



# City of Austin

**Leslie Pool, Council Member**  
**District 7**

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## Item HS1.12 Investing in Graffiti Abatement Efforts

### This proposal would:

- Add an additional graffiti abatement team and abatement materials to the city's main graffiti abatement program in the Austin Youth Development (AYD) program in the Health and Human Services Department (HHSD).

### Graffiti vandalism affects Austin residents' quality of life.

- According to a U.S. Department of Justice publication, "graffiti contributes to lost revenue associated with reduced ridership on transit systems, reduced retail sales, and declines in property value."<sup>1</sup>
- Last year, the graffiti abatement team in AYD received more than 5,000 requests to remove graffiti vandalism.<sup>2</sup>

### Austin's graffiti program has been at the same service level for more than a decade, harming its ability to respond to resident requests in a timely manner.

- Rapidly removing graffiti is an important strategy for preventing individuals from continuing to vandalize an area, with many cities aiming to remove graffiti vandalism in one to two days.<sup>1</sup>
- However, the AYD program, at its current service level, takes roughly two weeks on average to clean up graffiti vandalism.<sup>2</sup>
- Investment in the AYD graffiti program has not kept pace with the city's growth. The city has funded it at the same level for at least a decade, while Austin's population grew by almost 30 percent over that same timeframe.<sup>2</sup>

### This proposal could help the city respond to resident graffiti abatement requests throughout the city more rapidly and help it improve quality of life in our communities.

- This investment would increase the graffiti abatement team's capacity by 50 percent, enabling the city to respond more rapidly to abatement requests and improve quality of life for Austin residents.

**Table 1. Graffiti Service Requests  
AYD Graffiti Abatement, 2015**

District	Requests
1	678
2	431
3	1,081
4	452
5	477
6	97
7	361
8	106
9	1,319
10	218
N/A	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,285</b>

*Source: "Graffiti Abatement," Austin Open Data Portal*

**Table 2. Budget Proposal for  
Austin Youth Development Graffiti Program**

Line Items	Investment*
<b>Operational Costs</b>	<b>\$129,134</b>
1 FTE (Program Specialist)	\$54,790
3 Temporary Employees	\$62,869
Fleet Maintenance & Fuel	\$5,475
Abatement Supplies	\$6,000
<b>One-Time Costs</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>
Truck, Trailer, & Equipment	\$70,000
<b>Total Budget Proposal</b>	<b>\$199,134</b>

*\*Funding amounts are for nine months funding in FY17.*

*Source: Health and Human Services Department Staff*

<sup>1</sup> Deborah Lamm Weisel, "Graffiti," U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policies Services (2009).

<sup>2</sup> Austin Budget Questions #34, #35, & #36, FY 2017.