



Good afternoon, everyone! On behalf of the City of Torrance and the Torrance City Council, thank you for joining me today. I am truly excited and humbled to deliver my 3rd State of the City address as your mayor.

Before I get started, I'd like to introduce all of my colleagues on the Torrance City Council, I ask that you hold your applause until I introduce all of the elected officials in attendance today – Representing District 1, Jon Kaji, District 2, Bridgett Lewis, District 3, Asam Sheikh, District 4, Sharon Kalani, District 5, Aurelio Mattucci, and District 6, our latest member Dr. Jeremy Gerson. I'd also like to introduce our City Clerk Rebecca Poirier, and City Treasurer Tim Goodrich. Now, let's give them a round of applause.

I want to express my gratitude to each of them for their dedication and collaborative spirit. Although they represent the City's six districts with unique needs and concerns, we are united by our shared commitment, purpose, and unwavering desire to make Torrance the best place to live, work, play, and visit.

I would also like to thank our federal, state, and county legislators and their representatives who are here for continuing to be champions of our City and for your unwavering support of our initiatives and policies. And thank you to the office of the Consul General of Japan in Los Angeles for sending their representative, Stacey Tamura to show support of our International Relations initiatives.

I'd also like to thank our City Manager, Aram Chaparyan and City Attorney, Patrick Sullivan - and the entire executive team along with all of our wonderful employees who continue to work behind the scenes to keep the City running as efficiently and smoothly as possible. Their unwavering commitment is evident in the civic pride they demonstrate and the tireless effort they put in every day to ensure our City remains vibrant and thriving. They truly are the heartbeat of our City.

Thank you to the Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce for hosting this event and to all of the generous sponsors who make it possible to bring our business community together.

Lastly and most importantly, special thanks to my wife Amy – and my two daughters for their unconditional love and support throughout this journey.

2023 was nothing short of transformative, filled with new opportunities, significant growth, and unwavering resilience. We've been laying the groundwork for a strong foundation. Reflecting on this journey, I am reminded of the theme I introduced last year: Sowing the Seeds for Success...and just like in any garden, the seeds we plant require time, care, and patience before they bear fruit. As we continue to nurture these seeds, we understand that the results don't appear overnight. It takes patience and time to establish strong roots and set the foundation for success. We are still in the process of cultivating these efforts, knowing that the harvest will be worth the wait.

Presenting my 3rd State of the City address today, you'll find that my priorities remain consistent since getting elected. We've advanced initiatives and policies that have proven to improve the quality of life not only for our Torrance residents but for our business community as well. My goals of ensuring financial health, stability, and growth remains steadfast, and I'm proud to say we are a financially sound City. In tandem, Public Safety remains our top priority.

The City Council recently adopted a balanced operating budget for the 2024 to 2025 fiscal year standing at just over \$525 million with an additional \$66.8 million allocated for Capital Improvement Projects. While the City is still undergoing its annual audit, it is projected that the City's reserves will top \$75 million dollars.

Recall last year's State of the City I shared a projected reserves of \$58 million dollars which is a long way from the infamous \$581k that brought us to a high-risk rating in 2020? A healthy reserve allows us to address unanticipated emergencies and provide uninterrupted public service to the community. Financial strength represents the lifeline that sustains and empowers our City. It provides stability and resources needed to support our workforce, maintain public safety, and ensure a high quality of life for our residents and businesses. A strong balanced budget ensures that our City can thrive, grow, and weather challenges that may come our way.

Thank you to the diligent work of our Finance Department led by Sheila Poisson and her team who play a crucial role in planning, allocating, and monitoring the use of funds to ensure the City's expenditures do not exceed its revenues. They provide the financial analysis, forecasts, and strategic guidance necessary to make informed decisions, prioritize spending, and avoid deficits. In fact, they were recently acknowledged by the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers Association with the "Operating Budget Excellence Award for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Operating Budget" a first for our City.

Our financial health and stability are the results of disciplined fiscal management. In the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year, the City collected close to \$23 million in sales tax revenue Measure SST

(Safe Strong Torrance) allocated to be spent on services benefiting Torrance residents. Measure SST's Citizen Oversight Committee formed in February of 2023 ensures transparency, review of financial reports, scrutinize expenditures, provide accountability, and offer recommendations to ensure these funds are used as planned, in the most beneficial way for the community.

Our financial stability creates a virtuous cycle where improved services, infrastructure, and amenities make Torrance more attractive, leading to higher demand and increased property values. In fact, the Los Angeles County Assessor shared with us recently that the value of our properties has increased by \$2 billion dollars, that's a 5.3% increase over the prior year, making Torrance one of the highest valued cities in LA County. When a city demonstrates strong financial health, it instills confidence in current and prospective residents and investors about the City's long-term growth and stability. This confidence is reflected in the willingness to invest in property and driving up market values.

Do you know what else has a direct and positive impact on our property values? The City's ability to effectively address homelessness, at least within our 21 square miles.

Let me share with you the commitment behind the City's Homeless Outreach efforts. Since opening 3290 Temporary Housing Village in 2022, we've placed 34 individuals in permanent housing and 48 have been matched to housing vouchers. The interim housing program provides those experiencing homelessness with professional case management services to support them in attaining permanent housing.

While Governor Newsom's Executive Order to address homeless encampments following the Supreme Court's decision in Grants Pass highlights the ongoing challenges, we face in providing comprehensive solutions for homelessness across the state, it had little effect on Torrance. We have been actively working to clean up homeless encampments to ensure the safety and well-being of our residents. Additionally, we've updated our policies, such as prohibiting an individual from remaining at a bus stop site for a period of longer than 4 hours in any given 24-hour window.

In Torrance, we provide wrap-around services designed to support homeless individuals and families. The City has three dedicated Homeless Outreach Coordinators now, whose role is to connect homeless individuals in Torrance with resources to move towards permanent housing. Since January, they have served 475 individuals through street outreach, connecting them to appropriate services. Our Outreach Coordinators have been able to help 29 people attain permanent housing, just through street outreach. Thanks to our partners Harbor Interfaith Services and Venice Family Clinic who continue to provide the necessary resources for people experiencing homelessness.

Thanks to our local, county, state, federal, and private partners, for their ongoing generous contributions. Since we started the Village, we have secured more than \$5 million to support the construction and operations of the 3290 Temporary Housing Village and to support the operations of the Street Outreach Program, and I am so proud to say, thanks to these partners we can continue to do so through 2025.

We're also able to address homelessness thanks to our public safety partners in the Torrance Police and Fire Departments, another key factor driving up property values in our community.

Under the leadership of Torrance Police Chief Jay Hart, we are modernizing and embracing 21st century tools to enhance our efforts. Our officers continue to serve this community with unwavering courage and professionalism, and I commend the department for your sacrifices.

I'm excited to share that just a few days ago, the Torrance Police hosted its official ribbon cutting ceremony of the Real Time Response Center or RTRC, which leverages advanced video technology and crime analytics to enhance police response to critical incidents and bolster investigative efforts. With real-time data from nearly 225 City-owned public safety cameras and growing, to include over 1,400 additional feeds from our partners at Torrance Unified School District, nearly 100 license plate readers, and various other sensors, including mobile trailer cameras, the RTRC provides immediate situational awareness and data-driven decision making. This capability is a true force multiplier while ensuring the efficient deployment of resources by improving responses to incidents.

The department also launched the Community Enhancement Program in August aimed at improving the quality of life through outreach and targeted projects like crime suppression foot patrols, traffic enforcement, and business and homeless outreach. This high visibility enforcement will gain awareness throughout the City and will eventually become a crime deterrence.

We also partnered with Simon Property Group when they launched their Youth Supervision Policy at Del Amo Fashion Center. This initiative was put in place shortly after the holidays where visitors under the age of 18 are required to be accompanied by an adult 21 years or older after 3pm on Fridays and Saturdays. This policy has been well received by our community and businesses.

Last month, we proudly hosted a successful National Night Out at Columbia Park bringing together our community for an evening of connection and collaboration with the Torrance Police Department.

I would also like to commend our Torrance Fire Department for their unwavering commitment to connecting with our community and their exceptional emergency response times to all 9-1-1 calls. Under the leadership of Fire Chief David Dumais, they stand as an exemplary force

within their industry. Operating across 6 fire stations throughout the City, they remain steadfast in their dedication to protecting lives and property in Torrance.

In just this last year, Torrance Fire responded to a record number of service calls including 12,000 rescue and emergency medical service incidents, 5,600 basic life support transports, 900 fire and life safety inspections completed, 300 hazardous incidents and 150 fires. Rescue and medical emergencies account for 73 percent of all calls.

Torrance Fire is a nationally recognized agency, having the Center for Public Safety Excellence or Accreditation and Insurance Services Office Class 1 Rating, we are among an elite group.

2023 also marked further enhancements in the department's Emergency Medical Services or EMS. Last year the EMS Patient Transportation Program continued to expand from 29 to 35 full-time Ambulance Operators.

The EMS Division also made significant enhancements in data collection and reporting by converting to the National Emergency Medical Service Information System which will ultimately improve patient care and enhance the overall quality and efficiency.

Also headed our way this fall, the Fire Department is getting ready to launch a new system called "Tiered Dispatching." This change is designed to optimize emergency response efficiency and ensure that resources are best allocated to enhance service to the community. They're also upgrading their paramedic vehicles to ambulances with advanced life support capabilities creating additional space to accommodate more specialized equipment for transporting critical patients. Soon, the response to a 9-1-1 call will be more strategic, to ensure dispatching an engine, paramedic, and basic life support ambulance is appropriate for each unique call and need.

All of these accomplishments by our first responders continues to elevate our community to be one of the most desirable places to live, work, play, and visit.

Public safety is foundational to fostering a thriving business community and is a key determinant in the decision-making process for companies looking to relocate or establish their headquarters. As an "Economic Powerhouse" within the South Bay, we've welcomed more than two dozen new restaurants and businesses in the past year, so it's no surprise that Torrance ranks 8th highest valued City in Los Angeles County with an Assessed Valuation of \$38.2 billion, producing the third highest sales tax revenue among the 88 cities in the County.

Why are we an economic powerhouse? Within a 5-mile radius of the City of Torrance we have an aggregate income of 43 billion dollars, with more than 42,000 businesses and a total day time population of just over 943 thousand.

Over the last year, Torrance had the highest average rate of hotel occupancy at 81 percent outperforming all of our neighboring cities to the north, east and south. People choose to stay in Torrance because it's safe, clean, and beautiful. We have great schools and we're strategically located near some of the greatest attractions.

The "WhyTorrance" experience continues to resonate not only with our local community, but by travelers as well... boasting the motto: Eat, Shop, and Stay.

With several new restaurants like Boiling Crab, Marugume Udon, Bafung Dumpling, Board and Brew, The Kabob Shop, Simply Salads, Raising Canes, 92 Korean BBQ, Jang Su Jang, and California's first drive through Shake Shack. Across town, the Habit Burger just opened their own drive-thru just a few weeks ago. The dining options are endless. We also opened a few more Starbucks, a Philz Coffee, and a 2nd Aldi's supermarket here in Torrance. These businesses are all proud to call Torrance their newest home.

Last year, I announced that an Apple store would be coming to Torrance, well I'm happy to report, they will open their doors next week at Del Amo Fashion Center next Friday, September 20th.

My colleagues and I are also thrilled to welcome a new business to Torrance, a joint venture between Sony and Honda, called Sony Honda Mobility of America as they launch the new Electric Vehicle brand AFEELA. The AFEELA brand will offer the most advanced integration of technology and entertainment, and we are thrilled Torrance will serve as their home. So, stay tuned and keep your ears to the ground as we plan to make the official welcome and joint announcements soon.

My colleagues and I traveled and visited unique conferences and trade shows this year including the Consumer Electronics Show in January and ICSC, the International Council of Shopping Centers in May. What eye-opening experiences for us to see what is out there, see how we can attract new businesses and show support to our local Torrance businesses who were exhibiting, putting their brand on the global market and showcasing. We used these opportunities to highlight the benefits of investing in Torrance to major potential business partners.

We also launched the first of a kind event called "Pitch Torrance" inviting local vendors to pitch to the City to utilize their services and products. A few months later the Office of Economic Development also hosted "Select Torrance" complementing the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation's "Select LA", inviting prospective businesses to discover why choosing Torrance is the right decision for their operations.

Business development and marketing takes time to nurture and grow. It starts with a strategy and knowing our strengths. As we continue to “Sow the Seeds for Success” I am confident that we will reap the rewards of our efforts in the near future.

We’ve met with nearly two dozen international groups, visitors and business executives, and Consul Generals from various countries representing global communities over the last year. They’re interested in what Torrance has to offer. We have strategically forged a path for International Relations, expanding our Office of Economic Development. We’re creating targeted campaigns to attract foreign direct investment by showcasing the City’s diversity and strengths, such as the business-friendly environment, a skilled workforce, and strategic location. We’re assisting local businesses in exploring international business markets providing resources, connections, and support for exporting their products or services abroad. And we’re leveraging technology and innovation by fostering relationships with global tech companies based here in Torrance. Our efforts continue to position the City as a key player in the international economic landscape while nurturing domestic businesses.

Another organization that continues to support the business community is the Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce. Thank you to Donna Duperron and her team for supporting our businesses, whether it’s providing networking opportunities, business advocacy, workshops and seminars, business referral, advocating business friendly policies, and hosting community events such as ribbon cutting ceremonies, grand openings, informational gatherings, and celebrations like this one today.

Based on my calendar, I’m scheduled to welcome close to two to three new businesses each month including Pure Essence Dentistry next week, Pure Life Acupuncture next month, Highlow Gift Shop in November, a 10-year anniversary celebration for Destination: Art that same week.... I have to keep a rotation of ties to wear to all of the different events. It’s exciting to be part of this growth. We’re looking forward to the upcoming 25th Annual Grand Mixer and networking event with the Japan Business Association and the Chamber. And if you haven’t registered yet, it’s taking place on Tuesday, October 1st at the Miyako Hybrid Hotel. This is just one of the many events the Chamber hosts throughout the year, and we are so grateful for your partnership with the business community. So, sign up if you haven’t!

Torrance is becoming the epicenter of bio-science and technology. I’m excited to share that Taiwanese based Biotech iProton signed a Letter of Intent recently to establish their cancer treatment center here in Torrance.

There are also exciting developments happening at the Torrance Gateway Property owned by the Sares Regis Group, currently in Phase 3 of their development. We have existing manufacturer Hadrian, which Forbes just listed as one of the “Next Billion Dollar Start Up’s.” And just down the street from Hadrian on Manhattan Place and Western Avenue, we welcomed SCORE Sports, the leading North American sports apparel manufacturer to their

new headquarters in Torrance. So, if you need uniforms for your kids AYSO, Little League, Company intermural teams, SCORE is the place to go.

Speaking of sports, Premier Lacrosse League is proud to call Torrance their new home after achieving astounding success, they rapidly outgrew their space in El Segundo and are now headquartered in Torrance. And for indoor climbing enthusiasts, Touchstone Climbing is proud to present “Class 5”, one of the best in the industry with 26,000 square feet of climbing, 17,000 square feet of rope climbing, and 9,000 square feet of bouldering which opened just a few days ago. They’re located at the former Baby’s R Us on Hawthorne Boulevard and is said to have something fun for the whole family.

Our partnerships with businesses like each of yours has been instrumental in building a resilient foundation for growth, locally and abroad. While not all businesses start here, many ultimately find their way home to Torrance, thanks in part to the strong community support and partnerships with corporate citizens, like the Torrance Refining Company who have been wonderful neighbors.

In fact, just last month, the City hosted once again, the largest international art fair called TRYST-NOMAD. It was held at Del Amo Crossing. It serves as a destination where artists can engage with fellow artists and the public and showcase their diverse and dynamic talents. Now this event would not have been possible without the support of the Presenting Sponsor which was the Torrance Refining Company. They also sponsored the Torrance Summer Nights, a series of free concerts and events hosted throughout our City. Thanks to their support we were able to upgrade sound equipment, and work with performers that drew crowds of more than a thousand people per concert.

They also take pride that they are located here in Torrance. Collaborating with the City, they upgraded the landscaping along nearly 1.5 miles of street frontage on 190th Street, incorporating seasonally flowering trees and utilizing recycled water for irrigation. This not only enhances community pride but also conserves fresh water for more essential uses.

Another corporate citizen such as Arc Boats who moved from Inglewood to Torrance early last year have been growing at lightning speed. The innovative

start-up designs, manufactures, and sells one of the most advanced high performance Electric Boats in the industry with the ambitious goal of electrifying all watercraft, blending modern aerospace design and manufacturing techniques with traditional marine craftsmanship. And they’re building them right here in Torrance.

In line with the City’s strategic plan of Stewardship of the Environment, thanks to the City’s General Services Department lead by Shant Megerdichian, the City replaced outdated Electric Vehicle chargers signing with Blink Charging to install and maintain 6 DC fast charging station and 14 Level 2 charging stations across 6 public sites, and Level 3 EV charger upgrades,

currently in progress. Since launching the 1 Mile 1 Charger project just over 10 years ago it has saved more than 18 thousand kilograms of greenhouse gas emissions by charging over 5,600 vehicles, and as of now, we have 99.7 percent of the City covered where drivers can count on at least one EV charger within each mile across the City.

When people ask, what is the “WhyTorrance” experience? This is where we play to our strengths. It’s the first-rate service you get in the City. We have competitive utilities and business license fees, a portfolio of major industries, skilled labor pools, proximity to Los Angeles and Long Beach Ports, LAX, Zamperini Field, and freeway access. Not that we need the reminders, but Torrance continues to make “best of lists.” In 2024 we made the Best Friendly City and Best Farmers’ Market based on the Daily Breeze Beach Reporter. According to KnowInsiders.com, a digital media platform, they ranked Del Amo Fashion Center a Top 10 Best Shopping Malls in the United States alongside prestigious shopping centers like Mall of America, South Coast Plaza and Aventura Mall. TravelAwaits.com, an online travel site empowering travelers to experience everything from bucket list trips to fun weekend getaways nailed it right on the head with this article: 9 Reasons Why You Should Visit Torrance Instead of Los Angeles. Travel and Leisure.com ranked Torrance #23 in the nation as one of the best places to live in the United States, and Niche.com ranked Torrance #12 for Best Public Schools with an A+ rating for our education system. The list goes on. And while we’re proud to be ranked in all of these esteemed categories, we’re not surprised, because that is the “WhyTorrance” experience.

That’s also why Torrance companies like Virco have not only survived but thrived since the 1950’s. As a leading manufacturer of school furniture and equipment in the United States, Virco has set the standard for quality and innovation in the industry for decades. Earlier this month, I had the distinct pleasure of touring their impressive facility and meeting Mr. Robert Virtue, this year’s Distinguished Citizen. His leadership and commitment to excellence have undoubtedly contributed to the company's enduring success. Congratulations to Virco on their remarkable achievements, and here's to many more successful years ahead!

Just after I gave my speech last year, my colleagues and I embarked on an unforgettable trip to Kashiwa, Japan and Hwaseong, South Korea. In Kashiwa we celebrated our 50th anniversary of our Sister City relationship, a tie that has bonded our two countries through five decades and multiple generations of Torrance students and families.

With the help of our growing Friendship Cities Program partnering with Cities abroad, we continue to pursue business opportunities, foreign direct investment, commerce, trade, tourism, and to present ready-made infrastructure to leverage the development of new businesses to strengthen our revenue stream.

As mentioned in the video, we kicked off 2023 with two Friendship City Agreements with Tainan and Changhua Taiwan, then our third Friendship City Agreement in Hwaseong, South

Korea, and just last month we signed our fourth partnership with Bizen, Japan, the hometown of Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Yoshinobu Yamamoto and on October 1st we will sign our fifth Friendship City Agreement with Oshu, Japan, the hometown of Los Angeles Dodger Shohei Ohtani. Can you connect the dots?

Our existing Friendship City agreements have already brought numerous opportunities for cultural exchange, economic cooperation, and mutual understanding. These relationships enable us to share best practices, attract international businesses, boost tourism, and create new avenues for investments. These partnerships are more than just symbolic; they provide tangible benefits that will contribute to our City's development, growth and the ability to be called an "Economic Powerhouse." We hope in the future we can also partner our schools with our Friendship Cities to launch a future student exchange program with students abroad so they can get a taste of life here in Torrance while experiencing athletic competition.

Now, if you haven't noticed, the fanbase for the Dodgers has exploded since Yamamoto and Ohtani signed contracts to represent Los Angeles baseball. And thanks to the partnership with Discover Torrance and Debbie Hays, who leads their marketing efforts for continuing to be a wonderful ambassador to the City of Torrance. Discover Torrance helps visitors seeking out the best places to stay in Torrance while on business or vacation, best places to eat whether its Ramen or Korean BBQ, shop, and of course catch a game during the season whether its baseball, football, basketball, hockey, rugby, or soccer.

And when people visit, how do they get around? Our Torrance Transit system. The Transit Department led by Kim Turner provides safe, reliable, inexpensive and courteous transportation to and from the SoFi Stadium on game day for just four dollars round trip. Whether you're catching a football game there or a concert at the Kia Forum, Intuit Dome, or YouTube Theater, its just a short ride away. Leave the driving to the professionals so fans can enjoy a smooth trip to and from their favorite event.

Last month, we approved the Connect Torrance Micro-Transit Pilot Program for 1-Year, an on-demand service to complement our Torrance Community Transit Program for seniors and those with disabilities. Imagine our seniors being able to request a shared ride to anywhere in Torrance for less than \$5 per trip! And the best part? It's user-friendly, even for those who still use a flip phone—like my mother.

In addition, for others who live, work and do business within the Pilot zone, they can use the service for just \$5.

When our visitors from Bizen, Japan, arrived, we had the pleasure of giving them a driving tour of our City aboard one of our Transit buses. Their first impressions spoke volumes: "Your streets are impeccably clean, your grass and trees are beautifully manicured, your shopping malls are bustling, and your community exudes warmth and hospitality."

These reflections are a testament to the backbone of our City. We would not be able to welcome international guests or host executives from Fortune 500 companies to explore Torrance if it weren't for our well-maintained roads, pristine streets, and beautifully landscaped neighborhoods.

Thanks to our Public Works Department led by Craig Bilezerian and his team who oversees Street Maintenance, Traffic and Lighting, Engineering, Sanitation, Streetscape, and Water. Thank you for keeping our City running smoothly, twenty-four seven.

They're busy maintaining more than 800 lane miles of roadway, more than 500 miles of curbs, gutters, and sidewalks in the City's public right of way. When you drive on our streets, we want to ensure a smooth ride, no matter how near or far the commute.

This past year the Street Operations division installed about 1,400 regulatory and street name signs, filled 12,000 square feet of potholes, repaired more than 95,000 square feet of asphalt roadways, replaced 27,000 square feet of sidewalk, and grinded nearly 7,500 square feet of sidewalk displacements.

The Sanitation division diverted more than 8,200 tons of recyclables and more than 15,000 tons of organic waste from landfills, swept nearly 66,000 miles of City streets, cleaned almost 400 miles of sewer pipeline and 8,800 manholes, and cleaned more than 1,300 storm drain catch basins.

The Streetscape division planted almost 600 street trees, trimmed close to 3,200 trees, responded to more than 500 tree emergencies, mowed 546 acres of turf in parkways and center medians, and addressed 2,800 residential requests.

Have you noticed the strategically located gateway signs throughout the City? We will be installing more wayfinding signage later this year in addition to these (hold up mini statue) which lets visitors know exactly where they are, whether they're exiting the newly completed 405 freeway offramp at Crenshaw Boulevard near 182nd Street or turning down one of our major entry points, there's no question when you've arrived in Torrance.

To say our crews are busy, would be an understatement. How do we do it? Leadership and commitment. Our executive team is committed to this City as much as I am, and as much as you are.

This year we enhanced transparency by launching several dashboards on our website where you can see real time updates on several of our initiatives including the Capital Improvement Plan or CIP. The City's CIP outlines major capital expenditures to ensure the proper maintenance of assets and infrastructure. The interactive Dashboard provides the public with an easy way to review and track the progress of funded projects across the community. Users can adjust filters on the map to refine their results.

Earlier this year our February storms impacted our residents and neighbors in the Vista Montana community. Our Office of Emergency Services took action and within a few hours our Public Works, Community Development, along with several of our City departments came together to tackle this landslide. While it took close to 6 months for the slope restoration, and to fully and safely reopen roads in the Vista Montana community, the City remains committed to work year round ahead of the next rainy season to ensure the City is prepared for any unexpected disasters. Technology is incredible. We've been able to share information about the February Storms on our Trending In Torrance.com website along with our Instagram page. Everything you might have a question about is right there.

And in case you haven't seen it, we have a 24/7 livestream from Rocketship Park where you can see the beautiful City view any time of the day. Just go to TorranceCA.Gov/RocketshipParkCam. My kids tell me, embrace the technology dad. Social media has been an incredible platform to help us connect and get information out to many of our community members.

We've found that through various means of communications, we're able to connect with each of you. Our "See What Torrance is Doing" campaign continues to remind our business and residential community that we are only a phone call away. A quick scan of a QR code or a click on the app is all that it takes to connect with us. We want to ensure our residents and business partners have a way to connect with us at the touch of a finger, 24/7.

And while you're on our website, don't forget to check out TorranceCA.Gov/YearInReview, for a comprehensive look at the accomplishments by all 14 of our City Departments, providing a clear picture of what an incredibly busy and productive year it has been for Torrance. This online resource offers detailed insights into the various projects, initiatives, collaborations, and milestones achieved across the City.

Additionally, if you are a resident or a business owner in Torrance, you should have received our beautifully designed Year in Review mailer. (show mailer) This publication is a visual showcase of the City's achievements, thoughtfully curated to keep you informed and connected to your community. We encourage you to place it in a prominent location like your refrigerator or near your phone for easy reference of important City contacts.

As we move forward, Torrance Unified School District remains the cornerstone of excellent education. I am so pleased to see more than 22,000 TUSD students thrive and succeed, year after year. As I may have mentioned before, both my children attended Torrance schools; they are a product of our education system. Torrance students continue to be recognized for accomplishments in academics and athletics, and the district for its enrichment programs. TUSD celebrated several significant milestones this year. The Early College Program, in partnership with El Camino College, completed its second successful year, allowing High School students to earn college credits, with 250 students applying for the 3rd cohort.

Thank you to the TUSD Board, Superintendent, along with all of the outstanding teachers, staff, and administrators who continue to put our students first.

I also want to acknowledge El Camino College who prepares students to four-year universities in the top 10% to UCs and 5% to CSUs. El Camino College has also recently announced offering its first bachelor's degree in respiratory care making it the first community college in Southern California to prepare students to go straight to work in this high demand field.

And we can't forget the Southern California Regional Occupational Center, also known as So Cal ROC, located here in Torrance providing vocational training for trades, especially at a time where these skills are in high demand.

And thank you to Cal State Dominguez Hills for continuing to support the South Bay with your Annual Economic Forecast in addition to offering a vast selection of majors for our college community. You can count me in for the ground-breaking ceremony on your campus in just a few short weeks!

Just as our community is home to top-rated schools, we also take pride in having world-class medical facilities. In fact, Torrance Memorial Medical Center and Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Center in Torrance were both recently honored as two of the best healthcare facilities globally, earning a spot on the World's Best Hospitals List of 2024, as recognized by Newsweek and Statista Inc. Congratulations to both institutions for this remarkable achievement.

We are also fortunate to have top ranked health care providers like Kaiser Permanente, Children's Hospital, UCLA Health, and affiliations with City of Hope and Cedars Sinai located here in Torrance to serve the healthcare needs of our community.

The Community Services Department led by John La Rock continues to support our growing community of youth and adults with wonderful park spaces to play along with recreational programs. As mentioned earlier, our Summer Concert series just wrapped up, the department in partnership with the Torrance Sister City Association, also supported the 9 member delegates from our Sister City of Kashiwa, Japan this summer who were here for 3 weeks. The Kashiwa delegation explored Southern California, dining in our local restaurants and shopping in our local stores and immersing themselves in American culture, food, and lifestyle.

As we come off the heels of the Paris Summer Olympics, 2028 will be here before we know it. The City is actively preparing as we keep these focal points of infrastructure improvements, hospitality readiness, public safety, community engagement, sustainability, and economic development in mind. We are strategically located with close proximity to Olympic venues,

the airports, and neighboring areas. By leveraging the Olympics as an opportunity to attract new businesses and investments, we hope this will have a long-term economic impact that benefits our community for years to come.

To support this growth and ensure residents, visitors, and businesses can easily access essential information, we are enhancing the City's website. Under the leadership of Andrei Yermakov, the City's Communications and Information Technology Director and in collaboration with the City Manager's Office, the upcoming website upgrade will make it easier to navigate, access information, stay informed about City news and events, and find essential services like business licensing and permits. Revitalizing the TorranceCA.Gov website will significantly improve communication with residents, visitors, and businesses alike. We appreciate your patience as our team undertakes these important projects. It will be worth the wait!

As we work to improve our online presence through the website upgrade, we're also focusing on enhancing the physical and economic landscape of our City. The Community Development Department, led by Michelle Ramirez plays a critical role in this effort. Her team oversees various aspects of construction, enforcement, engineering, and planning activities, focusing on streamlining permitting processes, investing in essential infrastructure, and supporting opportunities for workforce development. These initiatives have facilitated your successes and enabled our local economy to thrive.

Over the course of the last year, they processed more than 9,000 permits representing a combined job valuation of more than \$134 million dollars. That reflects a robust local economy, indicating a strong entrepreneurial spirit, and business-activity, contributing to job creation, economic growth, and increased tax revenue for the City. This number also suggests a healthy mix of small businesses, large enterprises, and a variety of industries that support the community's economic stability and vibrancy.

Speaking of growth, we're excited for the new development of the 218-unit luxury apartment complex which will include nearly 12,000 square feet of commercial space on the former Gable House Bowl site. While it may currently appear as a leveled dirt field, envision this modern and attractive living option taking shape, significantly enhancing the community's appeal and desirability. Adjacent to this hotel, folks are moving into the newly complete COGIR Senior Living.

We are a true destination of residential, commercial, and industrial.

If you haven't heard, Torrance is hiring! In the past year alone, we received more than 16,000 applications for positions within the City. From those, we hired 369 new employees and promoted 318, a testament to the dynamic growth and opportunities within our organization.

The Human Resources Department, led by Dr. Hedieh Khajavi, has been instrumental in driving this success.

Additionally, just last month, my colleagues and I approved a historic \$4.6 million incentive package for our Torrance Police Department. This pilot program is designed to retain and attract top-tier officers, with lateral hires eligible for signing bonuses of up to \$100,000 during their first year. Recruiting the best in the field requires extraordinary efforts, including rigorous selection processes, comprehensive training, and competitive incentives. Only through such measures can we attract individuals who embody the highest standards of integrity, skill, and dedication necessary to protect and serve our community with excellence.

Excellence takes many forms here in Torrance and we had the privilege of celebrating our outstanding employees as seen in the video who embody the highest standards of professionalism and civic pride with our Employees Picnic. And by the turn out of the crowd and the civic pride, and the “I Love Torrance” spirit, it was not hard to miss.

Along with our Employee Picnic, the City also hosted a number of wonderful events this past year. Did anyone attend our 4th of July fireworks show at the LA Galaxy Sports Complex? We had nearly a thousand community members turn out and enjoy the show in a safe and fun way. We hosted the 62nd Annual Armed Forces Day Parade, Cherry Blossom Festival, and Fire Service Day, just to name a few. We also have the Coastal Cleanup at Torrance Beach happening next weekend, and several more fantastic events planned such as the Halloween Spooktacular Family Movie Night at Wilson Park on October 28th and the Annual Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving morning. And you’ll soon notice City Hall illuminate in festive colors, celebrating the wonderful holidays approaching.

These are opportunities for my colleagues and I along with our City employees to engage with our community and show what we do and how we serve our community, our valued stakeholders. Thank you to our Communications team for elevating how our City engages with the public, utilizing all the available tools to share vital information and tell important stories about our community.

So, what’s ahead? The tremendous potential and possibilities for the City’s growth, expansion, and development. Like these seeds we’ve planted, these opportunities will flourish as we nurture existing relationships and cultivate new ones. We have an exciting future ahead of us and I invite you to join me on this journey. Continue to stay engaged, share your ideas, and See What Torrance is Doing. With your support and input, I am confident that we can continue to be trailblazers in our path to building relationships, partnerships, collaborations, and economic development in our great City.

We continue to elevate the “WhyTorrance” experience with our rich history, unique character, dedicated communities, exceptional public service and safety, top rated schools and

hospitals, our beautiful parks and open spaces, an array of shopping and dining experiences that exceed expectations. And the best is yet to come, with even more exciting opportunities on the horizon.

Together, we can do great things.

Together, we are the powerhouse of the South Bay.

Together, I know the future is bright as we continue to Sow the Seeds For Success.

May God Bless the City of Torrance.

And May God Bless America.

Thank you.