



CO00032823

SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL
Snohomish County, Washington

ORDINANCE NO. 08-011

RELATING TO GRAFFITI, ESTABLISHING A GRAFFITI ABATEMENT
DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM, AND ADDING A NEW CHAPTER 10.10 SCC

WHEREAS, graffiti, as defined in this ordinance, is a form of vandalism and a visual symbol of disorder, and is detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of the community; and

WHEREAS, graffiti promotes a perception that laws protecting public and private property can be disregarded with impunity, which fosters disrespect for the law that results in additional crime; and

WHEREAS, graffiti is detrimental to property values, business opportunities, community pride, and the enjoyment of life; and

WHEREAS, the abatement of graffiti having such detrimental effects provides substantial public benefits; and

WHEREAS, Snohomish County is a growing and vibrant community, and it is in the best interests of the County and public to help members of the community respond to and recover from the defacement of property by graffiti; and

WHEREAS, establishment of a graffiti abatement demonstration program will enable the County to provide substantial public benefits while further evaluating the problem and other potential county remedies;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED:

Section 1. A new chapter is added to Title 10 of the Snohomish County Code to read:

Chapter 10.10

GRAFFITI ABATEMENT DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

Sections:

10.10.010 Purpose.

10.10.020 Definitions.

10.10.030 Collection and distribution of information.

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1 10.10.040 County abatement action.
2 10.10.050 Evaluation and reporting.
3 10.10.060 Sunset.
4

5 **10.10.010 Purpose.**

6 The county council finds that graffiti on public and private buildings,
7 structures, and personal property, including motor vehicles, creates a condition of
8 blight within the county and results in the deterioration of property values,
9 business opportunities, and enjoyment of life for persons using adjacent and
10 surrounding properties. The council further finds that the presence of graffiti is
11 inconsistent with the county's goals of maintaining property, preventing crime,
12 and preserving aesthetic standards, and that promoting the abatement of graffiti
13 will provide substantial benefits to the county and the public. Accordingly, it is
14 the purpose of this chapter to further the health, safety and welfare of the
15 community by establishing a graffiti abatement demonstration program
16 administered by the department of public works.
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18 **10.10.020 Definitions.**

19 In this chapter, unless the context clearly requires otherwise,

20 (1) "Abate" or "abatement" means to remove, paint over, or otherwise
21 obscure graffiti from public view.

22 (2) "Department" means the department of public works.

23 (3) "Graffiti" means any inscription, word, figure, painting or other mark
24 that is written, etched, scratched, sprayed, drawn, painted, or engraved on or
25 otherwise affixed to any natural or manmade surface of public or private property
26 without the consent of the property owner and which is visible from a public right-
27 of-way.
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29 **10.10.030 Collection and distribution of information.**

30 (1) The department shall collect and distribute information to encourage
31 and facilitate the combating and abatement of graffiti by public and private
32 property owners or others. The department shall:

33 (a) establish and operate telephone and internet reporting systems that
34 provide for the reporting of graffiti to the department and for the distribution to
35 property owners and others of information developed under this section; and

36 (b) develop and distribute information regarding the cost of graffiti to the
37 public, effective means of combating and abating graffiti by property owners or
38 others at the neighborhood level, and other services that may be available from
39 the department.

40 (2) If graffiti is reported to the department, the department shall make
41 reasonable efforts to contact the property owner and occupant of the property if
42 other than the property owner, in person or by mail, and provide the property
43 owner and occupant with information developed under this section. For reports

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1 identifying new graffiti the department shall act as soon as practicable and
2 emphasize the practical benefits of prompt abatement. If the property owner or
3 occupant indicates that they are unable to abate the graffiti the department shall
4 inform them of the application process for county abatement action under SCC
5 10.10.040.
6

7 **10.10.040 County abatement action.**

8 The department may take action to abate graffiti on public or private
9 property located in unincorporated areas of the county upon application of the
10 property owner and in accordance with administrative rules issued by the
11 department. The administrative rules shall require, in addition to other
12 requirements of the department, that the property owner demonstrate to the
13 department that abatement will provide benefits to the community that
14 substantially outweigh the cost of services and that that the property owner
15 execute a written consent and waiver of liability in a form determined by the
16 department. The aggregate cost of abatement services provided under this
17 section shall not exceed the amount appropriated to the department for this
18 specific purpose, if any.
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20 **10.10.050 Evaluation and reporting.**

21 The department shall evaluate the extent of the graffiti problem in
22 unincorporated areas of the county and the methods that may be available to
23 combat it. On a semi-annual basis the department shall submit a written report
24 to the county council and executive containing:

- 25 (1) a description of the problem, including the locations and features of
26 public and private property most likely to be affected by graffiti;
27 (2) a description of actions taken by the department under this chapter
28 along with evaluations of their cost and effectiveness;
29 (3) a description of actions taken by other local governments to combat
30 graffiti along with evaluations of their suitability for implementation by the county;
31 (4) recommendations for improvement, extension, or repeal of the
32 program established by this chapter, if any; and
33 (5) other matters determined appropriate by the department.
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1 **10.10.060 Sunset.**

2 Chapter 10.10 SCC, as adopted or amended, is repealed effective
3 January 1, 2010, unless reenacted prior to that date as provided in charter
4 section 2.115.

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6 PASSED this 19th day of March, 2008.

7
8 SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL
9 Snohomish County, Washington

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11 Don S.
12 Chairperson

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14 ATTEST:

15
16 Sheila McCallister
17 Clerk of the Council *asst.*

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19 ☒ APPROVED

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21 () EMERGENCY

22
23 () VETOED

24 DATE: 3/28/08

25
26
27 for
28 County Executive

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30 ATTEST:

31 **MARK SOINE**
32 **Deputy Executive**

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34 Approved as to form only:

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36 [Signature]
37 Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

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