



Office of Communications  
City of Beverly Hills  
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[www.beverlyhills.org](http://www.beverlyhills.org)

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## **Ambassador Service Program to Promote Safety and Hospitality**

Beverly Hills, CA – Beverly Hills recently adopted a one-year pilot program to respond to increased incidents of aggressive panhandling in the business districts. The City Council unanimously agreed to hire the private ambassador service company Block by Block to provide additional “eyes and ears” on the streets to help reduce intimidation of customers and the resulting disruption of commerce.

Under the pilot program, Block by Block will staff the business triangle with uniformed ambassadors for 21 hours each day. The firm will work closely with law enforcement and other City departments, as well as businesses to promote safety and hospitality in the area.

The City already has a number of policies that deal with aggressive panhandling and other quality-of-life issues. These include City ordinances, public education and outreach campaigns and law enforcement.

However, the problem has grown bigger with time. According to the 2015 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, the number of homeless individuals in the area comprising Beverly Hills, Culver City, West LA, Santa Monica and Malibu has gone up by 17% in the past two years.

The goal of the ambassador program is to supplement existing law enforcement and social services with the presence of professionally trained staff who will help implement City policies.

Some examples of how this would work include:

- Ambassadors can help identify individuals who are homeless and in need of the city's C.L.A.S.P. homeless outreach team.
- Most visitors and residents who experience incidents of aggressive panhandling are unwilling to go through the process of filling out a police report. Ambassadors can witness and serve as victim in court proceedings.



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- Nightly patrols of city parking structures will identify homeless individuals sheltering in facilities and link them with appropriate services, thus reducing recurring maintenance and upkeep issues.

The program was researched and recommended by the Human Relations Commission, and is similar to programs in other local communities such as Santa Monica, West Hollywood and Pasadena. The budget for the pilot program stands at \$500,000.

For more information, please contact City of Beverly Hills Human Services at 310-285-1006.

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