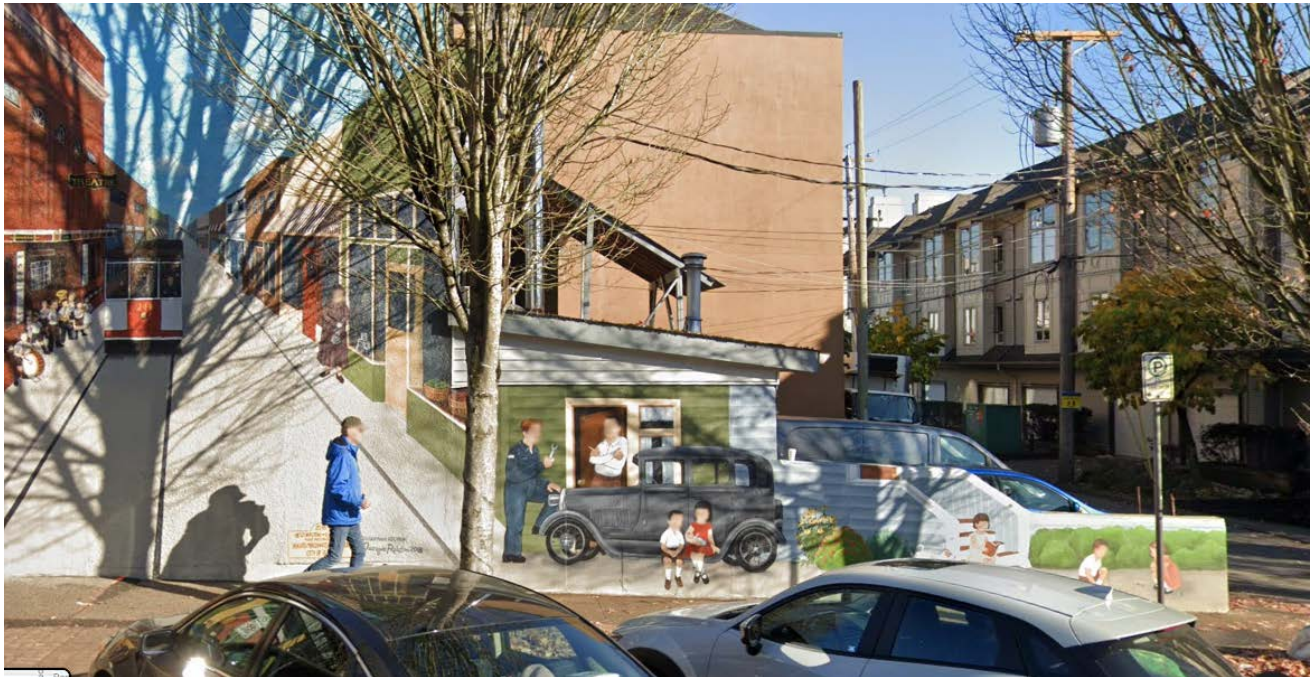
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Mural at 7513 Edmonds Street (2020)



Mural at 5575 Short Street (2020)



Mural at 4000 Hastings Street (2020)

5.0 FUTURE INITIATIVES

The development of a public art walk along Beresford Street between Metrotown and Royal Oak Skytrain is proposed in 2021 and the proposed program will be presented in a future report for Council approval. The public art walk is intended to increase the visibility and safety of the Beresford walking path while creating an attraction to the South Burnaby community. Subject to Council's endorsement of the program, a neighbourhood consultation process will be undertaken to seek public feedback and comment. The Anti-Graffiti Program Coordinator was instrumental in its conception and will continue to provide creative inspiration and practical solutions to provide such things as increased lighting and interactive public art.

Opportunities to further engage youth in the Anti-Graffiti Program will also be explored in 2021. This would include graffiti reporting, graffiti removal, and participation in the mural program. There is promising potential to prevent youth from engaging in illegal graffiti with the introduction of a mentorship program in public art.

Another goal in 2021 is to strengthen the partnership with the RCMP to increase education and communication with youth in the school system, implement restorative justice programs to help rehabilitate youth, and support the investigation and potential prosecution of prolific vandals.

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This report is provided for information.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'L. Gous', with a horizontal line extending from the end.

Leon A. Gous, P.Eng., MBA
DIRECTOR ENGINEERING

TWP/DL/ac

Copied to: City Manager
Director of Public Safety and Community Services
RCMP – OIC Burnaby Detachment – Deanne Burleigh
Director of Planning and Building
Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services