



SOUTH PARK
THE PLACE TO BE

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**South Park BID Receives Global Award for Improvements in Public Space
*DTLA Neighborhood Successfully Tackles City's Largest Infrastructure Problems***

San Francisco, CA (October 2015) The International Downtown Association (IDA), an international network of diverse practitioners who transform cities into healthy and vibrant urban places, today recognized the South Park BID with its most prestigious award, the Downtown Pinnacle Award for public space improvements. The Pinnacle Award is defined as is an exemplary project in the field of downtown revitalization clearly exceeding in the areas of: innovation, replication, representation, and sustainability. The South Park BID's winning project, the Streetscape Strategic Plan: Curating A Neighborhood, was among 16 qualified entries. The category recognizes distinguished capital improvements in urban design, physical function, and/or the economic viability of downtown and the community.

"The South Park BID's project received IDA's most distinguished award for demonstrating excellence in downtown management," said IDA President and CEO David Downey. "Each year, the IDA Awards Jury honors the very best programs and projects in each category to recognize great work and most importantly to set the standard for best practice in our industry. The South Park BID Public Space Strategic Plan is a wonderful example for all cities to emulate."

The South Park BID Streetscape Strategic Plan identifies three key projects to improve public space in South Park: repairing broken sidewalks, cultivating a vibrant street tree palate, and curating public art. The projects collectively make the pedestrian experience safer and more intriguing, ultimately improving economic activity and district identity.

The City of Los Angeles is facing a crisis with cracked and unsafe sidewalks, many of which are a result of sprawling street trees. A recent *Los Angeles Times* study revealed that nearly 20,000 sidewalk complaints were made through the City's 311 service request system in the past 5 years, estimating roughly \$10,000,000 in repairs. In a City that is strapped for resources and in which LA Mayor Eric Garcetti has declared a "back to basics" agenda, which prides itself on frugality and stripping the non-essentials, the South Park BID has accomplished what many would consider impossible to do in a 1.5 year timeframe and on less than a \$90,000 budget. As one of the fastest-growing communities in Downtown LA, South Park also ensured that the sidewalk repairs and street tree planting spanned across the entire neighborhood and took into account all of the developments and construction in the district.

"I congratulate the South Park BID on winning this prestigious award," said LA City Councilmember José Huizar. "While it is one of the highest honors a BID can receive, I am not surprised. The South Park BID and its leadership have been extremely active and creative in seeking solutions to some of the most challenging public space issues we face in Downtown Los Angeles. They have been an incredible partner to my office and others, and their collaborative style and ability to see projects through completion have brought tangible results to a rapidly emerging Downtown Los Angeles."

"We were able to accomplish a high impact, replicable project with a relatively small budget and on an abridged timeline by building high-quality partnerships," said South Park Executive Director Jessica Lall. "We are grateful to be recognized by the International Downtown Association, a group comprised of our

peers, in our collective effort to make communities more walkable, sustainable, and a world-class destination.”

Streetscape Project components included:

Sidewalk Repairs

The BID conducted a district survey to identify the areas in need of mending across the 32-block district, and set out to find an affordable and sustainable solution. The BID discovered a unique “saw-cutting” technique, implemented by Precision Concrete Cutting, which eliminated 800 sidewalk trip hazards in accordance with City safety specifications and meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The work was completed within 14 working days, and yielded zero complaints from the community.

Street Trees

With the help of community partners Melendrez, who assisted with an initial district walk and survey, Mia Lehrer and Associates, who created a placement map of street trees in the district, and the Los Angeles Conservation Corps, who provided and trained Corps members to complete the labor, the BID was able to spearhead the planting of 19 trees and trimming 6, and identification of 38 new tree wells for future planting, at no cost to the BID.

Public Art

The South Park BID engaged the help of the Do Art Foundation to curate district art and develop a cultural narrative of movement and growth for the neighborhood. The result in the first year of embarking on the Public Art Strategic Plan in 2014-2015 is South Park’s outdoor public gallery, which includes 8 dynamic murals and 11 utility boxes, each capturing the action and evolution of the neighborhood in their own fashion. Many of the murals have been featured by the Google Street Art Project, and praised by community stakeholders and City Departments and Officials.

“The complete impact of the BID’s streetscape efforts are insurmountable,” said Bob Buente, Treasure-Secretary of the South Park BID Board of Directors. “As the owner of a senior living group in South Park, my residents are now able to walk the sidewalks while enjoying the trees and public art decorating the district. We are all excited to see what else is in store.”

Celebrating its 10-year anniversary this year, the South Park BID will continue to prioritize key streetscape projects in partnership with the City, local organizations, and other community stakeholders to create a vibrant, cleaner, safer, and more sustainable neighborhood. These projects include progressing a thriving public art program, installing parklets, greening of alleys, and planting more street trees.

For more information, please visit: www.southpark.la

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About:

The South Park Business Improvement District (BID) is managed by the South Park Stakeholders Group, a coalition of residents, property owners, and business who are deeply committed to the ongoing improvement of the district. Since 2005, the South Park BID has worked to make South Park safer, cleaner and more vibrant for the people who live, work and visit South Park.

For more information, visit www.southpark.la @SouthParkLA #SouthParkLA #SPDoesArt

About:

International Downtown Association: The Washington, D.C. based International Downtown Association (IDA) is a champion for vital and livable urban centers and strives to inform, influence, and inspire downtown leaders and advocates. With 500 member organizations and thousands of professionals, IDA is a guiding force in creating healthy and dynamic centers that anchor the well-being of towns, cities, and regions.

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