



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE:	November 17, 2025
MEETING TYPE:	Regular Council meeting
SUBMITTED BY:	Steve Perry (Police Chief)
AGENDA CAPTION:	[City Signage] Presented by: (Steve Perry, Police Chief)

Background Information

Pan handling and Loitering signs are not enforceable by State Law or City Ordinance. The intentional placement of these signs are a proactive approach to discouraging loitering activity and panhandling.

Two types of views on pan handlers: Sympathetic view and unsympathetic view.

The sympathetic view, commonly but not unanimously held by homeless advocates, is that panhandling is essential to destitute people's survival, and should not be regulated by police.

Some even view panhandling as a poignant expression of the plight of the needy, and an opportunity for the more fortunate to help.

The unsympathetic view is that panhandling is a blight that contributes to further community disorder and crime.

A university student in the State of Oregon spent time as a panhandler. In his experience on the streets of Oregon City represented a quest for knowledge, not money.

The researcher conducting this study double-majored in economics and political science and is an economic assistant with the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, Portland office. His panhandling career was brief – just 12 days

His experience showed that, as a panhandler, he could make \$11.10 an hour – more than Oregon's minimum wage, then at \$8.95 an hour. The Texas minimum wage is \$ 7.25 per hr. \$ 3.85 raise over the TX minimum wage.

His panhandling project produced a variety of findings: donations ranged from four cents to a \$100 bill. He averaged \$5.13 per hour his worst day (the first) and \$24.63 per hour on his best.

One of every 59 people driving by gave money. Middle-aged people (between 25-49) gave much more than older or younger people.

Some offered jobs or rides; others gave him sports drinks, gift cards, bottled water, beef jerky or homeless care packages.

In an Arizona State University study:

Police must be concerned with the welfare of panhandlers who are vulnerable to physical and verbal assault by other panhandlers, street robbers or passersby who react violently to being panhandled. Panhandlers often claim certain spots as their own territory, and disputes and fights over territory are not uncommon.

Panhandling intimidates some people, even causing some to avoid areas where they believe they will be panhandled.

Among the contextual factors that influence how intimidating panhandling is are:

- The time of day (nighttime panhandling is usually more intimidating than daytime panhandling)
- The ease with which people can avoid panhandlers (panhandling is more likely to intimidate motorists stuck in traffic than it is those who can drive away)
- The degree to which people feel especially vulnerable (for example, being panhandled near an ATM makes some people feel more vulnerable to being robbed)
- The presence of other passersby (most people feel safer when there are other people around)
- The physical appearance of the panhandler (panhandlers who appear to be mentally ill, intoxicated or otherwise disoriented are most likely to frighten passersby because their conduct seems particularly unpredictable)
- The reputation of the panhandler (pan handlers known to be aggressive or erratic are more intimidating than those not known to be)
- The characteristics of the person being solicited (the elderly tend to be more intimidated by panhandlers because they are less sure of their ability to defend themselves from attack)
- The number of panhandlers (multiple panhandlers working together are more intimidating than a lone panhandler)
- The volume of panhandling (the more panhandlers present in an area, the more intimidating and bothersome panhandling will seem).

- In San Francisco a community survey was conducted. People said they gave money to panhandlers because they felt pressured and avoided certain areas because of panhandling; nearly 40 percent expressed concern for their safety around panhandlers.
- In the City of Dallas, an article was published stating that Dallas officials are seeing an increased number of complaints in Aggressive Pan handling.

Challenges with Enforcing Pan handling:

- In recent court rulings some courts have ruled that Panhandling is constitutionally protected.
- Same with Loitering, courts have ruled Loitering ordinances are too broad.
- Passersby continue to contribute to the problem by giving money to panhandlers.
- It's become socially acceptable, from the sympathetic person

Why we may need to discourage pan handling:

- Can be a public Safety concerns
- In studies conducted business owners worry that the presence panhandlers will affect their business.
- **Texas Transportation Code - TRANSP § 552.007. Solicitation by Pedestrians**

(a) A person may not stand in a roadway to solicit a ride, contribution, employment, or business from an occupant of a vehicle, except that a person may stand in a roadway to solicit a charitable contribution if authorized to do so by the local authority having jurisdiction over the roadway.

(c) In this section, "charitable contribution" means a contribution to an organization defined as charitable by the standards of the United States Internal Revenue Service.

Budget Implications

Cost of signs

Operational Impact

Reduce panhandling in the City of Hutchins

Legal Review

Yes

Staff Recommendation

Consider approving the use of signage to reduce pan handling.

Supporting Documentation and Attachments

Photos of Signage