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CANADA

October 15, 2012

Chair and Members of the Public Safety Committee

Re: Inquiry on the topic of graffiti double victimization / proposed pilot project

The City's Yard and Lot Maintenance By-law addresses graffiti as a quality of life matter in our neighbourhoods.

It has been well researched and reported that the tagging of a property is seen as a form of recognition within the graffiti culture. The longer a graffiti tag stays "up", the more likely additional graffiti will follow.

Alternatively, if graffiti vandalism is promptly removed, a vandal's "period of recognition" is diminished and the offender tends to move onto other areas. This prompt removal strategy is supported by the "Broken Windows Theory", which recommends maintaining urban environments in a well-ordered condition to prevent further vandalism and escalation into more serious crimes.

When property damage occurs by way of graffiti tagging and then the property owner receives an order from the City to remove the graffiti vandalism at their expense, it is the perception of the property owner, that they have been "double victimized".

I would respectfully request that the Manager of By-law Enforcement report back on the potential of establishing a pilot project, conducted over a period of time in 2013, where a vandalized property owner is not charged a fee by the City and receives assistance in removing graffiti.

There are many different organizations within the City that coordinate graffiti removal services for specific areas. If the City works together with the various neighbourhood and business associations, who currently have independent graffiti removal programs, all partners should be able to benefit from the economies of scale cost advantages associated with a City wide project.

Respectfully,

for 
Matt Brown
Councillor Ward 7