



# CITY OF COMMERCE AGENDA REPORT

Item No.: \_\_\_\_\_

**TO:** Honorable City Council

**FROM:** City Administrator

**SUBJECT:** PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARD FROM THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION TO THE CITY OF COMMERCE FOR THE WASHINGTON BLVD/I-5 FREEWAY PROJECT

**MEETING DATE:** January 15, 2019

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

This staff report provides a summary to the City Council on the recent award recognition that the City of Commerce received. There is no action or recommendation on this item.

## **BACKGROUND:**

American Public Works Association is the professional association of Public Works leaders throughout the United States and Canada. The Southern California Chapter covers Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties and there are over 1400 members in the Chapter. The purposes of the Chapter's awards program are to recognize public agencies for their outstanding projects and programs, and to share the wealth of good ideas. An award ceremony was held on December 12, 2018 at the Centre at Sycamore Plaza in Lakewood, where City of Commerce was recognized for the outstanding achievement.

This marks the second consecutive year that the City of Commerce is honored by an APWA award. In 2017, Washington Blvd Widening and Reconstruction also received an APWA Project of the Year award for Traffic, Mobility, and Beautification.

## **ANALYSIS:**

Washington Blvd is a major transportation corridor for the City of Commerce and the region. Construction of the Washington Blvd widening, rehabilitation and beautification began in 2015. Washington Blvd also received a Project of the Year Award in 2017. In addition to addressing transportation needs and bringing modernizations and upgrades

to the overall infrastructure of the City, such projects raise the profile of the City, and promote economic development. To further this effort, City considered extending the improvements to the I-5/ Washington Blvd interchange ramp area. This particular location, although within Caltrans right of way, serves as a gateway to the City and for years was suffering from neglect and lack of proper maintenance.

For many years City of Commerce residents would complain to Caltrans about the poor condition of the interchange and lack of regular maintenance. Unfortunately, due to lack of resources, Caltrans was unable to address City's concerns. Furthermore, the fact that the interchange was Caltrans property did not permit City forces to undertake maintenance and clean-up. Therefore, in order to address these matters, staff began discussions with Caltrans in 2104. Through two years of negotiations, meetings, and agreements, the City was successful in completing a legal agreement and landscape plan that met the desired goals of the City and Caltrans. The agreement permitted the City to revamp the landscaping and take over the maintenance of the area. The City was also successful in utilizing project savings from Washington Blvd construction towards construction of the new landscaping and beautification effort.

The unsightly and unkempt interchange was thus transformed into a 3-acre drought tolerant, attractive, and pedestrian friendly gateway that is a delightful welcome to Commerce residents and visitors. For this effort, the City of Commerce received the 2018 Creative and Innovative award from American Public Works Association.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

No fiscal impact.

#### **RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC GOALS:**

This item relates to the City Council's specific 2016 Strategic Action Plan goal to "develop and implement a sustainable CIP Program to ensure the quality of existing infrastructure and support future plans for the City and develop and invest in infrastructure and beautification projects that support economic growth."

Recommended by: Maryam Babaki, Director of Public Works & Development Services

Reviewed by: Vilko Domic, Finance Director

Approved as to form: Noel Tapia, City Attorney

Respectfully submitted by: Edgar P. Cisneros, City Administrator

Attachment: Letter