

**5.12 POPULATION AND HOUSING**

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) examines the potential for socioeconomic impacts of the proposed general plan update on the City of Torrance, including changes in population, employment, and demand for housing, particularly housing cost/rent ranges defined as “affordable.”

The analysis in this section is based, in part, upon sources of information from the following agencies and report(s):

- Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)
- United States Census Bureau, Department of Finance (U.S. Census)
- *Economic Conditions and Trends*, prepared for the City of Torrance General Plan Update, Stanley R. Hoffman Associates, Inc., July 8, 2008

A complete copy of the *Economic Conditions and Trends* study is included in the Technical Appendices to this Draft EIR (Volume II, Appendix H)

**5.12.1 Environmental Setting**

This section considers population trends, housing trends (including vacancy rate, housing tenure, and current and future housing needs), and employment trends.

**Population Trends**

Based on current land use conditions, the current population of Torrance is 135,864 (See Table 5.12-1). Although this number is less than other population projections for the City, it reflects the current land trends in the City and remains consistent with the population projection factors used to predict future population and employment totals for the City based on the land uses in the proposed general plan update. For a comparison, other sources have estimated the current population in Torrance to be anywhere from 141,420 (US Census for 2007) to 147,405 (Torrance Economic Development Office) to 146,820 (2008 SCAG RTP). For the purposes of this environmental analysis, the current population of 135,864 is used to maintain consistency throughout the report.



**Table 5.12-1  
City of Torrance Race and Ethnicity Trends**

Ethnicity Group	1990		2000		2006	
	Torrance	L.A. County	Torrance	L.A. County	Torrance	L.A. County
White	66%	41%	52%	31%	43%	29%
Hispanic	10%	38%	13%	45%	18%	47%
African American	1%	11%	2%	9%	2%	9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	22%	10%	28%	12%	33%	13%
Other	0%	0%	4%	3%	5%	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: U.S. Census, 1990, 2000, and American Community Survey, 2006.

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Ethnically, the City of Torrance is becoming more diverse. In 2006, white residents were the most prevalent group in the City at 43 percent, followed by Asian/Pacific Islander residents, at 33 percent.

In 2007, the City of Torrance had a median age of 41.1 compared to the county (34.5), the state (34.5), and the nation (36.6) (US Census 2009). In 2000, seniors aged 65 and older comprised 14 percent of the population, while adults 18 to 34 years old constituted 20 percent, and adults 35 to 64 years old constitute the largest portion of the population at 43 percent (Stanley R. Hoffman Associates 2008). Since 1990, the proportion of residents in the college and young adult age groups has been declining, while the middle age group (35 to 64 years old) has increased consistently.

### Housing Trends

Torrance is a well-established area of Los Angeles County and has become almost entirely built out. This leaves little room for additional housing or other land uses. This has created a tight housing market in the City and housing prices have increased over the years. The median Torrance home price in January 2008 was \$575,000. This was 1 percent lower than the median home price in January 2007 and housing costs are expected to continue to decline after the sub-prime mortgage collapse.

The housing stock in Torrance changed between 2000 and 2008. According to the Department of Finance, the total number of housing units increased from 55,967 in 2000 to 57,743 in 2008. This is an increase of 3.2 percent. In comparison, the total number of housing units in Los Angeles County increased from 3,270,906 to 3,403,480, an increase of 4.0 percent. The state of California had an increase in total housing units of 10 percent between 2000 and 2008 (12,214,550 units to 13,444,455 units). Table 5.12-2 shows the composition of the housing stock in 2008.

**Table 5.12-2  
Composition of 2008 Housing Stock**

<i>Unit Type</i>	<i>Number of Units</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Single-family detached	30,704	53%
Single-family attached	3,693	6%
Multiple family (2-4 units)	3,469	6%
Multiple family (5+ units)	18,694	32%
Mobile homes and other	1,183	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>57,743</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: California Department of Finance 2008.

Single-family detached units make up the largest percentage (53 percent) of existing housing in Torrance. Higher density multifamily units make up 32 percent of existing homes, more than single-family attached and multifamily units (both at 6 percent). The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) provides regulations for high density housing in cities (California Government Code Section 65863). This code restricts cities' ability to reduce the maximum allowable density in areas already designated or zoned for residential uses to a level below the density used by HCD.

Table 5.12-3 breaks down the types of households present in Torrance as indicated by the US Census in 1990 and 2000. The number of total households has increased by 3.7 percent (from 52,615 to 54,542). In 2006, 56.7 percent of the occupied housing units in Torrance were owner occupied, an increase over 1990 and 2000 conditions.

**Table 5.12-3  
US Census Household Characteristics for the City of Torrance**

Household Type	1990		2000		2006
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total	Percent of Total
Households	52,615	100%	54,542	100%	100%
Family households	35,340	67.2%	36,276	66.5%	67.8%
w/ children	25,023	47.6%	18,253	33.5%	34.4%
w/o children	10,317	19.6%	18,023	33%	33.4%
Nonfamily households	17,275	32.8%	18,266	33.5%	32.2%
Single persons	13,286	25.3%	15,005	27.5%	29.4%
Other nonfamilies	3,989	7.6%	3,261	6%	2.6%
Average household size	2.4		2.51		2.6
Average family size	3.04		3.1		3.19
Renter-occupied	53.9		42.9		43.3
Owner-occupied	41.8		54.6		56.7

Source: U.S. Census, 1990, 2000 and American Community Survey 2006.

### Vacancy Rate

The vacancy rate for the City of Torrance, as reported by the U.S. Census in 2000, was 2.5 percent (1,425 units). However, by 2006 the rate had increased to 5.3 percent (3,017 units) (US Census 2007). Traditionally, a high vacancy rate indicates either the existence of a high number of desired units or an oversupply of units.



### Low Income Housing Needs

For housing planning and funding purposes, the HCD uses five income categories to evaluate housing need based on the area median income (AMI) for the metropolitan area:

- Extremely Low Income Households earn between 0 and 30% of AMI
- Very Low Income Households earn between 31 and 50% of AMI
- Low Income Households earn between 51 and 80% of AMI
- Moderate Income Households earn between 81 and 120% of AMI
- Above Moderate Income Households earn over 120% of AMI

According to the 2000 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy, less than 7 percent of the City's total households are classified as extremely low income (0–30% of AMI), less than 7 percent are classified as very low income (31–50% of AMI), and approximately 11 percent were classified as low income (51–80% AMI). The distribution of Torrance households based on income is compared with Los Angeles County in Table 5.12-4.

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**Table 5.12-4  
Low Income Housing Stock in 2000**

	<b>Extremely Low Income (0–30%)</b>	<b>Very Low Income (31–50%)</b>	<b>Low Income (51–80%)</b>	<b>Moderate/Above Moderate Income (81% +)</b>
Torrance	6.6% (3,572 households)	6.7% (3,642 households)	10.7% (5,823 households)	76% (41,427 households)
Los Angeles County	13.2%	11.3%	15.6%	59.9%

Source: HUD Chase Data Book 2004

Note: Data based on 2000 Census

As with most of southern California, the need for additional affordable housing is apparent. Table 5.12-5 shows the percentages of renters and homeowners that fall into extremely low, very low, low, and moderate/above moderate income levels in Torrance.

**Table 5.12-5  
2004 Low Income Households in Torrance**

<b>Household Type</b>	<b>Extremely Low Income (0–30% AMI)</b>	<b>Very Low Income (31–50% AMI)</b>	<b>Low Income (51–80% AMI)</b>	<b>Moderate/ Above Moderate Income (81% + AMI)</b>	<b>All Income Categories</b>
<b>Renter-Occupied Households</b>					
Elderly (62+ years)	69%	81%	73%	25%	55%
Large families (5+ persons)	71%	89%	68%	11%	36%
<b>Total Renters</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Owner-Occupied Households</b>					
Elderly (62+ years)	76%	54%	40%	12%	25%
Large families (5+ persons)	35%	70%	83%	30%	34%
<b>Total Owners</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>32%</b>

Source: City of Torrance General Plan Update Housing Element 2009

For the planning period between 2008 and 2014, the City of Torrance needs to meet 1,828 Regional Housing Needs Assessment credits, as dictated by state housing law. As of October 2008, the City has qualified for 995 of these credits and plans to qualify for an additional 1,155 credits. Table 5.12-6 shows the existing and planned developments to meet these credits.

**Table 5.12-6  
Comparison of Sites Inventory and RHNA**

<i>Income Category</i>	<i>Very Low</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Above Moderate</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Delegated RHNA Credits</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>1,828</b>
RHNA Credits Achieved	--	--	9	986	995
<b>Remaining RHNA Needed</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>1,063</b>
Vacant sites	40	--	--	41	81
Recyclable Sites	465	300	309	--	1,074
<b>Total Sites</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>1,155</b>
<b>Difference (remaining RHNA minus sites)</b>	--	--	--	--	--

Source: City of Torrance General Plan Update Housing Element 2009

**Current and Future Housing Needs**

Housing growth is modest in Torrance. Between the 2000 census and 2007 housing estimates, housing stock only grew by 2 percent (55,967 to 57,404 dwelling units). The majority of the housing stock is single-family residential (approximately 60 percent), followed by multifamily housing (approximately 33 percent). There have been some issues of overcrowding of households when tenants are not able to afford market-rate homeownership or rental costs. In 2000, 16 percent of renter-occupied units were overcrowded and 4 percent of owner-occupied units were overcrowded. These percentages dropped in 2006 to 9 percent of renter-occupied units and 1.4 percent owner-occupied units.

**Employment Trends**

Current workforce numbers for Torrance vary by source. In 2007, the American Community Survey (ACS) estimated the labor force (aged 16 and older) of Torrance to be 70,877 persons (US Census 2007). In comparison, the most current SCAG projection (2005) for the work force is 104,992 (SCAG 2008). The ACS-estimated labor force is based on the US Census and the SCAG estimated labor force is based on existing land uses in the City. The difference between the two projections may be attributed to the intensity assumptions of the employment land uses. For the purposes of this analysis, the SCAG numbers are used to compare the existing and proposed Torrance employment numbers, which are also based on existing and proposed land uses. Given the City’s built-out nature, there is greater likeliness that the City would grow more in intensity, not in area, so using land-use-based estimations would provide more conservative employment projections.

Workforce by sector can generally be broken down into:

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining (0.1 percent)
- Construction (4.4 percent)
- Manufacturing (16.6 percent)
- Wholesale Trade (5.3 percent)
- Retail Trade (10.0 percent)
- Transportation, warehousing, and utilities (6.9 percent)



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- Information (3.5 percent)
- Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing (7.9 percent)
- Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services (12.2 percent)
- Educational services, and health care and social assistance (17.6 percent)
- Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services (7.6 percent)
- Other services, except public administration (4.7 percent)
- Public administration (3.1 percent)

The median household income has steadily increased over the last decade. According to the 2000 Census, the median household income in Torrance was \$56,489, significantly higher than the median household income for Los Angeles County (\$42,189). In 2006, the City's median income is estimated to have increased substantially, to \$68,324, and in 2007 it was estimated to be at \$71,519 (US Census 2007).

#### **5.12.2 Thresholds of Significance**

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- P-1 Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure).
- P-2 Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.
- P-3 Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The initial study, included as Appendix A, substantiates that impacts associated with the following thresholds would be less than significant:

- Thresholds P-2 and P-3

These impacts will not be addressed in the following analysis.

#### **5.12.3 Environmental Impacts**

The following impact analysis addresses thresholds of significance for which the initial study disclosed potentially significant impacts. The applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

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#### **IMPACT 5.12-1: THE PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN UPDATE WOULD DIRECTLY RESULT IN POPULATION GROWTH IN THE PROJECT AREA. [THRESHOLD P-1]**

**Impact Analysis:** One of the purposes of the general plan update is to ensure that the City adequately plans for and accommodates future growth. The City of Torrance General Plan provides opportunities for population growth through land use designations, goals, and policies that provide a vision and guide growth in the City. As part of the general plan, the City provides land use designations, including low density residential, low-medium density residential, medium density residential, medium-high density residential, and high density residential. Additionally, the general plan designates commercial, office, and industrial uses, which could lead, indirectly, to population growth by providing employment opportunities.

#### **Population Growth**

Based on existing and proposed land use in Torrance, the number of households would increase by 4,388 by the year 2030. This would contribute to a total population increase of 11,218.

As shown in Table 5.12-7, 2030 general plan buildout projections for population, households, and employment are all within the 2030 SCAG projections. Compared with the SCAG projections, the general plan buildout estimates 13,336 fewer persons, 2,020 fewer households, and 7,382 fewer jobs in Torrance by year 2030.

**Table 5.12-7  
Comparison of SCAG 2025 and General Plan Buildout Projections**

	SCAG Projections for City of Torrance		General Plan Projections	
	2005	2030	2005	2030
Population	146,820	160,444	135,864	147,082
Households	55,504	59,556	53,147	57,536
Employment	104,992	113,071	104,887	105,689
Jobs-to-Household Ratio	1.58	1.90	1.97	1.84

Sources: 2008 SCAG RTP.



#### **Employment Growth and Jobs-to-Housing Ratios**

The proposed land use plan provides for a total of 31,349,000 square feet of industrial space, 20,026,000 square feet of commercial and mixed-use space, and 2,692,000 square feet of hospital and medical space. Overall, there would be 75 additional gross acres of employment-based land uses than the existing land use plan for the City. By 2030, proposed land uses could generate 105,689 employment opportunities.

The number of jobs projected for 2030 based on the proposed general plan update is 105,689. SCAG estimates jobs in Torrance to reach 113,071 by 2030. The jobs-to-housing ratio based on the general plan update is then 1.84, compared to 1.90 based on the SCAG projections (Table 5.12-7). Comparisons with the county and regional SCAG and jobs-to-housing projections are shown in Table 5.12-8.

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**Table 5.12-8  
Local, County, and Regional Jobs-Housing Ratios**

	<i>Torrance SCAG</i>		<i>Torrance General Plan</i>		<i>Los Angeles County</i>		<i>Southern California Region<sup>1</sup></i>	
	<i>2005</i>	<i>2030</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2030</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2030</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2030</i>
Population	146,820	160,444	135,864	147,082	10,206,011	12,015,889	18,146,764	23,255,378
Households	55,504	59,556	53,147	57,536	3,212,434	3,906,851	5,687,196	7,449,484
Employment	104,992	113,071	104,887	105,689	4,397,025	4,946,420	7,770,880	9,913,372
Jobs-to-housing Ratio	1.58	1.90	1.97	1.84	1.37	1.27	1.37	1.33

Source: 2008 SCAG RTP

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Southern California region includes Imperial, Orange, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Ventura counties.

The Los Angeles County and Southern California region have similar job-to-housing ratios. The City of Torrance has a SCAG-projected jobs-to-housing ratio of 1.90 in 2030, which is more jobs-rich than the county and the region. The jobs-to-housing ratio based on the general plan update, 1.84, is slightly more housing-rich than the SCAG projection.

The jobs-to-housing ratio is used for reference for city officials and planners. There is no ideal jobs-to-housing ratio adopted by city, regional, or state policies. A high jobs-to-housing ratio indicates the City has a higher number of jobs compared to households relative to other areas. Workers in the City would either need to find housing locally, thereby indirectly increasing the population, or they would need to commute from surrounding communities or cities.

Based on land uses in the City, the buildout population in Torrance would increase the population directly by about 8 percent. Additional indirect population growth may also occur because of the slightly higher jobs-to-housing ratio in the City compared to the surrounding areas. However, the City would not experience a substantial increase in population over existing conditions and impacts would be less than significant.

#### **5.12.4 Relevant General Plan Update Policies**

Proposed General Plan policies and programs that promote variety of urban, suburban and rural housing opportunities and expand the employment base within the City include:

##### **Land Use Element, Balanced Community Objective and Policies**

- To the extent possible, preserve the balance between jobs and housing in Torrance through land use decisions (Policy LU.2.6).

##### **Land Use Element, Economic Development and Redevelopment Objectives and Policies**

- Encourage land use decisions that are fiscally responsible and positively affect the City's economic health by creating jobs, generating tax revenue, and involving private capital investment (Policy LU.12.1).

##### **Housing Element**

- Enhance housing opportunities for all Torrance residents. (Objective H.1)



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- Provide a range of different housing types and unit sizes for varying income ranges and lifestyles. (Policy H.1.1)
- Encourage the provision for housing which meets the needs of seniors and the disabled. (Policy H.1.2)
- Continue to implement the Senior Citizen Housing Development Standards. (Policy H.1.3)
- Continue to monitor and assess the special housing needs of senior citizens, in collaboration with the Torrance Commission on Aging. (Policy H.1.4)
- Assist in the provision of adequate housing to meet the needs of the community. (Objective H.2)
- Explore approaches to residential development that decrease the cost of housing and increase the opportunity for homeownership. (Policy H.2.1)
- Work with large employers to facilitate the development of workforce housing. (Policy H.2.2)
- Encourage mixed use development on a case-by-case basis to allow for increased housing opportunities. (Policy H.2.3)
- Continue the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program. (Policy H.2.4)
- Maintain and improve the quality of existing housing and residential neighborhoods in Torrance. (Objective H.4)
- Encourage the maintenance and enhancement of the existing housing stock. (Policy H.4.1)
- Promote increased awareness among property owners and residents of the importance of property maintenance. (Policy H.4.2)
- Support preservation of existing affordable low-income housing that is considered at risk of converting to market level rents. (Policy H.4.3)
- Encourage the rehabilitation of residential properties by homeowners and property owners. (Policy H.4.4)
- Promote equal housing opportunity for all residents. (Objective H.5)
- Continue to enforce fair housing laws prohibiting discrimination in the building, financing, selling, or renting of housing on the basis of race, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, familial status, source of income, sexual orientation, or any other arbitrary factor. (Policy H.5.1)



#### **5.12.5 Existing Regulations and Standards Conditions**

- California Government Code Section 65863

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#### **5.12.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation**

Upon implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, the following impacts would be less than significant: 5.12-1.

#### **5.12.7 Mitigation Measures**

Impacts on population, employment, and housing conditions are less than significant and no mitigation is needed. There are no mitigation measures.

#### **5.12.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation**

No mitigation measures are required for impacts on population, employment, and housing. The impacts on population, housing, and employment are less than significant.