



BEVERLY HILLS

IN FOCUS

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▶▶▶ BEVERLY HILLS - IS WELL INFORMED

Measure R: Half-Cent Tax for Transit

Among other weighty issues on November's ballot, voters will be asked to decide if several critical local transportation projects should be funded through a half-cent sales tax increase.

Put forth by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro), Measure R is expected to generate some \$40 billion over the next 30 years. More than half (54%) of the sales tax will come from businesses and tourists, with the average cost per person estimated at \$25 a year. Leveraging funds from other sources, the revenue would be earmarked for several new transit projects, as well as to speed up projects already in the pipeline.

The measure addresses rail and bus expansion, highway improvements, signal synchronization,



Photo courtesy of Metro. ©2008 LACMTA

The measure addresses rail and bus expansion, highway improvements, signal synchronization, street repairs, traffic reduction and other transportation issues.

street repairs, traffic reduction and other transportation issues. Included on the list of Measure R projects is the Westside Subway Extension, extending Metro Rail to the Westside.

Metro officials cite Los Angeles County's traffic and air quality as critical reasons to build or expand systems that take cars off the road and use clean, energy-fueled transit. The sales tax projects, they say, carry regional benefits for all commuters.

One component of Measure R is an expenditure plan, which will include start and finish dates, costs and expected funding sources. All expenditures will be subject to annual audits, with an independent

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Guidelines for Giving

Charitable organizations receive about 80 percent of their donations from individuals, so it's no wonder their representatives are often found on residents' doorsteps asking for contributions. Before you open your wallet, though, consider these tips for charitable giving:

Check identification: The person on your front porch should be carrying a solicitations permit issued by the City. The Solicitations Advisory Commission reviews and approves permit applications for organizations conducting charitable fundraising – by phone or door-to-door. Permits are required whether or not the actual fundraiser takes place in Beverly Hills.

Don't give cash: Make checks out to the charity itself, not to the individual collecting donations.

Keep records: This comes in handy at tax time so you can document your gift-giving; be sure to ask if your donation is tax-deductible, sometimes it isn't.

Do the math: How much of your donation actually benefits people in need? The City's Solicitations Commission's guideline is that at least 50 percent of the gross receipts should be funneled to the charitable purpose.



Follow up: The City requires a financial statement clearly reporting the results of the solicitation 30 days after the permit expiration date. Review it for future gift-giving.

Beware of the name game ploy: Watch for organizations that use names closely resembling those of better-known, legitimate charities. You can check with the local charity registration office and with the Better Business Bureau.

Don't be intimidated: Avoid being a victim of high-pressure tactics that insist on immediate action.

Examine the mail: Appeals that come through the mail should not be disguised as bills or invoices – that's illegal.

Find out more: The Solicitations Advisory Commission operates in cooperation with the Beverly Hills Police Department. Check out the websites for the City: www.beverlyhills.org or the California Attorney General's office at www.ag.ca.gov/charities.





▶ BEVERLY HILLS - IS SERVICE ORIENTED

Employee Spotlight - Daniel Hernandez

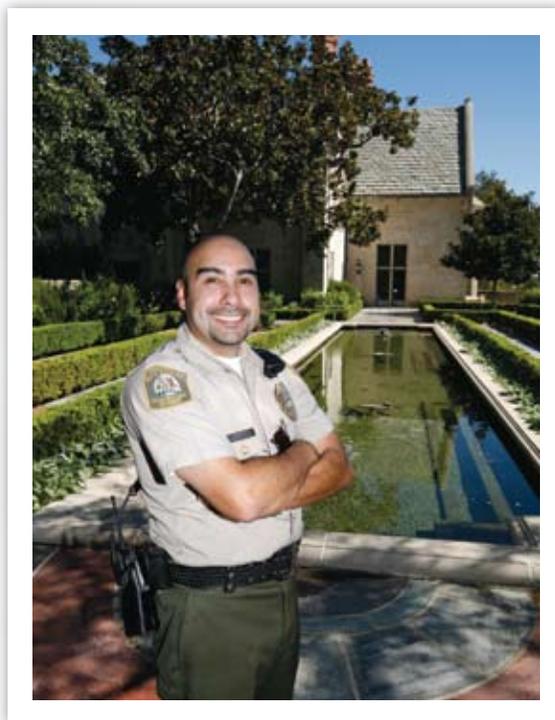
The smooth operation of City programs and events relies on people with a penchant for detail, a focus on community and an ability to think on their feet. Meet a Beverly Hills park ranger with all those qualifications, his is a familiar face to many park-goers!

The job:

Daniel is a Senior Park Ranger in the Community Services Department. He's based at historic Greystone Park and Mansion. The City's 12 rangers are visible throughout the community, going above and beyond the job to assist residents, staff and visitors so that everyone has a safe and enjoyable time at the City's parks.

All in a day's work:

At the 18-acre Greystone Park and Mansion, rangers conduct tours and oversee such events as film productions, design shows, chamber concerts, and jazz and theater performances. Recently, Daniel rescued a stray dog, cared for the pooch, posted signs and walked the neighborhoods until he found the grateful owners.



Special Setting:

Greystone Park and Mansion is the jewel of the City's park system, drawing thousands of tourists from all over the world and serving as a beautiful backdrop for major events.

People power:

What's the best part of the job? "The public contact – we have regular park visitors who have gotten to know the rangers and are like family. Even the kids know the rangers, so there's a generational connection."



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Measure R: Half-Cent Tax for Transit

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panel of transportation experts, judges and commuters providing oversight.

Beverly Hills voters are encouraged to learn all the facts about Measure R before going to the polls. For detailed information, visit www.metro.net/measureR.



Photo courtesy of Metro. ©2008 LACMTA

*On the cover are members of the Beverly Hills Teen Advisory Committee.
Pictured (left to right): Oliver Bogner, Natalie Gordon, Benjamin Phillips,
Genevieve Javidzad and Anton Saleh.*

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