

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

To: **"Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"**

Date: 7/5/2022 12:20:36 PM

Subject: **Council Memo - Mitigating and Managing Nuisance Graffiti in Vancouver (Items C, D and F) - RTS 14562**

Attachments: **Council Memo - Mitigating and Managing Nuisance Graffiti in Vancouver (Items C, D and F) - RTS 14562.pdf**

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Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Andrea Law, General Manager of Development, Buildings and Licensing, Margaret Wittgens, Deputy General Manager of Strategy and Planning, Engineering Services and Eugene Lum, Staff Sergeant, Vancouver Police Department which responds to the Council Motion "Mitigating and Managing Nuisance Graffiti in Vancouver (Items C, D and F)" (RTS #: 14562). This memo provides information on the following:

- ☐ Current graffiti enforcement and prevention measures;
- ☐ Opportunities to increase enforcement and alternatives to fines;
- ☐ Temporary exemptions and mitigation strategies for property owners who are repeated targets of graffiti;
- ☐ Opportunities to collaborate with external stakeholders on graffiti removal initiatives;
- ☐ A communications strategy to raise public awareness on the impacts of graffiti; and
- ☐ Exploring the concept of sanctioned graffiti zones.

If you have any questions, please contact Andrea Law at [andrea.law@vancouver.ca](mailto:andrea.law@vancouver.ca), Margaret Wittgens at [margaret.wittgens@vancouver.ca](mailto:margaret.wittgens@vancouver.ca) or Eugene Lum at [eugene.lum@vpd.ca](mailto:eugene.lum@vpd.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 xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

## MEMORANDUM

July 5, 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  
Margaret Wittgens, Deputy General Manager, Strategy and Planning, Engineering Services  
Lisa Parker, Director of Public Space and Street Use, Engineering Services  
Saul Schwebs, Chief Building Official  
Sarah Hicks, Chief Licence Inspector  
Koji Miyaji, Assistant Director, Development, Buildings and Licensing  
Iain Dixon, Assist Director, Legal Services  
Howard Chow, Deputy Chief Constable, Vancouver Police Department

FROM: Andrea Law, General Manager, Development, Buildings and Licensing  
Margaret Wittgens, Deputy General Manager of Strategy and Planning, Engineering Services  
Eugene Lum, Staff Sergeant, Vancouver Police Department

SUBJECT: Mitigating and Managing Nuisance Graffiti in Vancouver (Items C, D and F)

RTS #: 14562

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### A. Purpose:

On May 27, 2021, Vancouver City Council approved the motion (included in Appendix A), *Mitigating and Managing Nuisance Graffiti in Vancouver*, directing a staff report back.<sup>1</sup>

Staff responded to item E on July 6, 2021 through a staff report to Council titled *Graffiti Abatement Grants to Business Improvement Associations (BIAs)*<sup>2</sup> and to item B on September

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<sup>1</sup> <https://council.vancouver.ca/20210519/documents/pspc20210519min.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://council.vancouver.ca/20210706/documents/r3.pdf>

21, 2021 with a memo, titled *Mitigating and Managing Nuisance Graffiti in Vancouver (Member's Motion B.6)*.<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of this memo is to respond to motion items C, D and F, which ask staff to report back on current enforcement and prevention measures, to identify opportunities to increase enforcement, to provide alternatives to fines (i.e. restorative justice program) and to provide temporary exemptions and mitigation strategies for property owners who are repeated targets of graffiti. The motion also asks staff to report back on opportunities to collaborate with external stakeholders on graffiti removal initiatives, to develop a communications strategy to raise public awareness on the impacts of graffiti and to explore the concept of sanctioned graffiti zones.

In addition to this memo, the City Manager's Office will be following up with Council on its December 16, 2021 memo *Vancouver Business Stakeholder December 6, 2021 Roundtable on Property Crime, Theft, and Violent Shoplifting, Findings and Recommendations*<sup>4</sup> that included recommendations from stakeholders to further address graffiti. Additional information will be shared with Council on this roundtable and next steps.

## **B. Background**

Graffiti can be a form of self-expression and connect people and communities by bringing streets to life with vibrant displays of art. However, graffiti, particularly nuisance graffiti, can also generate community concern because of its impacts on businesses, residents and local neighbourhoods and be associated with safety and security concerns. That is, nuisance graffiti plays an impactful role in citizen attitudes toward crime and their perception of crime.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the City and its commercial districts experienced an increase in the number and frequency of nuisance graffiti. A total of 6,400 case files were created in 2021 for graffiti complaints logged by 3-1-1 and more than 158,000 graffiti removals were completed by the City's graffiti abatement contractor, Goodbye Graffiti.

Since 2018, there has been an average increase of 15% in the number of graffiti complaints logged annually. The neighbourhoods with the highest number of graffiti tags are Downtown, Grandview-Woodland, Mount Pleasant, Strathcona, Kensington-Cedar Cottage, and Kitsilano. VPD's statistics show that graffiti continues to be a city-wide issue.

Some areas, such as Downtown and Chinatown, are particularly impacted with damaged murals, defaced statues and offensive and racist graffiti on boarded up businesses. These issues are reflected in the data; for example, Chinatown has had a 296% increase in graffiti incidents reported to police from 2019 to 2021. Offensive and racist graffiti incidents are investigated as hate-crimes by the VPD. Examples of this are the repeated racist graffiti on the historic Lions statues in Chinatown (2022) and anti-Asian racist graffiti written on the window of the Chinese Cultural Centre (2020). This has raised concern amongst Chinatown's residents, particularly long-standing, elderly members, who view these incidents as examples of anti-Asian sentiment.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/09-22-2021-mitigating-and-managing-nuisance-graffiti-in-vancouver.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/12-16-2021-council-memo-council-memo-business-roundtable-on-property-crime.pdf>

It is important to note that the City and VPD have a zero-tolerance policy against hate and racist graffiti. To help mitigate and manage graffiti the City has a number of tools and programs, which are outlined in the next section.

### **C. Overview of the City's current programs and initiatives to address graffiti**

The following section provides an overview of the City's current programs and initiatives that help mitigate and manage nuisance graffiti in Vancouver.

#### **1. To mitigate nuisance graffiti and encourage artistic expression in the public realm, the *Integrated Graffiti Management Program* runs a Mural Program, a utility box art wrap program, and supports community placemaking.**

The Mural Program supports artists, property owners and community groups to create murals on both private and public property. Since the inception of this program, murals have increased in popularity. In 2020, the City supported 50 mural projects and in 2021 nearly 70 mural projects. One of the goals of the Mural Program is to support local and emerging artists, including those from equity-denied communities. To help advance this goal, the Mural Program has led several artist calls, including:

- Several indigenous artist calls, which since 2017 have supported over 20 indigenous artists to paint primarily large-scale murals across the city.
- An artist call in partnership with Hogan's Alley, BC Housing and PHS to honour the Black community that was displaced and connect its history to the contemporary and future Black community.
- An artist call in Chinatown for artists who have a relationship to Chinatown to paint murals in that neighborhood. Goals for this call included encouraging artists to think critically about Chinatown's living heritage and its representation. In April 2022 one of the murals produced for the artist call was significantly damaged by graffiti and mural program staff worked with the artists to facilitate a full repair of the mural, and re-application of anti-graffiti coating.

On-street murals, as well as murals on traffic barriers and picnic tables, have also been popular in the last few years, particularly as a form of community-led placemaking in the City's pop-up plazas and parklets. These community-led placemaking projects are supported by Street Activities programs and help improve the public realm and discourage graffiti on public infrastructure. On-street murals have also provided an opportunity for community expression at critical social moments, such as the street murals for Black Lives Matter and Every Child Matters.

In addition to murals, the *Integrated Graffiti Management Program* has invited artists to create digitized vinyl designs for utility boxes that are often targeted with graffiti. Since the inception of the Art Wrap Program in 2013 over 150 boxes have been wrapped with a primary focus on assets in Business Improvement Areas.

**2. To manage nuisance graffiti, the City also has a number of tools and programs to support graffiti clean up.**

The *Integrated Graffiti Management Program* funds graffiti removal on public buildings and infrastructure through a multi-year contract with *Goodbye Graffiti* totalling \$525,000 / per year. In addition, the City's street furniture contractor, *Outfront Media*, removes graffiti from bus shelters.

Residents and businesses can report graffiti through 3-1-1 and key areas of the city are proactively serviced on a regular basis. As the City does not tolerate racist or hate graffiti, *Goodbye Graffiti* also prioritize its removal on both public and private property within four hours.

To help address nuisance graffiti on private property, the *Integrated Graffiti Management Program* also runs a Free Paint Program in partnership with Dulux Paints. Vancouver property owners and tenants can receive up to two gallons of exterior paint in a calendar year for graffiti removal. The City received requests for 175 gallons of free paint in 2019, 240 gallons in 2020 and 335 gallons in 2021. The increase is thought to be largely due to the increase in nuisance graffiti during the pandemic. Staff also used the City's social media channels to promote the free paint program in the summer of 2021, and will do so again this year.

In addition, in 2021 and 2022 Council approved a one-time grant of \$500,000 to support Business Improvement Associations with graffiti clean up, abatement and beautification.

In Spring 2022, the *Integrated Graffiti Management Program* also provided a large order of graffiti removal wipes to interested BIAs and there are ongoing discussions with private sanitation companies to explore reinstating a program in which they provided paint to BIAs to clean graffiti on their dumpsters.

Finally, given how hard hit Chinatown has been by graffiti, in particular by racist and hate graffiti, the City has also topped up funding for the Chinatown BIA to support graffiti removal and additional security.

**3. The City also has enforcement tools to help manage graffiti.**

Graffiti is prohibited under the City's Graffiti By-law. The Graffiti By-law states that it is prohibited to permit, place or cause graffiti to be placed on any structure, vegetation or thing on public or private property. The bylaw defines graffiti as "one or more letters, symbols or marks, howsoever made, on any structure or thing".

To encourage property owners to address nuisance graffiti, under the Graffiti-bylaw, property owners are required to remove graffiti within 10 days of being served an order. After 10 days, if the graffiti remains, it may be removed by a contractor hired by the City with the cost of removal billed to the owner for non-compliance of the order. The minimum fines stipulated in the Graffiti By-law for any person doing graffiti without authorization and for a property owner not complying with an order to remove graffiti are \$500 and \$250 respectively for each offence under the bylaw.

Property-Use Inspectors (PUIs) carry out the investigation and enforcement of graffiti complaints on private property and refer a complaint to VPD if there is a racist or hate element to it.

Using an escalating enforcement approach, PUIs first attempt to gain voluntary compliance by providing information and education to businesses and property owners regarding the Graffiti By-law. If voluntary compliance is not successful, PUIs can issue an order.

#### **D. Approach to fines and penalties for property owners who are repeated targets of graffiti**

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the City recognized the burden that graffiti removal places on business operators who are repeated targets. As part of the City's efforts to support economic recovery, particularly for businesses, enforcement of the removal of graffiti has been reprioritized since July 2020 with graffiti enforcement being limited to obscene and offensive case files. As the COVID-19 pandemic impacts start to subside and we move towards recovery, the City is resuming regular compliance follow-ups on graffiti complaints city wide with the exception of the downtown core where in the interim, enforcement will continue to be focused on obscene and offensive case files. This approach supports the current anti-graffiti initiatives being undertaken by the City and BIA's in the Downtown and surrounding area. Enforcement of all graffiti will be supported with a strong focus on educating businesses and property owners as a first step before escalating to other compliance measures. This approach will strive to achieve voluntary compliance by working with property owners and businesses and informing them of the suite of City programs and supports available for graffiti removal.

Enforcement of the Graffiti By-law involves communicating with property owners and providing information and assistance regarding graffiti removal options. Quick identification and rapid removal or a paint over of graffiti within 24 to 48 hours of it appearing is a mitigation strategy that is shown to reduce its occurrence.<sup>5</sup> The effectiveness of this approach is based on the premise that rapid removal can counteract motivation for graffiti vandalism by limiting the time the graffiti is displayed and consequently seen by other graffiti taggers.

Businesses and property owners who are repeated targets of graffiti can receive up to two gallons of free exterior paint per calendar year through the City's Free Paint Program in partnership with Dulux Paint.

Additional mitigation strategies successful in other jurisdictions are also summarized in Appendix C.

#### **E. Exploring the benefits and feasibility of sanctioned graffiti zones and gauging community interest**

Staff in the *Integrated Graffiti Management Program* are currently advancing work to explore the benefits and feasibility of sanctioned graffiti zones. Staff have completed a jurisdictional scan of

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<sup>5</sup> Sloan, Howitt and Kelling (1990); Scott (1989); Cheetham (1994); Clarke (1978) [PDF]; and Governing (1994).

graffiti sanctioned zones, commonly known as free walls or legal walls. The research shows that graffiti sanctioned zones have been most successful when they are championed and led by the urban art community who can program regular events, such as graffiti jams and emerging artists can practice and potentially receive mentorship from established artists at a free wall. A common challenge of existing programs is that graffiti often spreads to areas near the sanctioned zone. In addition, there is a need for an ongoing management plan to monitor content and refresh the wall by painting it out periodically.

Over the next few months, staff will be engaging key stakeholders such as the BIAs, the street art community, and Vancouver Mural Festival to share key findings and learn more about their potential interests in a sanctioned graffiti wall initiative. In particular, staff will explore considerations around successfully siting a graffiti wall and the approach and supports needed to manage a graffiti wall. Stakeholders will be given the opportunity to provide feedback and share ideas they have about mitigating graffiti and creating opportunities for artistic expression in neighbourhoods experiencing graffiti vandalism.

Once this community engagement is complete, staff will update Council on proposed next steps.

## **F. Exploring opportunities to increase and improve enforcement**

In December 2021, staff convened a business community roundtable in response to an October 2021 Council motion directing staff to invite community leaders, industry associations and BIAs to participate in a roundtable to share concerns and perspectives on increased property crime, theft and violent shoplifting. Participants shared concerns regarding increased graffiti and provided feedback on key needs for additional support and enforcement.

Staff have also completed a jurisdictional scan to learn about how other municipalities address graffiti enforcement and mitigation strategies. For example, the Victoria Police Department has a Community Resource Officer serving as an anti-graffiti Coordinator to investigate graffiti crimes, to assist other officers with their graffiti investigations and to maintain a graffiti database of images pulled from many sources. To mitigate graffiti instances, North Vancouver RCMP offers free CPTED evaluations to citizens by having a police officer trained in CPTED to assess a location and provide suggestions about how to change the environment of the location to reduce crime including graffiti.<sup>6</sup> For more examples of graffiti enforcement and mitigation strategies, see Appendix B and C.

Currently, the majority of graffiti complaints reported to VPD by the public or businesses are not in progress and so there is rarely a description of the suspect and no video footage of the incident. These types of calls are categorized as non-urgent, routine service-related incidents that do not require an officer immediately but may require follow-up investigation. In many instances, property owners remove the graffiti before police respond and the incidents are reported via 3-1-1 or online reporting.

If a member of the public calls 9-1-1 because they are witnessing in-progress graffiti vandalism, a VPD patrol unit will respond based on other prioritized incidents at that moment. If a suspect is

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<sup>6</sup> CPTED is an approach to building and property planning and development that reduces opportunities for crime including graffiti

apprehended and there exists sufficient evidence to support a charge, the police officer may request appropriate charges with Crown Counsel.

At this time, the VPD does not have a dedicated graffiti management unit to handle graffiti investigations. Graffiti investigations are handled by patrol members, Youth Services Section or, in specific cases, the General Investigation Section or Hate Crimes Investigator.

Historically, the City did have additional enforcement programs to address graffiti. In 2002, Council approved an Anti-Graffiti Program for the Vancouver Police Department and two full-time officers were assigned to develop and implement the program within the VPD, educate those within the organization and the community on the threats posed by graffiti vandalism, and coordinate existing and new initiatives.<sup>7</sup>

The VPD's Anti-Graffiti Program included RestART, a restorative justice art program in partnership with the City and Community Policing Centres. The objective of the program was to engage youth involved in illegal graffiti in restorative justice art projects to reduce the negative impact of defacing property, to enhance safety, and to support healthy lifestyles. The program combined art and restorative justice principles to provide support and education to at-risk youth.

In 2012, the Grandview Woodland Community Policing Centre took over RestART but funding has been difficult to secure in recent years so the program is provided on a semi-regular basis.

Restorative justice programs are considered successful in other jurisdictions including Nanaimo, Burnaby and Surrey. In Nanaimo, the restorative justice program is run by the Nanaimo branch of the John Howard Society. Instead of arrests and potentially criminal charges, those accepted by the program have to admit their guilt and talk through their actions in a group which includes the persons impacted. The group then works together to decide how to best repair the damage caused. The Nanaimo RCMP Auxiliary Program leads work on this program in relation to graffiti.

The VPD's Anti-Graffiti Program was dissolved, as a result of resourcing priorities.<sup>8</sup> The VPD is currently in the process of initiating a pilot graffiti project targeting the hardest hit areas.

The department has the following programs and initiatives in place to deal with the proliferation of graffiti and mischief issues across the city:

- Anti-graffiti projects, such as Project Blowback, which focused on taggers in the District 2 (the Downtown Eastside and East Vancouver neighbourhoods);
- Increased foot and bike patrols and attention to Chinatown neighbourhoods and high-crime community areas;
- District 2 patrol members focusing on graffiti offences and identifying taggers;
- Ongoing partnerships with community, including liaising with Business Improvement Associations and other groups;
- Participating in Citizen Crime Watch activities in and around downtown to prevent graffiti incidents; and

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<sup>7</sup> <https://council.vancouver.ca/020425/csb3.htm>

<sup>8</sup> <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/12-16-2021-council-memo-council-memo-business-roundtable-on-property-crime.pdf>



- Providing Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) advice to the City and communities.

A summary of police forces in other jurisdictions that have dedicated staff and resourcing for graffiti enforcement is provided in Appendix B.

### **G. Communication strategy to raise awareness**

Staff are currently working to develop an updated communications and social media strategy to raise awareness about graffiti-related services and programs available to businesses and residents. The strategy will focus on both how businesses and residents can help address nuisance graffiti and encourage businesses and residents to report graffiti through 3-1-1. In addition, work is underway to refresh website content and initiate more direct outreach to businesses. A proactive communications strategy will be rolled out in Q3 of 2022 to align with when increased incidents of graffiti occur.

### **H. Conclusion**

As outlined in this memo, the City currently has a suite of tools and programs to discourage nuisance graffiti and encourage artistic expression in the public realm, to support the clean up of graffiti on both public and private property, and to enforce the graffiti bylaw. All instances of racist or hate graffiti are prioritized by the VPD and the City.

Over the next few months, staff will continue to work with community stakeholders to explore the potential of a sanctioned graffiti zone or free wall, as well as other approaches that could encourage artistic expression but avoid the negative impacts of nuisance graffiti on residents, businesses and local neighbourhoods.

Staff will also continue to use the existing tools and an escalating enforcement approach to respond to graffiti complaints on private property and explore opportunities for enforcement. Staff will report back to Council with any future recommendations on sanctioned graffiti zones or additional enforcement tools.

If you have any questions about the content in this memo, please contact Andrea Law, Margaret Wittgens or Eugene Lum.



Andrea Law  
General Manager, Development,  
Buildings and Licensing  
604.873.7160 [andrea.law@vancouver.ca](mailto:andrea.law@vancouver.ca)



Margaret Wittgens  
Deputy General Manager,  
Strategy and Integrated Planning,  
Engineering Services  
604.673.8227 [margaret.wittgens@vancouver.ca](mailto:margaret.wittgens@vancouver.ca)



Staff Sergeant Eugene Lum  
Special Projects, Operations  
Division, Vancouver Police  
Department  
604-717-3712 [eugene.lum@vpd.ca](mailto:eugene.lum@vpd.ca)

**Mitigating and Managing Nuisance Graffiti in Vancouver – Final Approved Motion<sup>9</sup>**

- A.** THAT Council recognize that the increase in street tagging style graffiti in particular has increased during the pandemic, and put a significant burden on small businesses and BIAs already struggling with pandemic recovery.
- B.** THAT Council direct staff to prepare communications programming to encourage residents and businesses to help manage nuisance graffiti through the City of Vancouver/Dulux Free Paint program for graffiti abatement;
- C.** THAT Council direct staff to report-back on current enforcement and prevention measures, and opportunities to increase enforcement, identification, and tracking of prolific taggers; including options for alternatives to fines such as a restitution- /restorative justice-based program or model for graffiti removal in collaboration with relevant arts and community groups and other potential collaboration partners including BIA's; while respecting the temporary moratorium by not tasking DBL in this work;

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to report back with a communications strategy for public education to highlight the costs and impacts of nuisance graffiti and tagging, as well as fines and penalties for offenses under the by-law.

- D.** THAT Council direct staff to report back on any temporary exemption from fines and penalties and mitigation strategies for specific owners and/or occupiers of real property who demonstrate they are repeated targets of graffiti, including mechanisms to alert relevant arts and community groups to nuisance graffiti requiring removal and restitution, while respecting the temporary moratorium by not tasking DBL in this work.
- E.** THAT Council direct staff to allocate an additional \$300K in 2021 toward the BIA Graffiti Management program in the form of direct grants to BIAs with the highest percentage of graffiti incidents and pursue recovery of these funds through provincial and federal COVID-19 recovery grant programs.
- F.** THAT Council direct staff to consult with local BIAs and the street art community to gauge interest and identify areas that might be considered as sanctioned graffiti zones.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://council.vancouver.ca/20210519/documents/pspc20210519min.pdf>

## **Examples of municipalities with police resources dedicated to graffiti enforcement**

### *City of Victoria – Anti-Graffiti Coordinator*

The Victoria Police Department has a Community Resource Officer serving as an Anti-Graffiti Coordinator. In that role, the police officer:

- Investigates graffiti crimes
- Assists other officers with their graffiti investigations including assistance to other police agencies in the region
- Reviews all graffiti imagery reported to the Victoria Police Department
- Maintains graffiti databases.
  - Images are pulled from many sources include online reporting, police files and images forwarded via email from citizens.

The anti-graffiti coordinator maintains a historical data base that goes back a few years. In 2019, Victoria Police Department started to maintain another image database using a program called *Graffiti Tracker* that has helped fight graffiti crime. Victoria Police Department typically investigates 40 to 50 graffiti mischiefs a year.<sup>10</sup>

### *Burnaby RCMP – Anti-Graffiti Unit*

The Anti-Graffiti Unit works in close partnership with the community and other police agencies throughout the Lower Mainland to identify prolific taggers. The objective of the Burnaby Anti-Graffiti Program is to control and minimize graffiti's negative impact on the community. The Burnaby RCMP's role in the program is to identify the graffiti writers and to hold them accountable for their actions through enforcement or education.

### *Calgary Police Service – Graffiti Coordinator*

The Graffiti Coordinator with the Calgary Police Service coordinates graffiti investigations between different members of the Calgary Police Service to ensure there is no duplication of offenders being investigated. The Graffiti Coordinator works with other City department to develop and deliver educational resources for the public and graffiti offenders.<sup>11</sup>

### *Toronto Police Service – Graffiti Management Program*

The Toronto Police Service's Graffiti Management Program in partnership with the City of Toronto that aims to reduce graffiti vandalism and incorporates five key elements: Enforcement, Intelligence Gathering/Management, Community Partnerships/Engagement, Education, and Restorative Justice-Diversion.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> My Great Neighbourhood Community Virtuals - Victoria Together Against Graffiti (VTAG)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.calgary.ca/cps/community-programs-and-resources/crime-prevention/graffiti-and-vandalism.html>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.torontopolice.on.ca/community/graffiti/>

## **Summary of mitigation strategies used in other jurisdictions for repeated targets of graffiti**

### ***North Vancouver***

The North Vancouver RCMP offers CPTED evaluations for free to the citizens of North Vancouver. CPTED is an approach to building and property planning and development that reduces opportunities for crime including graffiti.

Communities, neighbourhoods, individual homes, and other buildings, streets, and parks can all be made safer through the application of design principles that make it more difficult to carry out graffiti and other types of vandalism.

During an evaluation, a police officer trained in CPTED will attend the location in question to photograph and review the area. They will then compose a formal report with suggestions about how to change the environment of the location to reduce crime.<sup>13</sup>

### ***Toronto***

In the City of Toronto, StreetARToronto (StART) is a suite of innovative programs designed specifically for streets and public spaces as well as private property. Initiated in 2012 as an integral part of the City of Toronto's Graffiti Management Plan, the StreetART Support Mural Program has been successful in reducing graffiti vandalism on private property and replacing it with vibrant, colourful, community-engaged street art.

Property owners who have received a Notice of Violation for Graffiti from Municipal Licensing & Standards or can otherwise prove they are experiencing issues with repeated graffiti vandalism (i.e. photos or a Google streetview image) are eligible to receive up to \$2,000 of direct material purchases, which can include:

- Artistic quality spray paint, available in a variety of colours;
- Assorted spray paint caps producing various effects;
- Exterior paint in a full colour spectrum; and
- A limited supply of application materials, including paint rollers, brushes and paint trays.

The City provides materials for the creation of graffiti art and art murals on properties with a history of repeated graffiti vandalism on walls exposed to city streets. Materials required for the project are purchased by City staff through consultation with the artist(s) selected to complete the work and are based on factors including the conceptual sketch for the design and the size of the mural proposed. Designs and artwork are subject to final approval by the City.

The mural must be maintained in a state of good repair for a period of at least one year from the final completion date of the project. It remains the responsibility of the property owner to remove

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<sup>13</sup> <https://bc-cb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=429&languageId=1&contentId=4814>

graffiti vandalism on their property in accordance with City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 485, Graffiti, in the Bylaw.<sup>14</sup>

Approved projects are designated as an “art mural”, as defined by the Graffiti Bylaw. In order to maintain the status of “graffiti art”, the murals must be kept in a state of good repair as approved. The by-law allows for the regularization of graffiti and mural art when it “is installed with the property owner’s permission, adheres to community character and standards, and aesthetically enhances the surface that it covers.”

### ***New York***

Property owners in New York can submit a Forever Graffiti Free application form to the City. Approved applicant provide permission to the City to clean graffiti any time graffiti is reported without the need for the owner to give consent for each instance. The City will always attempt to remove graffiti from the property free of charge when it is reported. The property owner will not receive a Notice of Intent to Remove Graffiti each time graffiti is reported on their property.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> [https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/8ce7-TS\\_StART\\_2021-Program-Info-Session.pdf](https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/8ce7-TS_StART_2021-Program-Info-Session.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> <https://edc.nyc/program/graffiti-free-nyc>