

Traffic Commission Meeting of
August 2, 2021

SUPPLEMENTAL #1

TO: Traffic Commission
FROM: Craig Bilezerian, Public Works Director
SUBJECT: Supplemental Material for Agenda Item No. 7a and 7b

1. For Agenda Item No. 7a, the last sentence of the third paragraph is amended to read as follows:

“On October 5, 2020, the Traffic Commission reappointed Commissioner Thomas as Chairperson and Commissioner Kosidlak as Vice-Chairperson for the term beginning on October 5, 2020 and ending upon appointment of a new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson at the first meeting of the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021. Due to the suspension of Traffic Commission meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic, October 5, 2020 was the first Traffic Commission meeting of the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020.”

2. For Agenda Item 7b, replace 'Attachment 4' with the attached revised 'Attachment 4'.
3. For Agenda Item 7b, attached is email correspondence received after the agenda item was posted.

Respectfully submitted,

CRAIG BILEZERIAN
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

By 

Steve Finton
Deputy Public Works Director/ City Engineer

Attachments:

- Revised Attachment 4
- 9 emails from Residents

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS:
Difference in Traffic Volume
(Week 1 vs. Week 2)

Week 1:
 05/03/21 - 05/10/21

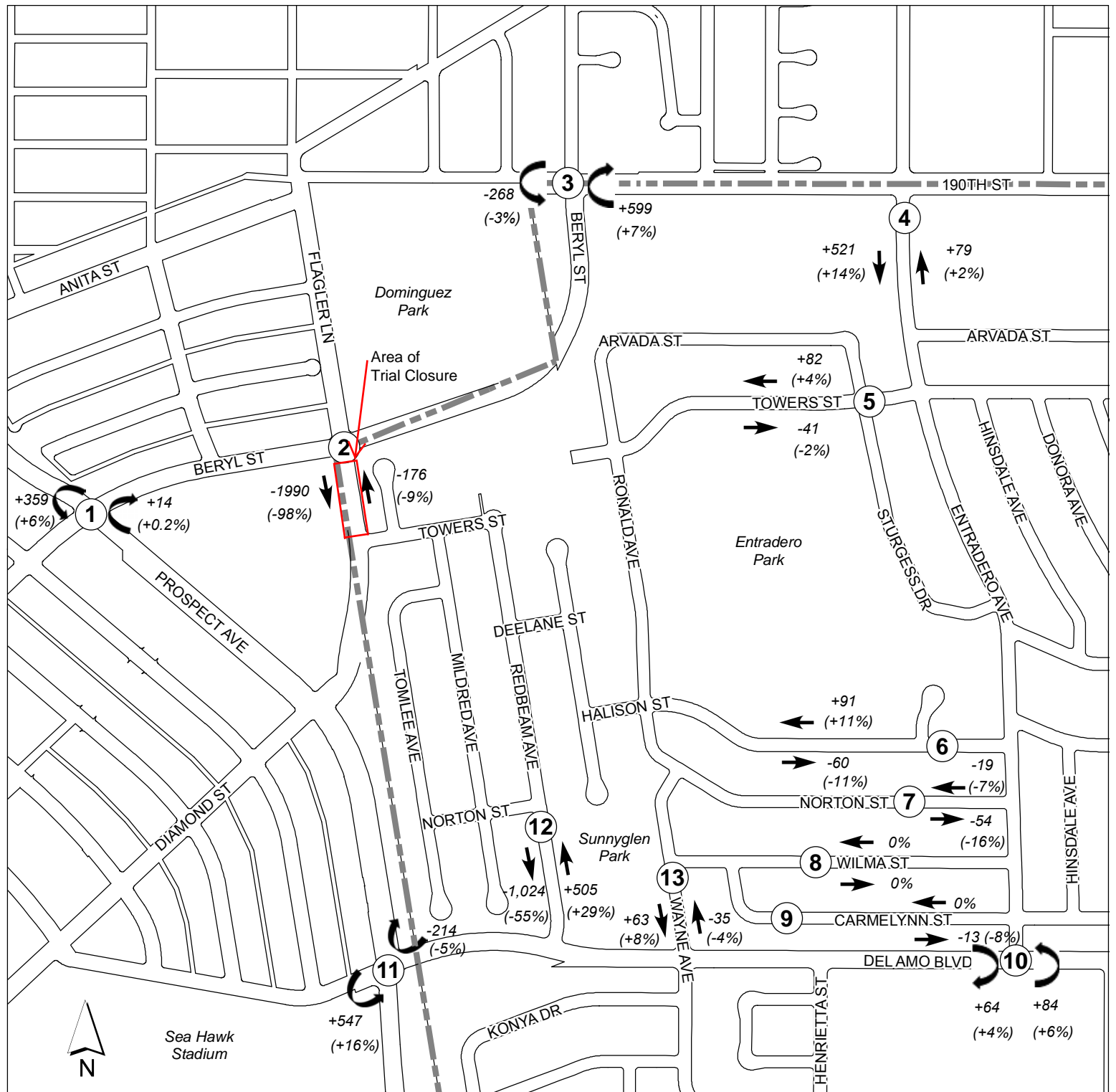
Week 2:
 05/22/21 - 5/28/21

Street Closure for
 SB Flagler Ln:
 05/19/21 - 06/08/21

Data comparison:
 5/4/21 + 5/5/21
 VS
 5/25/21 + 5/26/21

Traffic Count Locations:

- 1 - Beryl St & Prospect Ave
- 2 - Beryl St & Flagler Ln
- 3 - Beryl St & 190th St
- 4 - Entradero Ave & 190th St
- 5 - Entradero Ave & Towers St
- 6 - Entradero Ave & Halison St
- 7 - Entradero Ave & Norton St
- 8 - Entradero Ave & Wilma St
- 9 - Entradero Ave & Carmelynn St
- 10 - Entradero Ave & Del Amo Blvd
- 11 - Del Amo Blvd & Prospect Ave
- 12 - Del Amo Blvd & Redbeam Ave
- 13 - Del Amo Blvd & Wayne Ave



[REDACTED]

From: Jay Bichanich [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 01, 2021 7:59 PM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Comments regarding Flagler Lane Southbound Closure #2

WARNING: External e-mail

Please verify sender before opening attachments or clicking on links.

Dear Traffic Commission,

My name is Chiaki Imai. I have been living on Tomlee Ave for the past 25 years.

During the closure of south bound traffic on Flagler Lane, I found myself dealing with significant inconvenience while coming home from daily errands. I had to search for various detours that took more time, gas, and general frustration.

Additionally, I felt unsafe about any potential emergency situation whereby there would be limited access into my neighborhood for ambulances or fire trucks. We already have the benefit of two access routes into and out of our neighborhood for such purposes.

May I suggest that for concerns of speeding on neighborhood streets, we consider installing speed bumps to slow down traffic.

Please keep Flagler Lane open to traffic in BOTH directions.

Thank you for your time.

Chiaki Imai

From: Frances Koo [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, July 31, 2021 1:31 PM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Fwd: WTHA - Southbound Flagler Lane Trial Closure - Review of Traffic Data & Public Comment

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To Whom It May Concern:

Turning Flagler Lane into one way traffic is unacceptable.

It disrupts the local residents access, make it difficult for traffic in case of earthquakes, fires, and emergencies.

Like that time when they had to close a street because of possible shooting.

Or the time when there was a riot during the Rodney King shooting, and traffic was snarled everywhere.

We blame the Flagler Lane Closure on the BCHD project going on next to it.

The Flagler Lane closure came about because of people complaining about potential traffic through our residential streets due to the BCHD expansion.

The BCHD development as designed, hangs over Flagler Lane, and invades the privacy of its Torrance neighbors.

It will most likely devalue those affected homes, leading to people moving out, and lower property taxes.

These are residential homes which people spent 15 to 30 years paying mortgage.

And while these people are going into retirement, BCHD is going to wipe out much of that value gained over so many years, for the gain of a few private investors.

Someone should list the benefit that we will be promised for the community, and hold them to it.

The city should not be taken by their bait and switch strategy.

They make empty promises like aquatic center on the one hand, while acknowledging that there is no budget allocated to it on the other hand.

It is easy to mention something, and quite another thing to actually accomplish it.

What exactly will we get at the end of the project?

We want accurate, trackable, and realistic goals, for which they will be held accountable.

And their progress towards stated goals should be reviewed regularly over the course of the project.

Is what they are expecting in return a public interest, or is it just private interest?

Nobody throws this much money at the project without expecting something in return. How are they able to *legally* turn a hospital renovation project (acquired through eminent domain for "construction, completion and operation of a hospital thereon in order to provide services to residents of said district") into a private senior housing investment? Even if it appears to be a train wreck and a money sink, they continue to throw money at it because the people making the decisions are continuing to get paid.

Has any one done budget planning to see if this is worth it?

The estimated cost for this project has doubled. And the price may keep rising. I wonder if the city will spend this much money, if they knew this project was going to cost that much?

Please don't let them bankrupt a city just because they don't know how to stop.

Concerned,
Frances Koo
Local Resident

On 07/29/2021 10:59 AM, West Torrance Homeowners Association wrote:

NOTICE OF TRAFFIC COMMISSION MEETING

**Review of Traffic Data and Public Comment related
to the Trial Southbound Flagler Lane Closure**

Monday, August 2, 2021 at 7:00 pm

**West Annex - Commission Meeting Room
(in person meeting)
Torrance City Hall
3031 Torrance Boulevard
(west of City Council Chambers)**

On Monday, August 2, 2021 at 7:00 pm, the Torrance Traffic Commission will discuss and take public input related to the trial southbound closure of Flagler Lane south of Beryl Street which occurred between May 19, 2021 and June 8, 2021. Staff will present traffic data gathered before and during the trial closure period.

The full agenda and staff report will be posted on July 29, 2021 at www.TorranceCA.Gov2021TrafficCommission.

We invite you to attend and provide input regarding this issue or you may email your comments to: PWTraffic@TorranceCA.Gov

For questions, please contact Ms. Angel Lotus, Associate Engineer in the Engineering Division of the Public Works Department at 310-781-6900.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Jay Bichanich [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 01, 2021 7:48 PM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Comments regarding Flagler Lane Southbound Closure

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Dear Traffic Commision,

I have been a resident on Tomlee Ave for the past 25 plus years.

My daily commute to a North Redondo Beach aerospace defense contractor requires travel both northbound and southbound thru Flagler lane near Beryl Street.

During the recent southbound Flagler Lane closure, my daily commute from my workplace to home was significantly affected with delay and general inconvenience by having to detour via Beryl, Prospect, Del Amo, and Redbeam with multiple additional left turns and traffic lights vs my normal return via Flagler Lane directly.

I am opposed to any further closures in any direction on Flagler Ln since the consequence negatively affects my daily work commute.

Please allow Flagler Lane to remain open in BOTH directions as it has been for at least the past three decades.

Thanks for your time.

-Jay Bichanich

[REDACTED]

From: Jon Ziegler [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 02, 2021 10:56 AM
To: PWTraffic
Cc: Toni Ziegler
Subject: Flagler Lane Closure

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We are Toni and Jon Ziegler and reside at [REDACTED] We, and every one of our neighbors we've spoken to about this issue, are vehemently opposed to this lane closure! We purchased our current home in 1976 largely due to its convenient access both north and southbound. However with this closure, returning to our home after exiting northbound is at best circuitous, and would add as much as five or more minutes to each trip south. We realized, during the temporary closure, that the majority of our trips are northbound, and were very relieved when the barricades were removed.

We believe that the solution to the sporadic unsafe driving in our neighborhood lies with the Torrance PD showing a greater presence here in order to ticket drivers speeding or running the stop sign on eastbound Towers Street at Mildred Ave.

Having been a respected Calif. Registered Civil Engineer for more than 50 years and dealing professionally with complex Traffic Engineering issues during that time, qualifies me to state that artificially dealing with normal, professionally designed traffic patterns is a bad idea.

Please leave well enough alone!

Thanks,

Jon M. Ziegler
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Ken Yano [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 02, 2021 1:51 PM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Comments on Flagler Lane closure

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We are against the closure of Flagler Lane. This closure is inconvenient to residents of Pacific South Bay and does not solve the problem of parents dropping off children at Towers elementary. Furthermore the traffic study was done during the pandemic when traffic patterns were abnormal. So it should be difficult for you to make accurate conclusions about traffic patterns from this study.

We are also opposed to any road cut on Flagler Lane that would give ingress/egress to BCHD for their Healthy Living Center. BCHD is also planning a bike path on Flagler Lane. Has anyone in Torrance given approval for this, since the lane is proposed to be on a Torrance street?

Sincerely,

Ken and Susan Yano
Pacific South Bay

Sent from my iPad

[REDACTED]

From: Mark Lewis [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, July 30, 2021 10:38 AM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Flagler Lane closure

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During the time of the closure of Flagler Lane, I noticed a large increase of traffic cutting through Towers Elementary School with some people not even driving slowly the time of me waiting to pick up my child I witnessed 1 child nearly getting hit after getting at of a car from someone cutting through. It would be only a matter of time before there will be an accident happen in the school parking lot.

From: Paul Lieberman [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, July 30, 2021 2:59 PM
To: PWTraffic
Subject: Beryl and Flagler barrier

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I liked the idea but with a suggestion.

HOWEVER...the enhanced traffic occurs at 7:45 AM when the speeding RPV drivers going to Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, etc drive from South to North through Redbeam at the same time that children are dropped off at Towers Elementary School on Redbeam. You are forcing traffic to fall on the school kids.

If you place the barrier on Flagler and Beryl in the opposite direction, the returning traffic from the business area occurs at 5:15 PM when there are no children exposed to traffic.

I believe you have the right idea. It is just that your traffic flow direction and its timing is defeating the purpose of safety for school children. Reversing the flow will keep the children safe.

Thanks for the effort.

Paul Lieberman

Paul and Gretel Lieberman
[REDACTED]

**Robert R. Ronne
LAW OFFICE OF ROBERT R. RONNE**

August 2, 2021

BY E-MAIL Only
(PWTraffic@TorranceCa.gov)
(TorranceTrafficCommission@gmail.com)

City of Torrance
Torrance Traffic Commission
3031 Torrance Boulevard
West Annex Commission Room
Torrance, CA 90503

Attention: All Commissioners and Public Works Department

*Re: Public Comments for Inclusion in Record of August 2, 2021
Public Hearing on Item 7b; Supplemental to Public Comments for Inclusion
in Record of February 1, 2021 Public Hearing; Supplement to December 7,
2020 comments; Supplement to March 2, 2020 comments as Invited by the
Commission; Supplement to April 27, 2020 Written Comments; Supplement
to June 1, 2020 Written Comments; Supplement to October 5, 2020 Written
Comments; Multiple Requests to Correct Inaccurate March 2, 2020 Minute
Entry, Error Identified on Page 3, in Section 2) of My October 5, 2020
Written Comments; Additional Public Comments on Pacific South Bay
Traffic Conditions For Consideration and Inclusion in the Record;
Objection to any BCHD Attempts to Utilize Flagler Lane for Any Purpose,
or Alter Pacific South Bay Traffic Conditions for Their Own Purposes; All
for Inclusion into Public Record.*

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Dear Commissioners:

Although I utilize for business purposes a Redondo Beach mailing address, I am a Torrance resident.

These are my comments to be read into, and otherwise fully included in the record of the August 2, 2021 Torrance Traffic Commission hearing, pertaining to Item 7b, as permitted under law and invited by the “Notice of Traffic Commission Meeting” sent by the City of Torrance, Public Works Department, and received by the undersigned.

1) Pacific South Bay (“PSB”) residents appreciate the Commission taking the time to review the data on the impact of the “one way” closure southbound on Flagler Lane. The reduced traffic was anecdotally observed.

However, there are a number of issues that the data to be reviewed at tonight’s hearing will not answer. Those include the following.

2) **Wrong way entries.**

A substantial number of drivers (at least 5 observed) entered from Beryl or Flagler Lane north of Beryl against the “do not enter” restriction.

3) **Aggressive driving.**

PSB has been plagued for years, if not decades, with those who drive (much) faster than the speed limit and seem to accelerate through “Stop” signs. The one-way closer exacerbated aggressive driving.

4) **Changed conditions.**

With the “reopening” of California, traffic flows in the PSB have dramatically increased, especially since the time of the study. The data being reviewed at tonight’s hearing my well be obsolete and invalid.

5) Comments regarding **further action needed** before any decision is made.

a. Enforcement.

Without increased traffic enforcement of signage and speed, any one-way closure is likely to actually increase “wrong way” traffic and aggressive drivers, making traffic in the PSB more dangerous.

The conditions created by a one-way Flagler Lane closure in the PSB would be much like the patterns of traffic during the pandemic. While a decrease in traffic flow generally was experienced, an increase in fatal collisions specifically occurred.

b. Updated studies.

Because of the increased traffic which occurred after the data being reviewed tonight, before any decisions are made, current, accurate data need be gathered.

In addition to a “basic” measurement, increased speed and increased willingness to ignore “Stop” signs should be studied, with “in person” daily observation, at least, being implemented.

c. Consider other options and impacts.

1. As noted above, increased enforcement alone, without any closures, perhaps would accomplish more than a closure, and enhance safety in the PSB.

2. Overall impact should be further studied. Whatever is done with the PSB generally, and with Flagler specifically, traffic patterns will change all over parts of Torrance and in nearby neighborhoods. This PSB resident does not favor any solution which simply “moves” PSB traffic issues to its neighbors, or to other parts of Torrance.

Torrance Traffic Commission
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3. Full closure. Given the increased speech of northbound “but through” (which will still occur), an increased willingness to ignore “Stop” signs during the one-way closure “test”, and the large increase recently in the flow of traffic, before any decisions are made, another “test”, this one of a full closure of Flagler Lane at Beryl, should be implemented and studied.

4. Increased variables. The Commission and Public Works have taken a “one step at a time” approach to the three issues which confront PSB; the agenda item tonight; the BCHD “bike path”; and, the BCHD proposed massive development project along Flagler Lane. All of these factors will dramatically change the PSB environment and traffic flows, and must be prevented (with no access allowed for BCHD).

5. Increased liability. By way of copy to the Torrance City attorney, it is my belief as a Torrance taxpayer, that, given any and all of the factors stated above, that increased liability to Torrance may be occasioned by any action of the Commission, especially without the further efforts to gather more information noted above.

We look forward to continuing to work with you towards an effective solution to the dangers caused to all of us by the PSB traffic concerns.

Very truly yours,

Robert R. Ronne

ROBERT R. RONNE

RRR/

CC: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: Flagler Lane Traffic vs. BCHD

From: Tim Ozenne <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 12:02 PM
To: City Clerk <CityClerk@TorranceCA.gov>
Subject: Flagler Lane Traffic vs. BCHD

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Dear City Council Members:

Below is draft I hoped to send to the Traffic Commission for tonight meeting, but I don't know how to do that. More importantly, as you can see, the real issue is not how we deal with possible cut through traffic in the Pacific South Bay neighborhood but whether the City of Torrance will assist its residents who are facing many problems from the proposed redevelopment of the BCHD facilities, including huge new structures that will interfere with normal enjoyment of the area's character. So, please read this draft with that in mind.

=====DRAFT=====

August 2, 2021

Dear Traffic Commission:

I appreciate that the Traffic Commission is examining how partial closure (SB) of Flagler Lane at Beryl might affect traffic patterns in the area. However, I don't see how the recent analysis tells us much.

The status quo would leave Flagler Lane open to traffic in either direction. As I live in the middle of the relevant neighborhood, I can understand why the public wants to know how much a partial closure such as occurred in May would affect traffic. Namely, could a closure significantly reduce cut-through traffic and, if so, is the reduction worth the inconvenience for residents?

Since I walk my dogs frequently in the neighborhood, I have witnessed many problems related to vehicle traffic. It is, of course, impossible for a single person on foot to know what share of traffic is, in fact, just local residents, visitors and tradespeople versus what share of traffic is due to people cutting through. Indeed, it looks to me like some of the traffic diverted from Flagler was heading to Ronald Avenue, cutting through PSB neighborhood streets to save a bit of time. In any case, I applaud accurate, comprehensive counts, though I realize "tracking" trips raises problems of costs and privacy.

It was pointed out that Torrance installed several new stop signs in an effort to deal with traffic problems. However, as a frequent observer, I know that many vehicles barely slow for such signs. Clearly, just putting in stop signs and such seems to assume that vehicles will actually stop, but many do not. Especially traffic cutting through to save some time, with drivers noting that there are rarely any patrol cars in the area, will be little discouraged by a few more posted stops. Meanwhile, I expect Torrance is reluctant to play hardball by increasing enforcement as many of the offenders are local residents who, while not obeying all the traffic laws, are not actually being careless. Only careful area data can tell us something about speeds, accidents, and the like. Again, that is probably expensive.

However, there is another issue that I hope Torrance will tackle: How to respond to the Beach Cities Health District plan to use Flagler and adjoining Torrance streets to access its property in Redondo, west of Flagler Lane, both during

construction and permanently to support operations. BCHD has been rather inconsistent as to whether it expects to use Flagler, regardless of the impact on the peace and quiet, privacy, and property values. Some of us continue to look to our city to enforce laws that might dissuade BCHD from its plan to ignore adverse impacts on Torrance. As a Responsible Agency, and having filled the role of a Lead Agency itself in the past, Torrance is in an excellent position to make sure that BCHD takes adverse effect of the development into account before proceeding.

It is all too clear that, as matters stand now, BCHD will need to use Torrance city land west of Flagler Lane to erect its huge apartment complex, and in doing so will need to disrupt the *Hillside Overlay Area* (HOA) established long ago. Its huge residential complex will obviously overlook many Torrance single-family homes to the east, and will be a visual injury for hundreds of families in the neighborhood. Plainly, the draft environmental impact report attempted to minimize or even disregard the huge downside the development would have on Torrance residents and their property.

I am not an expert, but it surely appears that BCHD, were it to build its proposed residential facility next to Flagler Lane, it would have to completely reshape the hillside in Torrance on the west side of Flagler. It probably would have to do that merely to erect the facility in the location now proposed. And, if it really intends to provide access to the lower levels of the building from Flagler, it clearly must remove a big chunk of the existing hillside in Torrance. So, even though the facility itself would not be in Torrance, its construction would appear to require that Torrance provide grading permits and otherwise accommodate the structure by reshaping the hillside and allowing creating of a large gash in the hillside for underground access.

Plainly, the proposed facility would not be in any way “compatible” with existing land uses generally and the HOA specifically. Were it proposed in Torrance, it would never be approved. I cannot imagine Torrance facilitating, in any way, such a building right along the Torrance-Redondo border. But I will leave it to the Torrance legal team to determine what steps Torrance can take to block this part of the development.

Thus, I would argue that minor changes in local traffic are not the main issue to think about in connection with access to Flagler. Rather, Torrance could look at the overall effect BCHD plans to have on Torrance residents. Torrance has the knowledge, rights, and resources to cause a substantial change and reduction in the BCHD plans. To me, it is nearly impossible to see the BCHD plan moving forward without substantial accommodations from Torrance, accommodations that will clearly lead to injuries to Torrance residents! I hope the city will be mindful of the losses in property values (and taxes) if the BCHD project moves forward as currently planned.