



Clean & Safe

Statement from Mark Schlesinger, chair, Clean & Safe

The 4th & Morrison billboard is part of the Real Change program that has been conducted by Downtown Clean & Safe for more than two decades. The point of this program is to encourage Portlanders to give financially to social service agencies assisting the homeless rather than handing cash directly to panhandlers. We were pleased to see the attention the current billboard brought to our outreach efforts. Over the decades the messaging in this campaign has evolved, and our intention has been to point out varying aspects of the issue in different campaign phases. We are planning to change out the current billboard message and image in the coming weeks. We will, however, continue with our efforts to encourage support for nonprofits serving those in need. Most homeless individuals do not panhandle, and our research found the ones that do frequently use the cash to support unhealthy habits. Giving to panhandlers is a personal choice, but Clean & Safe wants to make sure Portlanders are aware that the most effective way to help homeless individuals move off the street into safe housing and productive lives is not to hand them an occasional dollar or two but, rather, to encourage their engagement with one of the many nonprofits serving Portland. We appreciate the many people who have offered us constructive comments about this campaign. To learn more, please go to <http://www.realchangeptdx.org>.

For more information, contact our Media Assistant at 402-416-6505.