

Community Open House Summary Torrance General Plan



June 4, 2005

On June 4, 2005, approximately 200 Torrance residents participated in the General Plan Community Open House held in conjunction with the Torrance City Yard Open House. The purpose of the Open House was to:

- Provide background information regarding the General Plan update process
- Identify potential outcomes for the opportunity areas
- Document traffic congestion areas
- Assess the level of acceptance for sustainability initiatives



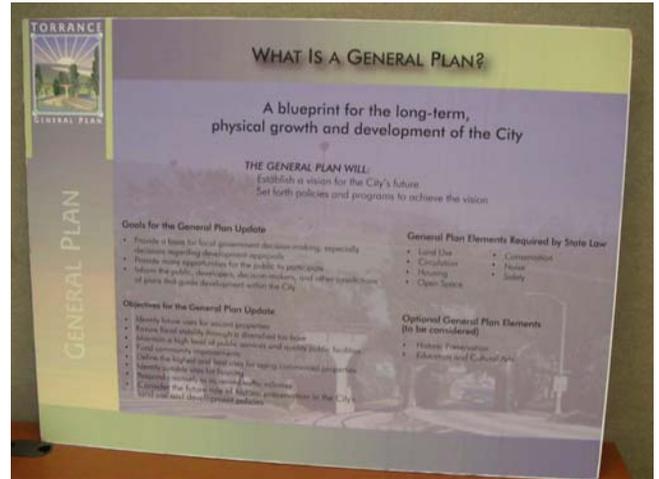
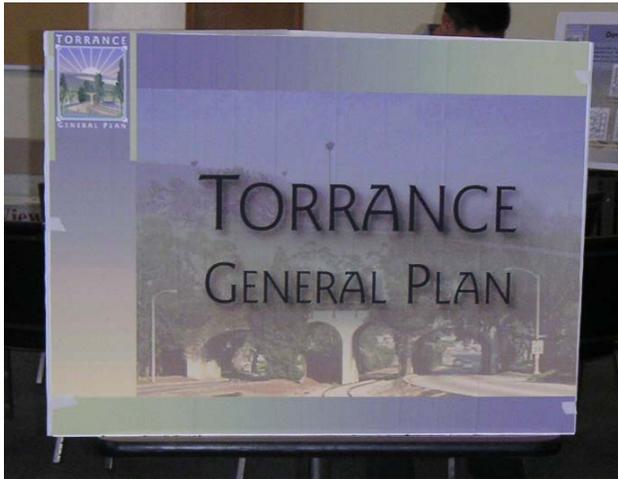
The format for the event was an open house where various City departments, including engineering, transit, information systems, parks and recreation, and street services participated by showcasing their activities in booths. Participants at the General Plan booth were presented with interactive displays dealing with issues like traffic, economic development, housing, and conservation.



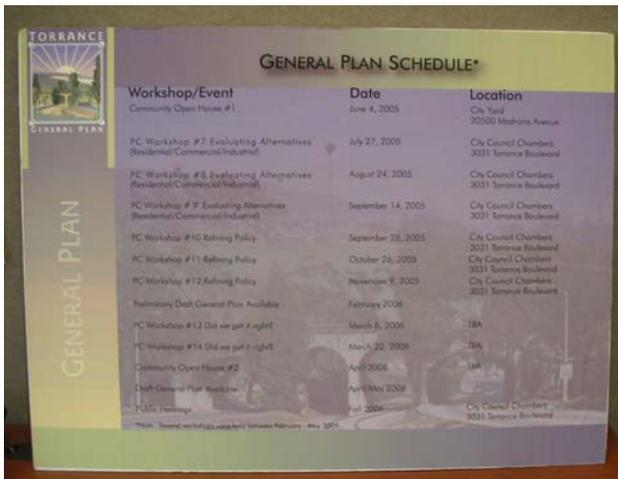
The following pages present a summary of the written comments, exactly as they were presented by attendees. Other activities recorded at the interactive displays are also documented.

GENERAL PLAN 101

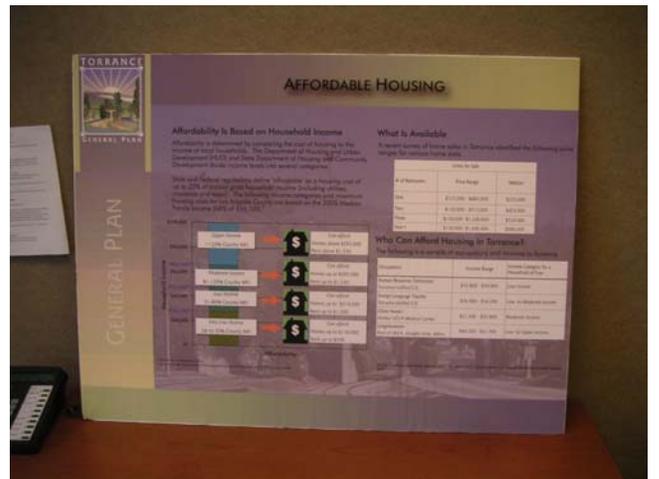
Purpose of Activity: Provide basic background on the General Plan process.



General Plan Background



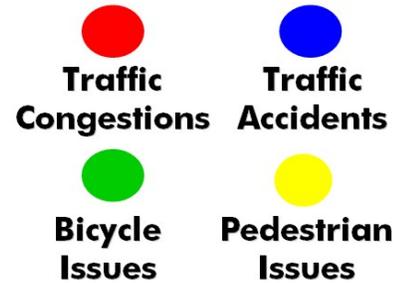
General Plan Schedule



Affordable Housing Information

CIRCULATION and MOBILITY

Purpose of Activity: To document traffic, pedestrian and bicycle access hotspots. Residents were asked to identify areas where traffic congestion and accidents are an issue and to also identify areas where there are pedestrian and bicycle issues.



Legend for Circulation Issues Board



Traffic related comments at this station are as follows.

- Takes about 20 minutes some days to get from Sepulveda to Pennsylvania via 235th/Maple.
- The traffic density on 235th St. is too great for a residential street where children play. Block it off.
- Stop sign needed on Sonoma and Maple.
- Need speed humps along 220th St., between Cabrillo and Arlington to slow down speeding vehicles in this small neighborhood. There is an extreme amount of overflow traffic.
- Make a 4-way stop at Sonoma and Hickory.
- Need a crosswalk on Arlington. More patrol – lots of accidents.
- Ermanita & 90th – curbed and sidewalked.
- Felbar & 187th – need a 4-way stop.
- Need a 4-way stop at Elm and El Dorado to slow cars around Fern School.
- Need left hand turn arrow at Maple and Torrance Blvd.
- Pedestrian issues with curves and trees at 166th and Casmir.
- Need to slow down vehicles going down 4600 block of 191st St. Maybe convert to a cul-de-sac.
- Longer light at Del Amo and Prairie. What about cameras?
- Freeway ingress and egress must be addressed at 405 and Crenshaw.
- Too many stop signs on Arlington between Sepulveda and Carson.
- 168th and Yukon – drivers roll through stop signs. Danger to school children.
- Speed/traffic signs at Prairie and Crenshaw.
- Make Amie a 2-way street.
- Keep Del Amo as it is.
- Connect Del Amo between Maple and Crenshaw.
- Need speed hump badly on Juniper due to school and the street itself is a street shot.
- Return bus service to Victoria Knolls.
- Left turn sign southbound Crenshaw to eastbound Lomita Blvd. is not long enough.
- Left turns difficult on Crenshaw between Sepulveda and Lomita.
- Bike lanes for the bike routes.
- Need better traffic light synchronization.
- Talk to city about mobile home, traffic accidents.
- Dust due to traffic.
- Make lot useful other than parking because people won't pay and they park on the street.
- No Del Amo extension.
- Too much traffic – don't need increased traffic.
- Improve/ add sidewalks in Del Amo Mall.
- This town is dangerous for bicyclists and pedestrians everywhere.
- School parking and traffic at Carl and 234th.
- Short signals. Not enough time to drive across Hawthorne Blvd.
- Desperate need for speed bumps (school zone) on Ronald Ave. and Towers St.
- Need camera at left turn signals at Lomita and 190th.
- Waiting time on north and southbound on Anza and Torrance.



- More sidewalks.
- Areas around the mall need sidewalks.
- Need more curb cuts.
- Kohl's at Airport Dr. – driveways get blocked. Signal?
- Concerned about the lowering of Carson St. at the mall.
- Transit opportunities for the mall.
- Shuttle service for mall (holidays).
- Extend time for crosswalks.
- Improve pedestrian access at mall.
- Too many u-turns allowed on Sepulveda. Disrupts traffic.
- Lomita at Crenshaw – driveways are blocked at the Office Depot.
- Need school signs.
- Bluff St. – people at the end of cul-de-sac drive faster than safe speed.
- Parking needed at PCH and Crenshaw.
- No access in vicinity of Maple and Crenshaw.
- Southbound Crenshaw, turning east – left turn signal too long to go green. Impatient drivers cause accidents.
- Van Ness from 190th to Del Amo – lights not synchronized.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

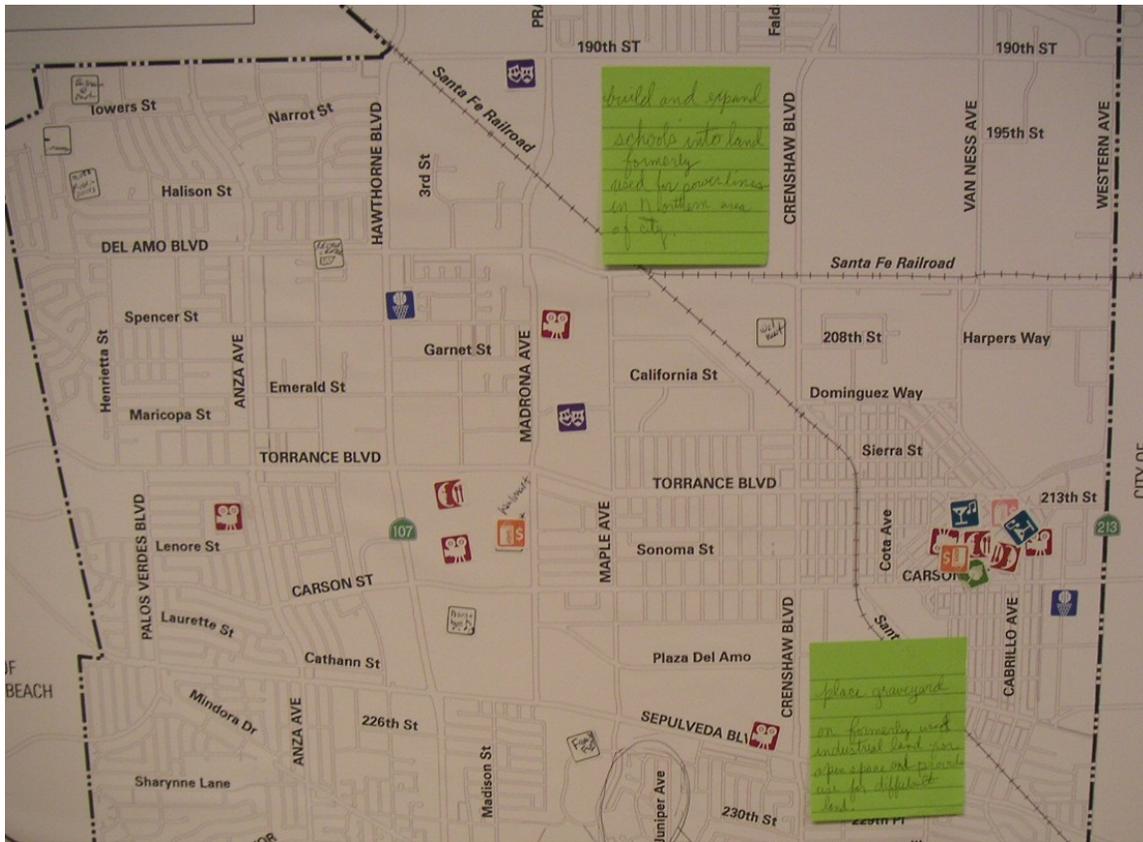
Purpose of Activity: to provide information about areas where there is potential for economic development, and to record participants' thoughts about desired services, activities or needs, including housing. Participants place icon stickers symbolizing activities/businesses on those areas of Torrance needing such activities/businesses. The following series of map sections show the results.

Legend

	Live Theatre		Retail Chains		Grocery
	Movies		Nightlife		Other
	Sports Field		Late Night Dining		Higher Density Housing
	Indoor Sports Facility		Gym/Health Club		Other



Between northern City limits and 190th Street



Between 190th Street and Sepulveda Boulevard



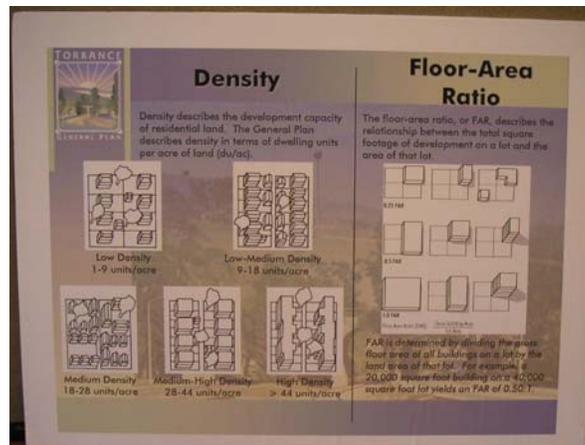
Between Sepulveda Boulevard and southern City limits

THE DENSITY GAME

Purpose of Activity: to learn more about the concept of density as it relates to residential developments and to look at the kinds of multi-family homes that could be developed in Torrance in the future. Participants were shown a picture of a residential development and asked to guess the density of that development. The development was then discussed in more detail.



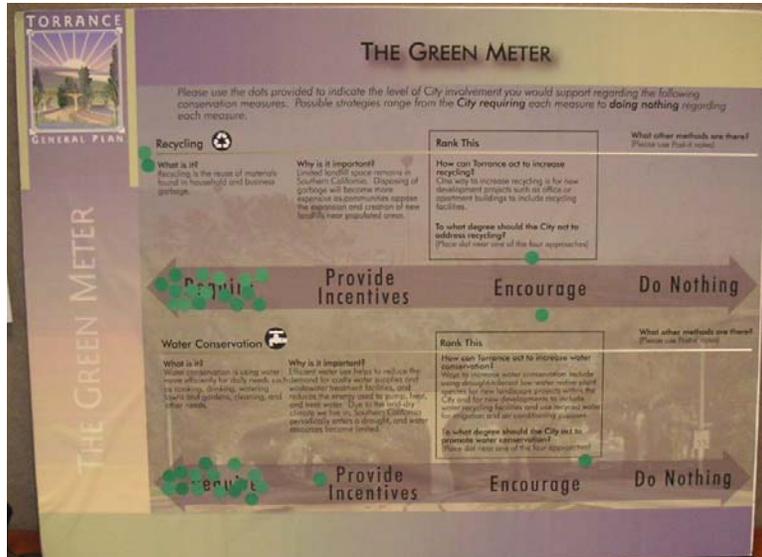
The outcome was a better understanding of the threshold of acceptance for multi-family housing types. The overall consensus was that housing with fewer than 3 stories, with good design that is compatible with surrounding single family neighborhoods would be acceptable in some areas of the City. Densities of 24 du/acre or less found wide acceptance with the participants. Structures over 3 stories were routinely rejected by the participants.



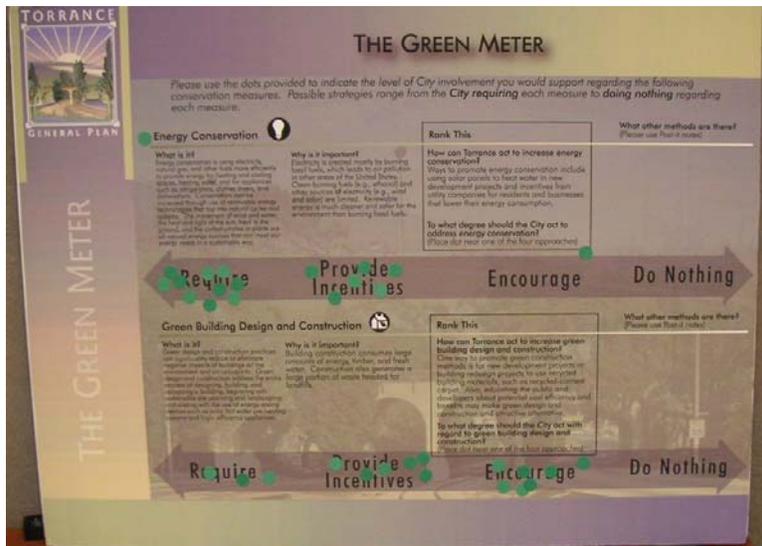
Information regarding Density and Intensity

CONSERVATION

Purpose of Activity: to determine the level of support for conservation initiatives. The results are shown on the “Green Meters” presented below.



Green Meter: Recycling and Water Conservation



Green Meter: Energy Conservation and Green Design and Construction

TORRANCE
GENERAL PLAN

THE GREEN METER

Please use the dots provided to indicate the level of City involvement you would support regarding the following conservation measures. Possible strategies range from the City requiring each measure to doing nothing regarding each measure.

Reducing Urban Runoff

What is it?
Urban runoff refers to the surface flow of water in a developed area due to rain or irrigation activities such as washing down driveways with a hose.

Why is it important to consider?
Runoff is an industrial and commercial waste management problem. It is caused by rain falling on paved surfaces, roofs, and other impervious surfaces. Runoff carries pollutants such as oil, grease, and heavy metals into storm drains and eventually into local waterways. Runoff also causes erosion and sedimentation in urban areas. For example, following rainstorms, bacteria are often found due to high bacteria levels caused by urban runoff entering storm drains that directly dump into rivers and the ocean without being treated.

Rank This

How can Torrance act to decrease urban runoff and improve water quality? One way to reduce urban runoff is to prevent water from washing cars, over-watering lawns and landscaping, or washing sidewalks and driveways from entering storm drains. This is typically accomplished by prohibiting or limiting these activities and requiring retention of runoff on site.

To what degree should the City act to address this issue? (Place dot near one of the four approaches)

What other methods are there?
(Please use Rank This notes)

Require
Provide Incentives
Encourage
Do Nothing

Green Waste

What is it?
Green waste is food and vegetable waste from the kitchen and garden, lawn care clippings, yard trimmings, weeds and dead flowers.

Why is it important?
Curbside or the average household bin is filled up with green waste, which ends up being dumped in landfill sites. This waste takes up large amounts of landfill space. As a consequence, it produces methane, a dangerous greenhouse gas, and other harmful pollutants, which can pollute local food and water.

Rank This

How can Torrance act to reduce the amount of green waste going to local landfills? One way to reduce green waste in landfills is for businesses and residents to offer on-site composting services for green waste. Another way is recycling of green waste. Curbside bins for compost bins, which can be used for food and garden waste.

To what degree should the City act to reduce the amount of green waste headed to landfills?

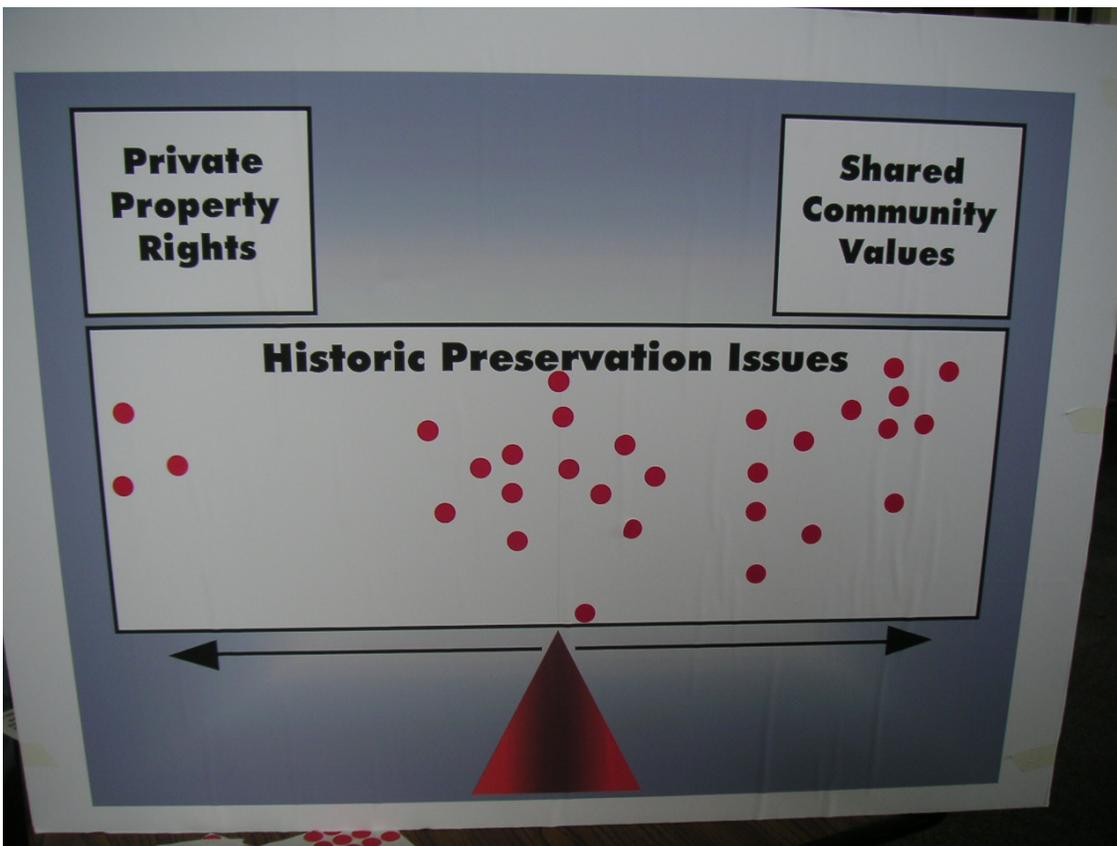
What other methods are there?
(Please use Rank This notes)

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Green Meter: Urban Runoff and Green Waste

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Purpose of Activity: Residents were presented with a diagram depicting the balance the City must achieve between property rights and shared community values when considering potential historic preservation policies and programs. Participants were given red stickers and asked to participate in an activity identifying where they feel the appropriate balance (the triangle) should be placed on this diagram. The following photo illustrates the outcome of this activity.



MARKETPLACE of IDEAS

Purpose of Activity: To gauge attendees' opinion on the future of Torrance. Participants were asked two questions: "When I look to the future of Torrance what am I most pessimistic about?" and "When I look to the future of Torrance what am I most optimistic about?". Participants wrote answers on sticky notes and placed them on the appropriate side of the following board:



Pessimistic Comments

- Overcrowding
- Need to know how the recycle containers etc. money is spent. Is it for a good cause?
- Time traffic lights, especially on Torrance Blvd.
- Schools and funding (2)
- No money for schools
- Schools & budget – decrease in Kindergarten size – scared away residents to home school/private schools
- Traffic (2)
- Traffic congestion – it's awful (3)
- Over building houses and condos (3)
- Laws restricting RVs on streets
- Higher-density leads to more transient community, fewer roots, negative school impacts
- Over-building (2)
- Homework
- Zoning – changing commercial to residential (3)
- Traffic Infrastructure
- Mobile refinery – Don't they sell part of the property?

- Over-building – loss of open space – too much traffic
- Too much new residential/condo development
- School funding
- Too much building – Torrance is looking like Century City and has congested traffic
- Over building – loss of neighborhoods
- Over development (2)
- Torrance Building and Safety inability to enforce building permits and its insensitivity to environmental concerns. For instance, construction site on Sepulveda and Cabrillo, tore down old beautiful trees to make way for condos



- Mixed use permits
- Lax guidelines and adherence to FARs
- Enforcement/monitoring of building permits
- Too much density – Keep a traffic/density balance
- Pollution in the sewers
- School budget
- Please stop building more houses
- Light rail (not coming)
- Public transportation
- School capacities and over crowding
- Condo construction squeezing out single family housing
- Affordable housing (\$200,000-\$300,000)
- City needs – mixed use like Paseo Colorado in Pasadena!
- NIMBY's
- Too much development and they are unaffordable!
- Budget cuts – not enough classes for students and teachers have to buy their own supplies for the kids.
- School maintenance

Optimistic Comments

- Keep Torrance like it used to be when it was an All-American City
- Putting homes in business & commercial areas causing a mess and traffic too
- Safety, schools, well-run city (3)
- Parks and recreation
- Adult schools
- Good plan for the City
- That council will listen to its citizens
- Summer program – variety
- Better leadership is coming!
- Schools! Need more \$\$

- Friendly community and great civic services
- Community safety and cleanliness of community (no graffiti)
- It's a good (better) place to live! (shops, schools, restaurants, services, etc.!)
- It's a fabulous place to live. It has everything!
- Preserving Downtown Torrance with small, high quality businesses to shop and dine in. It's income producing no more residential housing downtown.
- Cultural arts programs
- Adult school
- More people pitching in to help
- Out of control building of residential homes – too much traffic –takes 30 min. to drive across town. INSANE.
- Traffic – Summer
- Summer
- People and police department
- Great City House programs, cultural art center, etc.

