

Hollywood Media District BID

Public Positions, as per Board of Directors

Hollywood Media District BID's position regarding the Greater West Hollywood Food Coalition's (GWHFC) operation within the boundaries of the BID

March 2013

A well-run food program exists in partnership with the community in which it is located, working with businesses, residents, and other service providers to help those in need. The ideal program is supported by the community, including city officials. The BID, as an organization, is committed to supporting a homeless services project in the Hollywood area, outside of HMD boundaries, that provides comprehensive services to our homeless neighbors. In a city as large and complex as Los Angeles, we question whether a food program can exist without the support of city officials and city services.

A well-run food program is not in the public right of way and best described by the following adjectives:

A. Clean and Hygienic

- Leaves the area in which it operates in a clean and hygienic condition.
- Provides indoor bathroom facilities for clients and provides cleaning services in outdoor areas, such as alleyways, sidewalks and residential property, when and if clients use these areas in lieu of indoor bathrooms.

B. Safe , Orderly and Consistent

- Provides security. Optimally, security is provided one hour before and one hour after the program serves, with a plan for enforcement and consequences for clients who violate rules.
- Observes set hours so that the community and clients can depend on services being provided during a certain timeframe. Enforces those hours and does not permit clients to loiter before or after the program's "open" hours.

C. Respectful

- Respectful of clients and their needs, demonstrating sincere interest in helping clients to improve their lives and move away from a life on the street.
- Respectful of the community and its needs, understanding that businesses and residents are affected by the way in which the program operates and the choices it makes.

D. Self-Sufficient and Accountable

- Provides all services necessary to allow the program to operate as a good neighbor, i.e., security, cleaning, etc. . .
- Explores creative solutions for involving clients in efforts to achieve self-sufficiency.

E. Comprehensive and Coordinated

- Provides more than food.
- Develops relationships with other homeless services providers, in order to become a part of the larger referral network that exists to serve the homeless population.
- Interested in getting to know the individuals it serves, so that needs can be identified and addressed.

A well-run food program has a community liaison and has articulated guidelines for the provision of services.

- A. The liaison would facilitate an ongoing dialogue with a diverse cross-section of the community, including businesses, residents, law enforcement and government officials, in order to create and maintain a program that best meets the needs of the homeless population and the larger community.
- B. The program has written and articulated guidelines that address its place in, and responsibility to, the community and clearly describe how services are to be provided.

It is the opinion of the HMD that the current operations of the GWHFC do not meet the requirements of a well-run food program. For many years, the BID has sought to partner with the GWHFC to move the program off the street and mitigate many of the issues the community has encountered to no avail.

Over the course of the last five years, there have been innumerable meetings with representatives of CD4, CD5, the Mayor's office, the State Assembly office, the State Senator's office, the LAPD Hollywood Division, as well as with the operator of the food coalition.

Despite HMD's continuous and good faith effort to find a solution, we feel the GWHFC has no desire to mitigate any stakeholder concerns while the problems for HMD stakeholders created by the operation of the feeding program are getting substantially worse. It's fundamentally unfair, a totally unreasonable burden on the neighborhood, and indeed, an unquestionable danger to the safety of the people who live and work in our community. Tenants are vacating due to the safety issues, rents and property values are decreasing, as is business tax revenue to the City of Los Angeles. The BID's security and maintenance expenses continue to increase while trying to alleviate the negative impact the program has on the district as a whole. This is in complete contradiction to the mission of the HMD BID.

Therefore, it is the position of the HMD that the GWHFC's feeding program is a public nuisance and that the City of Los Angeles must take immediate action to discontinue the GWHFC operation at its current location and that any future operation be within the confines of a private or publicly owned property in accordance with all building, safety and health codes.