

Management report to Council**Agenda item 6.3****Melbourne Graffiti Blitz Update****Council****Presenter:** Jorja Pindor, Director Waste and Recycling**26 April 2022****Purpose and background**

1. The purpose of this report is provide an update on the Melbourne Graffiti Blitz (the blitz) program, including the amount of graffiti cleaned and types of assets and property cleaned.
2. The amount of graffiti cleaned every month across the city has increased by more than 60 per cent since the start of the pandemic. Graffiti reporting has also doubled in this time.
3. A targeted approach was needed to manage this increase in graffiti cases. The blitz program is intended to combat graffiti on public and private assets, improve public spaces and ensure the city is sparkling as workers, students and visitors return. This is being undertaken in partnership with various State Government agencies and private asset owners including Telstra, Australia Post and Citipower.
4. In February 2022, City of Melbourne called on other businesses and property owners to also help remove graffiti from their buildings and assets, and encouraged residents and visitors to report graffiti using QR codes located around the city.
5. Graffiti removal can be complex. It includes removal of paint from a range of surfaces, including heritage assets and buildings, or colour matching painted surfaces and painting over the unwanted graffiti. Each of the four electric vehicles used for this program, carry with it hundreds of different paints and chemicals to manage graffiti removal. Some cases can be cleaned with a single process, with many requiring multiple visits for additional paint applications or chemical cleaning before being completed.
6. The blitz commenced in the Hoddle Grid on 6 March 2022. The Hoddle Grid, Docklands, South Wharf and Southbank areas have now been completed. The blitz is currently underway in South Yarra and North Melbourne. The Flemington, Kensington and West Melbourne areas will be completed in May 2022. Carlton, East Melbourne and Parkville will be completed by the end of June 2022.

Key issues

7. Approximately 14,000m² of graffiti has been successfully removed as part of the blitz program to date (refer Attachment 2 for example images). This equates to over 50 tennis courts of surface area cleaned and is equivalent to almost a third of all graffiti removed during 2019.
8. Graffiti case reporting almost tripled in volume since the launch of the blitz program in March (937 cases in Jan 2022 compared with 2386 in March 2022). Of all graffiti incidents removed as part of blitz, half of these were a result of a report from the community, and the remaining half were proactively identified.
9. During March, the average time between graffiti being reported and cleaned was 5 days. This is over a 70% reduction in days for completion, compared to January 2022.
10. The majority of all graffiti removed was from privately owned commercial properties (refer Attachment 3).
11. To date, the blitz has had a noticeable impact on graffiti management and the cleanliness of the city.
12. Trends have been identified as to the most likely re-occurring graffiti 'hot-spots' as part of this program (refer Attachment 3). This data will allow for a more targeted approach to graffiti prevention in partnership with Victoria Police. It will also inform the development of other prevention campaigns, including the use of murals or plants and trees in areas being targeted, as well as the application of graffiti prevention coatings on appropriate surfaces.

Recommendation from management

13. That Council notes the outcomes to-date of the Melbourne Graffiti Blitz Program.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 2 of 11)
2. Attachment 2 – Graffiti removal images (Page 3 of 11)
3. Attachment 3 – Graffiti trends (Page 10 of 11)

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. No direct legal issues arise from the recommendation from management.

Finance

2. This program of works fits within the current budget allocation for the service at \$400,000 for the 2021/22 financial year.

Conflict of interest

3. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Health and Safety

4. One of the key themes in the development of this program was to improve the community perception of safety within the city, as there is a link between graffiti occurrences and other criminal acts. This increased perception of safety is also aimed at increasing cleanliness and visitation to the city.

Stakeholder consultation

5. External consultation was undertaken with relevant Victorian Government agencies and private asset owners including Citi Power, Telstra, Australia Post, Vic Track, Yarra Trams and Vic Roads. This consultation was aimed at increasing the graffiti removal service levels by these stakeholders for their own assets, and seeking approval to remove graffiti if required on relevant assets as part of the blitz campaign.
6. This consultation was undertaken by direct communication with relevant government department heads and relevant CEOs, seeking a partnership approach to graffiti management within the city.

Relation to Council policy

7. This recommendation is consistent with:
 - 7.1. Council Plan 2021-2025:
 - 7.1.1. Strategic Objective: Safety and Wellbeing and Deliver
 - 7.1.2. Major Initiative: Maintain a clean city through the Rapid Response Clean Team initiative
 - 7.2. City of Melbourne Graffiti Management Policy 2021

Environmental sustainability

8. In developing this proposal, the environmental sustainability issues or opportunities considered include the use of a full electric fleet of vehicles to undertake the graffiti management program, which form part of the current contract requirements of the City of Melbourne - Graffiti Management Contract with the service provider Calcorp.

Attachment 2 – Images of Graffiti Blitz Removal

Example A

Section: Private Property (Commercial)

Complete Date: 10 March 2022

153 m2 graffiti removed

Address: 310 Queen Street, Melbourne CBD



Example B

Section: Private Property (Commercial)

Complete Date: 15 March 2022

168 m2 graffiti removed

Address: 364-372 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne CBD



Example C

Section: Non-CoM Owned Buildings

Complete Date: 16 March 2022

152 m2 graffiti removed

Address: 295 - 300 Queen Street, Melbourne CBD



Example D

Section: Building Site Scaffolding/Hoarding

Complete Date: 17 March 2022

140 m2 graffiti removed

Address: 300 Queen Street, Melbourne CBD



Example E

Section: Private Property (Commercial)

Complete Date: 18 March 2022

135 m2 graffiti removed

Address: 295 - 300 Queen Street, Melbourne CBD

Before Photo	After Photo
	
	
	

Example F

Section: Private Property (Commercial)

Complete Date: 30 March 2022

450 m2 graffiti removed

Address: 26 Power Street, Southbank



Example G

Section: Private Property (Commercial)

Complete Date: 31 March 2022

300 m2 graffiti removed

Address: 56-58 Clarendon Street, Southbank



Attachment 3 – Graffiti Blitz Trends

Graffiti removal by asset type

Asset Type	Square meters of graffiti removed	Percent of total graffiti removed
Private commercial	9940	71%
Private residential	1120	8%
Vic Roads	840	6%
Yarra trams	560	4%
Council owned	420	3%
CitiPower	420	3%
Universities	280	2%
Australia Post	140	1%
Telstra	140	1%
Other	140	1%
TOTAL	14000	100%

Attachment 3 – Graffiti Blitz Trends

Highest Repeat-Offended Graffiti Areas: Post Blitz

1. **Flinders St and Collins St block** - between Queen St and Swanston St
2. **Little Bourke St** - between Exhibition and Swanston St
3. **Elizabeth St** – between Flinders St and Therry St
4. **Bourke St Mall**
5. **Little Collins** - between Swanston and Queens St

