

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Dr. Gregory J. Snyder

**Date Submitted:** 09/10/2022 07:39 AM

**Council File No:** 12-1549-S21

**Comments for Public Posting:** My name is Gregory Snyder and I am an Urban Sociologist from new york, and I spent 8 years researching and writing about professional skateboarding culture in Los Angeles. The West LA courthouse was a critical component to my work and that story is chronicled in my second book. I want to say that I enthusiastically support turning the Idaho Parking Lot into a public plaza, with skateboarding obstacles, reminiscent of the West LA Courthouse. Since the 1990s the "Courthouse" has been a spot that is critical to the history of skateboarding, and also, to the history of west LA. This public plaza was a place where skaters could not only practice and play on the specific elements of urban design, the famous ledges for one, but it has also been a place of commeraderie and the formation of community. In 2014 this all came to a head, when skateboarding activists from the community worked with Jay Handel to re-open the courthouse. Not only did this provide skaters with the chance to reinvigorate a dusty skate spot but it also had consequences far beyond in terms of activism and engagement with the community. Hundreds of skaters came out to support, they participated in community council meetings, and learned how to advocate for themselves and to work with other stake holders in their community. This place was a place for skateboarding but also for engagement with those beyond the subculture. The impact of this place cannot be over stated. As a skateboarding place, just in the last 8 years, the courthouse ledges and obstacles have attracted new professional and amateur skaters from across the globe and this activity can be seen in the videos and photos of skateboarding feats. This is to say that not only did the courthouse provide a place to play, but it was in fact also a place to work. Skateboarding subculture is sustained through the practice of documenting tricks and disseminating them to the rest of the subculture, and thus, the courthouse is also a spot where a lot of production takes place, and has facilitated the careers of many current skateboarders. The plan to re-create the Courthouse in the Idaho Parking lot is a brilliant solution for all parties involved. It creates a new spot, and it shows skaters that West LA is interested both in their legacy and in their continued participation in a community. This current project shows that skateboard advocacy is a positive social good and helps to increase the diversity of ideas and peoples who participate in local

politics.

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Zachary Moldof

**Date Submitted:** 09/10/2022 08:53 AM

**Council File No:** 12-1549-S21

**Comments for Public Posting:** Hello, My name is Zach Moldof. Since 2018 I have been working with LA Mayor's Office, and GRYD Foundation to create skateboard programming for gang outreach and youth intervention. I'm writing in support of the preservation of the West LA Courthouse. Like many iconic skateboard spots of the mid 90s, this otherwise banal location has served as an integral location for unique cultural rituals that have spread from Los Angeles to the rest of the world. And while the proliferation of skateboarding is a thing to celebrate, without a tangible connection to the historic architecture and unique innovators who performed there, much of Los Angeles' unique role disappears. That disappearance is already happening. Many of the minoritized practitioners who formed the actual material of the skateboard culture that exists across the globe today are forgotten. And many of the locations where these practitioners performed their rituals have been erased in previous eras of renovation and reconstruction. The opportunity to replicate the courthouse elements at the nearby Idaho Lot is a unique, and historic opportunity. As the city prepares for the myriad opportunities that may arise from the 2028 Olympics, this is a singular opportunity for the city to create collaborative ownership of a piece of history that belongs to some of the most disenfranchised citizens. And it's worth mentioning that this specific location has such significant merit that it draws skaters from around the world, to an exact locus whose significance was created solely through the efforts of young disenfranchised skateboarders.