



ericGARCETTI

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

District 13 ? 200 N. Spring St. Room 470 ? Los Angeles ? CA 90012



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GARCETTI'S "UNTAGGERS" TAKE ON GRAFFITI

PAINT ROLLER RAISED HIGH, COUNCILMEMBER LEADS THE ANTI-GRAFFITI CHARGE

More than 50 neighborhood leaders and community volunteers teamed up and spread out across the 13th Council District on Saturday to identify graffiti "hot-spots". The event marked the debut of Uniting Neighborhoods To Abolish Graffiti or UNTAG, Councilmember Eric Garcetti's ambitious program to cut graffiti in half in his district in two years.

"No matter where I go in my district, I hear one thing loud and clear: no one likes graffiti. With a smart system of block captain volunteers and concentrated enforcement in hot-spots, we will be able to stamp graffiti out in our neighborhoods. By catching taggers in the act and making them paint out their own work and the work in their own neighborhoods, we will show young people that vandalism has consequences for them too."

After hearing Councilmember Garcetti lay out his strategy to reduce graffiti by 50%, volunteers headed for the neighborhoods of the 13th District, where they spent the morning identifying hot-spots for graffiti, identifying more than 500 locations to be targeted by the paint-out crews. Where possible, neighbors asked property owners to sign a release allowing the city's contractors to paint over graffiti on their property as soon as it comes up. The Councilmember himself struck the first blow against graffiti, joining volunteers and Operation Clean Sweep to paint out a tagged wall near a 101 Freeway underpass in Historic Filipinotown.

At the end of the day, more than half of the volunteers signed up to become block captains, committing to paint out graffiti, monitor their neighborhoods and recruit UNTAGgers in their own communities.

"UNTAG feeds directly into the work we're doing on my neighborhood council to improve the quality of life in Echo Park," said Matthew DuBois, an elected member of the Greater Echo Park Elysian Neighborhood Council. "Neighbors, join me in becoming an UNTAG block captain. We all have a stake in keeping our communities beautiful."

Commissioner Cynthia Ruiz of the Board of Public Works participated and promised full support from city departments. "UNTAG can count on me to coordinate its efforts with the city's own Operation Clean Sweep to create a block-by-block, rapid-response graffiti eradication network."

Los Angeles Chief of Police William Bratton will address the next public meeting of UNTAG, to be held on June 19th from 12-2 p.m. at Micheltorena Elementary School in Silver Lake.

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