
TO: Mayor J. Lehman and Members of Council

FROM: R. Sutton, P. Eng., Director of Engineering

NOTED: R. J. Forward, MBA, M.Sc., P. Eng., General Manager of Infrastructure & Growth Management
C. Ladd, Chief Administrative Officer

RE: Graffiti Abatement Program – Update
(File: P01-GR)

DATE: June 12, 2017

The purpose of this memo is to update Council on the success of the Graffiti Abatement Program in 2016, and to inform Council of the planned activities for 2017.

City staff continues to take a proactive approach to graffiti abatement throughout the City. This approach includes graffiti eradication, education, and prevention. Graffiti vandalism is a problem in many communities, and it can negatively affect property values and the aesthetics of neighbourhoods.

The program is led by the Engineering Department's Right of Way Activity (ROWA) group in close coordination with the operations and maintenance staff in other City departments, including Environmental Services, Roads, Parks & Fleet, and Corporate Facilities.

In general, the program approach involves:

- Identification, tracking, and removal of graffiti vandalism on City property in a timely manner including graffiti notification to utility companies, Canada Post, and other non-City owned infrastructure occupying our rights-of way;
- Notifications of private property graffiti to By-law Services for action;
- Partnerships with Bell Canada, local artists, and community groups on preventative graffiti measures such as street art murals; and
- Proactively applying anti-graffiti coatings on infrastructure surfaces that are prone to graffiti.

When necessary, City staff retain the services of a graffiti removal service to remove tagging and other graffiti. Particularly offensive graffiti, once it has been identified, is removed as soon as practical, or obscured if this can't be done within 24 hours. Other, non-offensive removals are identified and grouped to take better advantage of the service provider's minimum call out time.

The graffiti program approach includes partnerships with local artists and community groups on preventative graffiti measures such as public art murals. Mural applications are a very effective deterrent to tagging in graffiti prone areas. Mural art is discussed with the artist prior to the work occurring, and typically depicts imagery in tune with the local community, history and culture.

In 2016 successful community outreach included:

- o Mural projects at local S.C.D.S.B. and S.M.C.D.S.B. schools;
- o Waste receptacle murals painted throughout downtown parks and waterfront;
- o Discussions with the BIA on partnership opportunities;
- o Partnership with the skate park 'paint the park'; and
- o Mac's Street Art Program: partnership with Crime Stoppers.



Mayor Lehman and the Students and Staff of Maplevue Heights Elementary School: Waste Receptable Mural Program



Themed murals on traffic cabinets at Dunlop Street and Owen Street (left) and at Memorial Square (right)

We have seen a noticeable reduction in the number of reported graffiti incidents in 2016 over that of the previous years. There were approximately 1,100 reportings in 2015 and 421 reportings in 2016. The reduction, in part, could be attributable to our removal efforts and our abatement efforts (i.e. Mural programs and community outreach). It should be noted that staff appreciate assistance from residents who actively patrol their neighbourhoods for graffiti vandalism and report it.

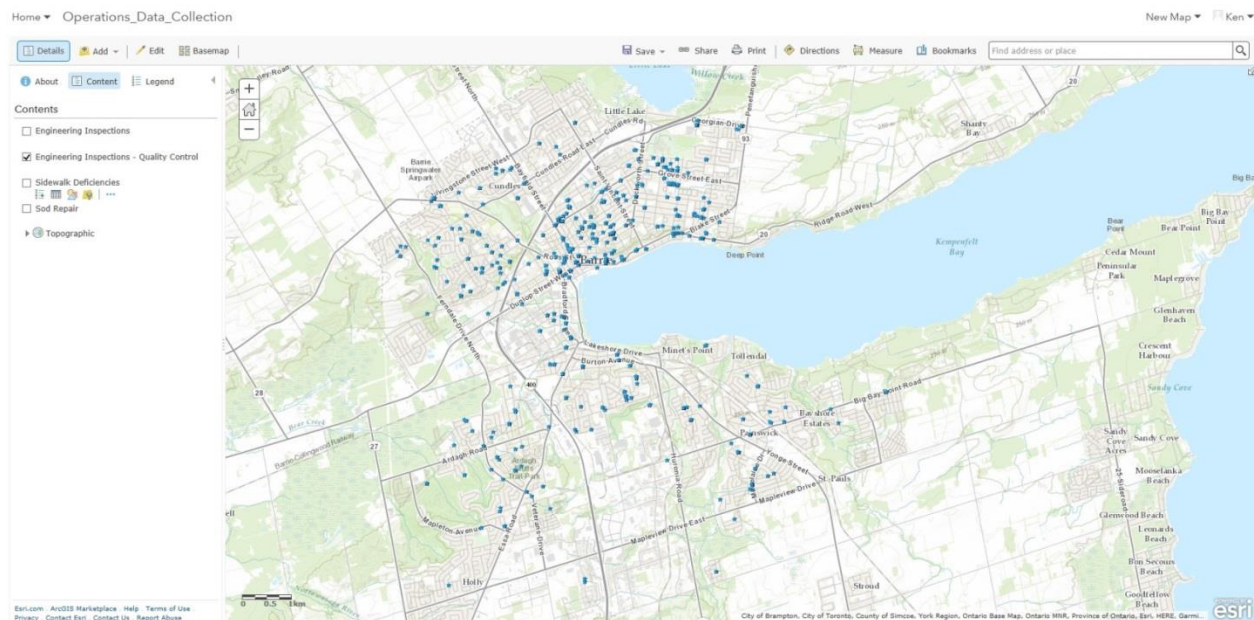
New for 2017 Graffiti Vandalism Tracking Enhancement through Innovation

Commencing this year, staff will be making process improvements using technology in a collaborated effort between the Engineering and GIS teams.

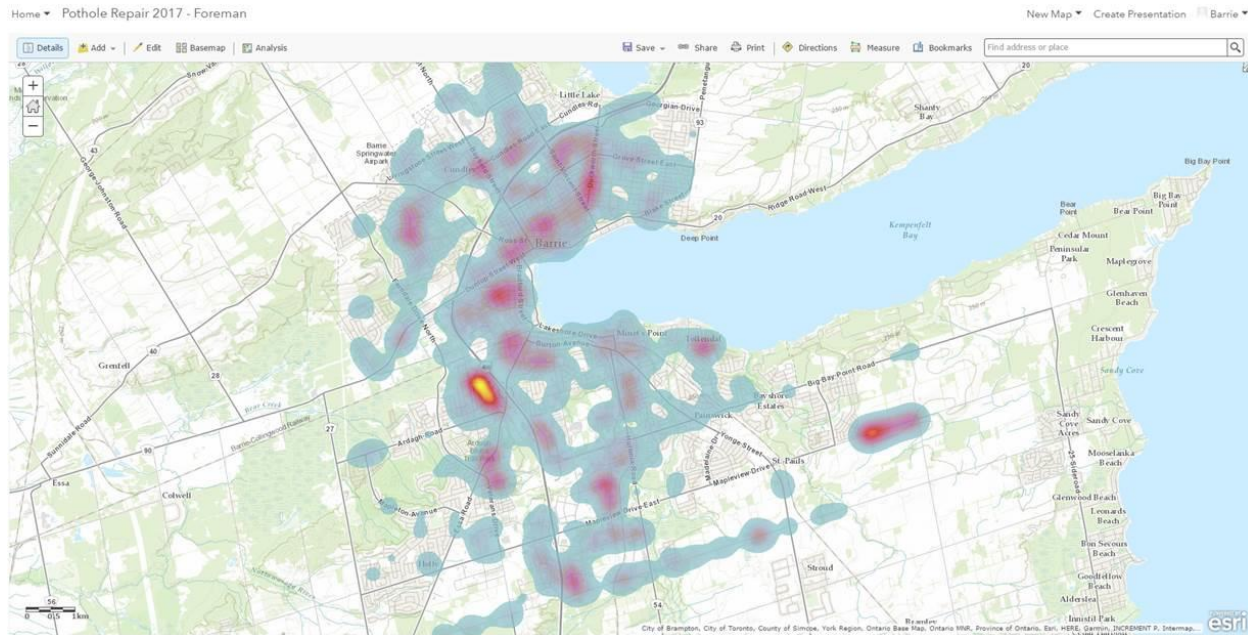
Staff will be managing the graffiti vandalism incidents in public spaces using a mobile web-based Application (App). The electronic data collection and tracking system 'Collector for GIS' will be downloaded on to existing mobile devices. The App permits collection and updating of data in the field and ties it back to our base mapping. The App is capable of providing 'live' information in a very user friendly map format, i.e., current location, input data, photos, tracking, searching, observations, live response to current events, and overall improved efficiency.

Benefits:

- No additional cost to implement;
- 'Live' tracking of graffiti removal status by internal and external stakeholders;
- Reduction in office paper preparation time;
- Improved customer service as we can better track priorities and dropped locations;
- Improved records management;
- Improved quality control;
- Improved communication between stakeholders;
- We will be working towards inclusion into City-Works system; and
- Requires minimal computer literacy skills.



Example: Data from App referenced into City GIS base mapping.



Example: GIS base mapping tools will allow us to easily identify graffiti vandalism 'hotspots' (to focus our graffiti abatement efforts in problematic areas).

The 2017 work plan includes the following activities:

- Continue our identification, tracking, and removal of graffiti vandalism;
- Continue our partnership with local schools;
- Develop a new partnership with the BIA, incorporating non-commercial themed murals painted on the waste receptacles throughout the downtown;
- Continue our Park Operations waste receptacle murals;
- Encourage the active participation of community members, including partnering with the 'paint the park event' at the skate park; and
- Work with Traffic Services and Parks Operations on additional murals on traffic cabinets.

The Graffiti Abatement Program is currently funded from base operating budgets, and utilized approximately \$30,000.00 in 2016.

For more information on graffiti abatement, please contact Mike Nugent, Supervisor of Construction Inspection at mike.nugent@barrie.ca or extension 4301.