INFORMATION REPORT

DATE: April 11, 2013

TO: City Manager

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development

SUBJECT: March 2013 Significant Increase in Graffiti Activity

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APPROVED: DATE:

Reports of graffiti have dramatically increased and remained steady throughout the first quarter of this year with the majority of the increase occurring during the month of March. This rapid pace is proving difficult for City staff and the City's graffiti abatement contractor to service and abate. Staff will continue to monitor graffiti levels and may need to increase the budget for abatement services should the increased trend continue.

Increases in Graffiti Reported to the Graffiti Hotline

	Mar-12	Mar-13	Δ	Q1 2012	Q1 2013	Δ
Public Property	63	358	468%	175	639	265%
Private Property	33	35	6%	87	75	-14%
Other Jurisdiction	8	11	38%	17	32	88%
Total	104	404	288%	279	746	167%

The most significant increases occur in reporting for public property graffiti with a 468% increase in March compared to last year and a 265% increase across the first quarter. This data does not include abatement performed by dedicated volunteers.

Staff believes a variety of factors are contributing to the sudden and sustained increase including: 1) the relatively dry winter and warmer weather, 2) the death of Forrest Peck (who tagged as SAON and KICKIT) with graffiti memorials mourning the loss in the graffiti subculture, 3) increased reporting by CaliWest, Inc. downtown host services, and 4) in light of the current public discussion regarding public safety, there may be a perception of a reduced police presence in the area. While the potential causes for the increase may be any combination of the above possibilities, nonetheless, the increase is occurring at record numbers.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact J. Guevara, Redevelopment Manager at 420-5156 or jguevara@cityofsantacruz.com.

Submitted by:

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Director of Economic Development