

Unleash Your Geek

San Jose, Calif.

Graffiti Removal Challenge

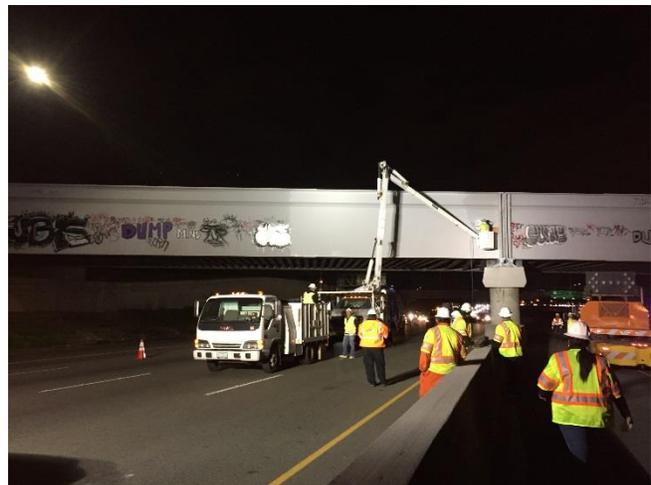
The Problem:

Graffiti on our freeways and in our communities is a challenge in the City of San José, and the Bay Area. The City of San José has spent upwards of \$4 Million on graffiti eradication efforts since 2011, and has several hundred volunteers working on making San Jose a beautiful place to live. A recent report shows that Graffiti in San José includes three troubling trends:

- 1) An increase of graffiti on private residential properties
- 2) An increase in graffiti along freeway sound walls, creek flood retention walls, and other third party right of ways
- 3) An increase in graffiti in hard to reach locations such as on billboards and along freeway signs and overpasses.

These trends show us that over the next decade we are going to see graffiti moving to places that are much more expensive and difficult to address.

Our current process for graffiti removal on overpasses, freeways, and railroad trestles is expensive and inefficient. A recent example highlights this inefficiency: Caltrans and the City of San José partnered to clean graffiti along a two mile section of Highway 101 between Highway 87 and McKee Road in January, 2016. This effort involved painting the overpasses, sound walls and railroad trestles to remove graffiti. Due to the need to paint the railroad trestles using a spray rig, over 40 people were mobilized at both the City and the State level, as freeway lanes were closed and large bucket



cranes were used to allow staff to paint the overpasses and railroad trestles. The mobilization and equipment cost taxpayers over \$60,000 for the three days of overnight work involved with this clean-up effort. Based on current trends, we're going to see more expensive clean-ups like this one, so we need an innovative and affordable solution.

The Challenge:

In response to this rising cost, the City of San José, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and Silicon Valley Community Foundation are creating a competition that will award a team of people in the San Francisco Bay Area with the best ideas and working prototypes that can address our hard-to-reach graffiti problem. We're hosting a two-phase competition that will utilize the creativity and civic entrepreneurship in this region to create an innovative solution to our graffiti woes.

Up to 4 prospects that address the problem succinctly and affordably will be awarded a sum of up to \$20,000.00 to prototype their idea, based on the cost. The grand prize winner will receive an additional cash prize of \$5,000 and possible assistance in patenting their prototype. Our local Silicon Valley U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is also helping to support the challenge by offering its popular 1-on-1 assistance on patent application basics and searching on its public workstations. The winning device will be beta-tested with Caltrans for roll out and the City of San José will receive free use of the device for 2 years.

To enter,

Go to www.herox.com/sjgraffiti

Important Dates:

Contest Start: May 11, 2016

Idea Submittal Deadline: September 30, 2016

Phase I (Ideas phase) winner chosen: Fall 2016

Prototype building begins immediately following prize disbursement

Prototype Deadline: Spring 2017

Eligibility:

The contest is open to any team of individuals who live in the 9 counties that make up the San Francisco Bay Area (Santa Clara, San Mateo, San Francisco, Marin, Sonoma, Napa, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda) except for current and retired State of California, City of San José, SV Community Foundation, or USPTO employees and their immediate family members.

Evaluation Criteria:

Idea generation and submissions will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Ideas Phase:
 - How much does the solution significantly change or improve the way we currently clean graffiti on difficult to reach locations such as freeway overpasses, train trestles, tall buildings, water towers and billboards?

- Will this improve the safety of workers? For example, will reduce the use of bucket cranes and help keep workers away from traffic hazards?
- Will this increase the efficiency of clean-up efforts and save money?
- Prototyping judging is based on:
 - The portability of the device (i.e. can it be moved to several locations throughout the day).
 - Ease of replication, product manufacturing
 - The solution's ability to remove graffiti so that the original surface looks clean (i.e. if it paints over does it leave a lumpy/uneven coat, or if it scrubs a surface, does it do so evenly)?

Contacts and Partner Info:

City of San Jose:

Paul Pereira – paul.pereira@sanjoseca.gov

Dylan Simon – dylan.simon@sanjoseca.gov

The City of San José – who we are and what we do

San José, known as the Capital of Silicon Valley is the largest city in the Bay Area, the third largest city in California and the tenth largest city in the U.S. San José is home to the greatest concentration of technology expertise in the world, with more than 6,600 technology companies employing over a quarter of its more than 1,000,000 residents. The City of San José has sought the talent, innovation and ideas from the community that lives, works and plays there.

Caltrans – who we are and what we do

Caltrans manages more than 50,000 road and highway lane miles, funds three intercity rail lines, maintains more than 12,500 state bridges, and inspects more than 400 public-use and special-use airports and heliports. Under the Active Transportation Program (ATP), Caltrans partners with local communities to develop and maintain safe, healthy, and convenient daily travel options. We are broadening our scope of projects to benefit active transportation users including pedestrians, bicyclists, and mass transit riders. The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe, sustainable, integrated, and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability.

Silicon Valley Community Foundation– who we are and what we do

Silicon Valley Community Foundation advances innovative philanthropic solutions to challenging problems. As the largest community foundation in the world, we engage donors and corporations from Silicon Valley, across the country and around the globe to make our region and world better for all. Our passion for helping people and organizations achieve their philanthropic dreams has created a global philanthropic enterprise committed to the belief that possibilities start here. Learn more at siliconvalleycf.org.

United States Patent & Trademark Office– who we are and what we do

The Silicon Valley USPTO is a West Coast regional office, serving California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Alaska, and Hawaii.

The regional office, located in San Jose, provides intellectual property (IP) services and resources for independent inventors, entrepreneurs, startups, researchers, IP practitioners, and others, as well as STEM education programming for students and teachers. The Silicon Valley, known as one of the most

Unleash your Geek
Graffiti Removal Challenge

prodigious and innovative entrepreneurial communities in the country, was selected as our West Coast presence to assist the USPTO in fostering and protecting innovation.