



# Memorandum

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Mayor Matt Mahan  
Councilmember Omar Torres  
Councilmember Peter Ortiz  
Councilmember Bien Doan  
Councilmember Domingo Candelas

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** April 14, 2023

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**APPROVED:**

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**SUBJECT: REPORT ON REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR GRAFFITI ABATEMENT SERVICES**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Accept staff's recommendation with the following addition:
  - a. Direct the City Manager to negotiate and execute a contract with Graffiti Protective Coatings, Inc. (GPC) that includes a service level agreement (SLA) to meet or exceed response goals 85% of the time.
2. Direct staff to establish a score card for partner agencies' effectiveness and response times for abating graffiti on their properties reported through SJ311, including VTA, Caltrans, Union Pacific, Valley Water, and the County.
  - a. Staff should return with preliminary scores through an information memo by August 2023 and continue to report to the Neighborhood Services & Education Committee on a bi-annual basis.
3. Staff should report to the San José Youth Empowerment Alliance policy team on the amount of gang-related graffiti removed.
4. Direct staff to study best practices for graffiti deterrents and abatement in other comparable cities and return to Council with an information memo that evaluates:
  - a. Contracting with community-based organizations (CBO's)
  - b. Employing youth and young adults from local communities to conduct abatement
  - c. Partnering with other government agencies to reach economies of scale
  - d. Establishing distinct, limited areas where street art is allowed with strict enforcement of offensive or gang-related graffiti
  - e. Approaches that incentivize vendors to meet or exceed SLAs

## **BACKGROUND**

San José's anti-graffiti program is an essential tool in our battle against blight, and we're fortunate to have effective partners like GPC working with us to abate graffiti on city-owned property. While GPC has a strong track record meeting 24- and 72-hour response goals, we should have guardrails in place to avoid backsliding as we ramp up efforts to beautify our city by committing GPC to meeting or exceeding SLAs at least 85% of the time. Similarly, staff should study whether other cities have executed contracts with vendors that incentivize exceeding SLAs for consideration when we extend or bid contracts.

Even with responsive contractors like GPC, we still have more work to do to tackle graffiti across the city. Residents don't care whether the graffiti is on city-owned, Caltrans-owned, or VTA-owned property, they just want to see it removed. Grading other partners' responsiveness can compel them to respond quicker and more effectively, and inform future agreements or amendments to existing agreements with partner agencies. We should also learn from best practices implemented in other cities that empower or employ residents and community-based organizations to be a part of the solution. As examples, the City of Los Angeles' Office of Community Beautification graffiti abatement program contracts with multiple CBO's who are responsible for abating graffiti in one or more council districts, and Chicago established protected areas where graffiti is permitted and registered as community art.

Finally, we understand the City Manager's office will produce a Manager's Budget Addenda that outlines a program framework to abate graffiti on privately-owned property and we look forward to pursuing opportunities to expand the reach of our anti-graffiti program.

*The signers of this memorandum have not had, and will not have, any private conversation with any other member of the City Council, or that member's staff, concerning any action discussed in the memorandum, and further state that each signer's staff members have not had, and have been instructed not to have, any such conversation with any other member of the City Council or that member's staff.*