

Minimizing Panhandling

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Introduction

- Panhandling is publicly begging for money
- Part of human culture since ancient times
- Uncomfortable and intrusive, often unsafe
- Public distress makes us agitated
- Detracts from city life the way red lights do
- Seems to be getting worse over recent years
- The less the better

Reasons To Help

- Biblical compassion for troubled people
- Shelters save the city money by reducing costs for police, ambulance, emergency room
- Panhandling reduces business, customers stay away
- Investing in people helps them heal and work
- Makes money for city government

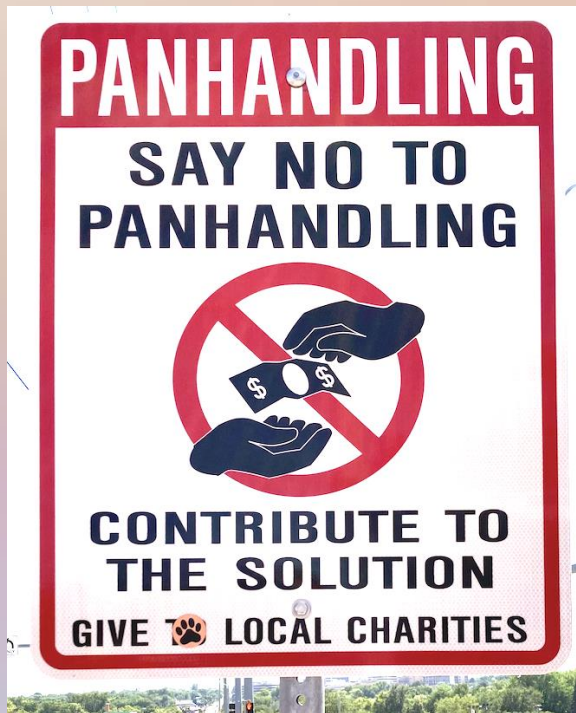
Panhandler Profiles

- Homeless alcoholics asking for “lunch money” to buy booze
- Asking for spare change to ride a bus
- Homeless people who don’t like shelters
- People who temporarily need economic help
- Professional beggars working their “career”
- City should determine incidence of each profile because different policies apply to each profile

Efforts To Reduce Panhandling

- Make it illegal – violates right to free speech
- Post signs – not very effective
- Homeless shelters – work for some people
- The Link – a short start toward sobriety

Signs Help A Little



Give Them A Job

- Drive around town, offer beggars a day job
- Pull weeds, remove litter, patch roads, shovel snow, ...
- Offer support services after the day's labor
- See "Albuquerque Gives Panhandlers Day Jobs, Not Tickets"
- "Albuquerque, N.M., offers them an income and social services for the day."
- <https://www.governing.com/archive/gov-albuquerque-gives-panhandlers-jobs-not-tickets.html>

Solve Underlying Emotional And Addiction Issues

- People strongly benefit from long-term communal housing-first approaches
- It takes years to recover from addiction
- Holistic whole person approach works best
- See "Healing Homelessness (And Addiction)" by David Z February 21, 2023

Questions To Investigate

- Why do some people choose the street over shelters?
- Is there an unmet need for a place to drink with friends?
- Send out a counselor to answer these questions
- Surprisingly, shelters that provide alcohol reduce consumption. See “Managed alcohol program” on Wikipedia

Remaining Issue

- Professional beggars working their “career”
- Sometimes they have nice cars but *pretend* to be poor

Potential New Ordinance

- Write a truth in panhandling ordinance
- People above an income/asset threshold must post a disclaimer that reads “I have money” on their “anything helps” sign that implies they’re poor
- Similar to truth in advertising laws

Enjoy Nature (Wyoming)

