



COUNCIL AGENDA: 1/30/2018  
ITEM: 5.1 (18-135)

## *Memorandum*

---

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Toni J. Taber, CMC  
City Clerk

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** January 25, 2018

---

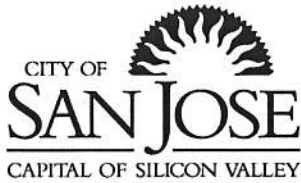
**SUBJECT: ANTI-GRAFFITI AND ANTI-LITTER PROGRAMS ANNUAL REPORT**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

As recommended by the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee on December 14, 2017, accept the Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Programs Annual Report.

CEQA: Not a Project, File No. PP17-009, Annual Report. (Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services)

[Neighborhood Services and Education Committee referral 12/14/17 – (d)4]



# Memorandum

**TO:** NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES  
AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**FROM:** Angel Rios, Jr.

**SUBJECT:** ANTI-GRAFFITI AND ANTI-LITTER  
PROGRAMS ANNUAL REPORT

**DATE:** 11/27/2017

Approved

Date

12/6/17

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** Citywide

## RECOMMENDATION

1. Accept the Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Programs Annual Report; and
2. Refer the report to the full City Council for the January 30, 2018 City Council meeting.

## OUTCOME

To provide an annual update on the status of the Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Programs and the impact they have had within our neighborhoods to keep San José clean.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During 2016-2017, the Parks, Recreation, and Neighborhood Services' (PRNS) Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Programs made great strides engaging the community to address graffiti and litter-related blight. Over the past fiscal year, the programs experienced the following:

1. A 200% increase in Anti-Litter Program volunteer hours and a 90% increase in bags of litter collected from the previous year.
  - a. Volunteer hours increased from 16,804 (2015-2016) to 47,956 (2016-2017).
  - b. Bags of litter collected increased from 10,692 (2015-2016) to 20,318 (2016-2017).
2. The Anti-Graffiti Program has abated approximately two million square feet of graffiti per year, for a total of 10 million square feet eradicated since 2012.

3. The amount of gang graffiti continued to increase throughout San José.
  - a. Gang graffiti increased from 523,080 square feet (2015-2016) to 607,532 square feet (2016-2017).

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2011, PRNS moved to a vendor approach for graffiti abatement. Since then, the City has enjoyed a strong partnership with our vendor, Graffiti Protective Coatings (GPC). Together, PRNS and GPC have dealt with increasing graffiti and community expectations. During this period, the programs have experienced three trends. First, the Anti-Graffiti Program has continued to abate an average of approximately 2,000,000 square feet of graffiti each year, over the past six years. Second, the Anti-Litter Program received an increase in complaints related to litter located within the city and on freeways. Third, there continues to be an increase in the amount of resources expended to coordinate the removal of graffiti located on private property (business and residential).

Beginning in February 2013, the Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Programs began operating as a component of the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force (MGPTF) to maximize community engagement efforts. Placing the programs in the MGPTF allowed the programs to further leverage resources such as staff to assist with community engagement and staff support as many of the litter and graffiti hot spots are located within the same communities where the MGPTF targets services. This also facilitated the effective removal of gang-related graffiti throughout the city.

During 2016–2017, the Anti-Litter and Anti-Graffiti Programs implemented an outreach strategy to engage service groups, neighborhood associations, and businesses to address litter and graffiti in their communities. This outreach strategy was very successful leading to more resident volunteerism and engagement in addressing litter and an increase in business-owner graffiti abatement. The substantial increase in the amount of litter collected by volunteers also increased volunteer service hours in comparison to the previous year. Additionally, the Mayor's Office launched the "BeautifySJ" Initiative in February 2017 that challenged residents to become more engaged in beautifying the city. Both the Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Programs align with this new citywide initiative by challenging and inviting residents to address blight in their neighborhoods.

Although both the Anti-Litter and Anti-Graffiti Programs continue to make an impact each year, both programs have their challenges. These challenges include meeting increased demand for services with the same amount of program resources; having an abatement-only strategy for graffiti and litter; and coordinating the removal of graffiti on non-City property. Currently both programs are only funded using an abatement-only strategy that does not provide for any sustainable proactive prevention efforts, such as education, to ultimately reduce both graffiti and litter.

In February 2017, a supplemental Council memorandum from Mayor Liccardo, Vice Mayor Carrasco, Councilmember Khamis, Councilmember Nguyen, and Councilmember Peralez provided additional

direction for the Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Programs in relation to program operations. Below is a response to those directions.

- A. *Include a proposed ordinance change on the upcoming Council priority setting session that will allow staff to warn private property owners to abate graffiti on their property within 72 hours, or the City will abate and bill the owner.*

Response: In October 2017, the City Council voted to include Private Property Graffiti Abatement as a Council Priority for 2017–2018. Staff will be researching and identifying how an ordinance change to address graffiti on private property can further reduce graffiti-related blight throughout the city.

- B. *Collaborate with BART, VTA, and other jurisdictions along the BART corridor to share information and develop a strategy for increased communication and knowledge sharing on graffiti issues in anticipation of the BART system expansion opening.*

Response: Staff has had initial meetings with VTA and one other city along the BART corridor to share information and strategies and discuss best practices to manage graffiti at the San José BART location. Anti-Graffiti Program staff will continue to meet with other cities and jurisdictions along the BART corridor in 2018 before the opening of the South Bay BART transit station to develop a long-term graffiti management strategy at this site.

- C. *Explore more options to use technology to help detect and report incidents of graffiti, such as devices that sense spray paint being used and will automatically alert law enforcement.*

Response: The Anti-Graffiti Program will continue to work with San José Police Department to research what technology is currently available to detect and report incidents of graffiti.

- D. *Expedite the hiring of unfilled FTE's associated with volunteer support services in the Adopt-A-Park and Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Programs.*

Response: In the June 2016 Mayor's Budget Message, PRNS received a Volunteer Coordinator position to support department volunteer efforts. This position was filled in fall 2017.

The hiring of this position took longer than anticipated as a result of the significant backing in recruitments citywide. In early 2017, the Human Resources Department implemented an autonomous hiring pilot to expedite hiring. PRNS was one of the initial departments participating in this program. This program resulted in speeding up the hiring of a number of positions, including the Volunteer Coordinator.

*E. Return to the Public Safety Finance & Strategic Support (PSFSS) Committee and the Neighborhoods Commission in the fall of 2017 with an update.*

Response: Ongoing consideration of the Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Programs Annual Report has been shifted from the PSFSS Committee to the Neighborhood Services and Education (NSE) Committee. Once the NSE Committee has approved this report, it will be referred to the City Council for approval.

The Anti-Litter and Anti-Graffiti Programs Annual report will be presented at the Neighborhoods Commission in January 2018.

**ANALYSIS**

In 2016–2017, both the Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Programs made strides in encouraging residents to report graffiti via the San José Clean/My San José apps; coordinating the abatement of graffiti located on City and non-City property; leveraging resources with other City departments; and, hosting community litter events to keep San José clean. Below are the annual updates for each program.

***Anti-Litter Program Updates***

The Anti-Litter Program continued to make progress in working with service groups, schools and neighborhood and business associations to educate residents about the impact of litter and to coordinate litter cleanup events. These efforts led to a 90% increase in the amount of litter collected and 200% increase in volunteer services hours for 2016–2017. In addition, during the reporting period, the Anti-Litter Program aligned program services with the BeautifySJ Initiative in an effort to leverage resources and energies to better serve the city. These substantial increases in program performance can be attributed to: 1) the launch of the BeautifySJ Initiative which led to increased engagement of residents in abating litter; and 2) increased program outreach and engagement with volunteer service groups.

<b>Anti-Litter Program Data</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
Total Number of Volunteers (Individuals)*	138	109	130
Total Number of Volunteers (Group)**	4,889	5,663	13,121
Total Litter Bags Collected	8,574	10,692	20,318
Total Number of Volunteer Hours	16,804	15,545	47,956

\*Individual residents who do not volunteer as part of a group of neighborhood association or community group.

\*\* Number of volunteers who served as part of a group such as Anti-Litter Program coordinated litter cleanup, neighborhood association, community-based organization, school, or business group.

To accomplish program goals, the program continued to work in collaboration with internal City departments and the Illegal Dumping Program to address litter, trash, and illegally dumped items throughout the city. The Anti-Litter Program focuses on educating the community about the negative impacts of litter on their neighborhoods; coordinating individual and service-group volunteers;

coordinating neighborhood cleanups with neighborhood associations and council offices; working with volunteer groups to address litter; and coordinating citywide and neighborhood litter events each year. Program staff attended over 60 resource fairs and neighborhood and community association meetings to educate communities on the resources available to support litter cleanups and recruit volunteers. More specifically, the program focused on linking resident volunteers to neighborhood associations and community groups to encourage long-term volunteerism and foster long-term community engagement.

The program continues to receive a substantial number of reports of litter on freeways, highways, onramps and exits, as well as in neighborhoods along expressways and other major thoroughfares. Some of this increase can be attributed to the rise in homeless encampments or rise in illegal dumping, which is often accompanied by trash dumping, and a lack of maintenance along freeways including entrances and exits. The Anti-Litter Program works closely with California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and other governmental agencies to address these complaints; however, with the volume and magnitude of the litter problem, a long-term strategy and solution will need to be implemented at a policy level to have an impact.

The “BeautifySJ” Initiative increased awareness of litter and resident engagement with the program, but its success is taxing existing staff resources. To support the increased demand on program supplies, the Anti-Litter Program received a \$25,000 Cities of Service grant (Mayor’s Office is the lead for the grant) to support Anti-Litter Program cleanup efforts.

While the program prides itself on delivering high-quality services to residents in San José, there have been challenges in keeping up with service demands. The Anti-Litter Program is currently funded for 2.0 FTE of staffing to coordinate and support litter pickup efforts throughout the city. At this time, the program has limited ability and resources to respond to litter complaints as there are no dedicated staffing resources for this task. To address some of the litter complaints that cannot be addressed with volunteers, the program contracts with San Jose Conservation Corps to pick up litter in areas with ongoing litter complaints and little to no resident volunteerism.

In 2017–2018, the Anti-Litter Program staff will coordinate BeautifySJ litter pickup events throughout the city, continue its strategy to recruit and retain volunteers, and focus on outreach and community engagement to increase awareness of the negative impacts of litter on the community. The program will also increase outreach efforts in neighborhoods that have ongoing litter issues but no active community groups to address it. Moving forward, the Anti-Litter Program will continue to work on increasing awareness and volunteerism with the goal of reducing litter citywide. The program’s outreach strategy seeks to educate residents on the impact of litter to our neighborhoods and parks, and engage communities in the City’s overall goal to significantly reduce litter and blight.

### ***Anti-Graffiti Program Updates***

The Anti-Graffiti Program has continued to abate approximately 2,000,000 square feet of graffiti each year citywide. Approximately 85% of graffiti is reported by residents via mobile apps, which continues to be the most popular method for residents to report graffiti. While program staff continues to promote the apps as the best method to report graffiti, the program also maintains a 24-hour phone line

and welcomes reports via email and in person to ensure that residents have a variety of methods to report graffiti. The program’s goal is to make it as easy as possible for residents to request services through a multitude of forums. In 2016–2017, 94% of residents rated graffiti-abatement services as good or better.

In 2016–2017, the Anti-Graffiti Program abated 1,998,532 square feet of graffiti of which 607,352 square feet was gang-related. The program prioritizes graffiti work orders based on where the graffiti is located and what type of graffiti is being reported. Offensive graffiti (hate speech, offensive and gang-affiliated graffiti) is prioritized and addressed within 24 hours. The program aims to abate other graffiti on City property within 72 hours. In 2016–2017, the program removed 63% of hate-speech, offensive, and gang-affiliated graffiti within 24 hours (please note that graffiti reported Friday evening through Sunday is not abated until the next business day, which extends the time); and 75% of all other graffiti was abated within 72 hours. Moreover, the program continued to coordinate requests for graffiti removal with several major property owners including: Caltrans, Caltrain, Pacific Gas and Electric, Santa Clara County Department of Transportation, Valley Transportation Authority, San José Water Company, and Union Pacific Railroad.

In 2016–2017, the Anti-Graffiti Program experienced a slight decline in abated graffiti. This was due to two factors: 1) areas within the City have transitioned into a “maintenance model,” meaning that we have shifted from a “restoration model,” which required abating graffiti in addition to restoring the painted surfaces; and 2) the program has better coordinated graffiti abatement with partners (Caltrans, Santa Clara County, Valley Transportation Authority, Santa Clara Valley Water District) to ensure that they remove graffiti on their properties rather than assigning City resources to the task. As illustrated in the table below, the amount of graffiti eradicated from 2012–2016 has continued to climb, with a slight decline in graffiti abated in 2016–2017.

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Square Footage of Graffiti Removed by Graffiti Vendor GPC</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
2016–2017	1,998,532	-6.3%
2015–2016	2,131,988	1.6%
2014–2015	2,098,196	4.6%
2013–2014	2,088,466	7.6%
2012–2013	1,939,426	

Over the past two years, the Anti-Graffiti Program has observed graffiti trends similar to those experienced by other large urban cities, including:

- Larger tags located in visible areas that take longer to remove;
- An increase of graffiti on business and residential property;
- Increased gang graffiti in non-traditional areas;
- The appearance of graffiti in areas that previously had little or no graffiti; and,
- More prolific tagging in parks, sidewalks, along sound walls, and on street signs.

Additionally, approximately 30% of all graffiti abated in 2016–2017 (607,352 square feet) was gang-related, which is slightly higher than national statistics.

To combat these trends, the program works to:

- Encourage residents to download My San José app and report graffiti;
- Educate the public on the impact of graffiti to the livability of the community;
- Address graffiti on private property (residential and business);
- Educate business owners on the impact of graffiti left on their property;
- Work more closely with major property owners to abate graffiti within the city;
- Contract with San Jose Conservation Corps to assist with graffiti abatement (large projects); and,
- Continue to coordinate weekend offender abatement efforts with the Santa Clara County Probation Department.

The 2016–2017, budget for the City of San José's Graffiti Program was \$1,776,846, of which \$907,357 was spent on graffiti eradication services provided by Graffiti Protective Coatings, Inc. (GPC); with the remaining budget spent on staff, materials, and supplies. In 2016–2017, the cost to eradicate graffiti was \$0.44 per square foot. The current rate for 2017–2018 is \$0.46 per square foot. PRNS had an initial contract with GPC for five years for the term of June 27, 2011 through June 26, 2016. In May 2015, the City Council approved an amendment to the current agreement with options until June 26, 2020.

In 2016–2017, the City launched a new Customer Relations Management system, which includes the My San José app that residents use to report graffiti. With the introduction of the My San José app, the San José Clean app will be phased out beginning in 2017–2018. Program staff are working with residents to transition them to the new My San José app, which allows residents to easily request several blight-related services through one app. During the phase-out period residents can continue to report graffiti utilizing either app, having two apps currently does not impact the programs ability to provide quality services or meet resident demands.

While the program has built upon its successes each year, there continues to be major jurisdictional challenges to addressing graffiti located within the City on non-City property (Caltrans, Caltrain, Valley Transportation Authority, Water District, Santa Clara County, Union Pacific Railroad, and Pacific Gas and Electric). PRNS continues to meet with these key stakeholders to and develop strategies to combat graffiti located within the city, on non-City property. While our partner organizations are aware of the ongoing graffiti issues, many have struggled to remove graffiti within an acceptable timeline, often



leading to increased graffiti. During 2016–2017, program staff referred over 1,500 work order requests for graffiti and litter removal to the appropriate non-City agency. Coordinating the removal of graffiti on non-City property can and often does utilize a substantial amount of staff time to address with the agency and reporting party. The Anti-Graffiti Program continues to meet with these partners to refine strategies to address these complaints more effectively.

Responsibility for removing graffiti or picking up litter depends on whether it is located on City property, private property, property owned by another government agency, or an entity such as a utility or railroad. Timelines for cleanup also vary based on responsibility. These responsibilities are outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1: Graffiti Abatement Responsibilities, Timelines, and Results (2016-2017)**

Classification of Property	Responsible Party	Eradication Timeline	Reports Received	Total Graffiti Eradicated
City Property	City of San José <u>Partners</u> GPC (citywide contract) Groundwerx (downtown)	- 24 Hours for urgent, offensive, hate speech, gang graffiti - 72 hours (all other graffiti)	29,918	City Staff: 14,036 square feet (urgent priority) GPC: 1,998,532 square feet Groundwerx: over 10,000 graffiti tags
Private Property: Business and Residential	Property Owner	10 days*	1,715	N/A
Governmental Agencies & Utilities**	Agency or Utility	Varies	Over 1,500	N/A

\* May take an additional month for abatement if the complaint is referred to Code Enforcement to be addressed.

\*\* Includes Caltrans, Caltrain, Pacific Gas & Electric, Santa Clara County Department of Transportation, San José Water Company, and Union Pacific Railroad.

As stated in previous program reports, there continues to be an increase in graffiti located on residential and business property. The program experienced a 6.5% increase in graffiti located on private property during 2016–2017; staff addressed 1,715 such complaints that required 1,658 site visits to close (this does not include complaints of graffiti located on Caltrans, Caltrain, Union Pacific, Pacific Gas and Electric, Valley Transportation Authority or Santa Clara County property). In comparison, in 2015-2016, staff addressed 1,604 graffiti complaints on private property that required 633 site visits to close, which was a 14% increase from the previous year. Addressing graffiti on residential and business property continues to be a workload issue for the program. While the home/business owner is responsible for removing this graffiti, the program provides assistance in removing any offensive graffiti when practical (including providing a courtesy abatement and/or free paint). However, home and business owners may be challenged by the cost to remove graffiti and the damage that is caused. Additionally, private property owners have a longer amount of time to remove graffiti, which can foster additional graffiti at the site. In October 2017, the City Council voted to include Private Property Graffiti Abatement as a Council Priority, which will allow the program to

develop a better process to address graffiti located on private property. In April 2016, staff reported that this would take 1.0 FTE and approximately \$77K. Staff will relook at this and report back on any necessary funding or service-level adjustments needed in the 2018–2019 budget process.

### ***Conclusion***

While both programs have made great strides over the past fiscal year to address graffiti and litter throughout the city, there is still an opportunity for the programs to improve outreach and operate more efficiently. In the future, the Anti-Graffiti Program will be assessing new community facilities that the City is bringing online such as trails, parks, pedestrian bridges, libraries, community centers, sound walls, and other structures so that staff can prepare for additional graffiti intervention and anticipate future funding needs. Both programs will continue to increase outreach efforts that encourage residents to use the available mobile apps to report graffiti and serve as Anti-Litter volunteers in neighborhood cleanup efforts.

### **EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

This annual Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Programs report provides program performance information for 2016–2017. The next annual report will be submitted to this Committee in fall 2018.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

This memorandum will be posted on the City's website for the December 14, 2017 Neighborhood Services and Education Committee meeting.

### **COORDINATION**

This report was coordinated with the City Attorney's Office and the City Manager's Budget Office.

### **COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT**

This report will be presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission on December 6, 2017, and the Neighborhoods Commission in January 2018.

November 27, 2017

**Subject: Anti-Graffiti and Anti-Litter Programs Annual Report**

Page 10

**CEQA**

Not a Project, File No. PP17-009, Annual Report.

/s/

ANGEL RIOS, JR.  
Director of Parks, Recreation  
and Neighborhood Services

For questions, please contact Neil Rufino, Deputy Director, at (408) 535-3576.