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MTV Star and Skateboarding Icon Rob Dyrdek Teams up with L.A. City Councilmember Jose Huizar on New Boyle Heights' Skate Plaza

Grand Opening for \$350,000 addition to Eastside's Hollenbeck Park part of Dyrdek's "Safe Spot Skate Spot Program," brings public/private improvements to once dilapidated park to nearly \$1 million

LOS ANGELES (Dec. 17, 2009) – Skateboarding Champion Rob Dyrdek, star of MTV's *Rob Dyrdek's Fantasy Factory*, and Los Angeles City Councilmember José Huizar joined up with Recreation and Parks officials Thursday to celebrate the Grand Opening of a \$350,000 state-of-the-art skate plaza in Boyle Heights.

The Safe Spot Skate Spot skate plaza at Hollenbeck Park came to life after Dyrdek approached Councilmember Huizar's office with the idea to build what would become a 14,000 square-foot, tri-level skate plaza that is already being called one of the nation's premier street-skating plazas. Councilmember Huizar matched that amount and more, allocating \$221,000 in Quimby funds and working with the Department of Recreation and Parks to identify and secure approximately \$54,000 in additional funding to complete the project.

"Rob Dyrdek and I know that kids on the Eastside like to skateboard as much as anybody else and this skate plaza is an incredible gift to the young people of this community," said Councilmember José Huizar. "I want to thank Rob and our friends at Rec and Parks for working with me on this worthy project. Furthermore, with nearly \$1 million in improvements, including additional trees and picnic benches, a completely renovated lake bridge, outdoor exercise equipment and now this fabulous skate plaza, Hollenbeck Park is once again a destination spot for seniors, kids and families."

Rob Dyrdek conceptualized and brought into reality the Safe Spot Skate Spot Program, which creates safe havens for kids to skate at across the country through the Rob Dyrdek Foundation. Dyrdek's foundation opened its first skate plaza at Lafayette Park in February and already has two other locations in the works.

"I am absolutely thrilled and proud to open our second Safe Spot Skate Spot in the City of Los Angeles," said Rob Dyrdek. "As you know, one of our goals at the Rob Dyrdek Foundation is to help create and support legal and safe skate plazas, which we call Safe Spot Skate Spots, for communities throughout the world. Here in Los Angeles, we are working closely with the Department of Recreation and Parks to build Safe Spot Skate Spots in all 15 Council Districts."

(more)

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“It truly has been an honor working with Councilmember José Huizar and his office, whose leadership and passion for the community he serves is nothing short of inspiring. Together we believe we have provided the local community with one of the best, if not the best skate plazas in the nation.”

City of L.A.’s Department of Recreation and Parks General Manager Jon Kirk Mukri was expected to attend Thursday to speak on behalf of his department and the collaborative effort needed to successfully open the skate plaza at Hollenbeck, as well as future sites.

“What fun to join with Rob Dyrdek, the skate plaza visionary, and Councilman Huizar, to provide this great plaza at Hollenbeck Park,” said General Manager Mukri. “It has the components that skaters love to skate with stair sets, rails and ledges. This is our second Safe Spot Skate Spot project and we're looking forward to more City of Los Angeles projects.”

Rob Dyrdek first rose to stardom as one of the best and youngest skateboarders in the world. Dyrdek started his reality television venture in 2006 and is best known to mainstream audiences as Creator, Executive Producer and the star of MTV’s *Rob & Big*. *Rob Dyrdek's Fantasy Factory*, the skateboarding entrepreneur and philanthropist’s new hit show, is currently in its second season on MTV.

Tired of skateboarders being treated as nuisances and even abused by public authorities, Dyrdek has taken it upon himself to change how the world sees the sport. The new skateboarding havens, like the one at Hollenbeck, give street skateboarders a safe and legal area to skate in a park’s natural landscape complete with the desired elements such as park benches and rails.

Besides the new skate plaza and other improvements at Hollenbeck Park, Councilmember Huizar has worked with the community, city departments and other elected officials in bringing \$1.4 billion in mostly public investment to Boyle Heights and the surrounding communities, including the opening of the Edward R. Roybal Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension, four new schools, including the Mendez Learning Center and Oscar De La Hoya Ánimo Charter High School, the new Hollenbeck Community Police Station, a new Child Care Center at Evergreen Park and the first City-built synthetic soccer field on the Eastside at the Boyle Heights Sports Center.

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