



CITY OF COMMERCE AGENDA REPORT

TO: Honorable City Council

Item No. _____

FROM: City Manager

SUBJECT: Women and Walls – Annual Women’s Art Initiative

MEETING DATE: June 10, 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize the Arts in Public Places Standing Committee to establish an annual event titled “Women and Walls”, a women-led art initiative designed to empower, uplift, and promote women artists by providing a prominent platform within the Commerce Arts District.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Commerce has a longstanding commitment to enhancing the cultural and artistic landscape of the community through its Arts in Public Places program. In alignment with this mission and with continued support from the City Council, and the Arts in Public Places Standing Committee have explored new ways to promote equity and representation in public art.

As part of these ongoing efforts, it is recommended to develop a recurring women-focused public art event titled “Women and Walls.” This initiative would reflect the City’s values of inclusion, artistic expression, and community engagement.

DISCUSSION:

The “Women and Walls” initiative aims to celebrate, empower, and elevate women artists in our community by offering meaningful opportunities for visibility through large-scale mural projects.

Program Structure:

- Collaborative Launch: Each year, five (5) to ten (10) women artists will be selected to collaborate on a large-scale mural on a prominent wall within the Arts District.

- Individual Murals: Following the collaborative project, each artist will be assigned her own wall (publicly owned or privately donated) to design and complete an individual mural that reflects her artistic voice, personal style, and vision.

Program Goals:

- Foster representation and equity in the public art realm.
- Support and amplify women's creative expression.
- Establish a visible and lasting legacy of women's contributions to Commerce's cultural identity.

All murals will be located in the Commerce Arts District, using walls that are either publicly owned or made available by local property owners who support the arts. This will be an annual event, contributing to a growing, permanent collection of women-created murals throughout the City.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:

- Staff and the Arts in Public Places Subcommittee will collaborate with art consultants and community stakeholders to develop a formal artist selection process, identify suitable wall locations, and ensure professional coordination of the event.
- A future agenda item will be brought forward to seek approval of consultant partnerships.
- Community engagement and educational programming may be incorporated in future years, especially involving local youth, schools, and emerging female artists.

BENEFITS TO THE CITY:

- Cultural Identity: Strengthens the Commerce Arts District's role as a hub for creativity and public engagement.
- Equity and Representation: Promotes inclusion of women's voices in the public art space.
- Tourism and Economy: Creates opportunities for community engagement, tourism, and economic growth.
- Inspiration and Mentorship: Encourages young women and girls in the community to pursue careers in the arts and to use their voices through creative expression.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve staff recommendation
2. Disapprove staff recommendation
3. Provide further direction to staff

FISCAL IMPACT:

At this time, there is no direct fiscal impact. Should the Council express support, staff will return with a detailed funding plan, including potential use of public art funds, and grant opportunities.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC GOALS:

This item is related to a specific 2016 Strategic Goal to “Develop and invest in infrastructure and beautification projects and support economic growth.”

Prepared by: Lena Shumway, Director of Administrative Services and City Clerk

Approved as to form: Noel Tapia, City Attorney

Respectfully submitted: Ernie Hernandez, City Manager