

Honorable Mayor and Members  
Of the Torrance City Council  
City Hall  
Torrance, California

Members of the Council:

**Subject: Community Development - Department Activities and Projects**

**Recommendation**

Recommendation of the Community Development Director that the City Council review information regarding current activities and projects in the Community Development Department.

**Background and Analysis**

The Community Development Department focuses on both short and long term planning for the community, as well as redevelopment, housing, transportation planning, building and code enforcement. Looking at all stages of development throughout the community, our goal is to maintain Torrance as a balanced community; one which will meet the needs of our residents both now and in the future by employing innovative and creative solutions to address mobility, land use compatibility, housing, infrastructure needs, and safety and environmental issues, while adhering to the many County, Regional, State and Federal regulations and mandates that impact upon our City.

Aside from the many day to day activities required to keep planning and building functioning in the City, the Department is working on the implementation of a one-stop permitting center and has continued to automate many of the functions performed by our Building and Safety personnel, including aspects of permitting as well as inspection requests. Last spring, we became a "Cool City" by signing on to the Mayor's Agreement, and are now beginning to work on establishing a baseline from which we can begin assessing ways to reduce our carbon footprint through a number of environmental initiatives. In addition, there are several long-term projects, including the General Plan Update, the Strategic Plan renewal, and Historic Preservation projects which are in the works.

**Oversized Vehicle Ordinance Update**

Since the creation of the Oversized Vehicle and Trailer Ordinance 3686, approximately 665 residents have registered their oversized vehicles and/or trailers with the City of

Torrance and received adhesive registration stickers. Of these registered vehicles, 277 residents have purchased various bundles of daily paperless parking permits in 2008. The registration stickers and daily paperless parking permits can be purchased at the Community Development Department (CDD) or Torrance Police Department (TPD); and a 24-hour phone line was established at Torrance Police Department for residents to activate their daily parking permits at their convenience. CDD and TPD staff are working with CIT staff to create an on-line system where residents can purchase and activate their daily parking permits on-line.

### **General Plan Update**

The initial phase of the General Plan renewal is complete, with a number of public workshops having been held to discuss the current state of the City and identify areas of concern as well as of stability and potential transition. Based on the input from these sessions, rough drafts of the various elements have been prepared and returned for additional workshop sessions to the various commissions. We are in the initial phases of contracting for the required Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the General Plan, which is anticipated to take 9 to 12 months to complete, including additional public meetings and outreach. After the completion of the Draft EIR, both the draft General Plan and the Draft EIR will be forwarded to Planning Commission and then on to the City Council for final approval.

The biggest challenge in the General Plan process has been trying to find ways to meet both the requirements of the State and the clear expectations of the Community. As we move further into the Strategic Plan renewal process, we expect that the vision and ideals embodied in that document will be used in finalizing the programs and policies contained in the General Plan.

### **Strategic Plan Renewal**

The first phase of the Strategic Plan, including focus groups, a statistically valid phone survey of both the business and residential communities and a Community Profile and Environmental Scan, has been completed. The information gained in this outreach is being used by the Strategic Plan Committee as they work on reviewing, refining and revising the 1999 Strategic Plan. The Committee is meeting weekly, and expects to complete the revision process in June.

While the Strategic Plan and the General Plan are very different documents, each requires extensive input from the community, and will complement each other as they reflect to the maximum extent possible the vision, ideals and values of the City and its residents.

### **Projects of Interest in the Area**

Although development is expected to slow somewhat with the slowing of the economy, Torrance remains a very desirable place to live and work, as reflected in the number of projects being brought forward. There is a great deal of interest in medical uses, both expansions of existing hospitals and creation of ancillary medical office space. Conversion and creation of office space into medical office or medical condominiums has taken place in Skypark and on Sepulveda, with potential projects on Lomita near Torrance Memorial Hospital. The former Daily Breeze site is also being looked at for medical office use to serve the Little Company of Mary Hospital. Both hospitals face increased demand for service as well as State requirements that will have them looking for expansion and remodeling opportunities in the future.

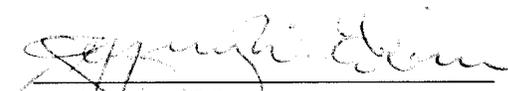
A number of condominium projects are being completed, including both senior and family residences. In addition, residential remodeling has shown no sign of slowing as yet.

### **Code Enforcement Projects**

Our Environmental Staff has been working with the SMART Team, Fire Prevention and the Community Lead Officers in addressing quality of life issues throughout the community. In particular, they have found an increasing number of homes with hoarding issues that affect not only the safety of the residents in the home but the residents of the surrounding homes as well. Training in the psychological aspects of hoarding coupled with resources such as rental dumpsters have allowed the successful clearing of several homes, with several others still in process.

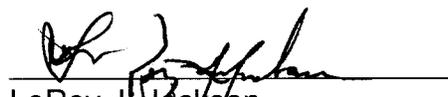
These programs represent the commitment of the Community Development Department to work with the community to formulate a comprehensive vision for the City as a whole.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jeffery W. Gibson  
Community Development Director

CONCUR:



LeRoy J. Jackson  
City Manager