



## CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS STAFF REPORT

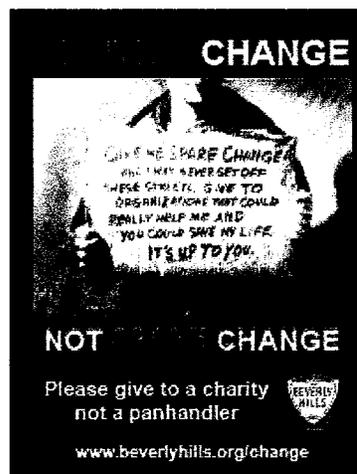
**Meeting Date:** May 7, 2013  
**To:** Honorable Mayor & City Council  
**From:** Wendy K. Hughes, Special Assistant to City Manager  
**Subject:** *Positive Change, Not Spare Change* Panhandling Public Awareness Campaign Update  
**Attachments:** None

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### INTRODUCTION

Last September, the City's National Urban Fellow along with the Community Services Human Services Administrator and Outreach Manager developed a public awareness campaign around the growing panhandling situation in Beverly Hills. As many as 9 out of 10 of the City's panhandlers are NOT homeless. They are professional beggars that make a lucrative, tax free income out of the generosity of our community and tourists.

Our goal was to ask that the visitors, business community and residents please refrain from giving directly to individual panhandlers on our streets. It does not help those who are actually in need, it just attracts more panhandling. We ask instead that they redirect their compassionate donations to a charitable organization of their choice. Additionally, they can hand them one of the service cards that lists the phone numbers of the City's partners that provides various services to our vulnerable population.



## DISCUSSION

The City's CLASP homeless outreach team and a Beverly Hills Bike patrol officer helped research, evaluate, and implement outreach and education efforts around this campaign. The '*Positive Change, not Spare Change*' poster was created along with the content for the <http://beverlyhills.org/change> website.

This topic was presented via the City Manager's report at the November 13<sup>th</sup> Formal City Council meeting

[http://beverlyhills.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=2&clip\\_id=3028](http://beverlyhills.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=3028) Item 3.C

The project's community outreach program included presentations to:

- Board of the Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce
- Rodeo Drive Business Association
- Beverly Hills Active Adults Club
- Beverly Hills Homeowners Association presidents
- Team Beverly Hills
- Beverly Hills Conference and Visitors Bureau employees
- Starline Tour Bus General Manager
- 8 out of 11 City Commissions
- Beverly Hills Homeless Collaboration committee
- Local faith-based organizations

Additionally, the posters are strategically posted at the City's Farmers' Market, Library, Police Station, and many of the City-owned garages within the business triangle (a particular favorite location for the panhandlers). The campaign is prominently displayed in the upcoming 2013 Spring Community Services brochure.

Working with the Beverly Hills Cable television department, the following public service announcement (PSA) was created <https://vimeo.com/55825071> that ran on the local cable TV station for the months of December, January and February. The silent version of this is on constant rotation on a Crescent Drive City owned parking garage video screen. Additionally, this topic was discussed on a December 2012 Inside Beverly Hills with Rudy Cole weekly television show which discussed panhandling and the homelessness in Beverly Hills <https://vimeo.com/55622003>. Several locally owned businesses (BH Market, Pioneer Hardware, Pickelz) now display an adhesive version of the campaign poster in their store front windows with service cards at their cash registers.

There have been two innovative approaches which have been very effective in visibly reducing the number of professional panhandlers since the campaign began. The first one was to have local businesses file a Trespass Arrest Authorization form which authorizes the Police to arrest specifically named panhandlers if they do not vacate the business property. The other approach, taken with the approval of the City Manager and Admin Services Department Head, was to personally hand out a blank Beverly Hills Business tax form to three of the City's most prolific panhandlers. This was an effective intervention since two of the three have not been seen in the business triangle for over 6 weeks.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This campaign required several dozen hours of staff time in addition to \$300 for the purchase of adhesive films for display in windows around the business triangle.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff will continue outreach to the community, request deploying additional bike PD officers, focus efforts on the most aggressive panhandlers, and facilitate cooperation with the courts.

Steven Zoet  
Approved By

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zoet', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.