

From: ["Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca)

To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)

Date: 6/3/2022 4:32:48 PM

Subject: [Council Memo - Update on Sanctioned Graffiti Wall Research and Engagement - RTS 14562](#)

Attachments: [Council Memo - Update on Sanctioned Graffiti Wall Research and Engagement - RTS 14562.pdf](#)

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Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Lon LaClaire. A short summary of the memo is as follows:

- This Memo provides an update on sanctioned graffiti wall research and engagement
- Staff conducted a jurisdictional scan and found examples where sanctioned walls have been successful, and others where there were challenges
- Over the next few months staff will begin engaging with stakeholders, and once that is complete will provide a comprehensive update on this work
- Staff are also working on a comprehensive update for both the "Mitigating and Managing Nuisance Graffiti in Vancouver" (May 2021) motion with DBL and the "Turning Construction Hoarding into a Canvas for Public Art in Vancouver" (March 2021) motion with ACCS

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lon LaClaire at 604-873-7336 or [lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca](mailto:lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca).

Best,  
Paul

**Paul Mochrie** (he/him)  
City Manager  
City of Vancouver  
[paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca](mailto:paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca)



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam), S<sup>k</sup>wxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

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## MEMORANDUM

June 3, 2022

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager  
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager  
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager  
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk  
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC  
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office

FROM: Lon LaClaire  
General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Update on Sanctioned Graffiti Wall Research and Engagement

RTS #: 14562

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As part of Council Member's Motion "Mitigating and Managing Nuisance Graffiti in Vancouver" (May 18, 2021) staff were directed to explore the benefits and feasibility of a sanctioned graffiti wall, and consult with local BIAs and the street art community to gauge their interest and identify potential locations. In addition, Chinatown in particular has faced challenges with graffiti on historic sites and murals, as referred to in Council motion "Free Parking and Other Measures to Address Public Safety and the Revitalization of Chinatown" (April 13, 2022). Below is an update on staff progress on this work to date and next steps.

Staff have completed a jurisdictional scan of over 20 cities across the world to understand how sanctioned graffiti walls have worked in other cities. The research shows that they have been most successful when they are championed and led by an urban art community that can initiate regular programming. For example, this year the City of Greater Sudbury granted permanency to a pilot graffiti free wall that was initiated by "Up Here", a volunteer run non-profit organization that brings together muralists to transform downtown Sudbury into an urban art gallery in the summer. The City is in the early stages of developing a management plan to monitor content and refresh the wall by painting it out periodically.

A common challenge of existing programs is that graffiti often spreads to areas near the sanctioned wall. In 2008, the City of Ottawa monitored three legal graffiti free walls over a one

year period. They found that when a graffiti wall is covered in tags adjacent areas are tagged, This results in an increase in graffiti in the surrounding community. Similarly, in 2018 in Kamloops they found that graffiti free walls did not reduce vandalism, and may make it worse.

Over the next few months, staff will be engaging key stakeholders such as BIAs, the street art community, Vancouver Mural Festival, and the Chinatown Legacy Stewardship Group to share key findings and learn more about their interests in a sanctioned graffiti wall initiative.

In particular, staff will explore considerations around siting a sanctioned graffiti wall and the management approach that is needed to make a sanctioned graffiti wall a success. Staff will also explore with stakeholders other ideas they have about mitigating graffiti, building up community capacity and creating opportunities for artistic expression in neighbourhoods experiencing graffiti vandalism particularly in hard hit neighbourhoods like Chinatown.

Once this community engagement is complete, staff will provide another update on this work.

In addition, staff are working on a comprehensive update to Council with Development, Buildings and Licensing on the motion "Mitigating and Managing Nuisance Graffiti in Vancouver" (May 18, 2021) and are supporting the Public Art team in Arts, Culture and Community Services on a Council update for the motion "Turning Construction Hoarding into a Canvas for Public Art in Vancouver" (March 31, 2021).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lon LaClaire', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lon LaClaire, M.Eng., P.Eng.  
General Manager, Engineering Services  
604.873.7336 | [lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca](mailto:lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca)