

AUBURN'S *Fast*NEWS

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DIRECT
FROM
CITY HALL
TO YOU

*Fast*News October 18, 2013
Special Edition

Welcome to your online recap of City actions and vital stories for folks who care about Auburn. Found twice monthly at the corner of City Hall and your smartphone, tablet or computer.

Upcoming Meeting dates

Chamber Forum Meeting, Oct 22nd at 7am
City Council Meeting, Oct 28th at 6pm
Chamber Forum Meeting, Oct 29th at 7am
Planning/ HDRC, Nov 5th at 6pm

F_N Getting to the Heart of Panhandling in Auburn

The related but different issues of homelessness and panhandling have sparked a serious community dialogue. We want you to be informed about how panhandling, in particular, is impacting Auburn and what we are doing about it, so we are devoting this issue of *Fast*News to this important and timely topic.

The City's recent pro-active program to combat panhandling has taken off like a shot. In a week-and-a-half, a specially directed video on the issue has racked up at least 30,000 views on various social media sites. Haven't seen it yet? Click [here](#).

The initial printing of 5,000 panhandling solutions pocket guides were almost completely distributed **in a week!** The pocket guides fold to the size of a business card, and give individuals location information for all the local resources they need to find food, shelter, medical attention and other help if they find themselves homeless. Likewise, if you are not homeless and have the ability to help financially, the guides also tell you where those donations can go to support the homeless in our community.

Cards are available at City Hall and the Auburn Police Department, as well as many Auburn retailers. They've become so popular that local businesses are approaching the City to "sign up" and some even offered to contribute to the program costs for more guides... businesses that, in the past, didn't want to, or *know how to*, touch this problem.

Here's the background. Homelessness has always existed and will not be eradicated as long as some individuals choose it as a way of life. It's an issue that confronts most cities in America, and Auburn is no exception. City leadership sat down with the directors of Auburn's nonprofit organizations that do an amazing job every day in getting people back on their feet. Through the nonprofit network supported by Auburn residents and businesses, we learned that there is food available every day, shelter every night, and clothing, medical care, showers, job training, rehabilitation programs and more, all at no cost. In their opinion, there is an important distinction between individuals asking on the street for your money (panhandlers) and what we think of as traditional "homeless" individuals. Panhandlers ask for money to support their desired lifestyles. They are people looking for money to purchase drugs and alcohol rather than those seeking to regain their lives. By giving money to panhandlers, we aren't helping people get off the streets, but likely just attracting more panhandlers. A Department of Justice study concluded that "most panhandlers have homes, and most homeless don't panhandle." Auburn is a very caring community. You can have a heart and *still* donate smart—to those who *really* help our homeless!

Stop
Panhandling.
Choose the
solutions.

Most **panhandlers**
have **homes**
and
most **homeless**
don't **panhandle**.

U.S. Department of Justice

- The Gathering Inn
- Auburn Interfaith Food Closet
- Adventist Community Services
- The Salvation Army
- St. Vincent DePaul

