

Waterloo Region Graffiti Strategy

A report on the initiatives being undertaken by the
Graffiti Strategy Committee

Goal:

Build awareness and reduce the incidents of graffiti throughout Waterloo Region by engaging our entire community in a multi-level and multi-disciplined approach to graffiti reduction.

Introduction:

The presence of graffiti has a large and widespread negative impact within a community. These adverse impacts relate to the perceptions of crime and safety, aesthetics and the local economy. In addition, municipalities, public agencies and institutions, enforcement agencies, business and private property owners, spend considerable time and financial resources with regard to their individual efforts to combat graffiti. There are few people in a community that will not, at one time or another, be affected by the presence of graffiti to some extent.

The Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council published their Fear of Crime: Perceptions in Waterloo Region report in November of 2009. The report helps to provide some context with our Region. In this report, graffiti was identified as one of the “crimes of concern”, and ranked 7th among the identified crimes in terms of level of concern, according to a 2008 citizen survey.

(Need to include foot note acknowledgement of report)

Background:

In 2009, a small core group of municipalities and agencies within Waterloo Region began to brainstorm ways to combat graffiti. It became clear early in the discussions that a coordinated and collaborative approach would be the optimal way to develop an Anti-Graffiti Strategy. The strategy, involved identifying all relevant stakeholders in the region to implement anti-graffiti initiatives. An attempt is being made to move from individual to collective actions.

A large group of stakeholders were brought together to brainstorm and begin the development of an anti-graffiti strategy. The discussions were fruitful and the stakeholder group identified a wide variety of issues associated with graffiti and ways to combat it. All of the input was categorized into four major themes. Embedded throughout the themes are the guiding principles of the 4 E's, consistent with strategies and initiatives developed in other jurisdictions. The 4 E's are:

Education, Empowerment, Eradication and Enforcement.

It is anticipated that the Anti-Graffiti Strategy will continue to be a dynamic document whereby various initiatives and action items will be discussed, implemented and evaluated over time. Certain existing initiatives once completed may be removed from the action list and new initiatives added as they are identified as being relevant and feasible within the region.

Themes:

The stakeholders have agreed to advance the graffiti strategy along four themes, identified as:

Prevention and Enforcement

Develop initiatives aimed at deterrence and consistent by-law regulations relating to early removal.

Community Engagement

Getting people engaged in initiatives to prevent and reduce graffiti within their communities.

Public Awareness and Education

Raise awareness within the community as to the impact of graffiti and ways to combat it.

Public Art

Develop public art projects in identified areas of the region as a way to deter graffiti.

Initiatives:

Appendix A outlines the various anti-graffiti initiatives that currently make up our Anti-Graffiti Strategy. The initiatives are categorized according to the applicable theme as described previously.

Stakeholders:

The following stakeholders have been involved in the development and implementation of the initiatives identified in the Anti-Graffiti Strategy.

Region of Waterloo	Waterloo Crime Prevention Council
Waterloo Regional Police Service	Downtown East You Gotta Luv it Project
Kitchener Downtown BIA	Waterloo Uptown BIA
City of Kitchener	John Howard Society
City of Cambridge	ROOF
City of Waterloo	Canada Post
Township of Wellesley	Button Factory
Township of Wilmot	Cambridge, Waterloo, Kitchener BIA'S
Township of North Dumfries	Bell Canada
KW- Hydro	Wilfrid Laurier Police
University of Waterloo Police	Community Justice Initiatives
Grand River Conservation Authority	Waterloo Region District School Board
Waterloo Catholic District School Board	Conestoga College
Crown Attorney's Office	Grand River Transit
KW Real Estate Board	Community Members and Community Centre Coordinators and Volunteers