Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
    Administration and Public Works Committee

From: Suzette Robinson, Director of Public Works
      Sat Nagar, P.E., Assistant Director for Engineering & Infrastructure
      Stefanie Levine, Senior Project Manager

Subject: APWA Awards Announcement

Date: March 16, 2015

Summary:
The Suburban Branch and Chicago Metro Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA) has recognized Evanston’s Public Works Department for their outstanding work in 2014. The Department received recognition in the following four categories:

Award Category:

APWA Suburban Branch Contractor of the Year: A. Lamp Concrete Contractors Inc.
The City nominated A. Lamp for this award. After the harsh winter, the City was faced with deteriorated roadways that far surpassed the capacity of our in-house street maintenance crews. The City went to A-Lamp for help. We were able to execute a change order to their 2013 Street Resurfacing Project to complete over $200,000 worth of strip patch street repairs throughout the City during the late spring and early summer of 2014. Snow plow route drivers completed an inventory of the sections that required attention. Street maintenance crews perform the required grinding and prep for A-Lamp to resurface. A-Lamp came back on three occasions to resurface areas as city crews prepped them. Over 200 locations were patched resulting in improved customer service and drivability within the City.

In addition to the emergency patching project award, A. Lamp was the successful bidder on the 2014 CIP I and CIP II water main and street resurfacing, CIP III street resurfacing, and the Sherman Avenue Streetscape and Street Resurfacing projects. Despite a rigorous schedule to complete four major projects, they performed outstanding work.
APWA Suburban Branch & Chicago Metro Chapter Project of the Year Award:
Lakefront Lagoon Restoration

The lagoon is a roughly 4.5 acre public space located along the shores of Lake Michigan, just east of Church Street in the city of Evanston, Illinois. The facility includes a park shelter, walking paths, large lagoon basin with stone walls and fountain jets, stone waterfall, stage, lighting, site furnishings and extensive landscaping. The site has been in existence for at least a century with portions of its current configuration created during the 1930’s by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). As a result, the site is historically significant for the City and is considered the heart of its lakefront park system. The facility is currently used extensively throughout the year for City programmed events: including, summer concerts, summer festivals and winter ice skating as well as day-to-day passive leisure activities such as walking, cycling, jogging and picnicking, to name a few. The facility was last renovated in the 1980’s with construction of the fountain, basin’s masonry walls and perimeter paths. Due to deterioration from age plus ‘wear and tear,’ the lagoon was in need of substantial rehabilitation. In 2008, a comprehensive master plan for Evanston’s lakefront properties was completed of which this project was emphasized as a central focus. The project will go on to compete for recognition at the national level in August.

APWA Suburban Branch & Chicago Metro Chapter Award of Merit: Stephen Walker

Stephen is an exemplary worker and has contributed greatly to the success of Evanston’s Public Works Department. The City of Evanston is pleased to have him on its team. Since the beginning of his tenure, he has ensured that each task assigned has been completed beyond expectations. He has shown commitment, dedication and skills beyond those required for his position as an Equipment Operator II. He has literally transformed areas, improving the community standards. Mr. Walker has received commendations from supervisors, the city manager, elected officials and residents for the quality of work he has performed. In addition, he has developed cost saving techniques for the City’s street sweeping operation, which resulted in over $40,000 in savings. As a volunteer on the City’s Healthy Living Committee, he not only designed a work out facility for the Public Works field employees, he also secured a donation an equipment donation valued at $25,000 for the facility. Mr. Walker was selected as a temporary supervisor by the Director to apply his talents and abilities to make improvements using his own discretion. Mr. Walker has performed superbly as the temporary supervisor of the section; he has prepared detailed reports of personnel and resource deficiencies and created dramatic improvements. Under his supervision, he has made grass and flowers grow in bare areas. His selections for new planting have been impactful and transformative. He has accomplished these changes in a cost effective manner and has even secured donations to achieve these endeavors. He has proven to be an “eyes wide open” type of leader, noting deficiencies and taking the initiative to fix them.

Stephen will go on to compete for recognition at the national level in August.
APWA Suburban Branch & Chicago Metro Chapter Community Involvement Award: Suzette Robinson

Suzette E. Robinson, Director of Public Works is being recognized for her Community Involvement. Ms. Robinson has been with the Public Works Department since April 2006. She has been a dynamic force for positive and constructive changes within the Public Works Department. Under her leadership, the department participates in the Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment. Ms. Robinson has taken a hands-on approach to the program’s operations and ensured that teens develop not only job skills, but a pertinent sense of self and self-esteem through her development of a concurrent reading program. Many of the students that she has interacted with and aided have gone forward to secure full-time employment opportunities and acceptance into college. She has worked alongside students, helping them with college searches, applications, financial aid, ACT test prep as well as providing information on any job opportunities that she is aware of. She has attended many of the teens’ extracurricular activities and sporting events. She ensures that the program is more than just a job and is instead a transformative part of the teens’ lives. Suzette will go on to compete for recognition at the national level in August.