



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**19-1646

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**Agenda Item Number:** 5

**Agenda Date:** 1/24/2019

**In Control:** Community Health and Equity Committee

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**DEPARTMENT:** Office of Innovation

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Brian Dillard, Interim Chief Innovation Officer

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** City-wide

### **SUBJECT:**

Update on Alternative Giving/Panhandling Solution

### **SUMMARY:**

Briefing and action on initiative to encourage residents to donate to non-profit organizations that support homeless programs and services and to reduce panhandling that violate City code.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The FY 2019 Budget approved funding in the amount of \$30,000 for public messaging, including signage, as part of an initiative to encourage residents to donate to non-profit organizations that support homeless programs and services and to reduce panhandling that violates City code. This is a pilot initiative requested by councilmember Manny Peláez and approved by the City Council as part of the FY 2019 Budget.

The Office of Innovation conducted research on what other cities are doing to encourage residents to donate to charitable organizations in an effort to reduce on-street panhandling. Data analysis was conducted on the number of calls received by the City of San Antonio and citations issued for panhandling that violate city code. The Office of Innovation also convened a group of stakeholders to develop alternate giving solutions including the San Antonio Alamo Regional Alliance for Homeless (SARAH), San Antonio Faith Based Initiative, Haven for Hope, and City internal departments.

### **ISSUE:**

The Office of Innovation will be briefing the Community Health and Equity Committee on research conducted and options developed to encourage residents to donate to non-profit organizations that support homeless programs and services in an effort to reduce panhandling that violate City code.

Findings and collected input have resulted in the following recommendations:

- **Alternative Giving:** The Human Services Department Faith-Based Initiative will use Short Messaging Service (SMS) feature to direct donations; a collaboration with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is being discussed to install signs to encourage residents to donate to non-profit organizations. A City ordinance will be required to install signs on TxDOT right-of-way.
- **Marketing & Education:** Educate public on alternative giving options to assist the homeless population by donating to non-profit organizations. This campaign will focus on the services non-profit organizations provide to individuals experiencing homeless, financial hardships, or other difficulties as a way to encourage individuals to donate to these organizations and reduce panhandling that violates city code. Campaign will focus on marketing the SMS feature managed by the Faith-Based Initiative, and highlight how a non-profit can better assist an individual in need rather than direct giving to an individual who is panhandling. Residents will be encouraged to notify the City of locations where individuals are seen panhandling thru the 311SA application (app); the City will utilize this information to send the Human Services Homeless navigation team to provide assistance to individuals experiencing homelessness.
- **Coordination of Efforts:** The City's homeless navigation team will coordinate with SAPD to visit sites where panhandling that violates city code occurs and offer services to individuals experiencing homelessness.

## **ALTERNATIVES:**

The Community Health and Equity Committee could choose not to recommend for full council consideration an ordinance that would allow the City to install signs that encourage alternative giving options on TxDOT Right-of-Way.

## **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The FY 2019 Budget includes \$30,000 for this initiative in the General Fund.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

This item recommends that an ordinance to authorize the installation of alternative giving signs on TxDOT right-of-way be approved. This ordinance is in the process of being developed in collaboration with TxDOT.