
Graffiti Abatement Grants to BIAs

Presentation to Council



June 7, 2022



**PDS Economic
Development Planning**



- ▶ Last year, Council approved grants to the 22 BIAs for nuisance graffiti abatement totaling \$500,000. Funds could be carried over if not spent during the year.
- ▶ This Report responds to a Motion approved by Council on April 12, 2022 as follows:
 - THAT Council approve an additional \$500,000 for graffiti abatement and beautification grants in 2022, to be funded from reserves; in order to improve conditions in Gastown, Chinatown, Strathcona, Downtown, and other affected neighbourhoods
- ▶ The total grant amount of \$500,000 would be allocated to the 22 BIAs in the same proportions as in 2021, as agreed by the BIAs and staff.

What is Nuisance Graffiti?

- ▶ Often referred to as ‘tagging’, nuisance graffiti can be lettering or graphics applied without permission on buildings, structures or utilities
 - City-owned Property
 - Private Property

- ▶ The City’s Integrated Graffiti Management Program contracts with Goodbye Graffiti to remove tags on City-owned property
 - Graffiti on private property is not included – some BIAs hire their own graffiti contractors, or work with Community Policing Centres to mobilize volunteers

Graffiti has Increased During the Pandemic

- Pandemic restrictions and business closures meant fewer shoppers
 - Fewer eyes on the street provided more opportunities for tagging

- BIAs hard pressed to keep up with new volume of graffiti:
 - Sheer number of tags
 - Tags in harder-to access locations such as upper floors
 - Frequent repeat tagging
 - Racist tags in some areas such as Chinatown
 - Many BIAs do not have the budgets for graffiti removal

- Appearance of public realm and perception of safety seen as negative for return of public and visitors

2021 Graffiti Abatement Grant Program was Successful

- Funds were distributed to the BIAs equitably, according to need
 - per allocations proposed by the BIA Partnership and agreed by staff
 - taking into account magnitude of tagging, geographic extent, etc.

- The funds were to be used only for additional graffiti removal, repair of surfaces, and prevention measures

- BIAs report that the additional funds were needed and effective

- No complaints were received

- BIAs report that proliferation of graffiti continues to be a major and visible problem, particularly in the Downtown Peninsula and Chinatown
- Addressing graffiti is urgent:
 - Return of summer pedestrians /shoppers
 - Re-opening of patios
 - Tourism and cruise industry
- Proposed 2022 grants would include the creation new murals to aid graffiti prevention

- Staff have identified \$500,000 to be transferred from the general revenue stabilization reserve
- The proposed grants are authorized under section 206(1)(j) of the Vancouver Charter

Thank You

