

2017 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

Good afternoon everyone! On behalf of the City of Torrance and the Torrance City Council, thank you for joining me today. I am excited to share the work we've completed in the past year, discuss where we stand in the current economy, and ultimately discuss the continuous growth of Torrance.

In the interest of time, since this is my 4th State of the City, I'm going to acknowledge everyone as a whole, for your dedication to the successes of Torrance at work.

But, there is one person, I must thank and that is my wife Terry. Thank you for the 40 years of marriage. Thank you for your support in the last 4 years. And, thank you for letting me seek reelection.

Happy wife, happy life.

Now, this just in from former White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer –

Today is very special because this will be the largest audience to witness the State of the City in Torrance ever... PERIOD! End of discussion!

Torrance is a great city, a city where we maintain balance amidst our efforts to do more for our inclusive community... a community comprised of people committed to making Torrance a place where lives can be enriched every day with so many activities and programs. And I'm proud to say, we've done just that! Throughout our City departments we've been able to provide many enhancements to programs, infrastructure, economic development and much, much more. Together with my colleagues on the City Council, City staff, and members of the community, we've taken numerous steps to take Torrance where it is now – an amazing city...a safe city ... a thriving city... a great place to live, work, study, gather and play, and I am truly honored to have served the past 4 years as your mayor.

Some visual enhancements I know many of you have noticed are, our digital signs. We've received great feedback from the community and many of our non-profits and community groups are taking advantage of the promotional opportunities on the displays. We've enlarged the original sign in front of the Plunge, relocated the previous display to North Torrance and added the impressive sign at Wilson Park. These signs are providing information to our residents, business partners and visitors in major thoroughfares of the City. Ironically, the only complaints I've had about these signs is they maybe a little bit too small!

For those of you that visit us on the web, you may have noticed a dramatic change to TorranceCA.Gov, our City's official website. A long time coming, we've launched the new site with more robust features, imagery and branding that really portrays Torrance, and of course, intuitive navigation. In addition to the official website, we've created sub sites for Transit, the Library, and Cultural Arts designed specifically to cater to their customers. Lastly, we developed a site to further promote our economic development and the Torrance Advantage that will allow us to market our City to potential businesses looking to start or



Patrick J. Furey was first elected to the Torrance City Council on June 3, 2008. He garnered the mayoral seat in 2014. As Mayor, he serves as Chair of the State Legislative Advocacy Committee and Federal Legislative Advocacy Committee. In addition, he serves as a member of the Sanitation District of Los Angeles County, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and serves as the Chair of the Los Angeles County City Selection Committee. He also is the voting delegate for the National League of Cities.

Patrick J. Furey graduated with honors from the UCLA Attorney Assistant Training Program and worked as a legal assistant for nine years prior to attending law school. He holds a juris doctor degree from the University of West Los Angeles and is a member of the California State Bar Association. Prior to being seated as the mayor, he retired from the County of Los Angeles as a Principal Deputy County Counsel assigned to the Children's Services Division.

Mayor Furey is married to wife Terry. They have two children and two grandsons.

relocate in Torrance in addition to providing a resource on the web for our existing businesses to learn more about our assistance programs, but I'll get into economic development a little more later.

Now, let me apologize for any traffic congestion or dust you may have experienced during construction, but these are just signs that we are hard at work! We've completed the \$3.5 Million, Crenshaw Blvd Rehabilitation Project. A high traffic area, we've repaired the pavement on Crenshaw Blvd. and also include signage, signal and landscape upgrades.

Accessibility for our community is always a priority for Torrance. The Sidewalk Repair for Handicap Accessibility Program repaired almost 3 miles of damaged and uplifted sidewalks in 3 residential areas to provide a continuous walking surface and also removed and replaced nearly 200 City trees.

Improving our water, the City acquired a property behind Yukon Elementary School for development of the North Torrance Well Field, which includes a new groundwater well, a new 3 million gallon storage tank and treatment facilities. The North Torrance Well Field allows for the removal of the huge water tank and pumping station at McMaster Park.

And we've also improved our City's streets with the Annual Residential Slurry & Pavement Seal Programs resulting in 3.3 million square feet of sealed streets for summer 2016. Currently in construction for summer 2017, an additional 3 and a half million square feet will be sealed. This helps to extend the pavement life and reduces maintenance costs.

Still on the horizon, in the spring we anticipate the start of Traffic Signal Upgrades, which will move traffic more efficiently and reduce delays. Summer of 2018 we should see the start of the Residential Street Rehab project which will improve the pavement in the WALTERIA area, as well repair displaced concrete curb, gutter, and sidewalks. Water main replacement is included on some streets.

Also next summer we will see fantastic improvements to the PCH and Hawthorne Intersection including pavement rehab and signal modifications. The boulevard will also see much needed improvements with repairs to the pavement and also include signage, signal and landscape upgrades. Cal Trans, our partners at the State are also going to making big improvements at the same time!

It's hard to keep up, right?

We know it's difficult to stay up to date with all of the improvements going on in our City. In fact, we are currently working on a project that may make these projects and their details available to you from the comfort of your front porch!

We understand that there is sometimes a communication gap between residents and government. We also hear that sometimes the community believes it has been left in the dark. That is why I've brought an idea to staff to develop an innovative mobile app and website tool that helps streamline City communications and utilizes map-based technology to convey relevant information, to the community with different levels of tech savvy. We're calling it Torrance Front Porch... and together we're taking this idea that you can access information from the comfort of your front porch to the Bloomberg Philanthropies 2017 Mayors Challenge.

The Bloomberg Challenge touches millions of lives – from the citizens who are affected by bold new innovations, to the hundreds of city leaders who use new strategies and tools to better meet the needs of their residents. Participating cities in the United States, Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean are advancing their bold ideas, improving the way their governments work and the quality of life in their communities.

It's a competition, and 35 Champion Cities will be awarded up to \$100,000 to begin to bring their ideas to life. Champion Cities will test and refine these ideas, creating a coast-to-coast civic-solutions laboratory. We are diligently working to complete the application process and need your help! Visit TorranceCA.Gov to complete our survey so that we can bring this innovative idea to realization! Awardees are anticipated to be notified by January 2018. It's really quite exciting. Should we be chosen, Torrance Front Porch could then be used in cities worldwide and we could be the recipient of grants up to \$5 million dollars.

We're always working to provide transparency to our community. Visit our website, register for our newsletters and eNotifications, subscribe to TorranceAlerts, or visit the Clerk's Office and we will get you the information. But there is also a lot of hard work going on in the City that residents don't see, for example, the Torrance Public Library makes sure nobody is without access. A cadre of volunteers delivers books, audio and other items to people who cannot get to the library. They visit single homes, group homes, retirement communities, and medical facilities bearing everything from popular bestsellers to non-fiction, CDs to digital media.

At the Farmers' Market one morning, a resident was speaking to the City Librarian and said "I used to use the library all the time, but now I don't see as well as I used to, I really miss reading." The Librarian told her about large print books and audio books, all available to her. She was amazed, but then added "I don't drive very well, I'm hesitant about trying to get to the library." The Librarian introduced her to Words on Wheels, and said she need never be without a great novel by her side, ready to read, because a volunteer would bring them to her. She said "That's amazing, I had no idea I could even ask for that!" Just another thing our city does!

Developing our workforce comes at a young age in Torrance. Our schools have always been a big draw for families and businesses looking to relocate. Torrance Unified School District continues their academic excellence every year... educating more than 24,000 students!

Over the past year, TUSD continued to focus on student centric teaching and learning. Once again, their 97% high school graduation rate is one of the highest in the State. For this reason, high schools in Torrance are consistently recognized as some of the best in the nation and state by Newsweek and U.S. World Report. The district was also recognized as one of the top 20 Honor Roll districts in the State by the Campaign for Business and Education Excellence.

In fact, five Torrance schools were announced winners of the Gold Ribbon Schools Awards Program. The honor, which went to 275 schools statewide, replaces the California Distinguished Schools Program, which is on hiatus while the state creates new testing and accountability systems. Bert Lynn, Calle Mayor and Magruder were among the middle schools honored. Of the district's high schools, North High and South High took the award as well.

Each of the five schools selected from the district earned the award for a key practice. These distinctions are worthy of celebration and reflect the positive effects of the leadership, collaboration, and perseverance of our administrators and educators working hard throughout the district.

And, how about Torrance High School being chosen the "Most Beautiful Public School" in California by Architecture Digest? Not bad for a 100 year old beauty!

It really is a pleasure being the Mayor of this great City.

And, a large part of that is because I have opportunities like visiting High School Government classes and speaking with about 1500 students every year in small classroom settings to explain local government and stressing how their participation can make an impact in their community.

And, Students and Government Day gives my colleagues on the council and I an opportunity to interact with 8th grade students, who actually get to run our city for a day. Again, showing the importance of community involvement to our future leaders.

To promote higher education, our partners at El Camino College have developed a program to aid first year college students with fees and materials. The program, South Bay Promise will pay for enrollment fees and textbooks for the first year at El Camino College, if they "promise" to attend in the fall after high school graduation. Students can also participate in the First Year Experience Program and take advantage of academic counseling to assist with educational planning, extensive orientation, priority course registration, and opportunities to participate in field trips. The goal? To make sure college is within our students reach and they are successful with attaining educational goals.

We all know Torrance is a great place to live. With the proximity to great healthcare, residents and visitors can remain at ease. California has about 420 hospitals. By U.S. News & World Report standards for Best Regional Hospitals, fifty-three meet high quality standards. I'm happy to say our very own Torrance Memorial and Providence Little Company of Mary in addition to nearby Harbor-UCLA and Kaiser rank in the top 30.

Nurse.org, the web's leading career site for nurses, has also recognized Torrance Memorial as one of the best hospitals for nurses to work for in California. During the past two years, Nurse.org has collected almost 2,000 reviews by nurses at 314 California hospitals about their workplace satisfaction. Reviews in California have revealed Torrance Memorial Medical Center has one of the highest levels of satisfaction among its nurses. It's a great achievement to know that they are providing great healthcare in an environment where people enjoy their jobs.

On July 28th, the American Hospital Association awarded Providence Little Company of Mary Torrance, Providence Trinity Care Hospice and the Providence Institute for Human Caring the prestigious Circle of Life Award. They are just one of two recipients of this award in the nation. The mission of palliative and care through the end of life is to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of patients and their loved ones. This award represents their commitment to providing excellent care with compassion to our community.

You may have noticed there is a massive construction project happening on Torrance Blvd. that represents a sea of change in patient care for residents of the South Bay. The former site of the Daily Breeze building, is being transformed into the Little Company of Mary Advanced Care Center (ACC)—which is good news for residents who need convenient, local access to advanced outpatient care. The ACC, slated to open next summer, will house multiple state-of-the-art services, all in one place.

The \$80 million, 106,000-square-foot facility will provide key programs including City of Hope's Multidisciplinary Cancer Center and Providence Little Company of Mary's Orthopedic and Spine Institute, among others. The partnership with City of Hope means South Bay patients can receive local, high-quality, coordinated cancer care in one convenient place, when in the past, they may have had to travel all the way to Duarte to receive City of Hope's nationally-recognized services which will soon be available right here in Torrance.

Torrance continuously works to advocate for a healthy and safe community. Our medical partners are just one reason we have such an independent senior population. That's probably why Niche.com ranked Torrance #3 in Best Places to Retire in California and #27 in the nation!

The all-volunteer South Bay Village, started operations in May 2015, and now serves Torrance and nearby surrounding areas. The Village provides services to its members to help them to remain in their own homes, while enjoying all that their familiar community has to offer.

With more than 200 in the U.S., The Torrance South Bay Village is the largest one of its kind west of the Mississippi. The senior village concept is composed of several elements, all orchestrated to help senior members to continue to live full lives and stay active while remaining in their own homes. This is just one example in Torrance, where seniors have the opportunity to not just exist, but to flourish.

Also keeping our senior community safe is our very own Torrance Fire Department. TFD utilizes data to drive improvement and determine direction. In light of recent data collected, The Fire Department determined that their number 1 call for assistance was injuries related to falls in our older adult population. This prompted our partnership with the non-profit organization, Partners In Care, who will be providing no cost fall prevention classes to our Torrance Community seniors.

To kick this off, yesterday our Emergency Medical Services division and the Community Services Department held the first ever City of Torrance Senior Safety Fair which provided resources geared for our senior community. Paramedics were on hand providing patient education and referred specific patient populations to available services. In addition, Torrance Libraries are also hosting an 8 week fall prevention class targeting our senior population. The first class filled quickly, and more classes will be scheduled soon.

Our Fire Department has really done some great work over the past year. In fact, TFD recently received a Special Recognition Award from the LA County Board of Supervisors. Supervisor, Janice Hahn recognized the Paramedic Program for excellence in delivering Emergency Medical Service to the community, and for identifying the needs of the community through data and demographics analysis to provide focused care within the community. Our medics go through an extensive training program and must have one year of experience before they are allowed to perform Standard Field Treatment Protocols. These Protocols are performed by our Paramedics in the field when treating patients. They are allowed to perform certain procedures to stabilize a patient prior to making contact with the hospital for further medical direction. Participation in the training program requires detailed quality assurance performed by our EMS Coordinator with monthly reporting to the Dept of Health Services. After only 6 months in the program, TFD achieved a 97% compliance rate! This is a huge accomplishment for our Fire Department.

Trail blazers in their industry, TFD also instituted a Fire Explorer Program and developed department wide mentorship programs for Explorer, Firefighter, Engineer, and Captain. They graduated 9 new firefighters from recruit training, implemented a Firefighter Wellness program through a college partnership with the goal of increasing firefighter safety and reducing injuries, and have begun the accreditation process with the Center for Public Safety Excellence with the goal of institutionalizing comprehensive self assessment and continuous quality improvement. Just last month, their revised Community Emergency Response Team or CERT program was approved and changes will start in January. I encourage you all to participate! And as if they were not working hard enough in Torrance, our team responded to the Whittier and La Tuna Fire to assist our Southern California safety partners. The La Tuna Fire is the largest in Los Angeles City Fire history.

Of course, the Fire Department doesn't just work with other Fire Agencies. Torrance Fire Department and our Police Department work hand in hand everyday to provide exceptionalism not just known as our quality of life but Torrance's

way of life. The two departments have partnered to train staff members for violent incidents including acts of terrorism and active shooter scenarios. The SWAT team along with Fire's Tactical Emergency Medical Services Paramedics provide the training with includes Unified Command, Mass Patient Treatment, Rescue Task Force training, and Victim Extraction.

Ranking #1 overall against comparable agencies within the County of Los Angeles, the Torrance Police Department excelled in crimes cleared this year. In fact, the Torrance Police Department Gang Detail dedicated countless hours to the apprehension and prosecution of a group of "East Coast Crip" gang members who were responsible for over 150 residential burglaries in Los Angeles County. They conducted a complex investigation by coordinating with Federal, State, County and other Law Enforcement Municipalities which resulted in numerous arrests and the recovery of stolen property. The culmination of this investigation led to 24 defendants being indicted on 40 felony counts, along with enhanced sentences for gang activity.

In January of this year, the City of Torrance began installation of 40 "Vigilant" camera-components to be used as Automated License Plate Readers throughout the city. Once the system captures a stolen / wanted vehicle, the information is relayed to Police Communications and patrol officers with minimal delay. Between January and August of this year, the system has captured 442 stolen / wanted vehicles. We believe this investigative tool will better serve the members of the community, and be an asset within the South Bay region as vital information can be shared amongst neighboring agencies.

The Police Department also works with issues dealing with social services. Our Community Lead Officers along with other local agencies continue to work with our homeless population to actively assist these individuals with legal and mental health issues.

And TPD is not only tasked with assisting our human population. Yes... I'm talking about coyotes. We continue to support the coexistence with urban coyotes through the Coyote Management Plan using education, behavior modification and development of a tiered response to aggressive coyote behavior. Our program was recently studied by the Public Administration Program at USC. During the course of the research study, Torrance PD was referred to as the poster child of urban coyote management, as well as an innovative department that is not only leading the way for urban coyote management, but is also receptive to feedback. We have seen active participation from the entire community including residents, homeowners associations, volunteers and city personnel as coyote sighting continue to drop. And many other cities are replicating our efforts.

TPD's Focus Based Policing philosophy was highlighted throughout the year as they focused our attention on problem solving, community partnerships, and crime prevention strategies. They continue to make great strides in utilizing social media to communicate and educate our community, which has kept citizens engaged and further solidified our strong partnership with the community.

Also working to keep the community informed, this year the City implemented a 24 hour communications team to manage our emergency notification system, Torrance Alerts and all other forms of interactive communications including our social media, website and enotifications, newsletters, digital signs, our AM radio station 1620 CitiSOUNDS, CitiCABLE, the disaster hotline and much more. They've received extensive training with our Police and Fire Departments and work with all of the City departments to communicate news including emergencies, road closures, and traffic updates to name a few. This allows our first responders to concentrate on keeping the community safe and secure.

As you can see, the safety of our residents, business partners, and visitors is one of our top priorities. The Torrance Refinery continues to demonstrate transparency in their operations and open in their communication. The City Council has remained committed to support the South Coast Air Quality Management District in their rule making process. This time of year is when the AQMD evaluate and create rules. We continue to take an active role in the rule-making process. We update our residents through workshops, much like the one that took place on Tuesday; and you can find a resource page on our website. It is important to understand that these rules do not just affect Torrance, they also affect neighboring refineries like Wilmington's Tesoro and Valero Refineries. City Staff continues to stay involved in safety by working with outside counsel to create a Memorandum of Agreement to replace the Consent Decree between the City and the Refinery, coordinate Process Safety Culture Assessment, Co-Chair Training group for Refinery Inspectors, and we even have staff on the Governor's Interagency Refinery Task Force Agency cooperation to enhance safety at Petroleum Refineries. We are committed to ensuring your safety.

Always working towards a stronger economy, our history of being fiscally prudent has helped us maintain our position in today's economy. The U.S. economic outlook is healthy according to the key economic indicators. The most critical indicator is gross domestic product (GDP), which measures the nation's production output. The GDP growth rate is expected to remain between the 2 and 3 percent ideal range. Unemployment is forecast to continue at the natural rate

and for Torrance, unemployment rates continue to drop. With 5.5% considered full employment, we are well within the full employment rate at 2.8%, County at 4.1% and State at 4.8%; comparable numbers taken from April 2017.

Our Office of Economic Development continues to act as ombudsman for our City, visiting nearly 70 Torrance businesses this past year, building and nurturing relationships in addition to offering assistance. They continue to host Breakfasts with the Mayor, work with our regional partners including The South Bay Entrepreneurial Center, The Los Angeles Regional Small Business Development Center Network, California Manufacturing Technology Consultant, Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce, South Bay Workforce Investment Board, Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development, Small Business Administration, Recycling Marketing Development Zone and the Foreign Trade Zone.

They have hosted several events including the GO-Biz California Competes workshop to promote the program to Torrance businesses, the annual Board of Equalization business resource fair, the Innovation Matters Expo in partnership with the South Bay Entrepreneurial Center, and the American Planning Association for one of their "Summer in the City" events to promote Torrance.

As you can see, our Office of Economic Development works hard to build and nurture our business partnerships. Currently, we have more than 13,000 active business licenses in Torrance with more than 3,500 located outside of Torrance wanting to work with you our business partners, residents, community members.

I recently heard someone say, "Businesses are a lot like Government in that Businesses are a dog eat dog world, and Government is just the reverse."

In any event, we're seeing our businesses grow and expand including our craft brewery community which has grown to 11 breweries

Hollywood Riviera Studios is also positioning their growing business to be audience rated in order to host e-gaming tournaments with a studio audience and the City is working with them to meet permit requirements.

As mentioned last year, Tritium electric charging company, which makes electric vehicle chargers and other products in Australia, moved into Torrance and has already grown and started producing chargers right here in our City.

Start up, Phyn – a joint venture between Belkin International, based in Playa Vista, and a company based in Finland that identifies safe drinking water delivery systems, has developed a product to identify leaks and conserve water that people can use in their homes.

The founders chose Torrance as the site and are looking to create what they call "Silicon Torrance!"

Another start up to join the Torrance community, Global Aero Interior, an aircraft seating company founded by an aerospace engineer. Our Office of Economic Development worked with the owner to help secure its FAA certification for repair.

A former Phillips lighting executive also brought Forever Lamp to our City which is a high bay LED light used in warehouses and manufacturing plants.

Gyu-Kaku, a Japanese bbq restaurant company is moving its US Headquarters to Torrance with about 50 employees. They have had a restaurant in Torrance since 2003 at Crossroads shopping center, with a total of 43 currently in the U.S. Interestingly, they are bigger than McDonalds & Starbucks in Japan!

I'm sure all of these businesses chose Torrance because they saw my last State of the City Address and our "Why Torrance" video which received more than 65 thousand views on Facebook! Don't you think?

We also continue to cultivate existing business relationships like Honda Motor Company as we work with their Research & Development on their "Living Lab" project to test and validate new mobility concepts. This is a great example of a Public /Private Partnership using Torrance as a microcosm to help further technological developments to increase mobility.

Also in the field of research, we are working with Alpine Electronics to assist with potential development of autonomous vehicles.

Speaking of vehicles, Torrance Auto Dealers Association has unified, developed a website, and increased joint marketing efforts. They are really looking to promote sales locally – so BUY IN TORRANCE!

And our Downtown Torrance Association has been reinstated. Another organization driven by business, but supported by the Office of Economic Development. They've elected a governing board, developed a Facebook page, and a website. Now, they are coordinating events together to attract more foot traffic to the area and to continue to revitalize downtown.

Also in development is a Torrance Restaurant Association in collaboration with the Chamber.

As you saw in the video, Ganahl Lumber is one of the many ribbon cuttings held this year. The Torrance lumberyard, which provided 86 new jobs, is also a state-of-the-art 18 acre facility. There's an 86,000-square-foot building supply store, a 12,700-square-foot shed where customers can have their lumber custom milled, and a 40,500-square-foot lumber storage shed that customers can drive into and load up their trucks.

Specializing in providing optimal motion systems, Oriental Motors has found its home back in Torrance. Offering an extensive product line-up of about 50,000 different products, Oriental motors concentrates on technological advancement and product design improvement. With plants all over Japan including Research and Development in our Sister City, Kashiwa Japan. Originally located on 237th St. in Torrance, they moved to the Harbor Gateway area after some years. Most recently they have chosen to move back with over 50 employees into a newly renovated building on Alaska Ave. It has been a coordinated effort between the City and the local utility companies to help the company meet their deadline for moving in. And, we'll be there with a ribbon cutting soon... You know how Torrance loves their ribbon cuttings!

The Del Amo Fashion Center continues to renovate the older parts of the shopping center. The two-story, 84,000-square-foot Dicks Sporting Goods opened in June and the demo for the almost 43,000-square-foot Dave and Buster's is underway.

If you're not familiar with Dave and Buster's, it's a family friendly chain where you can play the newest arcade games, enjoy chef-crafted creations, sip innovative cocktails & watch your favorite team in the sports bar! It will add an entertainment aspect to the Fashion Center that we anticipate will draw new customers of all ages.

The Burlington Coat Factory store will relocate after the holiday season to the Torrance Promenade at Del Amo and the Boulevard. It will occupy the space vacated by Sears Outlet which moved to Torrance Blvd.

Parking lot "re-dos" are in process and most of the original lots will be redone in the next 2 to 3 years.

By early 2018 the Outdoor portion of the mall will get a makeover. The space will be renovated into a new Outdoor Village featuring a central park for kids to run on. Evening concerts and family movies will also take place in the center.

EMC Seafood & Raw Bar is also coming to the Fashion Center. Established in 2013, EMC quickly become a popular place for fresh seafood in Koreatown. They currently have locations opened in Irvine, Woodland Hills and in the Santa Anita Mall. This new restaurant will be located next to the Lucille's restaurant fronting the Boulevard and construction is underway.

There is so much happening in retail and that's great for our city! We are seeing increased mall sales taxes that are helping offset declines in utility-users' taxes and other municipal revenue sources. Sales taxes grew by 3.6 percent in the fourth quarter of 2016 compared to the previous year, driven largely by Del Amo's renovation. These taxes which are our largest source of income, represent 28% of the city's general fund revenues.

So what else is going on in the City? Has anyone heard the buzz about Amazon?

And, how about the buyer of the Toyota Property?

Wait.... I think we need a drum roll for this...

Drumroll...emphasize the build up

Toyota? Amazon? Toyota? Amazon?

Well! The big Surprise is! We still don't know. Or, we still can't say!

But did you notice anyone in the room sweating?

Maybe Holding their breath?

Who knows... maybe the buyer of the Toyota Property is actually in this room right now. Just Maybe?

But yes, we are fully aware that Amazon is looking for property to house 50,000 employees. Are we for it? Of course we are! Are there elements that make Torrance a good candidate, sure. In fact, all of the requirements listed by Amazon appear to describe our city.

But we are also aware of the obstacles Amazon is currently facing in their Seattle location. Traffic congestion, housing, can our schools accommodate an influx of new students? We have to look into all aspects welcoming a large company. But are we willing to throw our hat in the ring? Of course we are! We'd be remiss to skip the opportunity and we have an inkling the Toyota Property buyer may feel the same way.

As I told USA Today, Great Wall Motor Company, China's largest SUV and pickup manufacturer did purchase property in Torrance. Though, it was not the Toyota property.

Discover Torrance continues to promote Torrance to visitors. Occupancy rates and average daily rates continue to go up in Torrance hotels. Several have or are going through renovations. Last year, we hinted that an elegant, world-class event would come to our City.

For more than two decades the Palos Verdes Concours d'Elegance has been a world-class show of classic, vintage historical, and special-interest automobiles, providing funds for charitable and community purposes. The Concours has promoted the beauty and opportunities of the Palos Verdes Peninsula and the South Bay.

On October 1st, they will break new ground by pairing first-class, concours-level automobiles with vintage aircraft at the historic Zamperini Field at our very own Torrance Airport. It is very fitting for our City with its history of automotive manufacturers like Honda and Edelbrock who chose Torrance as their headquarters.

We all know traditions are big in Torrance and this past July we were able to once again enjoy the 4th of July Fireworks Show. We also continued our long standing tradition of the Armed Forces Day Parade and Celebration with the return of the successful Armed Forces Day 5k presented by the Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce.

Visitors from near and far travel here to experience the hometown warmth we have for our military personnel every year. New to the City, the Social Services Commission will host a Veterans Day Recognition Event on November 10th.

If you've driven down Crenshaw Blvd and 207th street, I'm sure you've seen the progress on the Torrance Transit Park and Ride Regional Transit Terminal. As many of you already know, this project will interface with the Regional Rapid Service and existing light rail. It will have boarding platforms for transit vehicles, state-of-the-art passenger information kiosks and maps, parking spaces for Rideshare Van/Carpool participants and enhanced shelters, fare vending machines and public restrooms. Phase 1, rough grading was completed in September 2016. Phase 2, site development, should begin construction in early 2018 and you will be able to check out a live cam to follow the progress.

And, with some help from our Assemblyman Al Muratuchi and Governor Brown, we may just have a big announcement this Spring about the Green Line Extension. Stay tuned!

Transit has also been improving their vehicles. Since the inception of the Fleet Modernization Project in the fall of 2007, the goal was to replace all 63 of our diesel-powered buses with alternative-fuel buses within the span of ten years. Through careful planning, aggressive grant writing and the efforts of a dedicated team, Torrance Transit now operates one of the newest and cleanest bus fleets in the nation. Our current revenue fleet of 63 buses is comprised of 53 Compressed Natural Gas buses and 10 Gasoline-Electric Hybrid buses.

Having converted to a 100% alternative-fuel bus fleet, Torrance Transit was aware of the environmental concerns regarding the conventional methods for extracting natural gas. In light of this, Torrance Transit partnered with the Clean Energy Corporation in late 2016 to begin the introduction and use of Renewable Natural Gas to fuel the Transit fleet at the Torrance City Yard. The source of the RNG is from the landfills and waste management facilities, allowing for up to

95% of the natural gas utilized by Torrance Transit to be from a renewable and environmentally sound source. Use of RNG also allows Transit to apply for and receive tax credits which are then reprogrammed for operational use.

Also promoting a greener environment is our "One Mile, One Charger Project." The project's objective is to facilitate the expansion of EV infrastructure throughout the City so that an EV driver is never more than one mile from a charging station within the City of Torrance. In 2015, City Council awarded a contract to ChargePoint to install, operate, and maintain publicly accessible EV infrastructure at six public locations. All six sites were fully operational as of May 2016. In addition, we now have approximately more than 100 publicly accessible EV Charging stations in Torrance!

Hard at work, we are doing great things in Torrance! As you can see, everyone plays an important role in our development. As many of you know, I've been involved in the community with different groups, serving on a commission, as a council member, but these past 4 years as mayor have really given me clear insight to how our City operates.

It's a lot like a game of Jenga.

To start, you incorporate different team players. For our City it's the different departments, the schools, community members, our residents and you... our business partners. You start the game with a strong foundation; each piece providing its own source of stability.

During the game, the pieces are constantly being moved – much like our different projects and programs. The object is to make it bigger and stronger. Of course, one wrong move can cause a problem.

So – you have to calculate every move so the tower doesn't collapse.

If some of the pieces fall, it's time to reflect on why they fell. You can't just throw those pieces away. They have to be integrated back into the tower – over time.

The important thing is to find a new way to fit them together that doesn't compromise the strength and integrity of the tower

Like the Jenga pieces – every part of our community is important to the vitality and success of Torrance – the residents, the schools, the businesses, the non-profits, the service clubs, the faith-based organizations and, yes – the government and the city leaders.

Working together, Torrance will continue to be the Tower that other communities wish to emulate.

Sometimes, you need some of the pieces to fall..

The important thing is to pick up those pieces and find a new way to fit them together that doesn't compromise the strength and integrity of the tower, or the City.

Every tower has weak spots, it's how we protect and care for those spots that will ensure its future stability.

Now, on your table, you will find that all of you have a Jenga to take with you as a reminder that we can apply what we've talked about today.

We recover, we repurpose, we rebuild, we rebound and create stability for our future.

This is how we work. This is Torrance at Work.

Thank you!