

An Evaluation of the Graffiti Management Program At the City of Vancouver

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ABSTRACT

This report presents a summative evaluation of the Graffiti Management Program (GMP) at the City of Vancouver. A summative evaluation focuses on the 'bottom line' of a program to determine whether it has achieved its intended outcomes; and whether it should continue to operate within its current size and scope.

Although the GMP has been operating for less than two years it does appear to have made significant achievements during this time, which warrants exploring the more difficult questions summative evaluations are intended to ask. Research for this report has primarily involved conducting interviews and focus groups with fifty participants from the program’s various stakeholder groups. A main point of discussion that has surfaced as a result of this research, concerns the performance of two program areas in particular. Thus, although this report seeks to evaluate all program components and to provide an in-depth analysis of the GMP’s effectiveness and budgetary needs, it does analyze certain program activities at length due to the level of debate and discussion they have sparked throughout the research phase. The report concludes with recommendations that flow from the findings, paying particular attention to strengthening certain program activities.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2002 the City of Vancouver implemented the Graffiti Management Program (GMP). The program is in response to growing concerns amongst City officials and many residents that graffiti can create serious problems for cities. These problems include damage to community facilities; a decrease in property values and financial burdens placed on businesses. The GMP dramatically expands upon previous graffiti reduction initiatives implemented by the City, with its focus on education, prevention, enforcement and eradication. The program also represents a multidepartmental effort, having been developed by the Department of Engineering Services in consultation with Community Services, the Park Board and the Vancouver Police Department.

Objectives & Summary of Method

This report presents a summative evaluation of the Graffiti Management Program. It seeks to determine whether the program has achieved its intended outcomes; and whether it should continue to operate within its current size and scope. The evaluation employs a research design that relies on a mix of new information collected for the purposes of the report and existing data collected by the program. Qualitative information is collected from the program's various stakeholders, which include: community groups; nonprofit organizations; private property owners; Business Improvement Associations; Translink Security; graffiti writers; Vancouver City Councillors; and City staff. Participants were selected using information provided by the City; by other participants and from the internet. For the most part participants were quite willing to contribute their thoughts and experiences, either through the phone or in-person. Altogether interviews and focus groups were conducted with fifty participants. To increase the reliability and validity of the conclusions made, the qualitative data is triangulated with informal observations; quantitative data currently collected by program staff; and secondary sources of information.

Evaluation Results

An analysis of the qualitative findings indicates the Graffiti Management Program has reached its outcomes to reduce graffiti on public and private property throughout the City. This reflects a tremendous accomplishment considering the program has only been operating for less than two years. Yet a majority of participants claim graffiti has only been reduced to varying degrees on private property, observing more reductions in certain areas of the City than others. This is illustrated in the following table that highlights participant findings on the scale of reductions achieved:

TABLE 1.0 PARTICIPANT FINDINGS OF PROGRAM OUTCOMES

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS & NON PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS	PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS	BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATIONS	SECURITY & ENFORCEMENT	GRAFFITI WRITERS	CITY COUNCILLORS	CITY STAFF
Program has reduced graffiti on public & private property; whereas private property in some communities have experienced a greater reduction than others	Uncertain whether the program reduced graffiti on public property; though feel no major reduction on private property	Program has achieved a visible reduction on public property; though observe a varying degree of reductions on private property	Program has achieved “total reduction” on public property; yet reduced graffiti to varying degrees on private property	Program has reduced graffiti throughout the City; but graffiti will never be truly eliminated and program goals never fully reached because the graffiti movement is too strong	Program has achieved a reduction throughout Vancouver; but uncertain as to the level of reduction that has occurred or whether it will remain in the long-term	Program has generally reduced graffiti on public and private property; yet still considerable graffiti on private property in certain areas

To explore why the qualitative findings indicate a reduction of graffiti has been strong on public property and less comprehensive on private property, a deeper analysis of the program’s performance is conducted. This analysis mainly looks at the program’s short-term outcomes, since according to the program’s logic model an achievement of the program’s short-term outcomes should result in an achievement of its medium-term outcomes: *to reduce graffiti on public and private property*.¹ An analysis of the qualitative and quantitative findings reveal that although the GMP has achieved nearly all its short-term outcomes it has not achieved two in particular, these are: to enforce the Graffiti Bylaw and to increase public awareness of graffiti. This analysis is illustrated in the following table.

¹ See Appendix A for the program’s logic model

TABLE 1.1 SHORT –TERM OUTCOMES NOT ACHIEVED

SHORT-TERM OUTCOME	DESCRIPTION	QUALITATIVE FINDINGS	QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS	OUTCOME NOT ACHIEVED
To enforce the Graffiti Bylaw	Enforcement of the Bylaw ensures property owners with graffiti on their buildings are educated on available removal options and comply with the Bylaw.	<p>Some participants feel program has successfully reached a large number of property owners and secured compliance with the Bylaw, noting compliance rate is 80%</p> <p>Yet a clear majority of participants feel the Bylaw is not consistently & broadly enforced; claiming the program has not reached a sufficient number of property owners, despite a compliance rate of 80%</p>	<p>Sept/02-Aug/03 small number of free paint kits distributed</p> <p>Sept/02-Dec/03 graffiti on building frontages & laneways in BIA districts have decreased substantially</p>	The qualitative findings suggest the Bylaw is not consistently enforced; whereas the quantitative findings provide insufficient data to confirm this. ²
To increase the public’s awareness of graffiti	The program seeks to increase public awareness through specific educational, promotional and outreach activities, since a public that is more aware about graffiti will likely contribute to and support reduction efforts.	<p>Some participants feel the program has increased public awareness through its various promotional and outreach activities.</p> <p>Yet a clear majority of participants feel public awareness has not increased, either because the program’s outreach activities are not aggressive enough or because graffiti is not a “hot” public issue</p>	<p>Sept/02-Aug/03 number of graffiti complaints made by the public has generally increased</p>	The qualitative findings indicate public awareness has not increased; whereas the quantitative findings provide insufficient data to confirm this.

Table 1.1 reveals that a majority of participants feel the Graffiti Bylaw has not been broadly enforced; and that public awareness of graffiti and the GMP has not increased. To investigate this further, the following analyzes the program’s difficulty in achieving these short-term outcomes and how this may impact the program’s achievement of its medium-term outcomes to reduce graffiti on public and private property. Interestingly, the analysis demonstrates that both short-term outcomes do not impact graffiti levels in the same way. This suggests one of

² For more information of specific limitations, see the Quantitative Data section, pp 17

the reasons participants note a more sporadic reduction of graffiti on private property may have more to do with enforcing the Graffiti Bylaw than increasing public awareness.

Short-term Outcome: Graffiti Bylaw

Enforcement of the Graffiti Bylaw involves communicating with property owners and providing them with information and assistance regarding graffiti removal options. This 'soft' approach seeks to ensure compliance with the Bylaw by working with property owners rather than striking them with a fine for not removing graffiti within the stipulated ten-day period. This approach is important considering the sensitive nature of the problem, where property owners often feel quite victimized by the graffiti defacing their property and look to the City for support.

The qualitative findings illustrate a majority of participants feel the program has not succeeded in reaching a large number of property owners or that enforcement efforts could improve in certain areas of the City. In this way, the findings suggest enforcement of the Bylaw has not been consistently and broadly applied. Unfortunately, the quantitative data that relates to enforcement of the Bylaw provide insufficient information to confirm or explain the qualitative findings. In general, the quantitative data collected for the GMP is useful for measuring program performance because it provides information on essentially what is occurring; yet does not explain why the program is performing in a certain way and does not clarify why certain variables may have occurred over time.

This being said, limitations posed by the quantitative data do not prevent a further analysis of why participants observe an inconsistent enforcement of the Bylaw. Looking at this issue more closely, it appears there are various plausible explanations. First, there may be limited resources available to enforce the Bylaw, which means enforcement must be conducted incrementally, focusing on certain areas of the City at a time. Second, enforcement staff may have made modest efforts at enforcing the Bylaw and reaching a large number of property owners. Third, there may be a stronger priority emanating from management to focus on enforcing other municipal bylaws, such as health and safety Bylaws, rather than the Graffiti Bylaw. Ultimately any of these scenarios may result in a less consistent and comprehensive enforcement of the Bylaw in certain areas of the City. In turn this may result in a smaller reduction of graffiti on private property, since if a significant number of property owners throughout the City are not aware of the Bylaw or of the program, they may not understand how consistent and timely removals contribute to reducing graffiti; and may leave graffiti on their property for longer periods of time. As a result, it appears improving enforcement of the Bylaw to be more consistent and broad would directly impact graffiti levels and would likely lead to a more balanced reduction of graffiti on private property, throughout Vancouver.

Short-term Outcome: Public Awareness

The program maintains a 'soft' approach towards increasing public awareness of graffiti and the GMP, where program activities focus on raising public awareness through education and outreach to communities and graffiti writers; rather than specifically targeting graffiti writers and fiercely advocating to eradicate graffiti. In this way the program's approach embraces Canada's non-confrontational values and attempts to balance the many different perceptions and attitudes the public maintains towards graffiti.

The qualitative findings reveal a majority of participants feel public awareness of graffiti has not increased. Participants have diverging views on why this may have occurred, some feel the program has not conducted enough outreach by not aggressively promoting the issue to the public; while others claim that regardless of the program's efforts, graffiti is not an issue the public is interested in. Meanwhile, the quantitative findings provide inconclusive data to confirm whether public awareness has not increased or to determine why this may have occurred.³

Although the qualitative findings indicate public awareness has not increased, this does not suggest the program should shift its current approach and aggressively conduct more outreach activities. Such efforts may make the public more aware of graffiti, yet due to the complex and political nature of graffiti, a public that is more cognizant of the issue may not necessarily result in more broad-based support for graffiti reduction. This is because the degree to which members of the public want to see graffiti reduced varies considerably from those who want to see more graffiti to those who are vehemently against graffiti anywhere in the City. Thus, it is possible that as individuals and interest groups are more aware of the issue, they may decide to support or campaign against graffiti far more vigorously than desired. Raising awareness of an issue or a problem is a key component of many prevention programs; yet it may be that programs which benefit from increased awareness are those dealing with less controversial issues. For this reason, increasing public awareness of a controversial issue such as graffiti may ultimately complicate the program's efforts to reduce graffiti. Considering this, the program's current 'soft' approach may be ideal. In fact, because the link between increased public awareness and graffiti reduction appears to be a weak one, the program may benefit from focusing more on other short-term outcomes that directly reduce graffiti levels, rather than on increasing public awareness.

³ See Quantitative Data Analysis section for more details.

Program Budget

Since a key element of summative evaluations is determining whether a program should continue with its current level of funding, the evaluation compares the benefits and costs the program creates for Vancouver residents and the City. It does this by analyzing the qualitative findings related to the program budget; and reviewing the current budget demands and priorities of Vancouver City Council. Though this analysis does not have the precision of a formal cost-effectiveness or cost-benefit analysis, it does draw attention to program costs in relation to perceived benefits.

The qualitative findings reveal a majority of participants feel graffiti reduction benefits all Vancouver residents in some way; while a minority of participants feel benefits are more tangible and concentrated to certain groups: such property owners, or communities with higher levels of graffiti. The qualitative findings also illustrate a majority of participants feel program costs are fully justified, considering the benefits the program creates; while a minority of participants, mainly from within City Hall, feel program costs are too high and that some resources allocated to the program may be better utilized elsewhere. An analysis of City Council's budget and priorities reveal the City is facing a funding short-fall of \$21.9 million in 2004, according to a Budget Estimates report released in November 2003. This short-fall is due to the costs of existing programs and to a number of new programs and initiatives the City seeks to establish in the coming year. There is considerable concern amongst city staff and City Council that balancing the 2004 Operating Budget may prove to be a real challenge unless the budgets of existing programs, such as the GMP, are re-evaluated.

Assessing the budget involves balancing the interests of the program's external stakeholders, who strongly feel program benefits outweigh costs; against the needs of Vancouver City Council, who maintain the budgets of existing municipal programs must be scrutinized. As a result, this means opportunities to reduce the program's budget should be seriously considered; while at the same time such reductions should seek to ensure program effectiveness is not gravely compromised.

Recommendations

The recommendations are intended to strengthen certain areas of the program and to offer different ways of conducting certain program activities. Yet, overall this report recommends the Graffiti Management Program continue to operate within the City due to the positive impact it has made and can continue to create.

1. COLLECT MORE SPECIFIC QUANTITATIVE DATA
2. ENFORCE THE GRAFFITI BYLAW MORE CONSISTENTLY & BROADLY
3. INCREASE PROMOTION AND OUTREACH TO GRAFFITI WRITERS
4. WORK WITH BIAs, COMMUNITIES AND NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TO RAISE AWARENESS AND CONDUCT OUTREACH
5. PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES TO REDUCE THE BUDGET

What Graffiti Is

Graffiti can be defined as ‘tagging’ or ‘piecing.’ Tagging refers to writing one’s initials or a ‘tagging name’ on a wall. It can be done in a matter of seconds and is often considered quite unattractive as it does not present a decipherable picture. Piecing refers to painting an actual picture or mural on a wall. It requires more time, skill and supplies than tagging; and for this reason it often produces an attractive and colorful piece of work.⁴ Due to the different types of graffiti that appears on buildings, windows or under bridges, and the various messages it may read; graffiti often elicits diverse reactions from the public. Some people view graffiti as an urban art form, as a new urban vernacular that should be encouraged and not eradicated because it livens up the dull black and white landscape of large cities. Others, particularly graffiti writers, view graffiti as a necessary form of self-expression. The following quote by a graffiti writer expresses this quite accurately:

“In the City you don’t get any say in what they build. You get some architect that does crappy glass buildings or gray buildings. No one comes up and says, “We’re building this, do you like it? Here’s the drawings, we’ll take a poll.” So why should I have to explain what I do? I live in the city, I’m a citizen. Maybe in the eyes of this town I’m not so important, b/c I don’t have all that high a status, as in class and job. But I live here so I should have as much say as anyone else, and that’s why I go out and paint, ‘cause I want to say something, and I don’t want to be told when I can do it.”⁵

Still, others view graffiti as vandalism, claiming graffiti writers are not artists but vandals intent on defacing public or private property for their own enjoyment. They feel whether graffiti is a masterpiece on a blank wall or a tag sprawled across a store window, if the writer does not seek permission from the building owner it is vandalism and a crime that should be punished.⁶ It is difficult to objectively determine whether graffiti writers should be considered criminals, yet it is evident that graffiti does impact businesses and communities in a negative way. Some of these negative impacts include: a reduction in people’s enjoyment of public spaces; decreases in property values and financial burdens placed on businesses that must constantly remove the graffiti. In fact, in some cases removing graffiti can cost thousands of dollars, which is especially costly for the smaller ‘mom-and-pop-style’ businesses common to many commercial areas throughout the City.

⁴ Presentation by Anti-Graffiti Unit to Vancouver City Council, July 8th 2003

⁵ Harriet, H Christensen, J Darryll & Brookes, H. Martha. Vandalism: Research, Prevention, and Social Policy. US Department of Agriculture, Portland Oregon; 1992, p.10

⁶ Presentation by Anti-Graffiti Unit to Vancouver City Council, July 8th 2003

The City's Response

Since the early 1990s the City of Vancouver has implemented a variety of initiatives to reduce graffiti levels throughout the City. Each successive initiative has increased in size and scope, in order to more adequately respond to the growing problem. Efforts began in 1993 when Vancouver City Council authorized an Anti-Graffiti Coordinator Position to conduct activities geared at graffiti removal. In 1994 City Council approved the City's first Graffiti Bylaw that sought "to prevent unsightliness of property by prohibiting the placement of graffiti and requiring that property be kept free of graffiti."⁷ The Bylaw essentially gave property owners sixty days to remove graffiti from their property before they were fined. During this time the City also implemented the Graffiti Abatement program, which conducted education, eradication and enforcement activities with an annual budget of \$30,000.⁸ Business Improvement Associations (BIAs) and community groups also implemented initiatives independent of one another, to reduce graffiti levels in their respective areas. Yet despite such efforts graffiti continued to spread, which according to many City officials indicated the severity and complexity of the problem.

In 1998 City Council approved a policy that requires publishers to remove graffiti from newsboxes within three days; at this time it also approved a pilot program to provide property owners with free paint supplies to assist them in removing graffiti.⁹ Finally, by 2001 the City began initial planning stages to develop the Graffiti Management Program. It surveyed graffiti on private property to determine how many properties had graffiti; it continued conducting outreach to communities to ensure their involvement in removal activities; it planned and executed fifteen City sanctioned murals; and began preparations for a public consultation process to learn how the public perceives graffiti and what should be done about it.¹⁰ The public consultation process did not attract as many residents as initially hoped; yet it did reveal the following points:

- Graffiti is only acceptable under limited, predetermined conditions such as free walls and murals
- Stronger penalties should be implemented for those caught doing graffiti
- The public and private sector should work together to reduce graffiti levels quickly¹¹

⁷ R, Birch. "Administrative Report." Council Report, City of Vancouver, July 23, 2001. RTS No.2202

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ R, Birch. "Administrative Report." Council Report, City of Vancouver, April 9, 2002. RTS No.02578

¹¹ Ibid

Evidently, a number of residents were concerned about the increasing levels of graffiti in their neighborhoods and wanted the City to take the lead in resolving the problem. The City responded to this in 2002 by revising the Graffiti Bylaw, giving property owners only ten days to remove graffiti; by increasing the fine for anyone caught doing graffiti to \$500 - \$2000; and by establishing the Graffiti Management Program.¹²

¹² Ibid

THE GRAFFITI MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

In April 2002, the Department of Engineering Services developed the Graffiti Management Program (GMP) in consultation with other City departments, such as Community Services, the Park Board and the Vancouver Police Department. The program dramatically expands upon previous initiatives because it seeks to coordinate and support the graffiti reduction efforts of other city departments, communities, schools and businesses throughout Vancouver, under one comprehensive program. In this way it seeks to utilize the energy and commitment illustrated by all these groups to drastically reduce graffiti levels. The GMP is modeled on other successful anti-graffiti programs, mostly from the United States, that also emphasize merging prevention, education and enforcement strategies to create an extensive program.¹³

Logic Model and Program Description

Logic models provide a visual representation of what a program does and how it is structured. The GMP's logic model (See Appendix A) reveals the program's four *program components*: Removal from Public Property; Removal from Private Property; Education and Prevention and enforcement with the Anti-Graffiti Unit. Each component is followed by various *implementation objectives* that list specific activities the component intends to accomplish. The first component, *Removal from Public Property*, intends to remove graffiti from public property through a contract with a graffiti removal company. The contract specifies certain routes the company must consistently monitor and how often this must be done. It is structured to ensure graffiti is removed from all visible public property throughout the City, which includes streetlights; poles; signs; buildings, bridges etc on a regular basis. The second component, *Removal from Private Property*, provides property owners with information on graffiti removal options and free paint twice a year so they can assume responsibility for removing graffiti quickly, consistently and within the ten day time limit stipulated by the Graffiti Bylaw. Thus a major objective of this component is to consistently enforce the Bylaw, to ensure property owners comply.¹⁴ The third component, *Education and Prevention*, includes a variety of objectives. First, it includes visiting schools across Vancouver to educate youth about how graffiti can be costly and why it presents problems for businesses and communities. Second, it involves providing unlimited paint supplies to communities and non-profit groups that want to organize community paint-outs or reduction programs in their area. Lastly, it seeks to work with businesses and communities to establish murals. Graffiti reduction initiatives and programs often promote establishing murals, because it is perceived that graffiti writers respect murals and will not tag a wall if a mural is on it. This being said, there is no empirical

¹³ Birch, Council Report, April 9 2002

¹⁴ T, Hammel. "Administrative Report." Council Report, City of Vancouver, July 8, 2003. RTS No.02730

evidence to confirm this perception. The *Anti-Graffiti Unit* comprises the fourth component, although it was established and is managed by the Vancouver Police Department (VPD), it is still regarded as a major component of the GMP. The Unit conducts various activities to reduce graffiti, from developing solid and reliable contacts within the graffiti subculture; to raising awareness within the VPD about graffiti; to investigating and charging graffiti suspects.¹⁵

As the logic model illustrates each set of *implementation objectives* leads to program *outputs*, which list specific work the program is intended to generate. The outputs are followed by *linking constructs*; which convey the transition steps that must occur in order for each output to reach the program's goals. The program's goals are divided into *short; medium and long-term outcomes* to reflect that all outcomes must be reached at different points and cannot realistically be achieved at the same time. This evaluation focuses on the program's short and medium-term outcomes, since its long-term outcomes would likely take years to achieve. Hence for the purposes of this evaluation, the program's intended outcomes are to reduce the amount of graffiti on public and private property.

Program Budget

To implement the program City Council approved additional temporary staff positions and additional resources. The program is structured to report back to Council every year in order to receive additional funding; it is not intended to receive continuous funding for three to five years, which is a more common timeline for programs. Thus, because it must report on results before funding is approved; it is expected to produce positive results within a short time-frame. Currently the program employs ten full time staff, which includes Clerical staff, Technical Assistants, an Anti-Graffiti Coordinator, a Property Use Inspector and two Officers from the police department's Anti-Graffiti Unit. The program's total budget for 2002/03 is **\$1, 263, 001**.¹⁶ The following table provides the budget allocation for each program component.

¹⁵ E, Miller. "Administrative Report." Council Report, City of Vancouver, July 7, 2003. RTS No.2731

¹⁶ Hammel, Council Report, July 8, 2003

TABLE 1.2 REMOVAL FROM PRIVATE PROPERTY BUDGET ALLOCATION

Activity		Amount
Contract – City	Contract	\$250,000
	Staff support (contract compliance)	\$27,300
Contract – Parks		\$100,000
Park Board Maintenance		\$125,000 ¹⁷
Garbage Container Enforcement	Staff support	\$18,400
	Recovery from garbage container permits	(\$18,400)
TOTAL BUDGET		\$502,300

TABLE 1.3 REMOVAL FROM PRIVATE PROPERTY

Activity		Amount
Free Paint/Removal Kits	Materials and supplies	\$80,000
	Staff support	\$22,500
Free Removal from Masonry on Heritage Buildings		\$50,000
Program Monitoring		\$27,300
Enforcement Staff		\$139,900
Paint Outs	Materials and supplies	\$50,000
	Staff support	\$16,267
TOTAL BUDGET		\$385,967

TABLE 1.4 EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

Activity		Amount
Mural program	Materials and supplies	\$40,000
	Staff support	\$16,267
Education	Materials and supplies	\$15,000
	Staff support	\$16,267
Outreach/Promotion		\$40,000
TOTAL BUDGET		\$127,534

TABLE 1.5 ANTI GRAFFITI UNIT

Activity	Amount
Training /Conferences	\$6000
Cellular Phone Air time	\$600
Vehicle Maintenance	\$4000
Vehicle Insurance	\$1000
Fuel	\$6000
2 Staff positions (paid by VPD)	\$140,000
TOTAL BUDGET	\$157,600

¹⁷ Part of historical Park Board building maintenance budget

TABLE 1.6 ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Activity	Amount
Anti-Graffiti Coordinator	\$55,100
General Clerical Support	\$22,500
Vehicle	\$12,000
TOTAL BUDGET	\$89,600

RESEARCH DESIGN

This evaluation employs a research design that relies on a mix of new information collected for the purposes of the report and existing data collected by the program. Qualitative information is gathered from the program's various stakeholders, which include: community groups; nonprofit organizations; private property owners; Business Improvement Associations (BIAs); Translink Security; graffiti writers; Vancouver City Councillors; and City staff. The wide variety of participants consulted ensures a balance of information is collected from individuals at City Hall and from the program's many clients.

Five interview guides were prepared, along with numerous letters and telephone scripts detailing how participants would be informed of the study and how participation would be secured.¹⁸ Once these tools were approved by the *Human Research Ethics Committee* at the University of Victoria, the data collection phase began. Participants were selected using information provided by the City; by other participants and from the internet. For the most part, participants were willing to contribute their thoughts and experiences, either through the phone or in-person. Altogether interviews and focus groups were conducted with fifty participants, in various locations throughout the City. All interviews and focus groups were conducted by one researcher; responses were recorded onto audio tape and subsequently transcribed. No participants received the questions prior to the interviews. The questions varied for each stakeholder group since each group is impacted by graffiti in distinctive ways; yet a theme throughout the interview guides was a focus on the program's outcomes and budget.

To increase the reliability and validity of the conclusions made, the qualitative data are triangulated with informal observations; quantitative data; and secondary sources of information. Two informal observations were conducted. The first involved observing a community paint-out at the Hastings North Community Policing Centre; the second involved observing how the Anti-Graffiti Unit conducts their activities. Quantitative information is analyzed using the GMP's existing database that tracks several variables; such as the percentage of private buildings marked with graffiti; or how many graffiti complaints have been made by the public since the program's implementation. Secondary sources of information are provided from a formative evaluation conducted by program staff in July 2003, which indicates a notable reduction of graffiti in different regions of Vancouver; and recommends implementing some new activities to improve program effectiveness.

¹⁸ See Appendix C and E

This research design is structured to enable a balanced analysis and to produce valid and credible recommendations. Yet, as with any qualitative research design there are some limitations. For instance, it was not possible to randomly select participants or to interview a larger number within the available time frame, for this reason participant responses may not reflect the collective views of each stakeholder group. Furthermore, because the research design and interview guides were developed in consultation with the program manager, this may have compromised the researcher's objectivity in determining what questions to include or who to speak to. This being said, the participation of the program manager has also increased the utility of the evaluation by ensuring interviews questions were relevant and meaningful.

The Graffiti Debate

A majority of the literature on graffiti presents different sides of the eternal debate: depicting graffiti as either a positive or a negative element of modern day society, structuring theories and framing arguments around this dichotomy. Literature that portrays graffiti as a positive element goes beyond the traditional argument that graffiti is attractive and colorful; as this is a subjective claim. Some of the literature assumes a historical approach, maintaining graffiti is a natural form of expression that has existed since the beginning of time, when graffiti appeared in the form of messages and pictures carved on cave walls.¹⁹ This view also asserts that throughout history “the graffiti artist expresses his fantasies; communicates his triumphs; vents his frustrations; proclaims his rebellion; (and) declares his propaganda,”²⁰ on the wall’s surface as a natural, *human* reaction to the outside world.

Meanwhile other pro-graffiti literature illustrates a normative approach, claiming graffiti contributes to the development of modern day society because it is the only form of communication for many individuals and groups who have no other outlet to express themselves.²¹ It asserts that within an increasingly complex and stratified society, those who do not have access to the media or cannot express themselves in the public in any way are forced to embrace graffiti. For these individuals the wall is a medium of necessity and is their communication with the outside world. As one graffiti writer claims: “I write, therefore I am.”²² This argument proceeds further to illustrate how graffiti originated in the impoverished neighborhoods of New York, with the explosion of ‘hip-hop’ culture in the early 1980s. It also depicts how graffiti began as a grass roots movement and grew into a powerful national movement that did not differentiate between writers of a different ethnicity; religion; political ideology; background or culture. During this time graffiti writers were depicted as romantics “trying to get their message out in a confused and mixed up world.”²³ As a result, movies and books on graffiti were made, where graffiti then expanded into an international movement. Here the literature also emphasizes the strength of the movement; how as an art form it embraced a wealth of new techniques and styles emanating from different corners of the globe; and has managed to evolve into an international movement without any assistance

¹⁹ Robert Reisner & Wechlser, Lorraine. Encyclopedia of Graffiti. Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc. New York, 1974: p.vi

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Bryan, Bob. *Graffiti Verite: read the writing on the wall*. Bryan World Productions, Los Angeles California, 1995

²² Reisner et al, p.xi

²³ Harriet et al, p.6

from governments, private companies or non-governmental organizations and funding agencies.²⁴

The majority of anti-graffiti literature presents graffiti as vandalism. It asserts that any kind of graffiti, whether it is piecing or tagging, drains the resources of cities by damaging publicly owned buildings, community facilities, infrastructure and businesses. Furthermore this literature maintains graffiti does not represent the voice of the 'under-dog' but is instead the result of "tactical play, boredom or ritualistic vandalism."²⁵ Yet the discussion does not end here, the literature also describes why graffiti produces such negative reactions from the public. Similar to the broken window theory described below, the literature maintains that graffiti sends a message to the public that no one is in control. Furthermore, graffiti seems to speak its own language to those within the subculture, as a result those not a part of the subculture are confused by the graffiti and do not understand the purpose behind it. The purpose behind other crimes may be clearer, where the goal is often to secure power, control or money; yet because the motivating factor behind graffiti is difficult to discern, it incites fear.²⁶ In this way, although the type of graffiti and severity of the damage may vary, it still negatively impacts the public and elicits public disapproval. Much of this literature maintains that constant and effective removals are the only way to eradicate graffiti; though at the same time observing graffiti is a "fact of urban life and can never be completely eradicated."²⁷ Furthermore some of the literature emphasizes the importance of establishing a positive relationship with graffiti writers; noting that promoting communication and mutual ties of interest between graffiti writers, City officials and security forces is the only way to reduce graffiti in the long-term.²⁸

The Broken Window Theory

Much literature on graffiti also often includes a debate on the Broken Window Theory. In 1982 the broken window theory was presented by James Wilson and George Kelling, in a now famous article from *The Atlantic Monthly*. At its most basic level, the theory asserts if a "window in a building is broken and left unrepaired, all the rest of the windows will soon be broken."²⁹ This is based on the idea that a single, broken window creates the impression within the community that nobody cares; and that breaking more windows will do no additional

²⁴ Harriet et al, p.10

²⁵ Monty L Christiansen. Vandalism Control Management for Parks and Recreation Areas. Venture Publishing, Pennsylvania State University; University Park, 1985: p.17

²⁶ Harriet et al, p.7

²⁷ Paul, Barker. "Be afraid, be very afraid...of gum on pavement and graffiti on the wall." *New Statesmen*. 11/18/2002, Vol.131 Issue 4614, p.23

²⁸ Harriet et al, p.11

²⁹ website: <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/crime/windows.htm>

harm. The theory is based on an experiment conducted in 1969, which tested whether disorder and crime are linked. In this experiment a car without license plates was parked with its hood up on a street in the Bronx, while a comparable car was parked on a street in Palo Alto, California. In the Bronx, within ten minutes of leaving the car it was attacked by people and within twenty-four hours, virtually everything of value was removed from the car. Meanwhile the car in California was untouched until the researcher smashed the car with a sledgehammer, “soon, passersby were joining in. Within a few hours, the car had been turned upside down and utterly destroyed.”³⁰ According to Wilson and Kelling this illustrates that untended property in any community can be vandalized if people perceive that ‘nobody cares,’ suggesting that even law-abiding individuals, who under normal circumstances would not dream of vandalizing someone else’s property, would do so under certain circumstances. Thus, the theory asserts that minor infractions such as graffiti, turnstile jumping in the subway and panhandling in the streets lower the social tone of a community and encourage perpetrators to advance to more violent activities, such as muggings, burglaries and so forth, thereby creating a culture of crime. Furthermore, Wilson and Kelling claim that graffiti provides a good example of how a minor crime can create a major crisis. Graffiti in a community indicates “an important public place is no longer under public control. If graffiti painters can attack cars with impunity then muggers may feel they can attack the people in those cars with equal impunity.”

In 1994 the Mayor of New York City at the time, Rudolph Giuliani, embraced the broken window theory as a means to secure order on city streets. He integrated the theory into the workings of the New York Police Department, implementing a policy known as *broken windows policing*.³¹ It is believed that after this policy was implemented, crime levels began decreasing. Thus the perception that targeting minor forms of disorder prevents more serious crimes from taking place, lead many cities across the United States to develop programs that target such behavior; such as anti-graffiti programs. These programs have also been developed in response to the negative costs graffiti incurs on businesses and communities; yet a major motivating factor has been the apparent success New York City has experienced from cracking down on minor crimes.³² Since the GMP is largely modeled on anti-graffiti programs from the US, the broken window theory also underlies its philosophy and structure.

Yet there are many critics of the broken window theory who claim that from a public policy perspective the theory has several flaws. First, they feel the theory focuses unwarranted

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ website: <http://www.law.uchicago.edu/news/harcourt-illusion.html>

³² website: <http://www.graffitiremovalpdx.org/aboutgrafwhy.html>

attention on those committing the minor crimes, such as graffiti writers or panhandlers. This may lead to giving graffiti writers a hard time; harassing pan-handlers; prosecuting turnstile jumpers vigorously; and in many ways indiscriminately rousting individuals that are poor.³³ As a result this infringes their civil liberties, not due to the crime itself but because of the more serious crime such disorderly conduct apparently creates. A second criticism is that although such minor forms of disorder, such as graffiti may be aesthetically unpleasant; there is no empirical evidence that they actually cause more serious crime. In fact according to Dr. Bernhard Harcourt, a key opponent of the theory:

“There's absolutely no good evidence that broken windows works...if you look at the social scientific evidence, there's no good evidence that disorder is connected to crime. If you factor in poverty and the stability of a neighborhood, all the correlations disappear. And if you look at the anecdotal evidence, there's no good evidence that it was the orderliness that was achieved through misdemeanor arrests in New York City that caused the drop in crime. We saw declines in crime across the country, across cities, major cities and many of them at the same if not greater levels than New York City.”³⁴

A final criticism made by opponents is that the theory creates two categories of people, the law abiders and the disorderly. Such categories do not reflect reality, because they are only created by theoretical frameworks such as the broken window theory; and that before graffiti writers, panhandlers or squeegee kids were classified in this way they may not have presented such a serious problem in the first place.³⁵

³³ ibid
³⁴ ibid
³⁵ ibid

QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

A variety of statistical data from each of the program's four components is collected. The data provides program staff and senior management with specific, nominal information on how each component is operating and what the associated costs are. This type of data is useful for measuring program performance because it provides information on essentially what the program is doing. For instance, it tracks the number of murals completed since September 2002 or the number of graffiti tags on private property. Yet this data only manages to establish trends, it does not explain why the program is performing in a certain way and does not clarify why certain variables, such as the number of murals completed, may have changed over time. In this way the data does not provide complete information on whether the program is in fact achieving its outcomes and reducing graffiti on public and private property. For this reason the following analysis considers information that can be extracted and highlights specific limitations each type of data contains. Table 1.7 illustrates the different kinds of statistical data collected for the GMP.

TABLE 1.7 STATISTICAL DATA COLLECTED FOR THE GRAFFITI MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

PROGRAM COMPONENT	DATA	SOURCE	DATE BEGAN COLLECTING	FREQUENCY
Removal from Public Property	Public Property Audits	Goodbye Graffiti Inc.	Sept.2002	monthly
		Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association	Sept.1998	
Removal from Private Property	Free Paint Vouchers	Program Staff	Sept.2002	monthly
	Murals			monthly & annually
	Private Property-Building Frontages			every 2 months
	Private Property-Laneways			
Education & Prevention	Graffiti Complaints	Program Staff	Sept.2002	monthly
	Community Paint-Outs			monthly & annually
Anti-Graffiti Unit	Suspect Database	Program Staff	Sept.2002	weekly & monthly

Public Property Audits

Goodbye Graffiti, the City's external graffiti removal company, reports the number of graffiti removals they conduct for the City each month. The report is categorized according to what material is removed, such as: spray bombs, ink markers, stickers, posters, wax crayon, etc. The information illustrates the number of removals conducted from September 2002 to October 2003, has slightly increased. This may reflect the number of graffiti markings on public property have also slightly increased, which would suggest a reduction of graffiti on public property has not occurred. However, a slight increase in removals may also indicate Goodbye Graffiti has become more efficient and timely with its removals, enabling it to conduct more removals than before suggesting a reduction of graffiti on public property may have still occurred. To confirm this more information from Goodbye Graffiti is required; such as whether the company has in fact increased its response rate. It is also necessary to analyze pre-program data. Goodbye Graffiti has been removing graffiti throughout Vancouver since January 1997; thus to accurately determine how the program has impacted graffiti on public property, the number of removals conducted each month before the program was implemented should be compared against the number of removals currently conducted.

The Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA) employs a group of individuals called the Downtown Ambassadors, who track graffiti on twenty different types of public property in the Downtown core. They report this information to program staff each month.³⁶ The data illustrates that from September 2002 to August 2003 there appears to be a general decrease of graffiti on poles, signs/posts, transit shelters and garbage cans; while graffiti on newsboxes appear to have increased in July and August. Overall, most areas heavily targeted by graffiti writers have experienced a general decrease in graffiti incidents during this time, considering the DVBIA has consistently monitored and reported incidents. Yet to determine whether this reduction is a result of the GMP, the number of graffiti incidents on public property in the Downtown core before the program was implemented must be compared against the current data.

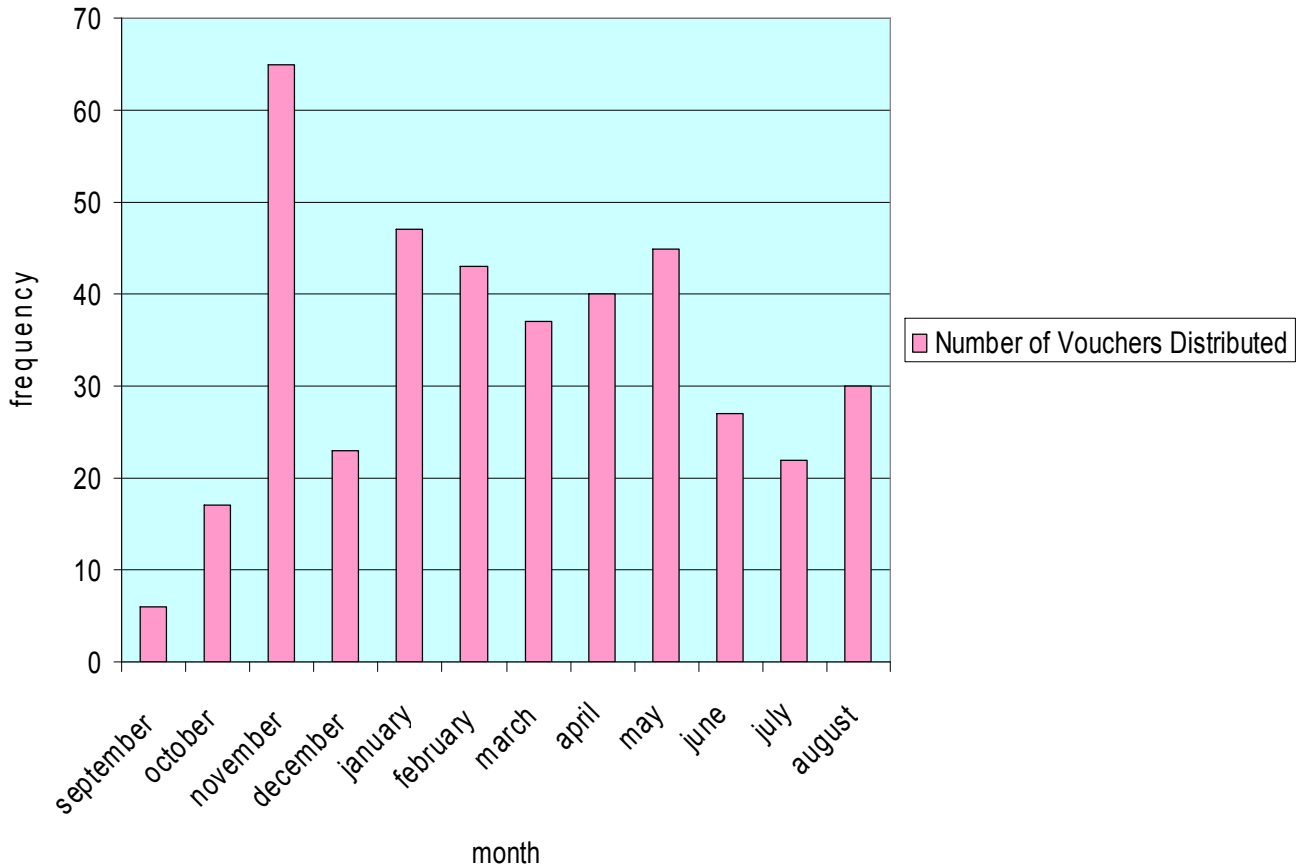
Free Paint Vouchers

To access the free paint kits property owners must first purchase free paint vouchers from City Hall, each voucher provides one kit. Program staff collect data on the number of vouchers issued per month. The following graph (Figure 1.0) suggests property owners have not purchased vouchers on a steady basis between September 2002 and August 2003. This is illustrated by the rise and decline in the number of vouchers issued per month. For instance, in October only seventeen vouchers were issued, which increased to sixty-five in November,

³⁶ This information is forwarded to Goodbye Graffiti to alert them to specific locations in the area.

declined to twenty-three in December and roughly continued a similar irregular pattern until August 2003. Furthermore, the chart indicates that only 402 vouchers have been purchased by property owners during this time period, an amount far smaller than the 1600 vouchers the program has made available.

FIGURE 1.0 DISTRIBUTION OF FREE PAINT VOUCHERS



There are various reasons that may explain why the free paint kits are not extensively used by property owners. Some owners may not be aware of the program and the free paint service provided; or some may not want to paint over the graffiti feeling it would only return. Yet it is also very likely that property owners are still removing graffiti without accessing the free paint, since some owners may have contracts with a graffiti removal company or some may simply remove graffiti using their own paint. Thus, it is difficult to accurately determine how the demand for free paint kits has impacted graffiti levels on private property with the available information.

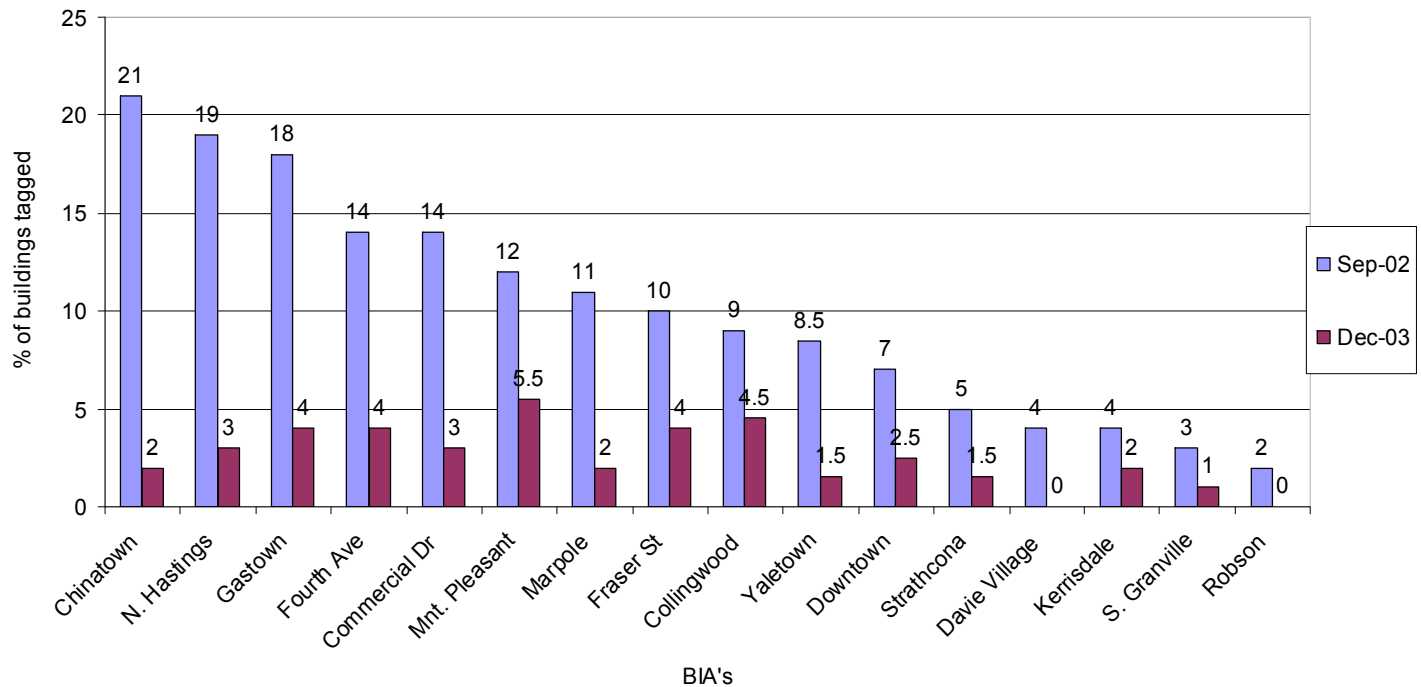
Murals

Program staff collect data on the number of murals established, focusing on the cost of each mural. Between September 2002 and August 2003 twenty-one murals have been completed with a total cost of \$21,894, which includes the cost of paint, permits and coating. Paint comprises the majority of costs for each mural, accounting for all the costs in 71% of the murals. Yet it is not clear whether the murals have reduced the amount of graffiti on public and private property due to several gaps in the collected data. First, the data do not indicate whether the mural was completed by a mainstream artist or a graffiti writer. To reduce graffiti it is critical murals are completed by graffiti writers rather than 'legitimate' free-lance artists; since participating in mural activities would assist graffiti writers to direct their talent in a more legitimate capacity, preventing them from tagging and doing illegal work. Second, the data do not indicate whether the mural has been tagged with graffiti since it was completed or if surrounding properties have experienced more or less graffiti. This would require more research on the part of program staff, but is an important piece of information to determine if a reduction has in fact occurred. Third, it would be useful if the data indicated the artist's name to illustrate whether most murals have been completed by a small number of artists or whether many artists have participated, since the number of individuals completing murals may impact graffiti levels in the City, especially in the long-term. Clearly, the number of murals established so far illustrates the program has been able to encourage property owners to put more murals on their walls; yet further information is required to determine whether this has led to a reduction in graffiti.

Private Property – Building Frontages

The GMP monitors graffiti levels on building frontages throughout Vancouver's Business Improvement Association (BIA) districts. It tracks graffiti levels in all eighteen BIA districts located in the City. This information is collected by first counting the number of private property buildings throughout the BIA districts, then counting the number of building frontages tagged with graffiti. The most recent data has been collected from September 2002 to December 2003, and is illustrated in Figure 1.1.

FIGURE 1.1 GRAFFITI ON BUILDING FRONTAGES BY BIA DISTRICT³⁷



Evidently, graffiti on building frontages in all BIA districts have sharply decreased within the fifteen month period. This provides some indication of program effectiveness; yet does not provide conclusive evidence, as the following limitations illustrate.

First, although the data indicates a reduction of graffiti on building frontages throughout all eighteen BIA districts in Vancouver, these districts do not encompass the entire City. Thus, although there are eighteen BIAs in Vancouver, each district comprises a relatively small geographical portion of the City and does not incorporate all private property buildings. (See Appendix F for a map of Vancouver's BIAs). This means there may be areas in the City where graffiti is accumulating, such as private property that falls outside the borders of BIA districts, which is not reflected by this data. It is not feasible for all building frontages throughout Vancouver to be monitored extensively given the program's available staff and resources; however tracking graffiti levels only in BIAs may reflect an incomplete picture of what the program has actually accomplished; thus there may be more or less graffiti on private property outside of business improvement areas.

Second, the data does not indicate the extent of the reduction achieved, as this depends on the amount of graffiti remaining on each building. Since only the number of buildings with

³⁷ Figure 1.2 provided by the GMP staff at the City of Vancouver

graffiti are tracked; and not the amount of graffiti itself, it is possible that different buildings may have varying levels of graffiti. For instance, if graffiti writers know that certain property owners remove graffiti quite quickly from the front of their building, they may not write on these buildings as often and as a result, graffiti may accumulate to a greater extent on other buildings. Yet information revealing to what degree graffiti levels may vary on each building, is not provided by the current data.

Third, this data does not indicate *why* graffiti levels on building frontages have decreased. The program may have played a direct role in reducing graffiti through increased enforcement of the Graffiti Bylaw; or due to an increase in the number of local commercial area contracts developed between BIAs and graffiti removal companies. For instance, the Strathcona BIA has maintained a contract with a graffiti removal company since early August and has consequently witnessed a major reduction of graffiti on building frontages.³⁸ A reduction could also be due to an increase in community paint-outs within certain BIA districts; for instance the North Hastings BIA, which has experienced a major reduction in graffiti levels on building frontages, also conducts regular community paint-outs on a monthly basis.³⁹ Yet it is also possible the program has played a more indirect role, whereas BIAs may be more proactive in reducing graffiti throughout their districts. BIAs are mandated to promote and improve the economic vitality of their district; thus they are often very proactive in keeping their districts clean and would likely make substantial efforts in reducing graffiti levels, more so than property owners in non-BIA areas of the City would. This illustrates there are various reasons why substantial reductions of graffiti on building frontages in BIA districts have occurred; yet because property owners in BIAs may be proactive, this also illustrates such reductions may not accurately reflect reductions achieved throughout the rest of the City. For instance, several BIAs such as Chinatown, North Hastings and Marpole, coordinate major efforts to reduce graffiti through individual graffiti reduction programs or initiatives.

Overall, similar to other data analyzed in this section, these data do not explain to what degree graffiti exists in non-BIA districts; in what capacity the graffiti remains (i.e. is there a lot on remaining buildings or just a few graffiti tags); and why a reduction in BIA districts has in fact occurred. For these reasons it is difficult to generalize these reductions and thus the program's effectiveness on private property, to the rest of Vancouver.

³⁸ Information on Strathcona secured from the Qualitative Findings

³⁹ The North Hastings BIA conducts the paint-outs in coordination with the Hastings North Community Policing Centre.

Private Property – Laneways

Beginning in September 2003, the program has also begun tracking graffiti levels in laneways, throughout the City's BIA districts. This data is collected in a similar manner as graffiti on building frontages, where the number of buildings in laneways are counted, followed by the number of buildings with graffiti. The data collected thus far illustrates a reduction of graffiti in a majority of laneways throughout the City's BIA districts. Yet this data is also subject to the same limitations described above, because it only reveals reductions in BIA districts and does not indicate why this reduction may have occurred. For instance, one possible cause for the reduction may be increased attention to graffiti in laneways by the City's Property Use Inspectors; while another reason may be increased attention to graffiti in laneways by BIA members, through community paint-outs or individual reduction initiatives. Overall, similar to the reasons described above, it is again difficult to generalize any reduction of graffiti in laneways achieved in BIA districts to the rest of the City.

Graffiti Complaints

The GMP collects data on the number of graffiti complaints made by the public each month, from September 2002 to August 2003. The public can report graffiti through the Graffiti Hotline, on-line through the program's website or directly at City Hall. The City responds to these complaints by removing graffiti on their property or by alerting property owners to the graffiti. The data illustrate the number of graffiti complaints on public and private property have generally increased during this period. This may reveal the public is becoming more aware of graffiti and is thus reporting incidents on a more consistent basis; or it may reveal an increase in graffiti incidents, since as more graffiti is visible, more people would be aware of it and more likely to report it. It is difficult to confirm exactly what has occurred, without analyzing more data of graffiti complaints before the program was implemented. To some extent this information is available, since the Graffiti Hotline began operating a few years before the GMP was implemented. Yet before the GMP, graffiti complaints were not consistently tracked and documented because there was no designated staff member to do this. Hence a major limitation in attributing any impacts to the program is that available pre-program data has been insufficiently documented and is unreliable, as the discrepancy in the total number of complaints made each year indicates:

- Pre- Graffiti Management Program Implementation

Sept. 2000 – Aug 2001: **328** complaints

Sept. 2001 – Aug 2002: **88** complaints

- Post- Graffiti Management Program Implementation

Sept. 2002 – Aug 2003: **2025** complaints

Community Paint-Outs

The GMP provides free, unlimited paint for communities to organize graffiti paint-outs in their area. The program tracks the total cost of paint-outs from September 2002 to August 2003, and tracks the total number of paint-outs conducted. The data indicate 39% of the twenty-three communities in Vancouver have participated in community paint-outs during this time period. Some communities conduct paint-outs on a monthly basis, while others conduct them once or twice a year. Overall, the data indicate the program has been able to encourage communities to organize paint-outs and to be proactive when it comes to removing graffiti. Yet more information is required to determine whether this has impacted graffiti levels; such as information on the number of paint-outs conducted by each community, which is not tracked. It would also be useful to monitor graffiti levels in communities that do not conduct paint-outs against graffiti levels in communities that do, to illustrate the impact paint-outs may have on graffiti levels.

Data Limitations

As mentioned earlier, these data primarily provide performance measures and do not indicate whether the program has achieved its objectives. Yet there are four additional limitations in utilizing these data for the purposes of this evaluation. First, it appears the program tracks outputs that are fairly straightforward to measure instead of those that may provide more useful information. For instance, the program only tracks the number of murals completed without tracking the number of times murals are tagged; or the level of graffiti on surrounding buildings. Such information is more difficult to collect, yet would indicate whether the program's mural activities have contributed to reducing graffiti. Second, the program may want to consider monitoring the level of program effort devoted to each activity, as it currently does not track such information. Thus, it may be beneficial for future evaluations and may add to the program's existing database, if specific data such as the number of program staff or the level of monetary resources devoted to a particular activity were tracked monthly, or every two to three months. This would enable program staff to determine whether the level of program effort or whether another variable is responsible for the observed outcomes of a particular activity. A third limitation is that it appears the program only tracks graffiti where it can be seen, whereas graffiti in alleyways, lanes and in the outer edges of the City are not monitored. Although program staff are now beginning to monitor graffiti levels in laneways, graffiti in the outer edges of the City should also be tracked on a regular basis. This is critical, since an increase of graffiti in these areas would suggest the program has only managed to push

graffiti to the less visible areas of the City. Last, a majority of the data have been collected since September 2002, five months after the program began implementation; thus using information during this period or before would strengthen any conclusions that can be made regarding program effectiveness. For these reasons the data cannot be utilized on its own to evaluate whether the program has achieved its goals. This means further information, such as qualitative data, must be collected in order to evaluate program effectiveness.

INFORMAL OBSERVATIONS

Hastings North Community Policing Centre

The following are observations of graffiti reduction initiatives at the Hastings North Community Policing Centre (HNCPC). The HNCPC conducts a *Graffiti Paint-Out and Cleanup Program*, which was developed largely in response to the GMP and its provision of unlimited paint supplies to communities. The Cleanup program also receives funding and support from the Hastings North Business Improvement Association (HNBIA); since the HNCPC and the HNBIA work together to collectively respond to graffiti and other issues facing the community. The Cleanup program conducts one community paint-out every month, usually on a Saturday. The program has two goals: to help the City reduce graffiti in the area and to encourage community residents, especially property owners, to become more involved and proactive in ensuring their community is safe, clean and attractive. Clean-ups focus on removing graffiti from businesses and alleyways, and residential homes if the graffiti is hateful or offensive. Overall it appears the Cleanup program has been very effective in consistently removing graffiti, as volunteers and residents notice a visible reduction in graffiti throughout the community.

Two factors contribute to the success of the community's program. First, securing buy-in from residents and property owners, which initially involved visiting businesses and obtaining written consent from the owners. Second, attracting a large number of volunteers to participate in the paint-outs. For each paint-out there is often between ten to twenty volunteers, though there is a core group of six or seven volunteers whom even do spot-checks for graffiti during the week. Volunteers usually learn about the program through word of mouth and without any advertising on the part of the community. Volunteers reflect various ages and come from a variety of different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds. Overall, they appear to enjoy participating in the community paint-outs because they can immediately see the outcomes of the work they are doing.

Anti-Graffiti Unit

The following are observations from spending an evening with the VPD's Anti-Graffiti Unit. The account is written in the first person, as this is most conducive to illustrate the insights gained. The evening began by taking a drive around the City; where we spotted graffiti tags on a number of buildings. The tags looked like huge letters, some in color, sprawled across the buildings, usually facing an alley and not visible from the street. The Unit could immediately recognize the tag name, even though to me it was extremely illegible; and could connect this tag name with the graffiti writer's real name. They could even recount who the writer is friends with, his/her age and where he/she tends to do graffiti. We then drove to the skateboard/bike

tunnel at the end of Hastings Street, known as Leeds Tunnel. The tunnel is named after an infamous graffiti writer that frequented and painted graffiti in the tunnel's cement bowl. Every inch of the tunnel was covered in graffiti; it looked very busy, colorful and exciting. It was difficult to imagine where such energy, passion and dedication to graffiti, reflected on the tunnel walls, would be directed if the tunnel was not available for this purpose. This being said, there was some graffiti 'leaking' onto the white wall outside the tunnel. Residents and City officials have had problems preventing graffiti from leaking in the past; and is why the City has not sanctioned the tunnel as a free wall for graffiti writers to use at their discretion. Next we drove to one of Vancouver's Skytrain stations, where there was visible graffiti on the businesses along the Skytrain route. Evidently, some property owners were consistently removing the graffiti; while others let it accumulate, attracting more graffiti.

Lastly, we went to a venue in the Commercial drive area that is a regular 'hang-out' for graffiti writers. The place was teeming with youth, most dressed in baggy pants and baseball hats. The Unit could recognize which youth were practicing graffiti writers and those that are no longer doing graffiti. Although the youth were definitely aware of the Unit's presence, they were likely not aware the Unit has such knowledge and intelligence about the graffiti subculture. Overall, my excursion with the Anti-Graffiti Unit illustrated how committed the Officers are to reducing graffiti; and how much knowledge they have collected and utilized within the past year and a half. It also enabled me to view the two elements of graffiti: the constant tagging that frustrates property owners and businesses; and the piecing with its impressive artwork, color and imagination.

QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

Participants from several stakeholder groups were interviewed to provide qualitative data on the outcomes of the program, these groups include: community volunteers and non-profit organizations; private property owners of street level businesses; representatives from Business Improvement Associations; representatives from Translink Security; graffiti writers; Vancouver City Councillors and City staff from the Department of Engineering Services; Park Board; Community Services; Property Administration/Management and the Vancouver Police Department. The following table (Table 1.8) presents a summary of the findings, illustrating how the majority of participants feel towards the program's achievement of its outcomes; its main activities; and whether the program's budget should remain the same or be altered. Appendix B provides a complete version of the findings.

TABLE 1.8 SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANT FINDINGS: MAJORITY RESPONSE ON KEY ISSUES

PARTICIPANTS							
	COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS & NON PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS	PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS	BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATIONS	SECURITY & ENFORCEMENT	GRAFFITI WRITERS	CITY COUNCILLORS	CITY STAFF
Program Outcomes	Program has reduced graffiti on public & private property; whereas some communities have experienced greater reduction than others in regards to private property	Uncertain whether program reduced graffiti on public property; though feel no major reduction on private property	Program has achieved visible reduction on public property; though only to varying degrees on private property	Program has achieved "total reduction" on public property; yet reduced graffiti to varying degrees on private property	Program has reduced graffiti throughout the City; but graffiti will never be truly eliminated and program goals never fully reached because the graffiti movement is too strong	Program has achieved a reduction throughout Vancouver; but uncertain as to the level of reduction that has occurred or whether it will remain in the long-term	Program has generally reduced graffiti on public and private property; yet still considerable graffiti on private property in certain areas
Graffiti Bylaw	Bylaw is selectively enforced in certain areas of the City	Unaware of the Bylaw and of the program; have not received information or assistance from program staff	Consistently enforced, in person and through distribution of letters	Unsure; but assume it is being enforced consistently	Do not understand the Bylaw; feel it makes life harder for property owners and not graffiti writers	no comment	Bylaw not consistently & aggressively enforced
Murals	Unaware of the program's mural activities; though support the establishment of murals	Unaware of the program's mural activities but want to see more murals established	Unaware of this activity's details; would like to learn more and to see more murals	No comment	Have several problems with this activity; feel it does not assist them or respond to their needs in any way	No comment	Mural activities have been effective in reducing graffiti
Public Awareness	No impact; requires further efforts by staff	No impact on public awareness; no impact on actions of graffiti writers	Public is now more aware of graffiti as vandalism; program has shifted their perception	No huge impact; requires further efforts by staff	Program is making the public feel more scared and angered towards graffiti	Program has not impacted or shifted public awareness; for different reasons	No impact; requires further efforts by staff; for a variety of reasons; some unrelated to program effectiveness

PARTICIPANTS							
	COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS & NON PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS	PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS	BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATIONS	SECURITY & ENFORCEMENT	GRAFFITI WRITERS	CITY COUNCILLORS	CITY STAFF
VPD Unit	Applaud the work of the Anti-Graffiti Unit; but feel the Unit should advertise their results more	Want to see more VPD officers arresting and charging more graffiti suspects	Applaud the work of the Anti-Graffiti Unit; enjoy working with them	Applaud the work of the Anti-Graffiti Unit, feel the Unit is working very hard	Do not have much knowledge about the Unit; though feel more enforcement measures will produce few results	Feel the Unit is reaching out to the subculture; & educating City staff	Applaud the work of the Anti-Graffiti Unit; enjoy working with them
Program Budget	Should be increased or remain the same	Want to see more resources to enforcement	Should be increased or remain the same	Should be increased or remain the same	Impartial, but would like to see funding for more free outlets	Budget should be reduced in major ways	SPLIT: Should be increased or remain the same VS Budget should be reduced in major ways

Data Limitations

As the above table illustrates, the interviews and focus groups conducted with participants encourages discussion and the free flow of ideas on the GMP, in ways that may not occur with a random survey or questionnaire. Yet the qualitative findings that emerge from this research are also subject to some limitations. First, as individuals are often influenced by their surroundings and experiences; in any program evaluation participant responses will inevitably incur a certain level of personal bias. This means the perceptions about graffiti and the success of the GMP conveyed by participants are influenced by a variety of factors; such as whether participants are the ones writing graffiti; whether they are property owners and are frustrated by seeing graffiti on their property; whether they are directly impacted by graffiti in their community; or whether they are responsible for implementing the program. Second, since participants were not randomly selected and only a handful of participants from each stakeholder group participated in the evaluation, the views expressed here may or may not accurately reflect the dominant views of each stakeholder group. This is not to say the information is not valuable, only that such data may fairly; and not accurately, represent each stakeholder group. A third limitation is that often, in collecting qualitative data the researcher is often the principle measuring instrument, aside from the interview or focus group guide being used. This means the observations, interactions and transcriptions performed by the evaluator, also influence the findings that emerge from the research.⁴⁰ Finally, a common limitation in using qualitative data is the possibility that the feelings, ideas and responses of participants may be influenced by the nature of the issue itself. Hence, participants may be especially vocal, critical or concerned about graffiti, in ways which they may normally not be, due to the political visibility of graffiti or due to any special media attention it may have recently received.

⁴⁰ Jim McDavid, "Program Evaluation." Module 5, p.11

EVALUATION OF PROGRAM OUTCOMES

An analysis of the qualitative findings indicates the Graffiti Management Program has achieved its outcomes to reduce graffiti on public and private property throughout the City. This reflects a tremendous accomplishment, considering the program has only been operating for less than two years. Yet a majority of participants claim graffiti has been reduced to varying degrees on private property, as illustrated in Table 1.8, observing more reductions in certain areas of the City than in others. Because the qualitative findings paint a clear picture of where reductions have been strong (public property) and where they may be less comprehensive (private property), it is important to determine why this may have occurred. The following does this by analyzing what the program has achieved, taking a closer look at the program's achievement of its short-term outcomes, using the qualitative and quantitative findings.

Short-term Outcomes

According to the program's logic model, an achievement of the program's short-term outcomes should result in an achievement of its medium-term outcomes to reduce graffiti on public and private property.⁴¹ To confirm whether the program has achieved its short-term outcomes, a detailed analysis is provided in Appendix D. The analysis utilizes the qualitative and quantitative findings, indicating the GMP has achieved a majority of its short-term outcomes, such as increasing the number of communities and non-profit organizations that proactively remove graffiti or increasing the number of schools that receive educational sessions on graffiti. Yet the analysis also suggests the program does not appear to have achieved two short-term outcomes in particular, as illustrated in the following table (Table 1.9). These outcomes are 1) to enforce the Graffiti Bylaw and 2) to increase public awareness of graffiti.

⁴¹ See Appendix A for the program's logic model

TABLE 1.9 ASSESSMENT OF (TWO) SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

SHORT-TERM OUTCOME	DESCRIPTION	QUALITATIVE FINDINGS	QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS	OUTCOME NOT ACHIEVED
To enforce the Graffiti Bylaw	Enforcement of the Bylaw ensures property owners with graffiti on their buildings are educated on available removal options and comply with the Bylaw.	<p>Some participants feel program has successfully reached a large number of property owners and secured compliance with the Bylaw, noting compliance rate is 80%</p> <p>Yet a clear majority of participants feel the Bylaw is not consistently & broadly enforced; claiming the program has not reached a sufficient number of property owners, despite a compliance rate of 80%</p>	<p>Sept/02-Aug/03 small number of free paint kits distributed</p> <p>Sept/02-Dec/03 graffiti on building frontages & laneways in BIA districts have decreased substantially</p>	The qualitative findings suggest the Bylaw is not consistently enforced; whereas the quantitative findings provide insufficient data to confirm this. ⁴²
To increase the public's awareness of graffiti	The program seeks to increase public awareness through specific educational, promotional and outreach activities, since a public that is more aware about graffiti will likely contribute to and support reduction efforts.	<p>Some participants feel the program has increased public awareness through its various promotional and outreach activities.</p> <p>Yet a clear majority of participants feel public awareness has not increased, either because the program's outreach activities are not aggressive enough or because graffiti is not a "hot" public issue</p>	<p>Sept/02-Aug/03 number of graffiti complaints made by the public has generally increased</p>	The qualitative findings indicate public awareness has not increased; whereas the quantitative findings provide insufficient data to confirm this.

⁴² For more information of specific limitations, see the Quantitative Data section, pp 17

Table 1.9 reveals a majority of participants feel the Graffiti Bylaw has not been broadly enforced; and that public awareness of graffiti and the GMP has not increased. To investigate this further, the following analyzes the program's difficulty in achieving these short-term outcomes and how this may impact the program's achievement of its medium-term outcomes to reduce graffiti on public and private property. Interestingly, the analysis demonstrates that both short-term outcomes do not impact graffiti levels in the same way. This suggests one of the reasons participants note a more sporadic reduction of graffiti on private property may have more to do with enforcing the Graffiti Bylaw than increasing public awareness.

Graffiti Bylaw

Enforcement of the Graffiti Bylaw involves communicating with property owners and providing them with information and assistance regarding graffiti removal options. This 'soft' approach seeks to ensure compliance with the Bylaw by working with property owners rather than striking them with a fine for not removing graffiti within the stipulated ten-day period. This approach is important considering the sensitive nature of the problem, where property owners often feel quite victimized by the graffiti defacing their property and turn to the City for support.

The qualitative findings illustrate a majority of participants feel the program has not succeeded in reaching a large number of property owners or that enforcement efforts could improve in certain areas of the City. In this way the findings suggest enforcement of the Bylaw has not been consistently and broadly applied. Unfortunately, the quantitative data that relate to enforcement of the Bylaw provide insufficient information to confirm or explain the qualitative findings. For instance:

- The data reveal the number of free-paint kits (to assist in removing graffiti) purchased by property owners are far below the expected number and have even decreased since September 2002. This illustrates property owners are either not interested in using the kits or are not aware they are offered. Although it is difficult to determine why the free paint kits have not been extensively used; if property owners are not aware of them it may be because not enough property owners have learned of the kits through enforcement of the Bylaw, as they are expected to.
- The data reveals a 73% reduction of graffiti on building frontages in Business Improvement Association (BIA) districts throughout Vancouver, since September 2002. A reduction in these areas may be due to a consistent enforcement of the Graffiti

Bylaw; yet it may also be due to other program activities or due to efforts made outside the program, such as those made by BIA members themselves.⁴³

Evidently, the findings are not able to conclusively determine whether enforcement has actually been less comprehensive than anticipated. Yet such limitations do not prevent an analysis of why participants observe an inconsistent enforcement of the Bylaw. There are various plausible explanations. First, there may be limited resources available to enforce the Bylaw, which means enforcement must be conducted incrementally, focusing on certain areas of the City at a time. Second, enforcement staff may be making modest efforts at enforcing the Bylaw and reaching a large number of property owners. Third, there may be a stronger priority emanating from management to focus on enforcing other municipal bylaws, such as health and safety Bylaws, rather than the Graffiti Bylaw. Ultimately any of these scenarios may result in a less consistent and comprehensive enforcement of the Bylaw. In turn, this may result in a smaller reduction of graffiti on private property as observed by participants, since if many property owners throughout the City are still not aware of the Bylaw or of the program, they may not understand how consistent and timely removals of graffiti contribute to reducing the problem; and may leave graffiti on their property for longer periods of time. As a result, it appears improving enforcement of the Bylaw to be more consistent and broad would directly impact graffiti levels and would likely lead to a more balanced reduction of graffiti on private property.

Public Awareness

The program maintains a 'soft' approach towards increasing public awareness of graffiti and the GMP, where program activities focus on raising public awareness through education and outreach to communities and graffiti writers; rather than specifically targeting graffiti writers and fiercely advocating to eradicate graffiti. In this way the program's approach embraces Canada's non-confrontational values and attempts to balance the many different perceptions and attitudes the public maintains towards graffiti.

The qualitative findings reveal a majority of participants feel public awareness of graffiti has not increased. Though participants have diverging views on why this may have occurred, some participants feel the program has not conducted enough outreach by not aggressively promoting the issue to the public; while others claim that regardless of the program's efforts, graffiti is not an issue the public are interested in. The quantitative findings provide inconclusive data to confirm whether public awareness has not increased or to determine why this may have occurred. The data illustrates an increase in the number of graffiti complaints

⁴³ See the *Quantitative Data Analysis* section for more information.

made by the public; yet this does not indicate whether public awareness has increased since an increase in complaints may be due to an increase in the program's outreach activities or due to an increase in graffiti levels.⁴⁴

Although the qualitative findings indicate public awareness has not increased, this does not suggest the program should shift its current approach and aggressively conduct more outreach activities. Such efforts may make the public more aware of graffiti, yet due to the complex and political nature of graffiti, a public that is more cognizant of the issue may not necessarily result in more broad-based support for graffiti reduction. Thus, unlike the Graffiti Bylaw where strengthening efforts to enforce the Bylaw would lead to more graffiti reduction on private property, strengthening efforts to increase public awareness may not lead to more graffiti reduction. While the GMP's goal to increase awareness stems from the perception that a public more educated on how graffiti damages property and impacts communities will contribute more to reduction efforts; it is also possible that as individuals and interest groups are more aware of the issues surrounding graffiti, they may decide to support or campaign against graffiti far more vigorously than desired.

Raising awareness of an issue or a problem is a key component of many prevention programs; yet it may be that programs which benefit from increased public awareness are those dealing with less controversial issues. For instance, programs that seek to reduce drunk driving would benefit from increasing awareness of the negative impacts caused by drunk driving, since the public generally accepts drunk driving as a dangerous act that places the public at risk. Conversely, due to the controversial nature of graffiti, not all members or groups within the public are against it or want to see it reduced, which may ultimately complicate the program's efforts to reduce graffiti.

Considering the many complexities surrounding the issue of graffiti and public awareness, the program's current 'soft' approach may be ideal. In fact, because the link between increased public awareness and graffiti reduction appears to be a weak one, this raises the question of whether the program should even be focusing on public awareness. The program may benefit from focusing more on other short-term objectives that directly reduce graffiti levels, rather than on increasing public awareness. This may also assist the GMP in allocating resources towards program activities whose effectiveness can be more easily measured. It is difficult to determine whether activities to increase public awareness have been effective, due to the visible nature of the problem, where the public may be less or more aware of graffiti simply

⁴⁴ See Quantitative Data Analysis section for more details.

depending on whether there is less or more graffiti throughout the City; and not on whether the City's efforts in increasing awareness are more or less effective.

The Incongruence of the Qualitative & Quantitative Data

In analyzing the qualitative and quantitative findings to evaluate the program's achievement of its short-term and medium-term outcomes, it is clear that each data set do not reveal corresponding findings. As indicated in the above analysis, the qualitative findings suggest the program is not effectively achieving its short-term outcomes to enforce the Graffiti Bylaw and to increase public awareness; whereas the quantitative findings introduce the possibility that enforcement has been consistent and broad; and that public awareness has actually increased. There are a few reasons that may explain why incongruence between the data has occurred. First, it may be that either the qualitative or quantitative findings reflect an inaccurate or even, an erroneous picture of how the program and its components are actually performing. This could be due to the various limitations each type of data contains; upon where such limitations may distort how the program appears to be operating, from how it is actually operating.⁴⁵ Second, the incongruence may be a result of the amount of qualitative and quantitative data collected, perhaps if more participants from each stakeholder group were interviewed or if a more diverse set of statistical information was collected by the program, there may be more common points between the data.

Yet this being said the report tends to focus and generate more analysis on the qualitative findings. Primarily, this is because the limitations posed by the qualitative data appear to be far fewer and less extensive than those contained within the quantitative data. Furthermore, much effort has been made to ensure the qualitative findings are credible throughout the data collection phase, such as using specific measurement tools and seeking input from a wide variety of groups; whereas similar efforts could not have been made with the quantitative data, as this information has been previously collected by the program.

⁴⁵ For limitations of the quantitative data, see pp 28, for limitations of the qualitative data, see pp 35.

Eradication & Prevention

The program utilizes both eradication and prevention policies to reduce graffiti, which is a major strength of the program. However it appears a majority of reductions achieved so far are due to eradication, precisely because eradication produces visible results in the short-term, whereas prevention produces more permanent results in the long-term.

Eradication seeks to reduce graffiti through consistent monitoring and timely removals. This results in reducing graffiti in a very short amount of time; yet because eradication focuses on removing graffiti and not on the source of graffiti (i.e. working with the graffiti writer), the monitoring and removal of graffiti must remain constant otherwise the graffiti will soon return. Hence, to maintain a constant eradication regime requires a major financial investment and since not every region or building owner throughout the City can afford such resources devoted to graffiti removal, eradication is often only conducted in specific areas, for a specific amount of time. For instance, eradication has been successful in extensively reducing graffiti on public property through the City's contract with a graffiti removal company; which focuses on consistent monitoring and removals of graffiti at an annual cost of \$250,000.⁴⁶ Meanwhile only some clusters of private property can devote the time and resources to effectively implement an eradication regime; which perhaps illustrates why graffiti reduction on private property has not been as widespread as that on public property.

Prevention policies can achieve a more balanced reduction than eradication policies, because prevention seeks to address the root of the problem by communicating and working directly with program stakeholders (i.e.: youth, graffiti writers, community volunteers, property owners). For instance, the program's focus on educating youth and graffiti writers about graffiti and the problems it can create, aims to shift perceptions and attitudes towards graffiti amongst those who are doing or thinking about doing graffiti. Furthermore, reductions achieved through such prevention activities are more effective than reductions achieved through eradication, as new attitudes towards graffiti are eventually embraced by younger generations of would-be writers. It has been argued that eradicating graffiti also works at preventing it since graffiti writers are less likely to do graffiti on a building or in an area where graffiti is quickly and consistently removed. Yet ensuring graffiti is consistently removed still requires a vigilant eradication regime and does not involve working directly with graffiti writers; thus any 'prevention' achieved through eradication is only temporary. Overall, although the program implements several prevention type activities, because the outcome of such activities will take

⁴⁶ Birch, R. "Administrative Report." Council Report, City of Vancouver, April 9, 2002. RTS No.02578. This amount is also subject to be reduced within 2004.

much time to materialize, the widespread reductions of graffiti they produce may not yet be visible.

Conclusion

The above analysis answers many important questions about the effectiveness and success of the GMP. It indicates the GMP has achieved its objectives to reduce graffiti on public and private property, though it appears this reduction varies from public to private property and from some areas throughout the City to others. To determine why a less comprehensive reduction has occurred on private property, an analysis of the program's short-term objectives was conducted. The analysis reveals two things. First, the program's difficulty in enforcing the Graffiti Bylaw as observed by participants, may impact graffiti reductions on private property. As a result, improving enforcement of the Bylaw to be more consistent and broad would perhaps lead to a more balanced reduction of graffiti on private property. Second, the program's difficulty in increasing public awareness, as observed by participants, may not affect graffiti reductions in an observable way. Furthermore, increasing awareness may even impede the program's efforts in reducing graffiti; thus the program would likely benefit in maintaining its current 'soft' approach towards public awareness or in reducing the level of priority attached to such activities. The above analysis also illustrates the majority of reductions achieved so far are due to eradication type activities, which produces more visible, location-specific reductions than prevention related activities. This may explain why participants note smaller reductions of graffiti on private property, in certain parts of the City.

ATTRIBUTION

In any program evaluation the question of attribution must be addressed, which means it is important to determine whether the program being evaluated *caused* the observed outcomes.

To do so, the following conditions of causality must be kept in mind:

1. The GMP occurred before the observed reduction in graffiti levels occurred.
2. The GMP co-varied with the observed reduction in graffiti, so that when program outputs occurred, the expected outcomes tended to occur.
3. There are no other plausible rival explanations for the observed reduction in graffiti, other than the GMP.⁴⁷

In regards to the first and second conditions, the qualitative findings suggest participants observe the GMP occurred *before* a reduction in graffiti levels occurred; and that more specifically, program outputs occurred when the program's expected outcomes tended to occur. However in regards to the third condition, it appears there may be other plausible reasons for the reduction in graffiti levels, such as previous graffiti reduction initiatives implemented by the City and efforts made by external organizations. The City began developing programs and initiatives to reduce graffiti in 1993. Since then various types of anti-graffiti programs have been developed and implemented. For instance, as mentioned earlier in 1998 the City established the *Graffiti Abatement Program*; it also began requiring publishers to remove graffiti from newsboxes within three days, and in 2001 Council approved a \$20,000 pilot program to provide free paint to property owners. Thus, even if graffiti levels were not visibly reduced as a result of these efforts, they still contributed to securing participation from communities; building partnerships; and increasing awareness of graffiti, all of which impact the GMP's objective to reduce graffiti.

External factors may have also contributed to the program's observed outcomes, such as the variety of graffiti reduction programs and initiatives conducted by BIAs, communities and non-profit organizations across Vancouver. In fact, the qualitative findings illustrate BIAs and communities have played an instrumental role in reducing graffiti levels in their surrounding areas, through actively distributing removal options to property owners; conducting paint-outs or in some cases tracking graffiti on private and public property. Yet it is difficult to decipher how many groups were operating such initiatives before the GMP was implemented, since many of these groups are currently involved in graffiti reduction as a result of the program's support and supply of paint and associated resources.

⁴⁷ Jim McDavid, "Program Evaluation." Module 1, p.23

Overall it is difficult to definitively resolve the attribution question and to determine whether the GMP alone caused the observed reduction in graffiti levels without collecting more quantitative data on graffiti levels before the program was implemented; and more qualitative data that would confirm how the occurrence of the program's specific outputs may have resulted in reducing graffiti levels. This being said, an inability to fully resolve the issue of attribution should not detract from the fact that the program appears to have reached many of its objectives and has played a principal role in reducing graffiti levels throughout Vancouver.

EVALUATION OF PROGRAM BUDGET

As mentioned in the beginning of this report, a key element of summative evaluations is determining whether a program should continue with its current level of funding or if its budget should be adjusted. Although the GMP has achieved its intended objectives, it is still important to critically evaluate whether the program's budget should be altered.

One way to evaluate the budget is to examine the cost-effectiveness of each program component. This can be done by developing quantitative cost ratios; for instance, to assess the cost effectiveness of the program's *Education and Prevention* component cost ratios can be developed that compare the number of murals completed against the cost of conducting mural activities. Such an analysis would illustrate a clear picture of whether or not program components are cost-effective. Yet while there is adequate data available to develop such ratios in some cases, for the most part further information must be gathered on the number of outputs produced by each program component; and further information must be collected to determine whether these outputs have led to the observed outcomes.

Recognizing these constraints a qualitative analysis is undertaken to evaluate the program's budget, by comparing benefits and costs the program creates for Vancouver residents. This analysis does not have the precision of a formal cost-effectiveness or cost-benefit analysis but does draw attention to program costs in relation to perceived benefits. Thus, it is intended that data from participant interviews; along with an analysis of City Council priorities and the City's current budgetary position will assist in determining whether the program's budget should be reduced, increased or if it should remain the same.

Qualitative Analysis

Perceived Benefits

The findings illustrate many participants feel the GMP produces several benefits for Vancouver residents, through its cooperation and communication with different groups that are impacted by graffiti and through its various program activities. For instance, participants observe the City's willingness to support communities in reducing graffiti encourages volunteers to participate and increases levels of civic pride and responsibility. Thus, from this perspective stronger communities equals a more vibrant and cohesive City, benefiting all Vancouver residents. Furthermore, according to the program's philosophy, a reduction in graffiti levels would ideally lead to the following benefits:

- increase in property values throughout Vancouver
- increase in the number of tourists that visit Vancouver
- increase in public enjoyment of Vancouver's public spaces
- reduction in urban crime rates & decay throughout the City
- increase in quality of life for Vancouver residents
- improvement in City's overall reputation

However not all participants feel this way; a minority of participants feel that only certain residents would benefit from reduced graffiti levels, such as: property owners; BIAs; individuals that work in or own street-level businesses; and communities that have high levels of graffiti. Thus, some participants feel benefits created by reduced graffiti levels may not be enjoyed by the public at large.

Program Costs

The annual dollar amount required to operate the GMP is \$1.2 million (M). The findings illustrate that a majority of participants feel budget reductions would negatively impact residents and are vehemently against any reductions to the program. They feel program costs are not that high; or that such costs are justified when compared with the social and financial cost graffiti incurs upon property owners; communities and businesses. Meanwhile a minority of participants, mainly from within City Hall, feel program costs are too high and are far too much to be spending on graffiti reduction, claiming much of the program's resources and staff may be better utilized elsewhere. Furthermore, they claim that because graffiti does not pose any significant danger or threat to the general public, it does not warrant spending so many resources.

Council Priorities

Vancouver's current City Council was elected in November, 2002. The Council is comprised of one Mayor and ten Councillors.⁴⁸ The Mayor and a majority of Councillors represent the Coalition of Progressive Electors (COPE), which is ideologically speaking, a left of centre political organization. COPE members pride themselves on representing and promoting the interests of the 'people' as opposed to those of corporations and big business. A few members of Vancouver City Council are from another political organization that began in 1938, called Vancouver's Non-Partisan Association (NPA). NPA stands, ideologically

⁴⁸ website: <http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/ctyclerk/councilmembers.htm>

speaking, more on the right of the political spectrum, and is known for promoting the importance of fiscally responsible governments.⁴⁹

Currently there is a concern emanating from certain Councillors about the decreasing livability of Vancouver. They point to loud motorcycles, car alarms, illegal street vending, aggressive panhandlings and other minor disturbances that collectively frustrate and incite fear amongst residents, especially the more vulnerable members of society such as women, children and seniors. Directly connected to this issue is the concern that City Bylaws are not being effectively enforced, which is perceived to have led to the increase in offensive behavior and lawlessness on Vancouver's streets.⁵⁰ This suggests prevention programs such as the GMP may play an increasingly important role, as it contributes not only reducing graffiti but improving cleanliness and the general appearance of the City. In fact some Councillors have claimed the City should look to the GMP as a model of how other prevention programs should be structured, as it provides a "good example of how the City's effort to curb minor offences," such as graffiti, "can noticeably improve City life."⁵¹ Another indication that graffiti and similar minor crimes may become a priority for City Council is the recent report published by the *Vancouver Board of Trade*; which maintains "data for 2002 from the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation and Statistics Canada indicates Greater Vancouver now has the worst property crime rate among major metropolitan areas in Canada and the United States."⁵² This being said the concern to effectively deal with these disturbances and minor crimes emanates from the two NPA Councillors; which suggests it may or may not receive support from the Mayor and other City Councillors. Furthermore, Council has already indicated support for other programs in 2004, which include:

- **False Creek Flats Planning Study:** provide land use and transportation directions to address the impacts of competing demands from high-tech jobs, medical services, universities, port support, downtown support services and transportation
- **Creation of a Disability Management Division:** to manage and reduce sick leave usage at the City
- **Pesticide Program:** educational program to reduce residential pesticide use⁵³

⁴⁹ website: <http://www.npavancouver.ca/about.shtml>

⁵⁰ website: <http://www.npavancouver.ca/news2003/news01dec03.shtml>

⁵¹ website: <http://www.npavancouver.ca/news2003/news01dec03.shtml>

⁵² website: http://www.boardoftrade.com/vbot_page.asp?pageid=1119

⁵³ A, Klein. "Administrative Report." Council Report, City of Vancouver, October 31, 2003, RTS No.3608

Other issues are also a priority to Council and to the public, such as the Vancouver Police Department's request to fulfill long-term staffing requirements; and to secure funding for a Surveillance Team for Sexual High Risk Offenders.⁵⁴

Budget Position

Some Councillors have voiced major concerns regarding the City's budget, due to increased spending pressures forecast for 2004, they fear the City is spending far too much money on issues that fall outside the City's mandate, and is thus wasting resources on unnecessary initiatives and projects. Although such comments may be motivated by political rather than real, financial concerns, City staff also raise similar concerns reflected in the *Preliminary Estimates of the 2004 Operating Budget*, which was released in late November, 2003. The estimates are often developed early in the budget process to ensure Council can review them and begin the process of bringing the estimates into balance. For 2004, the estimates reveal a funding short-fall of \$21.9 million.⁵⁵ In the past Council has been able to balance increases in the operating budget with a property tax increase⁵⁶ in the range of local inflation. Yet staff claim doing so for the 2004 Operating Budget proves a real challenge for the following reasons:

- **New programs and services:** There are a number of new or increased expenditures related to programs and service approved by Council, of which the GMP is one of them.
- **Salary increases:** Collective agreements for most employee groups expired at the end of 2003, thus the wage provision is a significant driver since employment costs comprise more than 50% of operating expenditures.
- **Inflationary increases:** A variety of material, next to costs associated with salaries and benefits face inflationary pressures.
- **Costs of outside agencies:** Some organizations have increased their requisitions to the City for 2004, such as E-Comm for 9-1-1 radio and dispatch cost increases.
- **Costs associated with the Capital Program:** The Operating Budget makes payments to the Capital Plan, which is the City's three year plan for spending on infrastructure, buildings and major community support programs.
- **Cost of known priority initiatives:** Council has already indicated support for three major initiatives that have been included in the budget position; such as support costs

⁵⁴ Ibid

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Property taxes provide two-thirds of funding for the Operating Budget.

for 2010 Olympics; support for the Richmond/Airport – Vancouver Rapid Transit and the second phase of the Electoral Reform Process.⁵⁷

Overall, the *Estimates* maintain it will be very difficult to hold property tax increases to local inflation without affecting the delivery of programs and services in 2004. Thus despite the fact that Council recently approved a funding extension to the GMP in July 2003, it seems very likely City Council will consider reducing the GMP's budget for 2004. This may be done not only to balance the City's Operating Budget, but from a public policy perspective it ensures essential municipal services and programs are not negatively impacted and that the City's key role as a service provider is not compromised.

Conclusion

Overall, the above analysis reveals two main points. First, the qualitative findings reveal a majority of participants feel benefits produced by the program outweigh its costs, for this reason they are against any major reductions to the program's budget. Second, current budget demands facing Vancouver City Council imply the program's budget of \$1.2 million is too high for the City to maintain. Thus, in order to determine whether the program's budget should be adjusted, the interests of the program's external stakeholders and the needs of Vancouver City Council must be balanced. This means opportunities to reduce the program's budget should be seriously considered; while at the same time such reductions should seek to ensure that program effectiveness is not gravely compromised.

⁵⁷ Klein, Council Report, October 31, 2003

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are intended to strengthen certain areas of the program and to offer different ways of conducting certain program activities. The recommendations also suggest opportunities to reduce the budget.

RECOMMENDATION 1#: COLLECT MORE SPECIFIC QUANTITATIVE DATA

Rationale

As mentioned earlier, quantitative data currently collected by the program generates information on the overall performance of the program. Yet to provide more specific and useful information the data should be able to indicate *why* the program is operating in a certain way; and whether activities that are tracked, are in fact reducing graffiti.

Description

This recommendation seeks to improve data collected on murals, community paint outs and graffiti complaints, though such changes can also be extended to data collected from other program activities. For each program activity, recommendations are made to collect more information on the specific outputs produced and the level of program effort made. This would enable program staff to determine whether observed outcomes are a result of a change in the level or type of outputs produced; or a result of changes in program efforts contributed towards a single activity.

For murals, the program currently documents information on the number of murals completed since the program has been implemented (not per month) and provides a breakdown of the costs this activity generates per month. Hence, it may be useful to track the following on a monthly basis:

Outputs

- the number of murals completed
- whether the mural was completed by a graffiti writer or legitimate artist (which may indicate the degree to which the program is reaching out to writers within the graffiti subculture)
- whether the mural is a picture; design or lettering inspired by graffiti styles and methods (this may illustrate the influence of graffiti style art amongst artists throughout the City, and more importantly, whether pieces more graffiti-like are less or more susceptible to be tagged)
- whether it is on public or private property
- whether the mural has been tagged within a six month period

Program efforts

- number of (FTE) staff working on mural activities
- amount of budget allocated to this activity
- other resources devoted to this activity

The program currently collects data on costs incurred from providing supplies for community paint-outs, yet further information provided on a monthly basis would be helpful, such as:

Outputs

- the number of community paint-outs conducted per month
- the name of the community involved
- whether the community has a program in place to conduct regular, weekly or monthly paint-outs or if the paint-outs are conducted at random (staff could then inquire why some communities choose to conduct them at random; and can use this information to encourage communities to help each other develop regular paint-out community programs, as some communities have mentioned they are willing to do this)

Program efforts

- number of (FTE) staff working on promotion/implementing community paint-outs
- amount of budget allocated to this activity
- other resources devoted to this activity

The program also currently collects data on the number of graffiti complaints made by the public on a monthly basis; here it may be beneficial to also track the complaints more closely, by monitoring:

Outputs

- how the individual member of the public heard about the program, (such information would enable staff to know which outreach and promotion activities are perhaps making the biggest impact amongst the public)
- whether the complaint is a “design” or a “tag” (this could be differentiated to the public by asking if it is a picture/mural or an initial)
- staff could even ask the member how they feel about graffiti to gauge public interest on the issue (i.e. this could be done in a small survey: do they “strongly agree” “agree” or “disagree” that graffiti should be reduced throughout the City, etc)

Program efforts

- number of (FTE) staff working on education/outreach
- amount of budget allocated to this activity

- other resources devoted to this activity

Lastly, the program has recently begun to collect quantitative data on graffiti levels in the less visible areas of the City, such as laneways, this is definitely a positive development that should continue.

Cost/Resources

It is intended that such changes should not require more resources, although it is expected that program staff collecting and tracking this data may initially require more time to add new variables to the program's current database.

RECOMMENDATION #2: ENFORCE THE GRAFFITI BYLAW MORE CONSISTENTLY & BROADLY

Rationale

The Graffiti Bylaw is a very useful tool to reduce graffiti on private property by placing the responsibility of graffiti removal on property owners. However, like any rule the Bylaw can only be expected to shape behavior to the extent that it is enforced. The qualitative findings indicate a general concern amongst most participants that enforcement of the Bylaw should be more consistent and broad by reaching and educating a larger number of property owners throughout the City.

Description

There are two ways in which enforcement of the Bylaw can be more consistently and broadly enforced:

- First, encourage program staff to assist enforcement staff (Property Use Inspectors) by enabling them to distribute information on the program and graffiti removal options to property owners, when they are out liaising with BIAs, property owners and communities. Such efforts would be in addition to those made by enforcement staff; thus this could increase the level of awareness amongst property owners of the Bylaw and the GMP.
- Second, ensure all twenty-three Property Use Inspectors can enforce the Bylaw, when necessary. This does not suggest enforcement of the Bylaw must precede enforcing other City Bylaws that deal with health and safety issues; yet the priority level attached to the enforcement of the Graffiti Bylaw must reflect the consequences property owners pay for not complying, which in some cases can be quite high depending on the amount of graffiti. Thus, it may be helpful for management to place a priority on enforcing the Bylaw that closely reflects the need and expectations of program staff

and of the public. This could be achieved by having the Property Use Inspector responsible for enforcing the Graffiti Bylaw prepare training material so other Inspectors are aware of the issues and concerns regarding this Bylaw.

Cost/Resources

This recommendation does not require more resources; in fact it appears increased enforcement of the Bylaw can proceed with current or even fewer financial resources currently allocated. This can be done by making enforcement of the Graffiti Bylaw more of a priority; and by utilizing available resources, such as program staff and the twenty-three Property Use Inspectors that enforce the City's several other Bylaws.

RECOMMENDATION #3: INCREASE PROMOTION AND OUTREACH TO GRAFFITI WRITERS

Rationale

Establishing murals is an effective activity because it seeks to both prevent graffiti (by including writers in the activity) and eradicate graffiti (by establishing murals on bare walls). The qualitative findings illustrate graffiti writers feel the program has not succeeded in including them in its mural activities, in fact they suggest many barriers structured within the program that prevent them from participating.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, the quantitative findings indicate nearly half of all murals completed to date have been done by graffiti writers, showing the program is making efforts to include graffiti writers into its activities. Yet this suggests approximately 50% of murals are completed by legitimate, practicing artists rather than graffiti writers, which may not appear to be a major problem to residents or City staff, yet does pose a significant problem for graffiti writers, who are increasingly frustrated at having few to no outlets for them to do graffiti on. It is likely many graffiti writers may be afraid participation in the program would result in a criminal investigation, yet whether a lack of participation is due to the program's structure or fear on the part of graffiti writers, ultimately if graffiti writers are not participating 100%, writers lose the opportunity to utilize their skills in constructive and well accepted ways and the program loses out on establishing links with a key stakeholder. Furthermore, although it is widely perceived that murals are not often tagged, this is not a rule amongst graffiti writers; but a tradition of respect some may choose to follow. If graffiti writers feel neglected by certain elements of the program and targeted by others, this tradition of respect may not continue especially since more writers feel many murals are "unfairly" completed by legitimate artists participating in the GMP.

Description

⁵⁸ See Appendix B (Qualitative Findings) for more details of responses on this issue

The opportunity to participate in creating murals throughout the City could be more aggressively promoted to graffiti writers. Ensuring more writers participate in establishing murals will increase its legitimacy within the graffiti subculture. As one writer says “the more you have respected writers actually promoting it; the more respect youth will have for murals and the less they will get tagged.” Some ways to accomplish this include:

- Advertise opportunities to do murals in places where graffiti writers may frequent, such as at skateboard or bmx parks (i.e. Leeds Tunnel); or on graffiti websites (would require discussing options with owners of the site).
- Establish contacts with graffiti writers that have completed a mural for the City in the past; or through non-profit groups that work directly with graffiti writers (such as the Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society that works directly with graffiti writers).

It appears program staff may currently employ some of these strategies, thus this recommendation seeks to emphasize that it would be beneficial to continue with such strategies and also to try new strategies that would make the City’s presence more known within the graffiti subculture, in a positive manner. Specifically, the writers need to be assured that establishing murals through the GMP can be fun; it can enable them to market their skills; and does not mean the writers will face an investigation from the VPD’s Anti-Graffiti Unit.

Cost/Resources

This recommendation does not require additional resources, though does require time on the part of program staff responsible for coordinating murals.

RECOMMENDATION #4: WORK WITH BIAs, COMMUNITIES AND NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS TO RAISE AWARENESS AND CONDUCT OUTREACH

Rationale

The qualitative findings reveal that Business Improvement Associations (BIAs), communities and various non-profit organizations throughout the City possess a great deal of knowledge, resources and skills the program can utilize. Furthermore, each stakeholder group has indicated they are willing and able to work with the City on a variety of initiatives related to graffiti reduction.

Description

Currently the City is working with external organizations to a certain degree; thus this recommendation seeks to strengthen existing partnerships as well as build new ones. This

does not suggest downloading responsibilities from the City to BIAs; communities or non-profit groups; but instead suggests continuing to find opportunities to work together towards the common goal of graffiti reduction. Specifically:

- Program staff can work with these groups to increase awareness of the GMP and graffiti removal options amongst property owners. For instance, the *Downtown Ambassadors* from the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association have numerous contacts and a wealth of knowledge regarding the needs and concerns of property owners in the Downtown core; which may provide very useful information to program staff.
- The City can also partner with BIAs in order to communicate more effectively with property owners that speak English as a second language; since some BIAs have hired translators in order to communicate with their members more effectively; and may be willing to share resources with the City. Thus, in situations where language may present a communication barrier, both groups can approach property owners together.
- Program staff may also find it helpful to work more closely with external organizations to raise public awareness, since a majority of programs and initiatives conducted by communities and non-profit groups (and to some extent BIAs) focus on educating the public on different issues. Thus, these organizations are likely to have several ideas, skills and programs already in place to assist the City in ‘spreading the word’ about graffiti reduction.
- External groups can also assist the City in reaching out to graffiti writers, (as mentioned above in Recommendation #3).

Cost/Resources

This recommendation does not require additional resources. It may require an investment of more time in the initial phases of establishing partnerships on specific issues; however it is expected to save the program resources and time in the long-term.

RECOMMENDATION #5: PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES TO REDUCE THE BUDGET

Rationale

An analysis of the qualitative findings reveal there is a need within the City, considering the wide array of programs and services it provides to residents, to reduce the budget of the Graffiti Management Program. Furthermore, program staff suggest particular ways in which the budget can be reduced without negatively affecting the program’s ability to reach its outcomes, as illustrated in the findings.

Description

This recommendation provides the following opportunities to reduce the budget:

- Free Paint Kits are not being used as extensively as initially planned. The qualitative data indicates that because the kits are not being used very widely, some participants recommend its budget be reduced by at least \$20,000. It is perceived this will not have a negative effect on the ability of property owners to remove graffiti on their own; since this still leaves \$50,000 for the provision of free paint kits. Furthermore, the qualitative findings also indicate more local commercial areas are establishing contracts with graffiti removal companies as a means to keep their properties clean and may no longer require the free paint. These contracts serve as the ultimate solution, as they allocate costs to business areas instead of taxpayers having to subsidize graffiti removal. Hence, reducing the budget of the free paint kits should not negatively impact the program.
- The qualitative findings, specifically findings from interviews with City staff, suggest effective enforcement of the Bylaw can still be achieved with the removal of one clerical position, which was initially created to support the Graffiti Bylaw Inspector position. Hence, reducing the budget with the removal of this clerical position should not negatively impact the program.
- An analysis of the qualitative and quantitative findings suggest the program's short-term goal to increase public awareness may not result in assisting graffiti reduction, in fact such efforts may complicate the program's goal to reduce graffiti. Various reasons are provided as to why this may occur, the main reason is that graffiti appears to be a controversial issue, where there does not appear to be a clear link between increased public awareness and reduced graffiti levels. Hence, pursuing opportunities to reduce the program's outreach and promotion budget should not negatively impact the program.

CONCLUSION

The Graffiti Management Program has accomplished a great deal within the short time it has been operating. In addition to graffiti reduction; the program has also contributed to assisting property owners respond to graffiti; strengthening community driven efforts to reduce graffiti, increasing civic spirit and pride amongst volunteers; and educating youth and the general public about graffiti. Such achievements are all the more impressive because graffiti is such a highly controversial issue, creating as much debate amongst the public as it does real concern. In fact, because graffiti is viewed with frustration and confusion on the one side and admiration and appreciation on the other, it has historically created a complex policy issue for governments to deal with. As a result graffiti is most often narrowly defined by the political motivations and ideologies of governments that are left to deal with the issue. Some cities have responded by waging 'wars' against graffiti, banning spray paint to minors; devoting entire police squads to eliminating graffiti and pursuing public, criminal prosecutions against graffiti writers.⁵⁹ The GMP is quite unique in this regard because it has not ostracized graffiti writers; many writers accept the program's objectives; have taken the time to voice their concerns and still want to participate in program activities. Although the program clearly needs to work more closely with graffiti writers and property owners, its two key stakeholders, it has illustrated the ability so far to strike a balance; respond to the concerns of different groups across the City; and pursue the public interest. This exemplary track record indicates it has the capacity to continue producing positive outcomes in the future. As a result it is imperative the Graffiti Management Program continue operating within the City of Vancouver, while incorporating the few structural and budgetary changes recommended.

⁵⁹ Tom Black. "The handwriting's on the wall: Cities can win the graffiti war." *The American City and County*. Pittsfield: Mar 1997. Vol.112, Iss.3; p.23

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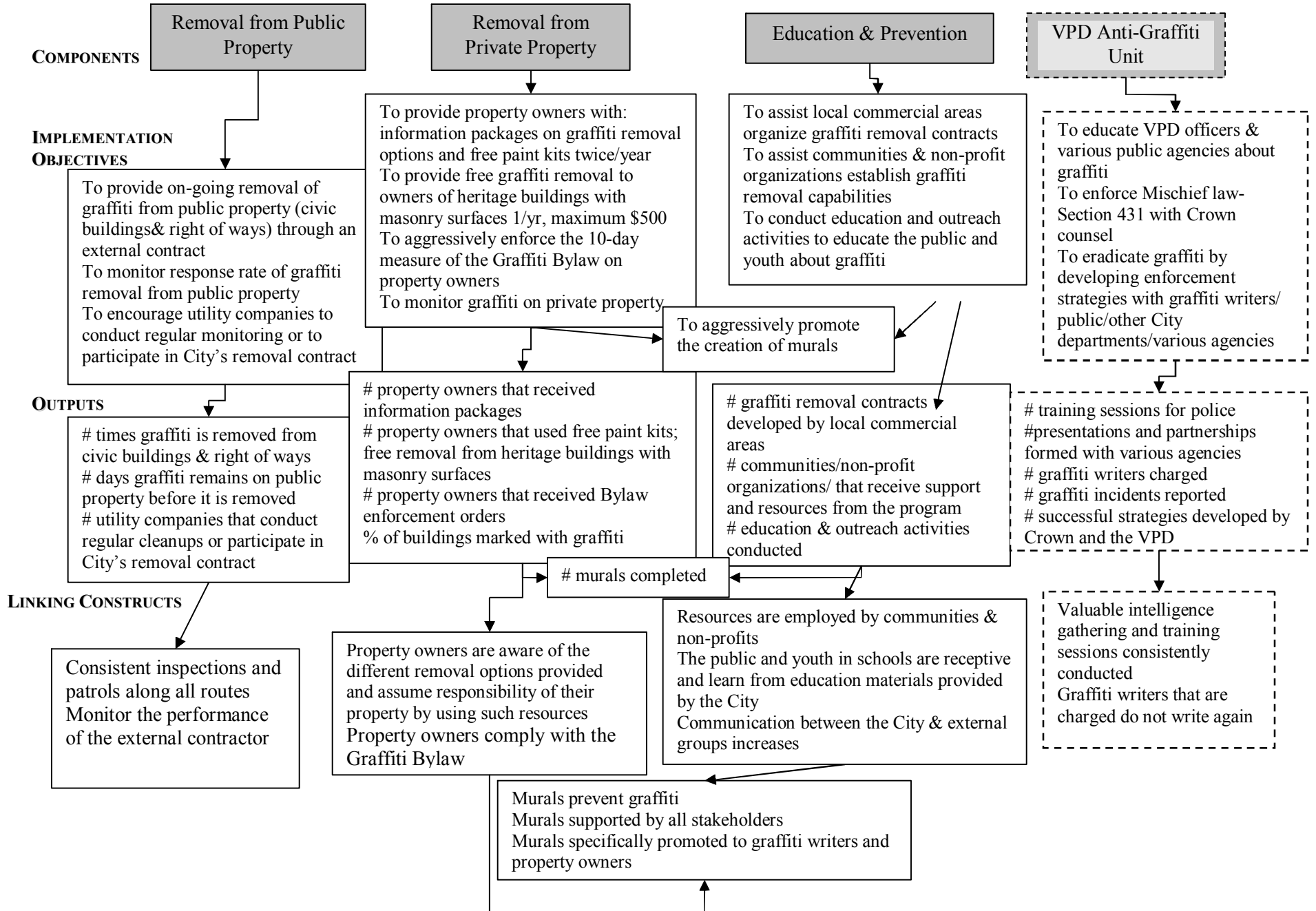
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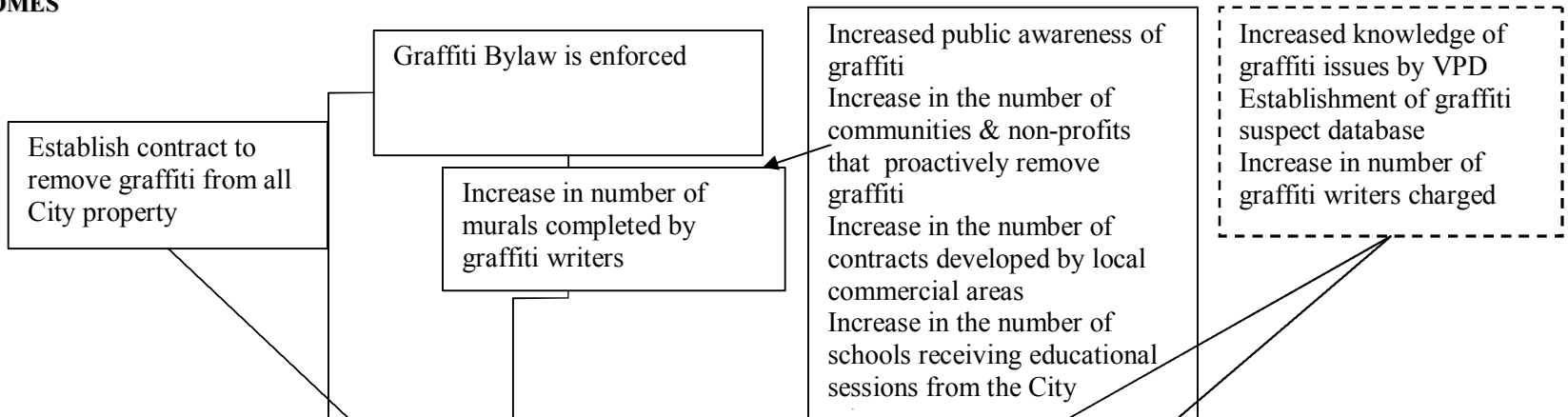
Appendix A

Program Logic Model

Figure 1: Logic Model
The Graffiti Management Program



**SHORT-TERM
OUTCOMES**



**MID-TERM
OUTCOMES**

Reduction of graffiti on private property

Reduction of graffiti on public property

**LONG-TERM
OUTCOMES**

Increase in public enjoyment of Vancouver's public spaces
Increase in #of tourists that visit Vancouver
Increase in property values throughout Vancouver
Reduction in urban crime rates & decay throughout the City
Reduction in tax dollars spent on removing graffiti
Increase in quality of life for Vancouver residents
Improvement in City's reputation

Appendix B

Qualitative Findings: Interviews with Participant Stakeholders

Community volunteers and non-Profit Organizations

Program Outcomes

Participants feel the GMP has reduced the amount of graffiti on public and private property; yet claim some communities have experienced a greater reduction in graffiti than others. They identify two reasons for this reduction. First, participants feel the program has responded to graffiti in a timely manner and has prevented graffiti writers from tagging through the program's education and enforcement activities. Yet they feel the task of reducing graffiti is huge and requires more time and resources to see a further, balanced reduction. Second, participants feel communities play a critical role in reducing graffiti levels; thus some communities are more proactive, larger and have more resources to engage in removal activities than others, resulting in a greater reduction in certain areas. For instance, the Hastings North Community has experienced a major reduction in graffiti and improved overall cleanliness because it is one of the larger communities with an active volunteer base. In fact, graffiti levels are so low the Hastings North Community is experiencing difficulties finding graffiti to paint over during paint-outs.

Support from GMP

Participants indicate the GMP's provision of paint and associated supplies to non-profit and community groups has been critical in encouraging such groups to proactively remove graffiti, especially for groups that conduct their own graffiti reduction programs. For instance, a non-profit organization called the Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society (PICS) operates a graffiti reduction program for unemployed youth.¹ The program relies on paint and associated supplies from the City to perform its main activity, which is developing murals. The Hastings North Community Policing Centre (HNCPC) also operates a graffiti reduction program and relies on supplies provided by the City to conduct its weekly graffiti patrols and monthly paint-outs.² Furthermore, participants claim GMP staff provide support by attending community paint outs on weekends;

¹ PICS operates an Arts and Culture Youth project which works with 10 unemployed youth, to reduce graffiti through the development of two murals within a six month period.

² The HNCPC operates a Graffiti Pain-out and Clean up program where volunteers conduct weekly patrols and monthly paint-outs.

meeting with community volunteers; identifying mural sites³ and attending PICS workshops to speak with youth about graffiti and the GMP.

Graffiti Bylaw

Some participants feel the Graffiti Bylaw is consistently enforced and that many property owners with graffiti are receiving enforcement letters from Property Use Inspectors at City Hall. Yet other participants feel the Bylaw is selectively enforced in certain areas of the City, which means some property owners may not be aware of the GMP and how it can help them. Apart from the issue of enforcing the Bylaw, participants identify two main challenges in working with property owners. First, the property owner may feel too busy to actively deal with the problem or to discuss it with City officials or community volunteers. Second, the property owner may not understand the graffiti reduction strategies available and may be afraid to paint over the graffiti, creating a “blank canvas” for more graffiti. Participants note such challenges often emanate from communication and cultural barriers where property owners may speak limited English or may not understand why the City or community volunteers are willing to help them remove graffiti; and may be skeptical of such assistance. Considering these challenges participants feel the City should be making more efforts to educate property owners of the GMP and resources available to them.

Public Awareness

Some participants feel the GMP has increased the public’s awareness of graffiti, while others feel an increase has not occurred and requires further efforts by the program. These participants feel “there is a lot of apathy from the public, because they still think graffiti is only a business problem and not a community problem.” Yet all participants feel they are making significant efforts to inform the public and “get the word out” with their community paint-outs and other graffiti reduction initiatives. Furthermore, some participants maintain they are also able to educate youth on the negative impacts graffiti can generate, “especially youth that are really hard to reach, which are often the ones doing the graffiti.” For instance, youth participating in the PICS program work closely with property owners and are able to see the frustration owners experience when their

³ Staff at PICS have completed 10 murals to date, between 2-3 mural sites have been identified by the City.

businesses are tagged with graffiti or when a mural they themselves have created gets tagged. In this way the youth learn that writing graffiti can be morally wrong and unfair to the victim.

Civic Pride

Participants feel the GMP has increased civic pride and community spirit, which they note is a major achievement. They observe that volunteers of various ages, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds are willing to participate in community paint-outs or patrols because such activities are enjoyable and produce clearly visible results. This results in a deeper appreciation for their community and encourages residents to volunteer in other activities that may also beautify and improve the community. Participants feel as property owners become more active and involved in graffiti reduction activities, they also become more engaged in their communities. Some participants have also observed youth are instilled with greater civic pride as they become more involved with graffiti reduction activities. For instance, youth participating in the PICS program feel a greater degree of civic spirit and responsibility by creating murals intended to cover graffiti and beautify their community. As one participant notes the youth no longer possess an “us VS them mentality, but a them is us and us is them mentality.”

Murals

The majority of participants interviewed are unaware of the GMP’s mural component, though express an interest to see more murals throughout Vancouver. They feel murals currently are often not tagged with graffiti and illicit positive feedback from residents. One participant notes that colorful murals in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside may uplift the community’s spirit.

Anti-Graffiti Unit

A majority of participants are aware of the work the Anti-Graffiti Unit of the VPD are doing, though many feel the Unit should be marketing the work they do to the public more regularly and should inform the public of any changes the Unit has made since its inception.

Program Budget

Participants maintain the GMP's budget should be increased or remain the same. They fear budget reductions specifically to the program's education, mural and community outreach components would negatively impact graffiti reduction programs implemented by non-profit organizations and community volunteers, noting that although such programs receive funding from other sources, support provided by the GMP is critical for such initiatives to continue. Overall participants understand the need to evaluate budget expenditures; yet are concerned any major budget reductions would result in a resurgence of graffiti levels. One participant cautions that a considerable amount of graffiti accumulated when his community did not conduct a community paint-out for a few months.

Private Property Owners

Program Outcomes

Many participants are uncertain whether the program has reduced graffiti on public property, cautioning they are not aware of what the program is doing and have not noticed any significant changes on public property. Yet to their knowledge many participants feel the program has not reduced graffiti levels on private property.

Graffiti Bylaw

Some participants indicate they are not aware of the GMP or any of the resources it provides, others claim they know the City "has some sort of a program" but are not sure what this entails. Overall, a few number of participants know of the program and the resources it provides. Although many property owners maintain they have received support from their BIAs, community volunteers and non-profit organizations, most participants have not received assistance from program staff on how to effectively remove graffiti or have learned of the benefits in developing contracts with graffiti removal companies. Participants unaware about the details of the GMP are also unaware of the Graffiti Bylaw. Few participants claim to have received ample information from the City and "excellent assistance" in removing graffiti from their property. These participants feel the City is essentially "doing all it can" to assist property owners.

Murals

Most participants indicate they have not heard of the GMP's mural component; though some of these participants have murals established through community or non-profit groups. Most often these murals have not been tagged; yet participants indicate walls not covered with a mural are still hit with graffiti. Overall participants would like to know more about the mural component and would like to see more murals throughout Vancouver.

Public Awareness

A majority of participants feel the GMP has not increased public awareness, nor do they feel it has changed the behavior of graffiti writers.

Anti-Graffiti Unit

Most participants have not had contact or know of the Anti-Graffiti Unit, but would like for the City to "pursue graffiti writers as aggressively as they pursue property owners."

Program Budget

Most participants feel impartial towards any budget reductions to the program, however they feel very strongly that more resources should be allocated towards enforcement so that more individuals caught writing graffiti can be arrested and prosecuted. Participants express frustration and confusion, they "do not understand why kids do graffiti," and for this reason want to see more enforcement, regardless of whether this requires an increase in the program's budget.

Business Improvement Associations

Program Outcomes

Participants feel the GMP has achieved a visible reduction of graffiti on public property, claiming the "City's efforts have been very effective." Most feel this is due to the program's contract with Goodbye Graffiti that ensures a quick removal of graffiti on public property; and due to its education and enforcement activities that work to prevent graffiti writers from tagging. Yet participants also observe a similar reduction has not occurred on private property and there "is in fact more

graffiti on private property” in certain areas of the City, such as the Downtown core.

The role of BIAs

Participants indicate the GMP has provided information to BIAs of the activities and services it conducts. They also note BIAs have played a role in distributing newsletters, pamphlets, and visiting property owners individually to educate them of what resources the program provides and what their responsibilities are in keeping their businesses clean of graffiti. For instance, the Downtown Ambassadors at the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA) play an instrumental role in distributing information on the GMP directly to property owners in the Downtown core. Part of their daily routine includes meeting with property owners individually and informing them of how to keep their businesses clean, which means they are able to provide information on the resources provided by the City. Furthermore, some participants indicate they have not only provided program information to property owners, but have also provided information to the City on properties that have graffiti. Many BIAs report property owners not complying with the Graffiti Bylaw to City Hall, if the owner does not remove the graffiti in a timely fashion. One BIA has established a graffiti inventory that sends pictures of graffiti on private property along with the property owner’s name and address to the City, to ensure program staff are aware and can respond accordingly. Overall participants feel the City can make more efforts to provide this information directly to property owners, yet feel BIAs are able to educate property owners and encourage them to respond accordingly.

Public Awareness

A majority of participants feel the program, coupled with the work they are individually doing is shifting public perceptions and making them more aware of graffiti.

Developing Graffiti Removal Contracts

Some participants indicate that many BIAs are developing contracts with graffiti removal companies to keep their business districts clean of graffiti. They note that many of these BIAs are larger and have the resources to maintain such

contracts; and are uncertain as to the role program staff have played in helping local commercial areas develop the contracts.

Graffiti Bylaw

Many participants feel the Graffiti Bylaw is consistently enforced by Property Use Inspectors from the City, in person and through the distribution of letters. They feel the City is “making a strong effort, considering its resources are not unlimited.” Participants also feel the Graffiti Bylaw is a very effective tool to ensure property owners remove graffiti quickly and regularly and to ensure they practice a higher level of civic responsibility.

Murals

Most participants have heard a mural component exists but are not aware of what this entails, for this reason they have not distributed information on this component to property owners in their districts. They would like to know more about the mural component and would like to see more murals throughout Vancouver. One BIA has begun its own mural program as a means to further reduce graffiti, since murals currently within the community have not been tagged and attract positive feedback from property owners and residents.

Anti-Graffiti Unit

Most participants feel the Anti-Graffiti Unit is doing a good job at working with BIAs and property owners, and feel they are a vital part of the program.

Program Budget

Many participants feel the program’s budget should be increased or remain the same. They express concern against any substantial budget reductions, feeling this would result in more graffiti than the City has worked so hard at removing. Some feel more funds should be allocated towards increasing the program’s enforcement activities, noting the City’s current approach is inconsistent, in that property owners are unfairly fined for not removing graffiti from their property, while the perpetrator is released “with a slap on the wrist.” They would like to see a more balanced approach where the City and the VPD identify the consequences of graffiti to the property owner and “go after the graffiti taggers with more vigilance and determination.” When asked how they would feel about

increased property taxes, one participant maintained that if higher property taxes meant the issue would receive increased importance on the part of the City, this would increase property values and would make any increase in property tax fairly negligible.

Security and Enforcement

Program Outcomes

Participants feel the GMP has reduced graffiti on public property; one participant even observes a “total reduction” on public property. Participants feel the program has succeeded in cleaning many areas that have been consistently hit with graffiti, in this way the City has set a standard that other municipalities and corporations must work towards. Participants also feel the program has reduced graffiti on private property; however only to varying degrees and not to the extent that has been reduced on public property. One participant observes certain areas of Vancouver have more graffiti on private property than others. Overall participants feel a general reduction has occurred because graffiti is cleaned up faster and because there are fewer incidents of graffiti, noting that some graffiti writers claim “it’s no fun doing graffiti anymore because it gets buffed.”⁴ Participants also feel the GMP has successfully reduced graffiti because different groups are working together, such as the VPD, Translink, Property Use Inspectors, Engineering staff at City Hall and Crown Counsel. One participant claims: “no one is dropping the ball.”

Preventing Graffiti

Many participants feel they have been successful in preventing graffiti writers from continuing to tag, even writers that have been immersed within the graffiti subculture for a few years. One participant notes “they could stay in their peer group and listen to the same music; do rap; break dance and still not do graffiti...there are kids like that.” Participants explain they approach individuals on a case by case basis, deciding the best course of action after having a discussion with the individual. Strategies pursued to prevent writers from tagging often vary depending on the individual writer. In some cases graffiti writers can be prevented by simply learning that doing graffiti may result in a criminal record;

⁴ Buffed: removing graffiti

while others are more difficult to reach and require different tactics such as having the graffiti writer paint over their own tag or promising the writer a site to paint a mural on if they do not tag for six months. Participants note that either of these strategies may or may not prevent the writer from tagging again, depending on each circumstance. When asked how to determine whether a graffiti writer has actually been prevented from writing graffiti, participants claim the writer's tag name would no longer be seen; and since they can recognize graffiti writers by their tag name, they can determine whether prevention has occurred. Participants feel they are dealing with a very tight population in specific geographic locations, observing "the City has collapsed in size." Furthermore they note that once a rapport has been established between themselves and the graffiti writer, it is quite visible to tell if an individual has returned to writing graffiti.

This being said, some participants believe that once a graffiti writer is completely immersed within the subculture, "it's almost like a knee-jerk reaction to do graffiti" and is exceedingly difficult for anyone to prevent them. Thus, these participants feel educating youth at a young age about graffiti is critical and may be a more desirable way to accomplish prevention than working with graffiti writers.

Graffiti is a Serious Crime

Participants feel that graffiti is a serious property crime, although graffiti is not as serious as other issues, it certainly costs taxpayers thousands of dollars to remove and impacts communities in a negative way. For this reason participants feel graffiti is also a quality of life crime that affects all Vancouver residents and residents in other municipalities. They observe that graffiti decays and destroys the urban landscape causing fewer people to frequent neighborhoods where graffiti is rampant, which inextricably links it to other, more serious crimes. To illustrate this point one participant refers to a BCAA advertisement that displays an image of a wall full of graffiti, with the caption reading *Don't get stuck here*. This being said, most participants feel that simply arresting graffiti writers is not the answer to reducing graffiti incidents. In fact, the Anti-Graffiti Unit point out they have just received funding for a graffiti school, intended to help teach graffiti writers about how costly graffiti is; and how to use their talents in legal ways and will incorporate other tools and ideas, as suggested by graffiti writers themselves.

Internal awareness

Participants feel the GMP has contributed to educating Patrol officers within the VPD about why graffiti can be a serious crime; the profile of a graffiti writer, etc. Procedures at the City's Emergency Communications Center (E-Comm) have also been revised to ensure staff process graffiti related calls as a 'mischief in progress' rather than a 'suspicious person.'⁵ For instance, "if someone is calling 911 to report that two people are spraying a wall with graffiti, it would normally be entered by E-Comm staff as a suspicious person, which is a lower category and not responded to as quickly as a mischief in progress. As a result the resources that E-Comm now puts out for a mischief in progress is very different from what they put out for a suspicious person." Overall participants feel that training VPD patrol officers and restructuring procedures at E-Comm have channeled more attention to graffiti at the Departmental level; increased awareness on graffiti at the street-level and provided more information to the Anti-Graffiti Unit on suspected graffiti writers. Participants claim this has increased the number of graffiti writers caught doing graffiti and has thus contributed to reducing graffiti throughout the City.

Public Awareness

Some participants feel the GMP must make more efforts to raise public awareness on the issue, claiming that many members of the public ignore graffiti unless they are directly affected by it. They feel the increase in acid etching has recently focused the public's attention towards graffiti, yet for this attention to remain the GMP must educate the public on how costly graffiti is. Yet most participants feel the GMP has increased the public's awareness of graffiti and the problems it can create. Furthermore, the program has been able to increase awareness within the graffiti subculture of the enforcement activities that are being conducted. Participants observe that graffiti writers know of them by their first name and "know they are being watched, like a cat and mouse game, because the graffiti community is very tight and word has spread."

⁵ E-Comm is the Emergency Communications centre that responds to 911 calls in all of South West British Columbia.

Program Budget

Participants feel the GMP budget should remain the same and not be reduced. They feel that program costs were initially high because graffiti is a complex problem and because the scale of the graffiti problem was substantial. Although program costs can likely be reduced in a few years, they feel that reducing the budget now would be too soon and would negatively impact graffiti levels within the City. Furthermore, participants strongly feel the program's current activities will ensure there is less graffiti in the long run and thus "is definitely worth it." One participant notes that graffiti is a global problem affecting cities across the world and that graffiti writers are a mobile group. For this reason participants feel the City must provide constant vigilance and enforcement to ensure graffiti levels remain low and are further reduced. Participants maintain "graffiti begets graffiti" and if program resources are seriously reduced the City may be heading to a graffiti explosion, where "they will get hit so hard, they won't know what hit them." One participant illustrates how the City of Kamloops implemented an anti-graffiti program and reduced the program's budget once graffiti levels were subsequently reduced, resulting in a huge increase in graffiti levels.

Graffiti Writers

Program Outcomes

Most participants interviewed agree the program has reduced graffiti, noting "walls being cleaned more often...rooftops being cleaned constantly and public space being cleaned a lot." Yet all participants feel the goal to reduce graffiti cannot be achieved in the long run, regardless of whether there is less graffiti now. They feel that graffiti may be cleaned up faster but it will never truly be eliminated from Vancouver's urban landscape. One participant observes, "Yeah the streets of Vancouver are cleaner...but only for a short time." Some participants feel the City is trying to emulate programs in Seattle and Los Angeles where "such cities have virtually no graffiti." Yet they feel this would never occur to the same extent in Vancouver, because the graffiti movement is just too strong and writers will never stop doing graffiti. One participant asserts: "Why would I stop, I've invested so much time and effort; it's my life. Nothing will stop me. It's not just writing on a wall, it's a movement; it's a lifestyle that can't be changed no matter how tough the enforcement is. It's just going to get higher and

bigger.” Other participants feel the same way, one participant wakes up every single day and makes time to do graffiti, next to having a full-time job and a family. Overall participants believe “graffiti is freedom, an art form, some say it's a hobby some say it's a lifestyle, some hate it, some love it, governments have always tried to get rid it, but...graffiti will never die out, it's a culture that will never fade.”

Why They Do Graffiti

The majority of participants have been writing graffiti for more than three years and feel they are fully immersed within the subculture. Many participants feel they were first drawn to graffiti due to their interest in art. One participant states: “Ever since I was a little kid in elementary school, I've been drawing all the time, as I grew older I became interested in hip hop culture in general, which also further encouraged my interest in graffiti. I wanted to be a part of this awesome, rad, art form.” Another participant asserts the mystery and awe of graffiti inspired him, he says graffiti reminds him of “modern day hieroglyphics...no one knows who did it, but the mark was there...someone did it for a reason.”

What Graffiti Is to the Writer

Participants explain there are two aspects to doing graffiti. The first is bombing and tagging, which includes getting up and getting known; the second is piecing and mural writing, which includes an artistic element. Most participants claim a “well-rounded artist” must practice both aspects of graffiti. When asked how they are currently using their skills, most participants say they write graffiti whenever they get the chance, on bare walls, trains, canvasses, or as one participant exclaims “anything I can get my hands on.” Participants indicate this does not mean they do graffiti twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week, instead many participants maintain they have been able to apply their skills in other ways, such as taking Fine Arts at university, learning about graphic design or working as a commercial artist. Some participants are proud of their status as a commercial artist and view it as a natural progression after years of practicing on bare walls and public spaces. Though the progression from graffiti writer to commercial artist is not what every graffiti writer aspires to, some feel they could

use aspects of graffiti for commercial purposes, but could never exploit graffiti and “use the graffiti itself” to sustain a living.

Differences within the Subculture

Participants claim the GMP simplistically amalgamates graffiti writers into one homogenous group. They feel there is much diversity within the group in regards to: age, skills, experience, why they write graffiti, whether they mainly tag, piece or use their artistic skills for commercial purposes. They feel this distinction is especially critical when it comes to distinguishing between the graffiti writer and the “young, disillusioned tagger who defaces store windows or someone’s garage for fun.” Participants feel such individuals are not real graffiti writers but vandals that just want to destroy something and are probably seeking attention for one reason or another. Participants interviewed claim they never hit a store window or someone’s garage in order to display their art. One participant says: “I respect everything when it comes to illegal graffiti. I only paint public space or corporate property; I never ruin mom and pop and I think that is really important.” Most participants do not feel they are committing a serious crime, as one participant notes: “I’m not a criminal and I always paint on stuff that’s already messed up... I don’t feel that I’m doing anything wrong, I know my stuff is popular with the general public and I sleep well at night.” Although some participants admit they are committing a type of vandalism, they take this with a grain of salt because their intention is not to vandalize. One participant claims: “C’mon, its only paint!” Furthermore, participants express frustration being lumped in the same group as acid etchers, because they feel acid is especially destructive and dangerous to public health. One participant claims: “paint stays up, so why bother using acid?” Overall participants feel being labeled as one entity by the GMP does not accurately reflect the subculture; as a result the program is spending resources targeting all graffiti writers when it should focus its efforts on only a few groups and individuals.

Other Program Impacts

There are considerable differences of opinion on how the GMP has affected graffiti in the City and the average graffiti writer. A minority of participants feel the program is making a positive contribution by attempting to target the young

taggers who are simply vandalizing property. These participants even applaud the program's efforts to "get rid of all the wack and stupidity" and feel the GMP is "weeding out the bad." They feel the program has not impacted the work they do, noting they still enjoy doing pieces and murals. One participant maintains: "I do not tag a lot, so I still do walls in certain relaxing spots and just do my own thing." However, a majority of participants claim the GMP impact graffiti in the following ways:

- Participants feel the GMP has altered the dynamics of graffiti within the City, with the number of tags throughout the City increasing in relation to the number of murals. This is because graffiti is now removed or painted over more quickly than before the GMP was implemented, graffiti writers are not deterred from tagging because it does not require many tools and only takes a few seconds to do; while writers are deterred from doing murals because it requires various tools and may take a few hours to complete. Furthermore, those who want their tags to remain longer often find new ways to make their mark, such as acid etching. In this way many participants feel the GMP has produced a less attractive, lower quality of graffiti throughout the City.
- Participants feel the GMP ensures there are no tolerated spots or free walls to do graffiti in Vancouver, except as one participant notes "one dark tunnel in East Hastings." Having fewer spots and faster clean-ups forces graffiti writers to write where they can, such as trains, the outer edges of the City or in nearby municipalities. Participants feel this specifically impacts younger generations of graffiti writers that want to piece and do murals, yet have nowhere to practice and showcase their skills. They fear such individuals will resort to doing more harmful graffiti, such as acid etching or tagging private property, because they are "essentially being pushed so hard... everything they want to do is illegal now and they have nowhere to write."

Public Awareness

Participants feel the GMP is changing the public's perception of graffiti for the worse in that the public may feel scared and angered by graffiti since the City is "cracking down on graffiti writers and the whole movement."

Graffiti Bylaw

Some participants are aware of the GMP due to the rapid removal of graffiti throughout the City, the fewer tolerated walls or by talking with property owners and learning about the program and the Graffiti Bylaw. Many participants understand the Bylaw; yet are not sure why property owners cannot keep graffiti on their property if they wish to. One participant observes: "Some rad pieces were done on a wall in Downtown, but because it wasn't sanctioned by the City the property owner had to clean it up. Why? It wasn't harming anyone." Moreover, some participants maintain they also feel frustrated by the Bylaw because "it makes the writer feel bad that the property owner has to pay a fine for the work the writer does."

Murals

All participants interviewed support the creation of murals throughout Vancouver, though not all participants fully support the GMP's mural component. Some participants support the mural component because they like to see the City help graffiti writers and feel "it would be cool to do [graffiti] legally." Others feel the mural component is falsely promoting graffiti because "graffiti is not knocking on doors to ask to paint something, it's the freedom to paint anywhere." These participants still support the mural component as long as graffiti writers understand they are not writing graffiti; only graffiti influenced art. Yet the majority of participants are less enthusiastic and more skeptical about this component. They feel the purpose of the mural component to reduce graffiti by increasing the number of murals is problematic for the following identified reasons.

- Graffiti writers are aware that to put up a mural it has to go through the City and the 'Vandal Squad.'⁶ This "kind of squashes any respect the mural might have," because such murals are regarded as 'legal eagles,"

⁶ Vandal Squad: Anti-Graffiti Unit at the VPD

other graffiti writers are suspicious and more likely to tag the mural. Thus they feel the respect factor and self-policing mechanism that has always existed within the graffiti subculture has been eroded by the GMP and its requirement to seek City approval for each mural.

- Participants feel putting up murals on private property was far simpler before the GMP was implemented and thus far more common. It involved approaching property owners getting tagged with graffiti and offering to put up a mural. Due to the self-policing mechanism that previously existed, graffiti artists could assure property owners the mural would not be tagged, especially if they had respect within the subculture. Now no assurances can be made, in addition the process to put up a mural is also longer and more bureaucratic, which participants feel makes property owners less willing to work with graffiti writers to establish murals.
- Participants feel the program's mural component does not ensure 'real' graffiti writers participate. In this way the program is not utilizing the writers as a resource, which they feel weakens the program's ability to communicate and work with the writers. They admit graffiti writers may not want to lose respect by participating or they may be afraid to submit their work and tag name to the City and the 'Vandal Squad.' Yet participants feel the component could make some changes to ensure more graffiti writers are aware of the opportunity and to ensure they participate.

Enforcement

Some participants are not aware of the VPD's Anti-Graffiti Unit; while others are aware the Unit exists but do not specifically know the work they do. Most participants are not fearful they will be arrested by the VPD or caught doing something illegal, since the majority of them feel they are not committing a serious crime. Though participants are concerned that simply arresting taggers and "putting them through the system" will not actually deter them from writing again. They maintain a stronger punishment would be for the tagger to clean up around the City, including painting over all his/her tags. Some participants also

suggest the program should focus fewer resources on hard enforcement and more towards resolving the root of the problem, such as why certain segments of the youth population take up tagging and why they may feel disenfranchised and abandoned by society.

Program Budget

Most participants have very few comments to make about the budget; they do not perceive an increase or decrease in the program's budget would impact them in any serious way. Yet some participants raise concerns that not enough money is directed towards outreach and education activities that involve young graffiti taggers and writers. Some participants would like to see more free walls and outlets for younger graffiti writers who they feel can be educated and taught about graffiti morals and ethics by the older, established writers. They feel this would be valuable considering the level of respect that younger writers have for their older counterparts.

City Councillors

Program Outcomes

Participants feel the GMP has achieved a reduction of graffiti on public and private property throughout Vancouver, though they are quite uncertain as to the level of reduction that has been achieved. Most participants feel a reduction has occurred due to the program's rapid response to and removal of graffiti that encourages graffiti writers to do less graffiti in visible spaces, since the graffiti is removed quickly. Though participants are uncertain whether this means graffiti writers are doing less graffiti in other areas of the City.

Tolerance Level

Participants feel the GMP should maintain a certain degree of tolerance in managing graffiti levels throughout the City. This could mean designating free walls for graffiti writers to use, and giving them the opportunity to manage the content on the walls. Overall most participants indicate they are not disturbed with "a little graffiti here and there," and feel the public would not be adversely affected if there were more legitimate outlets for graffiti writers.

Public Awareness

Participants feel the GMP has not increased the public's awareness of graffiti, because reduced graffiti levels have made graffiti a less visible problem to the public and because the program is not very aggressive in that regard. One participant notes, "graffiti is one of those things you don't really notice unless its there." A few participants feel graffiti is still an important issue to Vancouver residents, even though it may not be a visible problem. They feel graffiti is a sign of disorder and lawlessness, even if graffiti is not threatening it still incites a degree of fear and frustration amongst the public and can lead to more serious crimes. Other participants feel graffiti is not an important issue to the public whether it is visible or not, claiming other issues such as late night bar openings or homelessness are perhaps more pressing concerns. These participants also maintain graffiti is not a sign of lawlessness and disorder and that there is no evidence graffiti deteriorates neighborhoods and leads to more serious crimes.

Enforcement

Participants observe the Vancouver Police Department's Anti-Graffiti Unit is working effectively to reduce graffiti and establish contacts within the graffiti subculture; and feel the Unit is passionate about the work they do. Yet some participants feel fewer resources should be spent on hard enforcement and more allocated towards soft enforcement, which may include working with graffiti writers to devise creative solutions to the problem. Meanwhile, other participants feel VPD resources dedicated to anti-graffiti work should be reallocated to other non-graffiti issues within the Department.

A Smaller Program

Participants feel the GMP has benefited Vancouver residents, especially since Vancouver maintains a large tourist industry and having a cleaner City encourages tourists to stay longer. However participants feel residents would not be negatively impacted if the program's budget and structure are reduced. Overall participants would like to see the program continue on a smaller scale.

Program Budget

Participants acknowledge the program's budget had been approved by City Council in July 2003, yet agree a future analysis of the program's budget should be more meticulous. Participants strongly feel the program's current budget is "terribly expensive" and should be reduced. Some participants feel the costs to maintain low graffiti levels should logically decrease since much graffiti has been removed and the City has gained a reputation as a place "not to do graffiti." They feel the initial push to reduce graffiti understandably required many resources because it was a serious problem; yet the program's current budget should be decreased since only a certain amount of monitoring and maintenance is now required to keep Vancouver clean. Other participants feel the budget should be reduced because there are other priorities municipal funds should be allocated to, rather than graffiti. They agree graffiti should ideally remain at its current low levels, but maintain "at what cost to the taxpayer, to the City and to other programs?" They are concerned money allocated to the GMP may be taking resources away from more essential, higher priority programs and services the City provides. Overall, participants agree the program goals to reduce graffiti are important, though "not to the tune of \$1.2M."

City Staff

Program Outcomes

All participants interviewed feel the GMP has generally reduced the amount of graffiti on public and private property, noting a major reduction has occurred in the early stages of the program when years worth of accumulated graffiti was removed. Participants express the following thoughts on the extent of reductions achieved.

Public Property

Participants observe a reduction of graffiti on streets, including poles, benches and retaining walls and on civic buildings such as City Hall and public libraries. They feel the program's contract with Goodbye Graffiti is primarily responsible for these reductions, observing the contract's weekly monitoring and fast response to graffiti complaints has been very effective. One participant claims: "The contract is the single largest thing that has impacted graffiti levels in Vancouver."

Some participants feel the increased attention on civic buildings by the contract has also encouraged building managers to now treat graffiti incidents on their buildings as a priority. This being said, participants also feel there is still considerable graffiti on areas not covered by the contract such as residential areas and areas less visible from the street, such as laneways.

A majority of participants observe a reduction in graffiti levels throughout Vancouver's parks; yet are unsure the GMP has directly contributed to these reductions because the Park Board conducts its own graffiti removal operations separate from the GMP. The Park Board monitors and removes graffiti from Vancouver parks through its own graffiti removal team staffed by four individuals and through a contract with Goodbye Graffiti, with each group responsible for certain parks.⁷ Participants more familiar with graffiti levels in Vancouver parks feel the GMP's education, prevention and enforcement activities have not directly contributed to any graffiti reductions in Vancouver's parks. They maintain the Park Board's graffiti removal team and contract with Goodbye Graffiti have played a more critical role in reducing graffiti, but feel graffiti is still a major problem within City parks. If removals are not conducted for a few days the graffiti quickly reappears at a faster rate than it can be removed, graffiti writers are also using more innovative strategies such as writing graffiti on higher elevations with tools that can reach higher. Furthermore, participants maintain the Park Board is more "concerned with the appearances of their buildings since appearance and cleanliness in Vancouver's parks are important to the public; whereas the City can get away with odd paint jobs under bridges or near highways." This means the quality of the removal or paint out conducted by the graffiti removal team and Goodbye Graffiti is important, and often makes graffiti removal within Vancouver parks a more time-consuming and resource heavy job.

Private Property

Participants observe certain areas have experienced more reduction in graffiti levels than others, as there is still considerable graffiti in the majority of the City's laneways, on garbage dumpsters and utility equipment boxes. Some participants

⁷ Although the graffiti removal company is the same, (Goodbye Graffiti) the Park Board's contract is different from the contract to remove graffiti from public property.

also feel that because the program provides a fast response and removal of graffiti from public property, that more graffiti writers are now targeting private property. One participant feels there are increasing levels of graffiti on private property in the Main and Terminal area because public property in the area is regularly cleaned and monitored. Another participant emphasizes this point, saying: “writers don’t touch City property but at the cost to the property owner.”

Why Reductions have occurred

When asked whether such reductions are due to eradication: the program’s speedy response and removal of graffiti or due to prevention: the program’s prevention of graffiti incidents, most participants feel both eradication and prevention are responsible for reductions. They feel some program activities such as the contract with Goodbye Graffiti and the Graffiti Bylaw work to remove graffiti quickly; while the education, mural and enforcement activities work to prevent graffiti incidents. This being said, some participants feel reductions have only occurred because the program has increased the response to and removal of graffiti; and that the program has not been operating long enough and has not conducted enough outreach activities to actually prevent graffiti writers from writing. They also indicate insufficient data has been collected to accurately measure whether the number of graffiti incidents since the program’s implementation have decreased.

Distribution of Information to Property Owners

Some participants feel the program has provided adequate information to property owners of graffiti removal options available to them. Property owners are “getting pamphlets, can go on the web,” and that “office staff are quite diligent in getting back to people.” They admit more outreach can probably be done but considering the resources the program provides to property owners, the City has clearly gone “above and beyond what most municipalities provide.” Yet other participants feel the program has not provided adequate information to property owners, claiming not enough owners are aware of the GMP and the resources it provides. One participant feels “property owners only know through word of mouth and from property owners that have interacted with Property Use Inspectors.” Participants point to the small number of free paint kits distributed to

property owners as an indication that general knowledge about the program is low and needs to be improved.

Developing Graffiti Removal Contracts

A majority of participants feel program staff have assisted local commercial areas develop contracts with graffiti removal companies to remove graffiti. Yet participants also identify certain challenges they feel may prevent them from helping more local commercial areas develop contracts. These challenges may include language barriers between program staff and property owners of street level businesses or the tendency of some owners to be skeptical or to hesitate becoming involved in a contract with other property owners in their area.

Graffiti Bylaw

Many participants recognize the Graffiti Bylaw is only one of several bylaws Property Use Inspectors must enforce; and that a major challenge in enforcing the bylaw is contacting the property owner. For instance, in some cases the building may be vacant; its owner may be overseas or the owner may be registered under a company name that may or may not reside in BC or Canada. Although many participants acknowledge the 80% compliance rate with the Graffiti Bylaw indicates property owners are proactively removing graffiti once an order letter is sent out by the Inspector, they feel not enough orders are sent out. Thus many participants are concerned the Graffiti Bylaw is still not consistently and aggressively enforced by Property Use Inspectors. They feel more orders can be issued to property owners considering there are twenty-two Inspectors, including one Inspector specifically responsible for enforcing the Graffiti Bylaw. Other participants express more serious concerns suggesting enforcement of the Bylaw is not administered as a top priority by the Property Use Inspectors. One participant maintains: "The inadequate enforcement of the Bylaw is perhaps the single most failure of the program, which completely undermines the effectiveness of the program...and the ten day Bylaw." They claim the Graffiti Bylaw is not being enforced to any of the standards specified in Council Reports describing the program. As a result some participants feel a certain level of graffiti is tolerated on private property, which compromises the program's zero tolerance approach towards graffiti.

Murals

All participants interviewed feel murals are effective in reducing graffiti, though some feel it only reduces graffiti on walls with murals while others believe murals also reduce tagging in the surrounding area as they reduce the number of spaces to tag.

Public Awareness

There are two different perceptions of how the GMP has impacted the public's awareness: some participants feel public awareness has increased; while others feel it has decreased.

- Increase in public awareness: Some participants feel the program's various media coverage; outreach and promotion activities have increased the public's awareness of graffiti. Hence one participant feels "more and more people are realizing about graffiti as an important issue," as a result of such educational and promotional activities.
- Decrease in public awareness: Some participants feel the program has not made enough efforts to increase public awareness, observing the majority of the public is not affected by graffiti and thus does not view graffiti as a major problem. This is illustrated by the low turnout at the public consultation forums held on graffiti, at a time when graffiti levels were substantially high, which indicates the public simply "does not care" about graffiti. Furthermore some participants feel the public may be even less aware of graffiti now, because graffiti levels have reduced and the problem is less visible. They feel the program must be far more aggressive to shift public perceptions on graffiti and ensure the public views graffiti as a major problem that requires constant monitoring and vigilance.

Community Participation

Participants feel the program encourages communities to take ownership of the graffiti problem by working with the City to reduce graffiti levels. They feel community paint-outs encourage civic responsibility and appreciate; and that

many communities and non-profit organizations are very proactive on this issue, while others could be more proactive in this regard.

Anti Graffiti Unit

Many participants believe the Anti-Graffiti Unit is working very effectively to reduce graffiti by tackling the root of the problem. Some feel the Unit should be arresting more graffiti writers to send a strong message to property owners and the general public that the City is serious about reducing graffiti. This is especially critical in the short-term since other activities such as education will mainly produce results in the long-term. Meanwhile other participants feel each suspected graffiti writer should be dealt with on a case by case basis and that helping writers to channel their energies in legitimate directions is more important.

Management

Many participants feel the GMP would operate more effectively if staff from the different departments involved worked in one unit and under one management body. They feel it would increase coordination and communication amongst the different departments involved, as it is sometimes challenging to know what other departments are doing on the issue. Other participants feel the City maintains strong interdepartmental cooperation and the status quo is “not hampering program effectiveness.”

Program Budget

Some participants feel the program should not be reduced simply because graffiti levels have been reduced. One participant notes: “just because our streets are paved, doesn’t mean that we don’t need the street teams.” Yet other participants feel some areas of the budget can be significantly reduced, that at some point the program “must declare victory and step back.” The following table indicates more detailed findings on budget expenditures for various program activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON PROGRAM BUDGET FROM CITY STAFF

PROGRAM COMPONENT	MAINTAIN/REDUCE INCREASE	FINDINGS
Removal from public property	Reduce costs of contract with external graffiti removal company	Some participants feel graffiti levels on public property have now reached a point where the frequency of the contract's monitoring and inspections should be reassessed. They assert the weekly inspections mandated by the contract should be reduced to bi-weekly inspections to reduce the majority of costs, which are for inspecting public property for graffiti. Participants feel there are ways to ensure this reduction does not result in a graffiti explosion, such as having program staff closely monitor graffiti levels and focusing on other activities that cost less but are equally effective, such community paint-outs.
	Maintain costs of contract	The majority of participants feel the contract should not be reduced to bi-weekly patrols, claiming this would incur a negative impact because the City leads by example. If the City reverts to bi-weekly patrols it cannot expect property owners to abide by the Bylaw's ten day response rate. Furthermore, reducing the contract's weekly monitoring schedule may place the City in a volatile situation: "You never how much graffiti you will get, we cannot predict that...they may declare war and we'll have to clean it up." Thus, if fewer resources are devoted to removing graffiti from public property graffiti levels may soar.
Removal from private property	Reduce budget for free paint kits	Many participants feel the kits are not being used as extensively as initially perceived. A reduction of \$20,000 has been suggested. Participants are not concerned this would leave property owners with fewer resources, noting that many property owners and their associated BIAs have developed contracts with graffiti removal companies to keep properties clean. This is regarded by many to be the ultimate solution, as it allocates costs to property owners instead of having taxpayers subsidize the removal of graffiti through the provision of free paint kits.
	Maintain budget for free paint kits	A few participants believe the budget for free paint kits should not be reduced at least until another few years because it is a key component of the program and critical for the City to ensure resources are available to property owners, even if they are not used extensively.
	Increase enforcement budget	A few participants would like to increase the enforcement budget by providing more resources for Property Use Inspectors to enforce the Graffiti Bylaw; because the initial contact between the property owner and Property Use Inspector is critical to begin the education process and eventual removal of graffiti from private property.

PROGRAM COMPONENT	MAINTAIN/REDUCE INCREASE	FINDINGS
	Reduce enforcement budget	Most participants agree the initial contact between the property owner and Property Use Inspector is critical; though assert the current resources and staff devoted to enforcing the Bylaw is more than adequate. They maintain any ineffectiveness in enforcing the Bylaw is a result of poor performance, not inadequate funding. Suggested reductions are to remove the two clerk positions assigned to the Graffiti Bylaw Property Use Inspector and the Graffiti Bylaw Property Use Inspector position, as the Bylaw can still be sufficiently enforced.
Education & Prevention	Increase budget for outreach/promotion	Some participants feel more resources should be devoted towards outreach and promotion activities because the program can work to galvanize the public behind graffiti reduction, and suggest the program is currently not aggressive enough. They claim the program provides much information and tools, yet does not send out a very strong anti-graffiti message by educating the public on “why it is a bad thing to have graffiti and how failure to remove it affects neighbors and the general public.” They feel resources for this can be transferred from the budget for material support costs for murals, because the program should not be using resources to establish murals when it can support murals by having more program staff actively match property owners with graffiti writers.
	Increase material support budget for murals	Many participants believe material support costs for murals should be increased because the program now provides a \$500 honorarium to the artist and requires more resources to establish murals. They feel some of these resources should come from the outreach and promotion budget, since they believe a significant amount of outreach has already been achieved during the first year and a half of the program’s implementation. Participants suggest increasing material support costs for murals by \$20,000 - \$40,000 while decreasing \$20,000 from outreach and promotion.
	Increase budget for education	Nearly all participants interviewed feel the budget for education should be increased or at the very least, maintained at current levels because targeting the population demographically has been especially effective and will produce long-term results. Furthermore, this activity could use more funding to reach Alternative Schools where many believe current and would-be graffiti writers attend.

PROGRAM COMPONENT	MAINTAIN/REDUCE INCREASE	FINDINGS
Anti-Graffiti Unit	Maintain or increase budget for Anti-Graffiti Unit	All participants strongly feel there would be negative consequences if the budget was reduced and if the Anti-Graffiti Unit's staff were reduced or removed altogether. Participants claim this would definitely hinder program effectiveness by eliminating a key contact with the graffiti subculture and would send a message to graffiti writers that the City tolerates graffiti.

Appendix C

Interview Guides

Measurement Tool 1#
Interview: Department Staff
City of Vancouver

Introduction (script)

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. As our subsequent conversation has indicated, I am a graduate student at the University of Victoria, in the School of Public Administration and am conducting an evaluation of the City's Graffiti Management Program.

The purpose of this project is to gain an in-depth understanding of the program's performance and to recommend whether the program has successfully achieved its goals; and whether it should to continue to operate with its current size and scope. Your participation in this interview is voluntary, which means you can end the interview or not respond to certain questions as you see fit. I also want to assure you that your comments will be kept confidential.

My report and subsequent recommendations will largely be based on information collected from these interviews; as such I encourage you to be honest and to say what you feel. I hope you can view this as an opportunity to voice your opinion, whether positive or negative, about the program and its impacts.

Before we begin, I request that you sign this consent form that acknowledges I informed you about the purpose of the research and that you've voluntarily agreed to participate. The consent form is only to participate; it does not mean the records of this interview will be made public at any point, they will only be seen by myself.

This should take no more than one hour of your time. Do you have any questions, before we begin?

The interview questions are framed around the four components of the GMP: graffiti removal from public property; graffiti removal from private property; education and prevention and the Anti-Graffiti Unit, managed by the Vancouver Police Department.

PART I – REMOVAL FROM PUBLIC PROPERTY

Considering the removal of graffiti from most public property is conducted through a contract with an external graffiti removal company, I want to first learn how you feel about the work conducted under this contract, as it comprises a major portion of this program component (Removal from Public Property).

1. How do you feel the City's contract with a graffiti removal company has affected the amount of graffiti found on public property?
 - If no, why not?
 - If yes, how so?

2. Do you feel the contract has led to an increase or decrease in the number of times graffiti is removed from civic buildings? Why?
3. Since the contract has been in operation, how long do you think graffiti remains on public property before it is removed?
 - Would you describe that as being a short amount of time, where the graffiti is removed before it attracts more? Or would you describe it as a long amount of time, where the graffiti attracts more?
4. What about in the City's parks, how do you feel the current contract has affected the amount of graffiti found on park facilities? Please explain.
5. Now moving on to the specific activities of this component, in your view has the program been able to influence how often utility and garbage removal companies conduct regular clean-ups?
 - If no, why not?
 - How many times a week do you think graffiti on utility equipment boxes and garbage containers is removed?
 - Do you know if this is faster or slower than before the GMP was implemented?
6. This component of the program intends to achieve a **reduction of graffiti on public property**. With the contract and the program's activities to encourage graffiti removal from garbage containers and other such utility equipment, do you feel a reduction of graffiti has been achieved?
 - If the response is 'No' or not sure, please provide explanation of why this outcome has not been achieved. Are there any changes you can suggest that would ensure it is achieved? *And proceed to question 7.*
 - If yes, where is this reduction most visible? Where is it least visible? (ie: in buildings facing main streets or in alleyways?)
7. In your opinion, do you feel the other components of the Graffiti Management Program, such as the education related activities, influence the effectiveness of the contract to reduce graffiti on public property?
 - If no, why not?
 - If yes, how so?

I would now like to learn how you view the value of this program component; and how you view its size and scope in the future. The sheet provided indicates the GMP's budget, as you can see **Table 1** illustrates the different activities of this component and their associated costs.

8. Looking at Table 1, is there any activity(s) of this component that you feel the program has devoted more or less funds to, than you feel it should? Please explain why or why not.
9. As the table illustrates, the majority of the costs associated with this component is for the contract to remove graffiti from public property and park facilities. How do you feel the amount of graffiti on public property and park facilities would be

affected, if the scope, and thus the costs associated with this contract were reduced? Please explain.

PART II – REMOVAL FROM PRIVATE PROPERTY

10. Do you believe the Graffiti Management Program has provided property owners with adequate information on graffiti removal options; (including information on services provided by the City, such as free paint kits; free removal from heritage buildings and the mural program)?
 - If not, why not?
11. Considering that often times, property owners must remove graffiti in 3-7 applications, are the mural program and the provision of free paint kits and free removal from heritage buildings, sufficient to assist property owners remove graffiti? Please explain.
 - Do you think the program's provision of these services affect the amount of graffiti found on private property?
 - If yes, how so?
 - If no, why not?
12. In your opinion, have the Property Use Inspectors enforced the Graffiti Bylaw on property owners?
 - If no, why not?
 - If yes, how would you describe the level of enforcement? (consistent, or inconsistent; aggressive or unassertive)
 - How do you feel this has affected compliance of the Bylaw by property owners?
13. How do you feel this program component has affected how property owners view the assistance they receive from the City in regards to graffiti removal?
 - Do you feel the program has worked to reduce or increase the number of property owners that may feel victimized by the Graffiti Bylaw?
14. This program component is intended to **reduce graffiti on private property**. Do you believe this has been achieved?
 - If the response is 'No' or not sure, please provide explanation of why this outcome has not been achieved. Are there any changes you can suggest that would ensure it is achieved? (*And proceed to question 17.*)

Once again, I would now like to learn how you value this component and the size and scope it should assume in the future.

15. Looking at Table 2 on the sheet provided, is there any activity(s) of this component that you feel the program has devoted more or less funds to, than you feel it should? Please explain why or why not.
16. As the table illustrates, the majority of the costs associated with this component are for Enforcement. How do you feel the amount of graffiti on private property would be affected, if the enforcement level, and thus the costs associated with this activity, were reduced? Please explain.

PART III – EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

17. To your knowledge, has the GMP assisted local commercial areas to organize their own graffiti removal contracts?
18. Do you feel the program has provided sufficient tools to help communities/non-profit organizations and businesses remove graffiti on their own?
 - Do you sense more cooperation amongst them as a result of the program's efforts?
19. How has the GMP influenced the number of volunteers available for graffiti paint outs?
 - Are there more volunteers available now, than before the program was implemented?
20. In your opinion how do you feel the program's education activities directed at elementary and secondary schools, have affected youth? Please explain.
 - Do you feel the educative tools provided by the program contribute to preventing graffiti? Why or why not?
 - If no, what purpose do you think the tools serve?
21. Do you believe the program's promotion of murals has affected the amount of graffiti on public and private property?
 - If not, why not?
 - If yes, how so?
 - Do you feel the creation of murals is fully supported by: property owners; communities; schools; & graffiti artists?
22. How have all these initiatives within this component affected the public's awareness of graffiti? Please explain.
23. This component of the program is intended to **reduce graffiti on private and public property**. Do you believe this has been achieved?
 - If the response is 'No' or not sure, please provide explanation of why this outcome has not been achieved. Are there any changes you can suggest that would ensure it is achieved? *Proceed to question 24.*

Now let us please turn to the budget sheet:

24. Looking at Table 3 on the sheet provided, is there any activity(s) of this component that you feel the program has devoted more funds to, than you feel it should? Please explain why or why not.
25. As the table illustrates, a large portion of the costs associated with this component are for the mural program. How do you feel the amount of graffiti on private and public property would be affected, if the mural program, and thus the costs associated with this activity, were reduced? Please explain.

- how do you feel this would affect the amount of graffiti on private and public property? Please explain.

PART IV – ANTI – GRAFFITI UNIT

26. Before we head into the details of the Unit's activities, I want to understand how you view the connection between **arresting/charging graffiti artists** and **reducing graffiti**: Do you feel that an increase in the number of graffiti writers charged will result in a decrease of graffiti throughout Vancouver? Please explain.
27. Do you believe there has been an increased awareness within the Vancouver Police Department, of the various issues related to graffiti?
- If no, why not? (proceed to Question #33)
 - If yes, do you believe this increased awareness has lead to more graffiti suspects being apprehended and charged? If no, why not?
 - Do you believe this awareness has lead to a reduction in graffiti? Why or why not?
28. How do you feel the establishment of a suspect database has affected the work conducted by the Anti-Graffiti Unit?
29. Some of the Unit's activities include: educating VPD officers and various agencies about the graffiti problem; enforcing the Mischief Law by investigating and charging graffiti suspects; and gathering intelligence on graffiti incidents and suspects. What activity do you feel is the Unit's most important one, in terms of reaching its long term goal to reduce graffiti on public and private property? Please explain.
30. Do you think the GMP would be able to work more effectively, (and thus reduce more graffiti) if the Anti-Graffiti Unit and the other components of the GMP were managed under one department? Why or why not?
- **Have you experienced any challenges** with the Anti-Graffiti Unit operating out of a separate City department, even though it works closely with the Graffiti Management Team and has the same medium and long term goals as the other components of the GMP? Please explain.

Table 4 on the sheet provided indicates the Anti-Graffiti Unit's annual operating costs are **\$157,600**. As you can see the majority of these costs are for the supplies and materials that enable the two police officers to conduct their activities.

31. What sort of impact do you believe there would be on the effectiveness of the GMP, if one of the officers from the AGU was taken off the unit?
- What if both officers were taken off and the unit was shut-down?
 - do you feel other areas of the GMP or external bodies, (such as community policing centers) could take over some of the Unit's responsibilities? Please explain.

Lastly, I would like to know how you feel about the program's overall budget, in its entirety. The total budget, including all four components plus the Administrative costs, is approximately **\$1,263,001**(as indicated on page 2 of the sheet provided.) Some City officials may feel this amount is far too much to be spending on graffiti, considering the financial constraints municipal governments face today. While other officials may feel this amount is not nearly enough to adequately respond to the graffiti problem. I would like to know your views:

32. Where do you feel you stand on this argument? How do you feel about the spending level and scope of this program?
33. Now, looking to the future, if the amount of graffiti on public and private property throughout Vancouver **continually decreases**, do you feel the scale and budget of the program should follow this trend; and also be reduced?
 - How would this affect the rate of graffiti- do you think? Please explain.

Thank you for your time, your responses have been very helpful.
If you have any further questions please contact me. (hand out card)
A copy of the final report will be available at the City, by mid-January.

Measurement Tool 2#
Interview: Council Members;
City of Vancouver

Introduction (script)

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. In light of your busy schedule I plan to make this meeting a maximum of 20 minutes. As my letter to your office has indicated, I'm a graduate student at the University of Victoria, in the School of Public Administration. I am conducting an Evaluation of the City's Graffiti Management Program. The purpose of this study is to gain an in-depth understanding of the program, it will recommend whether the program has achieved its intended outcomes; and whether it should continue to operate along its current size and scope.

Your participation is voluntary, you can end the interview or not respond to certain questions as you see fit.

Your comments will be kept strictly confidential, only I will have access to the notes that I record here today.

Before we begin, I request that you sign this consent form that acknowledges I informed you about the purpose of the research and that you've voluntarily agreed to participate. The consent form is only to participate; it does not mean any records of this interview will be made public at any point.

Do you have any questions?

1. From your perspective, what is the role of the Graffiti Management Program?
2. Do you feel there should be a certain tolerance level when it comes to graffiti? (So that graffiti artist can have an outlet of some sorts?)
3. Two goals of the program are to reduce the amount of graffiti on public and private property. Do you feel the program has achieved a reduction on public property?
-do you feel this reduction has been achieved on private property?
-if not, why not?
4. Do you feel the property use inspectors have enforced the Graffiti Bylaw on property owners?
5. Is there any one initiative or activity implemented by the program, that you feel has significantly contributed to the program's success? Why?
6. Do you feel that external factors (such as the work done by community members or individual business improvement associations) have influenced the program's ability to reach its goals?
 - If no, why not?
 - If yes, how so? (to what degree?)

7. How do you feel the program has affected the public's awareness or attitude towards graffiti?
8. To your knowledge, from comments or concerns that you have heard from the public; do you feel that graffiti is an important issue to the public?

The program's four components and their associated costs are illustrated on the budget sheet provided. As you can see, the program's total budget is approximately **\$1,263,001**. Some City officials may feel this amount is far too much to be spending on graffiti, considering the financial constraints municipal governments face today. While other officials may feel this amount is not nearly enough to adequately respond to the graffiti problem.

8. I'd like to know how you feel about the spending level and scope of this program?
9. Looking at the budget sheet provided, where all components and their costs and activities are listed-are there any areas where you feel the program should be devoting more or less funds to?
 - Why? Or why not?
10. How do you feel the amount of graffiti on public and private property would be affected, if the Anti-Graffiti Unit of the Vancouver Police Department was cut?
11. Now, looking to the future, if the amount of graffiti on public and private property throughout Vancouver continually decreases, do you feel the scale and budget of the program should follow this trend; and also be reduced?
 - How would this affect the rate of graffiti- do you think? Please explain.
12. Overall, do you feel the citizens of Vancouver have benefited from the Graffiti Management Program?
 - What sort of feedback or comments have you heard back from the public on the program?
13. Lastly, in your view do you feel that graffiti reduction and prevention is a priority to City Council?

Is there anything you'd like to say about the GMP or this evaluation?

Measurement Tool 3#
Focus Group: Community Representatives and Youth Volunteers

Introduction (script)

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. As my letter and subsequent conversations have indicated, my name is Amna and I am a graduate student at the University of Victoria. I am conducting an evaluation of the Graffiti Management Program. The purpose of this project is to gain an in-depth understanding of the program, to ultimately recommend whether the program has achieved its goals.

I've put together a few questions about the program, to generate some discussion and to gather your views and opinions about the program's impacts. My report and subsequent recommendations will be largely based on what I learn from you, so I encourage you to be as honest as you can. I want you to feel free to say anything you like about the program, positive or negative.

Remember, your participation in this research is voluntary. You can leave the focus group at any time. Also, all information that you provide in this group will be treated with the strictest confidence and I ask that everyone here do the same.

I would like to keep this meeting to a maximum of one and a half hour, which means I may have to cut a discussion off at some point. If there is something you would like to say but don't get a chance during the session, please contact me, I'd like to hear what you have to say. I'll pass around some cards at the end of our meeting that has my contact information on it.

Before we begin, I request that you sign this consent form that is going around, it acknowledges that I informed you about the purpose of the research and that you've voluntarily agreed to participate. The consent form is only to participate; it does not mean the records will be made public at any point.

Do you have any questions?

1. How did you first get involved with the issue of graffiti removal?
2. After attending the community paint out a few weeks ago: I learned about the several types of activities you do in relation to graffiti removal; and it seems to me that your approach towards graffiti is quite different from that of the City – which seems to advocate more of a zero-tolerance approach towards graffiti
 - Is this correct?
 - This being said then: do you feel the city's program is too harsh or aggressive; and that perhaps there should be more free walls and more tolerance overall?
 - Why or why not?
3. do you feel this community's approach to graffiti has enabled so many people to rally behind this issue?

4. do you feel that graffiti is a major concern to this community?
 - Is it a major problem or just an eye-sore?
 - What about to other communities across Vancouver, to your knowledge do you feel that graffiti is a major issue?
5. How much of your resources are devoted to coordinating graffiti removal activities?

Now moving on to the program:

6. From your perspective, what do you think is the purpose of the GMP?
7. As you are probably aware, some of the main goals of the program are to reduce the amount of graffiti on public and private property throughout Vancouver.
 - Do you think there has been a reduction of graffiti on public property?
 - What about private property?
 - If not, why not?
8. On public property: where do you think a reduction (if it has occurred) is most visible?
9. What sort of impacts do you see the program making in your communities- besides a reduction in graffiti?
10. Do you think the program has provided sufficient tools to help communities, non-profit organizations and schools remove graffiti on their own?
11. Do you feel the program has encouraged communities and nonprofits to work more amongst one another?
 - Do you feel this is different, from before the program began?
12. Has the program influenced the number of volunteers available for graffiti removal activities that you coordinate? Mainly: (do you feel there are more volunteers now, than before the program was implemented?)
13. How do you think the program has impacted the public's awareness or attitude towards graffiti – has it increased?
14. Turning to the program's mural component: Do you believe the program's promotion of murals has affected the amount of graffiti found on public and private property?
 - If not, why not?
 - If yes, how so?
 - Do you feel the creation of murals is fully supported by: private businesses; communities; schools and graffiti artists?
 - Do you feel there are enough murals around the city?
15. Have you ever had contact with the Vancouver Police Department's Anti-Graffiti Unit?
 - If yes, whyHow often do you communicate with them?

- If no: are you aware of the work the VPD is doing in regards to graffiti prevention?

16. How do you think the program would be affected if the Anti-Graffiti Unit was downsized or cut out altogether? *(in other words; do you feel a police presence is important to ensure graffiti levels stay down?)*

I would like to know how you feel about the program's overall budget, which is approximately **\$1,263,001**. Some City officials and residents feel this amount is far too much to be spending on graffiti, considering the financial constraints municipal governments face today. While others feel this amount is not nearly enough to adequately respond to the graffiti problem.

17. I would like to know where do you stand on this argument? How do you feel about the spending level and scope of this program?

18. Is there any area of the program you would like to see the City expand upon? Or perhaps an area that you think the City is spending too much attention towards?

19. Now, looking to the future, if the amount of graffiti on public and private property throughout Vancouver **continually decreases**, do you feel the scale and budget of the program should follow this trend; and also be reduced?

- How would this affect the rate of graffiti- do you think? Please explain.

20. Overall, do you feel the program and all its activities are necessary to keep Vancouver clear of graffiti or do you feel that volunteers and communities can eventually work to remove graffiti on their own?
Please explain.

Before we end is there anything you would like to say about the program or this evaluation?

Thank you for your time, your comments and ideas have been a great help.
Please contact me if you want to add anything or ask me any questions.
The final report will be available at the City by mid-January.

**Measurement Tool 4#
Private Property Owners**

I'd first like to learn what type of work the DVBIA conducts on the graffiti issue.

1. Can you describe this for me?
 - When did the DVBIA begin focusing its energies and resources on this issue?
 - What sorts of results have you seen from this work?
 - Who are the DVBIA's major partners in this work? (security firms? VPD? The City?)
-

1. From your perspective, what do you think is the mandate of the City's Graffiti Management Program?
2. A main objective of the program is to provide property owners with sufficient information on graffiti removal options, this would include information on how to access the City's free paint kits for property owners. Do you feel this information has been provided to business in the downtown core?
3. Do you feel there has been sufficient communication between city staff and the DVBIA on the issue of graffiti?
-if no, why not?
4. Are you aware of the program's other components: such as the education and outreach components?
5. Do you feel there is more cooperation amongst businesses, on the graffiti issue, since implementation of this program?
 - Why or why not?
6. How do you feel the program has affected the public's awareness or attitude towards graffiti?
7. Do you feel that graffiti is an important concern to the businesses in the downtown core?
8. Do you feel that graffiti is an important concern to the public at large?
9. More specifically, are you aware of the program's Mural Program?
 - how do you feel a mural on your wall has affected (or will affect) the amount of graffiti it may attract? Please explain.
10. Considering that often times, property owners must remove graffiti in 3-7 applications, is the provision of free paint kits/twice a year sufficient to assist you remove the graffiti?
 - If not, why not?

11. Do you feel that the Property Use Inspectors from City Hall enforce the Graffiti Bylaw consistently?
 - How do you feel such enforcement measures have affected compliance with the Graffiti Bylaw? Please explain.
12. In order to reduce graffiti on private property, do you feel it is necessary to increase enforcement efforts?
 - If yes, how so?
 - If not, why not?
 - Can you suggest other ways the City can work with private property owners to reduce graffiti on private property?
13. How often do you communicate with the Vancouver Police Department's Anti-Graffiti Unit?
 - How do you feel about the work they are doing to arrest and charge graffiti writers? Please explain.
 - How do you think the program would be affected if this unit was downsized (ie; going from two full time officers; to one; or none?)
14. Overall, do you feel the initiatives of the GMP have worked to **reduce the amount of graffiti on private property in the downtown core**?
 - **What about throughout Vancouver?**
 - If not, why not?
 - **Do you feel the program has been able to reduce the amount of graffiti on public property?**
 - If not, why not?

Lastly, I would like to know how you feel about the program's overall budget, which is approximately: **\$1,263,001**. Some City officials and residents feel this amount is far too much to be spending on graffiti, considering the financial constraints municipal governments face today. While others feel this amount is not nearly enough to adequately respond to the graffiti problem. I would like to know your views:

34. Where do you feel you stand on this argument? How do you feel about the spending level and scope of this program?
35. Now, looking to the future, if the amount of graffiti on public and private property throughout Vancouver **continually decreases**, do you feel the scale and budget of the program should follow this trend; and also be reduced?
 - How would this affect the rate of graffiti- do you think? Please explain.

Before we end, is there anything you would like to say about the program or this evaluation?

Thank you for your time, your comments have been a great help. Please contact me if you want to add anything; or ask me any questions. If you would like to see the final report, it will be available at the City in mid-January next year.

Interview Guide 5# Graffiti/Mural Artists

1. Before we begin discussing the program, I'd like to learn about your thoughts and experiences with graffiti:
 - When did you first start writing graffiti?
 - How long have you been writing?
 - Why did you first begin?
 - Currently, how do you use your skills (ie: commercial uses, gallery shows; etc)
 - i. Do you expect this to change in any way in the future? (why or why not?)
2. Overall, how would you describe the experiences you have gained from writing graffiti?
 - Have they been positive or negative? Please explain.
3. Now moving on to the City's Graffiti Management Program, what do you feel is the purpose of the program?
 - What do you think are the program's goals?
4. How has the program affected your ability to write graffiti? Please share your experiences, if you can.
 - Since the program's implementation, have you found it harder to write graffiti?
 - If not, why not?
 - If yes, how so?
5. What sort of impacts do you see the program making in your neighborhood? Please explain.
 - What about across Vancouver?
 - How do you feel about the impacts it is making?
6. How do you feel about the program's mural program? (*if not sure, explain the program*)
7. Do you believe the program's promotion of murals has affected the amount of graffiti on public and private property?
 - If not, why not?
 - If yes, how so?
8. Do you feel the creation of murals is fully supported by schools, communities and businesses? Why or why not?
 - Do you fully support the creation of murals?
 - Why or why not?
 - If yes, have you completed a mural for a school, businesses or community centre?

- If yes, how would you describe this experience?
9. How do you feel the GMP has affected the public's awareness of graffiti?
 - Do you feel it has changed their attitude towards graffiti?
 - If not, why not?
 - If yes, how so?
 - If yes, how has this impacted your writing?
 10. Have you ever had contact with the Vancouver Police Department's Anti-Graffiti Unit?
 - If yes, how often do you have contact with them?
 - How do you feel about the work they are doing to reduce graffiti? Please explain.
 11. Do you believe that an increase in the number of graffiti writers arrested and charged will result in a decrease in the amount of graffiti in Vancouver? Please explain.
 12. Overall, do you feel the program has been able to REDUCE the amount of graffiti on public and private property throughout the City?
 - If not, why not?
 13. What do you feel would happen to the amount of graffiti in the city, if the GMP operated on a smaller scale, with a smaller budget and fewer initiatives? Please explain.
 14. In your opinion, what do you feel should be the City's response to graffiti? Please explain.
 - Is there any way in which you feel the City can encourage your art and still manage the amount of graffiti throughout the City?
 15. Before we end, is there anything you would like to say about the program or this evaluation?

Thank you for your time, your comments have been a great help.
Please contact me if you want to add anything or ask me any questions. (*Will hand out a contact card.*)

The final report will be available at the City in mid-January.

Appendix D

Assessment of Short-Term Outcomes

The following table analyzes the program’s short-term outcomes, as indicated in the logic model and using the qualitative and quantitative findings, determines whether these outcomes have been achieved.

ASSESSMENT OF SHORT TERM OUTCOMES

SHORT-TERM OUTCOME	DESCRIPTION	QUALITATIVE FINDINGS	QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS	OUTCOME ACHIEVED?
To establish a contract to remove graffiti from all City property	Contract stipulates weekly inspections of graffiti on City property and requires graffiti complaints are responded to within forty-eight hours. Performance monitored by staff to ensure the contract is operating effectively.	Participants familiar with the contract feel it has proven to be very effective in removing graffiti from all City property, noting fewer removals have occurred in areas not covered by the contract Participants less familiar with the contract feel graffiti is consistently and quickly removed Some participants feel the contract should focus more on the quality of removals	Sept/02-Aug/03: fewer graffiti incidences on public property in the Downtown core Sept/02-Aug/03: slight increase in number of graffiti removals from public property	Yes: as both findings reveal consistent removals from public property
To enforce the Graffiti Bylaw	Enforcing the Bylaw requires program staff to: contact property owners with graffiti on their building; educate them on available removal options and secure compliance with the Bylaw.	Some participants feel program has successfully reached a large number of property owners and secured compliance with the Bylaw, noting compliance rate is 80% Yet a clear majority of participants feel the Bylaw is not consistently enforced; claiming the program has not reached a sufficient number of property owners, despite a compliance rate of 80%	Sept/02-Aug/03 small number of free paint kits distributed Sept/02-Dec/03 graffiti on building frontages & laneways in BIA districts have decreased substantially	The qualitative findings suggest the Bylaw is not consistently enforced; whereas the quantitative findings do not provide sufficient data to dispute this ¹
To increase the public’s awareness of graffiti through specific educational, promotional and outreach	A public that is more aware about graffiti and the various problems it can create; will be more likely to contribute to and support reduction efforts. With the public ‘on side’ the program can conduct a successful campaign to reduce graffiti levels and	Some participants feel the program has increased public awareness through its various promotional and outreach activities. Yet a clear majority of participants feel the program has not increased public awareness because	Sept/02-Aug/03 number of graffiti complaints made by the public has generally increased	The qualitative findings indicate public awareness has not increased whereas the quantitative findings provide insufficient data to dispute this

¹ For more information of specific limitations, see the Quantitative Data section, pp 17

SHORT-TERM OUTCOME	DESCRIPTION	QUALITATIVE FINDINGS	QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS	OUTCOME ACHIEVED?
activities	maintain the reduction.	its outreach activities are not aggressive enough or because graffiti is not a “hot” public issue		
To increase the number of murals completed by graffiti writers	Secures cooperation of graffiti writers. Enables writers to work closely with property owners, encouraging them to become more active within their community; attain a higher level of civic responsibility and ultimately write less graffiti.	Most participants are unaware of the City’s mural activities, though support them; while a majority of graffiti writers want more opportunities to complete murals established through the City; and want an easier process of doing so.	Sept/02-Aug/03: increase in number of murals established, compared with those established pre-program; 16 out of the 31 murals that have been completed are done by graffiti writers	Yes: although the qualitative findings indicate a majority of graffiti writers feel insufficient opportunities provided; the quantitative findings assert that an increasing number (16 out of 31) of murals are being completed by graffiti writers; which is an increase from not having any opportunities previously.
To increase the number of communities and non-profit organizations that proactively remove graffiti	Provides communities and non-profit organizations with support and resources, so they can conduct graffiti reduction initiatives or activities to remove graffiti. Increases civic pride.	Many participants feel the program has been instrumental in increasing the number of communities and non-profit organizations that proactively remove graffiti; and in attracting volunteers to the graffiti issue and increasing community spirit	Sept/02-Aug/03: increase in number of community driven graffiti reduction initiatives established, compared with those established pre-program	Yes: as both findings reveal the number of participating communities has increased
To increase the number of graffiti removal contracts developed by local commercial areas	Ensures more commercial areas are removing graffiti quickly and consistently through the work of a graffiti removal company.	Many participants feel the program makes substantial efforts to work with property owners to develop contracts. They note they are many obstacles in assembling property owners within one area together to develop a contract, more contracts have been developed since the GMP has been implemented	There is no statistical data collected on the number of contracts developed	Yes: although there is no quantitative data available, the qualitative findings indicate an increase in number of contracts developed

SHORT-TERM OUTCOME	DESCRIPTION	QUALITATIVE FINDINGS	QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS	OUTCOME ACHIEVED?
To increase the number of schools receiving educational sessions from the City	Seeks to prevent graffiti incidents by teaching youth about why graffiti poses major problems for cities and resident.	Many participants feel the program has increased its visits to schools across Vancouver and feel the program now reaches a wider audience than initially planned	There is no statistical data collected on the number of schools visited	Yes: although there is no quantitative data available, the qualitative findings indicate an increase in number of schools visited
To establish graffiti suspect database	Enables the Anti-Graffiti Unit to categorize police incidents involving graffiti and profile suspects in an accessible format.	Participants that are aware of the database acknowledge it has been established at the onset of program implementation; continues to expand	There is no statistical data collected on utility or effectiveness of the database	Yes: although there is no quantitative data available, the qualitative findings indicate this goal is achieved
To increase awareness of graffiti within the VPD	Educating VPD patrol officers about graffiti enables greater flow and exchange of information internally, assisting to apprehend and charge more suspects.	Many participants feel VPD Patrol Officers have been specifically educated about graffiti and observe Officers have more knowledge about the issue	There is no statistical data collected on how many patrol Officers trained or improvements made	Yes: although there is no quantitative data available, the qualitative findings indicate this goal is achieved
To increase number of graffiti writers charged	Seeks to prevent other writers from doing graffiti and sends a clear message to Vancouver residents the City is serious about reducing graffiti.	Most participants feel more graffiti suspects have been charged A few participants are uncertain if this has occurred	There is no statistical data available on the number of suspects charged	Yes: there is no quantitative data available to confirm this; however a Council Report by the VPD specifically states the number of graffiti suspects charged have increased

Appendix E

Letters & Transcripts used to Recruit Interview Participants

City Staff

A. Letter from General Manager of Engineering Services to inform participants:

In April 2002 the City of Vancouver implemented the Graffiti Management Program (GMP) to reduce graffiti on public and private property throughout Vancouver. Amna Khan, a graduate student from the University of Victoria, School of Public Administration is conducting an outside evaluation of the GMP. The evaluation will analyze whether the program is achieving its intended outcomes; whether it should continue to operate within its current size and scope or if it should be adjusted. She will be speaking with the program's numerous stakeholders, including City staff members, politicians and the community. We believe that this comprehensive approach is crucial in order to ensure the GMP is operating effectively, and that an appropriate amount of resources are allocated to the program.

Amna plans to speak with staff from Engineering Services, Community Services, the Park Board and the Vancouver Police Department, to find out how the GMP is performing. Amna's research will provide you with an opportunity to voice your opinions on many aspects of the program.

I realize that demands on your time are many but I strongly encourage you to participate in this evaluation process. We hope that your frank and candid discussions with Amna will help the City answer key questions about the program, and maximize the benefits the program can provide to all.

Amna will be calling you in the next two weeks to ask for your assistance. I hope that you will make the time to comply and help us ensure the GMP is reaching its goals.

B. Telephone script to follow up with participants:

Hi (participant),

This is Amna Khan calling. As you probably know, I am a student at the University of Victoria; and am conducting an evaluation of the City's Graffiti Management Program. The evaluation will be summative in nature, which means it asks whether the program has achieved its intended outcomes and whether it should continue within its current size and scope or be adjusted.

I hope to conduct an interview with you, to gather your thoughts and ideas on the program's success, since you work closely with the program. Your participation is voluntary, and any information you provide will be confidential. The interview should take no more than one hour of your time. Would it be possible to meet with you this sometime this week or the next? If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 604-889-9548.

2. Council Members

Dear (Council Member),

I am currently completing my Masters degree in Public Administration at the University of Victoria. I am conducting an outside evaluation of the City's Graffiti Management Program.

The evaluation of the program will be summative in nature, which means it will assess whether the program has achieved its intended outcomes; whether the program should continue to operate within its current size and scope or if it should be adjusted. My research will be based on discussions with representatives from the program's numerous stakeholder groups (departmental staff; community members; graffiti writers and politicians.) The information collected will be used to recommend whether the program is operating successfully.

I have randomly selected you and three of your colleagues to consider participating in an interview, which will enable me to better understand your perspectives on the Graffiti Management Program; and how it has impacted Vancouver and the residents that you represent. I hope that you can find some time to sit down with me during the next few weeks, to speak about your thoughts and experiences with the program. The interview will require a time commitment on your part of twenty minutes, maximum.

I will be contacting your office to try and arrange a time to meet. If you have any questions in the meantime, please feel free to contact me at 604-889-9548.

3. Property Owners

Dear (participant),

I am a graduate student from the University of Victoria, School of Public Administration. As you may know, in April 2002 the City of Vancouver implemented the Graffiti Management Program (GMP) to reduce graffiti on public and private property throughout Vancouver. I am currently conducting an outside, independent evaluation of the program. It will recommend whether the program is achieving its intended goals and whether it should continue to operate within its current size and scope. I plan to speak with numerous groups impacted by the program, including City staff members, politicians and community members.

Upon discussions with the program Manager, you have been contacted as a property owner that has previously experienced graffiti on your property; or because you have been involved in some way with the graffiti issue. I hope that you will consider participating in a focus group session, along with 4-5 other participants. It will provide you with an opportunity to voice your opinions on many aspects of the program and to share your thoughts with others. The focus group will require a time commitment of one hour to 90 minutes maximum. Your participation is voluntary; and any information you provide will be confidential.

I will be calling you in the next two weeks to ask for your assistance. I realize that

demands on your time are many; yet I hope that you will make the time to participate, and help the City ensure the Graffiti Management Program is making a positive difference in your community and for your business. I look forward to speaking with you soon.

In the meantime, if you have any questions and wish to contact me, I can be reached at 604-889-9548 or email at aakhan@uvic.ca.

4. Community members/Youth Volunteers

Dear (participant),

I am a graduate student from the University of Victoria, School of Public Administration. As you may know, in April 2002 the City of Vancouver implemented the Graffiti Management Program (GMP) to reduce graffiti on public and private property throughout Vancouver. I am currently conducting an outside evaluation of the program. The evaluation will analyze whether the program is achieving its intended goals and whether it should continue to operate within its current size and scope. I plan to speak with numerous groups impacted by the program, including City staff members, politicians and community members.

Upon discussions with the program Manager, you have been contacted because of your work and involvement on the graffiti issue. I hope that you will consider participating in a focus group session, along with 4-5 other participants. It will provide you with an opportunity to voice your opinions on many aspects of the program and to share your thoughts with others. The focus group will require a time commitment of one hour to 90 minutes maximum. Your participation is voluntary; and any information you provide will be confidential.

I will be calling you in the next two weeks to ask for your assistance. I realize that demands on your time are many; yet I hope that you will make the time to participate, and help the City ensure the Graffiti Management Program is making a positive difference in your community. I look forward to speaking with you soon.

In the meantime, if you have any questions and wish to contact me, I can be reached at 604-889-9548 or email at aakhan@uvic.ca.

5. Graffiti Artists

Dear (participant),

My name is Amna Khan. I am a graduate student from the University of Victoria, School of Public Administration. As you probably know, in April 2002 the City of Vancouver implemented the Graffiti Management Program (GMP). I am conducting an outside, independent, evaluation of the program. The evaluation will analyze whether the program is achieving its intended goals and whether it should continue to operate within its current size and scope. I plan to speak with numerous groups impacted by the program, including City staff members, the Anti-Graffiti Unit, politicians, community volunteers and graffiti artists.

I plan to interview a few graffiti artists, whether they are writing illegally or legally. I want to learn how they view the program and how the program has impacted the work they do, whether the impact is positive or negative. There will be no tape-recorders or video cameras, confidentiality will be secure and I am willing to meet the artists wherever they may prefer. The interview should take no more than one hour.

Due to your status as a graffiti artist, I would like to interview you and any of your friends or co-workers that also practice graffiti. I want to gain a deeper understanding from you, on how the Graffiti Management Program has affected your lives and your livelihood. Thanks for taking the time to read this, you can contact me at 604-889-9548 or email at aakhan@uvic.ca. I hope to hear from you soon.