

October 21, 2016

Mayor Ashton Hayward  
Council President Bare  
Council Vice President Spencer  
Council Member Wu  
Council Member Myers  
Council Member Terhaar  
Council Member Johnson  
Council Member Wingate  
Council Member Canada-Wynn  
City of Pensacola  
222 West Main Street  
Pensacola, Florida 32502

RE: Loitering and Panhandling – Downtown Pensacola

Dear Mayor Hayward and Council Members,

The Pensacola Downtown Improvement Board (DIB) is requesting the City of Pensacola's assistance in addressing a significant and somewhat alarming rate of increase in the loitering and panhandling activity occurring in the Downtown District. We understand this problem is not unique to our community and recognize the issue is not the same as homelessness which is a significant community issue requiring a long term community wide solution.

The DIB's goal is to identify short, intermediate, and long term solutions that not only preserve the rights of the less fortunate but also protect the rights and economic viability of those that have made significant investments in our community.

As you are aware, the DIB continues to work diligently to enhance and promote Downtown Pensacola as a vibrant cultural and commercial destination for residents, businesses and visitors. Downtown generates a significant amount of economic activity for our community in the form of jobs and tax revenue. The DIB's mission is quickly being overshadowed by an increasing number of people loitering and panhandling on our streets, parks, sidewalks and storefronts. This situation has become a legitimate public health and safety concern and merits prompt attention.

There have been significant effort and resources expended by the City, County, Visit Pensacola, DIB, and the private sector to implement and promote the renewal of downtown as well as the upcoming First City Lights Festival and the soon-to-be launched Downtown Pensacola Trolley Service. Additionally, the upcoming holiday season is vital to the economic success of Pensacola's downtown retailers and restaurateurs.

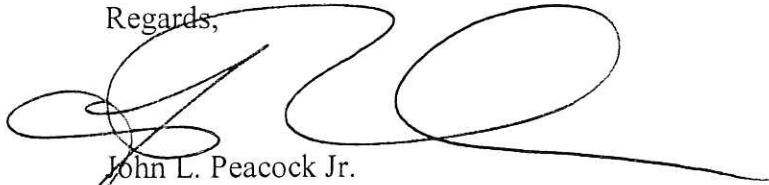
Please trust that this Board membership stands ready to help in any way possible to identify and implement a balanced approach to deal with this economic, safety, and health related issue. Our recommendations and request for action include:

- 1) Immediate implementation of a downtown Police presence (on foot or bicycle) to discourage and manage loitering in public parks after hours and at business and residence entrances.
- 2) Update the License To Use (LTU) language to allow enforcement by Pensacola Police upon receiving loitering complaints from property and business owners.
- 3) Follow the precedent set by other progressive Florida cities by identifying districts where loitering and panhandling activities are restricted.
- 4) Author ordinance language defining the activities associated with loitering and panhandling that are deemed unlawful.
- 5) Collaborate with county, community and non-profit organizations in the development of long term solutions for assisting the less fortunate population in our community.

These steps will help ensure businesses, citizens and visitors have a safe, family friendly and pleasurable experience while working, living, dining, shopping and enjoying the streetscape of Downtown Pensacola.

We sincerely thank you for your support, time, consideration and collaboration in addressing this request.

Regards,



John L. Peacock Jr.  
Downtown Improvement Board