



CITY OF COMMERCE AGENDA REPORT

TO: Honorable City Council

ITEM #10

FROM: City Manager

SUBJECT: Consideration of Monument Sign Design Options for the Gateway Monument I-5 at Eastern Avenue Beautification Project

MEETING DATE: July 28, 2026

RECOMMENDATION:

The City Council will consider:

1. Selecting one of the two monument sign design options for the Gateway Monument I-5 at South Eastern Avenue Beautification Project; and
2. Authorizing staff to direct the contractor to proceed with the fabrication and installation of the selected monument sign design, subject to Caltrans final review and approval.

BACKGROUND:

The City is proposing the beautification of the raised island at South Eastern Avenue and the southbound I-5 freeway on-ramp to welcome visitors to the City of Commerce. The project site is located within Caltrans right-of-way, and the design has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) while supporting the City's vision and beautification goals.

On October 11, 2022, the City Council approved a Professional Services Agreement with Hirsh & Associates, Inc. for the design of the project. The design included the development of a gateway monument and associated landscaping consistent with Caltrans standards.

On September 26, 2023, Hirsh & Associates, Inc. presented the final concept plan to the City Council, and the City Council approved the concept plan to proceed with Caltrans review and approval. Because the project is located entirely within Caltrans right-of-way, the design phase required extensive coordination with Caltrans and took more than two years to obtain the necessary approvals and execute the required maintenance agreements.

On October 28, 2025, the City Council approved the Maintenance Agreement between the City of Commerce and Caltrans. Subsequently, on March 24, 2026, the City Council approved the Landscape Maintenance Agreement with Caltrans.

On April 28, 2026, the City Council awarded the construction contract for the Gateway Monument I-5 at South Eastern Avenue Beautification Project to Hart Design Build, Inc. The

construction phase has commenced with project submittals and the review process currently underway. Construction is scheduled to begin in mid-August, with anticipated completion in February 2027.

ANALYSIS:

As part of the construction process, the contractor submitted monument sign shop drawings for review in accordance with the contract documents. To provide the City Council with an opportunity to determine the final aesthetic appearance of the gateway monument prior to fabrication, two design options are being presented for consideration at tonight's meeting. The options vary only in the monument lettering and front-face finish. No structural, dimensional, or foundation modifications are proposed.

The two options are as follows and are shown in the attached rendering:

Option 1 – "CITY OF COMMERCE" Lettering (Approved by Caltrans)

- Maintain the originally approved monument sign with matte black color lettering.

Option 2 – "COMMERCE" Lettering Only

- Remove the words "CITY OF."
- Retain only the word "COMMERCE" with matte black lettering.

Staff has consulted with Caltrans regarding the proposed monument sign options. Caltrans has advised that Option 1 reflects the design previously approved through the design review process.

Should the City Council select Option 2, this will require an additional Caltrans design review and an update to the executed Maintenance Agreement before fabrication can proceed. While Caltrans indicated that the review process is expected to be less extensive than the original approval, selecting a modified design option may nominally delay the project's construction start date and monument fabrication schedule. Further, staff will coordinate with the consultant and Caltrans to complete the updated Maintenance Agreement update prior to fabrication.

Staff recommends that the City Council select one of the two monument sign design options and authorize staff to direct the contractor to proceed with the fabrication and installation of the selected monument sign design, subject to Caltrans review and approval.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Select one of the two monument sign design options presented by staff.
2. Provide further direction to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no further fiscal impact associated with this agenda item at this time.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC GOALS:

This agenda item relates to the 2016 Strategic Plan, Infrastructure and Facilities:

Guiding Principle 4: Develop and invest in infrastructure and beautification projects that support economic growth

Recommended by:	Andy Ramirez, Interim Director of Public Works
Fiscal Impact reviewed:	Alvaro Castellon, Director of Finance
Approved as to form by:	Noel Tapia, City Attorney
Respectfully submitted by:	Ernie Hernandez, City Manager

ATTACHMENT:

1. Design Rendering Options