



Charles H. Wilson Regional Park situated on 44 acres is located at 2200 Crenshaw Blvd. Originally acquired in 1974, the park formerly housed a United States Naval Annex. It was the site of a U.S. Naval Annex and was purchased from the Federal Government with the assistance of former Congressman Charles H. Wilson; for whom the park is named. Mr. Wilson lived in the South Bay area for most of his life and always wanted to see a center in the area for sports and leisure activities that could be enjoyed by people of all ages. Numerous factors (political, educational and monetary), problems and conflicts blocked the way to Torrance's acquisition of the Naval property.

Torrance's bid for this conglomeration of "tin and concrete" stressed the positive environmental impact that the conversion of this barren property into a unique recreational facility would have for residents. Despite barriers; City legislative liaison labored diligently by going to Washington to confer with GSA staff and Congressman Wilson to negotiate a compensation payment at \$250,000 for the existing structures on the property paving the way for the City to secure the former Naval Annex land. Transfer ceremonies for the property took place on November 7, 1974; during which, the old Naval Annex was renamed Charles H. Wilson Community Park.

For six years, Congressman Wilson and Torrance officials worked on the development of the park. Financing for development came through a series of grants mostly Land and Water Conservation Grants. The site was officially dedicated on September 29, 1979. Dating back to its beginning, Wilson Park was envisioned as a "central park for all people". Indeed, this theme has remained a constant as the City of Torrance has provided numerous enhancements to this ever-popular recreation area.

Today, this large regional park has a variety of uses. It offers a host of facilities including: 4 lighted softball diamonds used by City Softball Leagues but sometimes "double" as soccer/flag football fields, 2 outdoor basketball courts, 2

sand volleyball court, 2 paddle tennis courts, 8 horseshoe courts, 3 tennis courts, colorful and challenging playground equipment for children, a handicapped accessible tree house that was donated in 2005 by The Annenberg Foundation, an amphitheatre and gazebo, a pond which was restored in 2010, a walking/jogging path (.91 miles), and barbecue pits for both large and small group picnics.

It also features a state-of-the-art roller hockey rink built in 1994, batting cages which were refurbished in 2008 and reopened in January of 2009. The skateboard park was opened in January of 2002 but currently remains closed due to much needed repairs.

The Dee Hardison Sports Center was built in the year 2000, dedicated on March 18, 2000. The building was named after former Mayor and longtime community activist Dee Hardison; who has had an enormously positive impact on the City of Torrance. The Sports Center is 18,200 square feet and includes a gymnasium, 2 basketball and volleyball game courts, a Wall of Honor that was dedicated in 2008 for recognition of excellence in athletics, a multi-purpose room for charter clubs and recreation programs, 2 administrative offices for the Farmers' Market Manager and a landscaped patio/plaza.

Wilson Park is also the site for the Torrance Farmers' Market, which is open every Tuesday and Saturday. Additionally, many annual events are held at Wilson Park such as the Halloween Carnival and Arts and Crafts Boutiques. Even locomotive enthusiasts are at home at Wilson Park with free rides on miniature live steamers, the first Sunday and third Saturday of each month.