

MEMORANDUM



Public Works Department

Date: 8/1/2016

To: Tempe City Council

From: Isaac Chavira, Transportation Maintenance Manager– Transportation (350-8349)
Shelly Seyler, Deputy Public Works Director – Transportation (350-8854)

Thru: Don Bessler, Public Works Director (350-8205)

Subject: Graffiti Program Update
August 18, 2016 City Manager’s Announcements

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update to the council on the status of the graffiti abatement program specifically highlighting the use of Tempe’s GIS system for tracking and management.

BACKGROUND

The Tempe graffiti abatement program has undergone a multitude of transitions over the years. In the past, it had been decentralized and compartmentalized. Most recently, Public Works, in an effort to create a more robust and holistic program and with Council support, changed the programs strategic approach by introducing proactive abatement through directed patrols across the city grid. This new “enterprise” approach strengthens the city’s commitment to prevention by aggressively removing graffiti to communicate that a clean city is valued. This new metric discourages recidivism. “Hot spot” areas frequently targeted by graffiti vandals are patrolled regularly with the overall goal of removing graffiti as soon as possible. In addition, the approach to data gathering and measuring has improved exponentially by the centralization of abatement data and the use of Tempe’s emerging enterprise GIS system that is integrated with the new Tempe 311 software. The GIS system will also be utilized by the Police Department’s investigative teams to build cases as graffiti tags are being documented, filed and abated. Graffiti is an expensive burden for a community as it lowers property values, generates repair costs and can incite additional criminal activity.

UPDATE

Graffiti abatement continues to operate as a centralized program after the successful completion of a six-month pilot program that took place from October 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014. The pilot program was a partnership between Public Works and Tempe 311. Specifically, the Public Works Department manages the administrative and operational elements related to graffiti abatement throughout the city including the annual survey, abatement field staff (which is comprised of one full-time permanent and one full-time temporary employee), materials and equipment. Tempe 311 continues to provide receipt of graffiti complaints including the location and type of graffiti. On average, Tempe 311 receives 21 calls related to graffiti a week. Staff estimates this constitutes about 15% of the crew’s time abating graffiti with the remaining 85% operating with a forward cadence. In addition to the calls received through Tempe 311, staff will be working with all Tempe field employees to assist in calling in and reporting graffiti as they see it in hopes of increasing the 15% reactive maintenance.

The results of the annual survey indicate on street graffiti is down 83.42% (see Table 2) since the first survey was performed in December 2013. There were 133 documented graffiti occurrences noted during the survey, which averages to 0.63 occurrences per mile; besting the previously set goal of no more than five incidences per mile. As noted, the annual survey indicates a downward trend in the number of graffiti incidents identified in the survey as well as a reduced number of graffiti calls in to Tempe 311.

Graffiti Abatement Program goals include:

- Proactively abate/track emerging “hot spots”: Expected completion July 2018. This will be accomplished via Graffiti Abatement GIS Data/Mapping Program.
- Reduce the proliferation of graffiti so that the community averages no more than five occurrences of graffiti/mile as calculated during annual graffiti survey: Complete. Results of the annual graffiti survey indicate an average of 0.63 incidences of graffiti per mile.

This is the fourth on-street graffiti survey conducted since consolidation of graffiti abatement. The latest survey was conducted using the same methodology as the previous surveys. As shown below in Table 1, the months when the surveys were conducted vary. Ideally, the survey should be conducted during the same month each year.

Table 1: Number of Graffiti Occurrences

Street	Approx. Mileage	Survey 1 (Dec 2013)	Survey 2 (March 2014)	Survey 3 (May 2015)	Survey 4 (May 2016)
48th (East Side Only)	3	9	11	8	2
52nd	11	11	11	8	6
All America Way	10.4	2	2	0	0
Apache Boulevard	3.8	26	52	33	8
Baseline	6.4	36	36	18	0
Broadway	9.8	95	48	28	15
College	2.6	31	17	6	2
Curry/Washington	2.5	16	16	6	4
Elliot	18.4	16	17	11	1
Guadalupe	13	18	9	5	6
Hardy	9.8	63	33	6	6
Kyrene	18	34	21	11	7
McClintock	10.2	56	44	62	8
McKellips	14.2	34	13	3	2
Mill	9.6	64	10	30	11
Price	7	8	41	26	10
Priest	8.8	99	39	51	11
Rio Salado Pkwy	8.8	30	14	9	3
Rural	14	41	12	16	11
Southern	1.4	63	95	19	4
University	19.8	39	50	31	9
Warner	9	11	3	11	7
Totals		802	594	398	133

Table 2: Summary of Survey Results

	Survey 1 (Dec 2013)	Survey 2 (March 2014)	Survey 3 (May 2015)	Survey 4 (May 2016)
Avg. Graffiti/Mile	n/a	2.81	1.88	0.63
% Change vs Previous	n/a	-25.94%	-33.00%	-66.58%
% Change Since Beginning	n/a	n/a	-50.37%	-83.42%

Staff also continues to look at opportunities for a third party graffiti abatement vendor to supplement the city's efforts in ensuring there is minimal graffiti throughout the city. Efforts could include:

- Assisting in creating a "clean slate" for the continued abatement of graffiti. Over time, various practices have been used to abate graffiti which has resulted in a high level of secondary graffiti. Staff has met with a potential contractor who could assist in removing the secondary graffiti throughout the city.
- Supplementing locations where the city continues to see higher than normal levels of graffiti

ATTACHMENTS

- PowerPoint