### News

# Cities fight panhandling with mixed results

### Chapel Hill program precedented

### **BY KAYLA CARRICK**

Giving back to the community can come in all shapes and sizes. In this case, it comes in tin cans,

parking meters and even cast iron cubes

Raleigh, Asheville and Portland, Ore., all have programs to cut down on panhandling while still helping out their homeless populations. Portland has old parking meters

downtown where people can drop

homeless services, and Asheville offers cast iron collection boxes welded to pole Chapel Hill is now in the fourth month of its own program designed

their spare change to go toward

to do the same thing - Real Change from Spare Change. Since the program is new, leaders still are searching for the best

way to make it a success. With the funds from Chapel Hill's program, leaders want to

expand the downtown outreach staff to be as large as Durham's. But looking at other cities expe-

ences, Chapel Hill will need more than just tin cans. Durham has a more established

street outreach team — four years and two full-time staff members. To raise the money to fund such

a staff, Portland leaders have advice for Chapel Hill: spread the word. "Constant education and promo-

tion of the program is critical for its success," said Megan Doern, communications director for Portland Business Alliance.

Portland's program started more than three years ago and has raised \$10,000 dollars in that time. In its first year it raised \$1,500.

But the group is having to switch things up to keep the money com-ing in. There are only 10 meters in downtown Portland, and leaders are making a push for more.

"We're going to redesign our meters," Doern said. "That will give us an excuse to publicize the

program all over again." Without renewed efforts to pub-licize programs like these, initiatives can fall by the wayside.

All that remains of Raleigh's Real Change Not Spare Change program, launched in 2004, is a

At one time, many downtown Raleigh businesses displayed the poster to encourage people not to

2002, and after shuffling it through

tion box in July 2007.

Butner, a business owner and former president of the Asheville Downtown Association, said more than \$1,000 has been collected from five boxes.

We never anticipated raising a whole lot of money on this," Butner said. "We want to find businesses or community groups that will offer to

match what we raise." Butner said making the collection boxes visible will help the program "kind of like a little billboard

> Contact the Investigative Editor at iteam@unc.edu.

## Forums review economic plans

### BY ROBERT C. GUNST JR.

Local business owners see uniformity when they look at downtown Chapel Hill.

'It seems like most of the busis on Franklin Street are either Carolina gear stores, restaurants or bars," said Christina Steger, manager of Tarheel Book Store

To hear this and similar concerns, the town of Chapel Hill will review the Economic Development Plan in public forums this week and next.

We need guidance from citizens to help determine our track and the adjustments that we will need to make," Chapel Hill Town Council member Bill Strom said.

The plan still is in draft form and focuses on making Chapel Hill more transit-based and on diversifying local businesses.

The town's plan also emphasizes sustainable development and creating stronger ties to the University. Local business owners have many different opinions about what eco-

nomic issues are important right now, but many said they did not know about the upcoming forums. "There are big parking prob-lems in Chapel Hill," said Antonio

Rodriguez, manager of Pepper's **Pizza** Cluck-U Chicken plans to begin

delivering food to serve those who do not want to navigate the logistics of Chapel Hill parking, General Manager Norm Praet said.

But Bill Hester of Bill Hester Fine Art in University Square said the town's problem isn't a lack of parking.

"If people are truly compelled to come downtown, then they will find ways to get here," Hester said. "I want to see us get off this parking kick. We need to put some romance down here

He said he thinks the town should hold more cultural events and rely less on UNC sports to attract visitors.

The town has a unique role in creating favorable conditions to promote economic development and business growth, said Adam Klein, director of government relations and economic development for the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce.

The forums will discuss the town's economic strategy statement and six goals for promoting growth.

Residents will have the opportu-nity to make their voices heard on how to solve economic problems at the forums.

"At this point, we are trying to gain input on all parts," Chapel Hill

### Weigh in on town development

Time: 10 a.m. Date: Today Location: Franklin Hotel, 311 W. Franklin St.

Time: 3 p.m. Date: Thursday Location: Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce, 104 S. **Estes Drive** 

Time: 7 p.m. Date: March 11 Location: Christ United Methodist Church, 800 Market St.

Economic Development Officer Dwight Bassett said.

Contact the City Editor

at citydesk@unc.edu.



LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE BAND

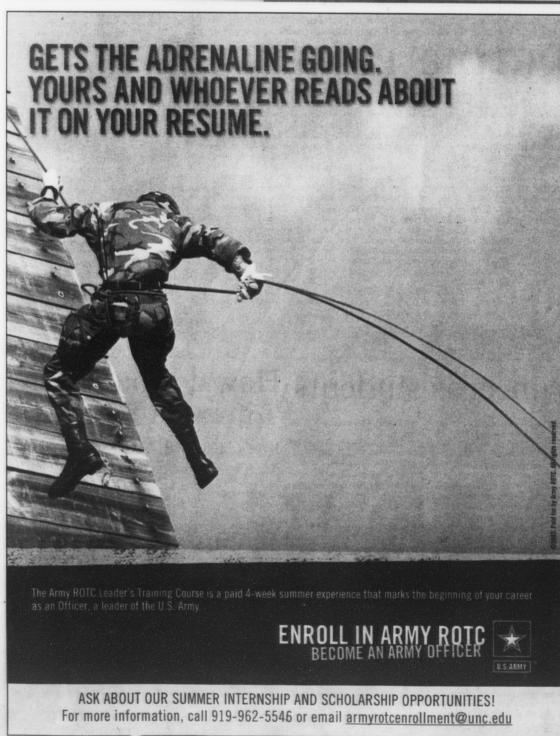
tudents from Western Guilford High School in Greensboro take part in one of the Carolina Jazz Festival events last week in the Student Union. James Ketch, UNC Jazz Band director, helped during the event. The festival also had a presence on Franklin Street.



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poster displaying the Real Change motto on a vacant storefront.

give to panhandlers. But Asheville's program has

fared a little better. Leaders first had the idea in

several task forces, set up a collec-

In the past eight months, Dwight

The Daily Tar Heel

