



City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve

Office of Robert Garcia **R-15**
Council Member, First District
Memorandum

Date: January 19, 2010
To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Council Member Robert Garcia, First District *RG*
Subject: Michael K. Green Skate Park

Background:

A new skateboarding park is scheduled to open January 17, 2010. The park will provide much-needed recreational activities to area youth, and young people throughout the neighborhood and the city are excited to use this new, world-class equipment to skate.

On April 9, 2005, Michael K. Green was caught in a gang crossfire and killed. He had no gang involvement himself. Michael was a popular, polite teenager and an avid, skilled skateboarder. He was known as a friendly kid, and taught many younger people to skateboard. In a neighborhood where violence and gangs were common, Michael kept out of trouble and preferred to skate or joke around rather than get into fights. Michael was an important part of the community and his death was tragic. He is sorely missed by his family and friends, and was a community leader and role model. According to many in the community, his polite, respectful demeanor and talent as a skateboarder – which earned him a sponsorship by Vans Shoes – “inspired kids to pick up skate boards and not guns”.

Naming the 14th Street skate park after a young skater is an appropriate way to recognize the young people who will be the primary users of this park. Naming the park after their fallen friend may also inspire people to take a special interest in the well being of the park and those who use it.

Michael was not a wealthy philanthropist, elected official, or community organizer. He was a normal kid who became a leader because of his positive attitude, respect for other people, and love for skating. For this reason, the community around the park and the people who will use this park support naming the skate park after Michael.

Recommendation:

Recommend designating the new skate park at Pacific and 14th as “Michael K. Green Skate Park,” and refer this item to the Parks and Recreation Commission and to the Housing & Neighborhoods Committee.