



December 12, 2023

President's Message:

As 2023 draws to a close, we wish you a calm and happy holiday season. We also ask that you consider taking on a board position at the RHA for the coming year. Here are just a few of the things your RHA has done over more than 70 years:

- In the 1940s, during the development of the Riviera, the City of Torrance neglected our local roads around the area until they became a safety hazard. The RHA took them to task at a City Council meeting, resulting in repairs.
- In 1953, the President of the RHA proactively advised the City Council on proper contour and grading of several Riviera roads.
- In the 1970s and 80s, the RHA vigorously and successfully defended the Hillside Ordinance against infringement, including that of commercial buildings.
- From 2011-17, the RHA fought to replace dead landscaping and broken fencing along PCH, as well as an update to the unsafe pedestrian bridge used by South High students. When we were stymied by the city, we secured funding from the state!



2011



Now

- For the last four years the RHA has been fighting to get the City of Torrance to reduce flights and noise at Torrance Airport, as well as insisting that harmful lead be removed from its aviation fuel (our latest update on page 3).

The RHA only holds 4 board meetings (2 hours or less! Often on Zoom!) annually, along with one or two public meetings. We're in need of a Web Master, a Communications Chair, a Fundraising Chair, a Treasurer Pro Tem and a Civic Liaison.

Without your help, sadly, the RHA may disappear, leaving the Riviera without an advocate to effectively bring issues to the attention of City Council. The RHA has relationships with and meets with City Councilors. We also have the infrastructure to marshal petitions and campaigns that focus on critical community issues and yield resolutions.

Your RHA is one of the last grassroots organizations left in our area willing to fight for its residents. Join us! Email Judy or Pam at: president@hollywoodriviera.org.

Do you know a stellar senior in high school? Make sure they apply for [an RHA scholarship](#) if they live in the Riviera. Want to contribute to our scholarship fund? [Join the RHA or make a donation](#) through our membership page (or through our QR code on page 5).

Our September Landscaping Award is all that's bright and merry (below).

We have updates on light rail (page 3) as well as a resident's question about tree law on page 4.

Many RHA memberships expire at the end of the year. Be sure and [renew for 2024!](#)

Wishing you Happy Holidays and a safe New Year!

Judy Brunetti & Pam Popovich, RHA Co-Presidents

September Landscaping Award

The Ally residence at 312 Via El Chico was the winner of our [September landscaping award](#). Their colorful plants are native to California and drought-tolerant. All this landscaping was done by the Ally family themselves—a true labor of love.



Torrance Airport Update

The RHA has been working for years to get the City of Torrance to address issues created by increased flights at Torrance Airport. These include the noise, the use of leaded fuel, and the extra flight schools that violate the City Charter. Two weeks ago, the RHA learned that the additional noise monitors promised by the city will not be added for another 4 months.

In the meantime, the RHA suggests that residents with monitoring devices note the loudness of the aircraft. If the noise is above 82dB, call Noise Abatement (310-784-7950) and fill in a report at the [Casper Noise Complaint website](#). For multiple noise violations, email CityCouncil@TorranceCA.gov, detailing the date, time, and noise level. This may seem like overkill, but the RHA recently learned that noise violations were not being recorded for several weeks due to “staffing issues” at City Hall.

The City Council was scheduled to set landing fees for Torrance Airport at the November 14th Council meeting. Unfortunately, City Attorney Patrick Sullivan neglected to give the 72 hour advanced notice required before sharing certain information publicly. The question of landing fees was pushed back to the November 28th Council meeting, where a lively discussion ensued.

Residents who spoke publicly (including the RHA and [COTAR](#)) stated that they felt the noise, the pollution, and the danger from so many low-flying planes indicated that the City needs to manage the airport more carefully. They supported landing fees as one of many necessary steps. Local pilots said they felt they were being punished because of the rapid growth of Sling Air Academy. Those pilots argued that fees would have little impact on the number of flights at Torrance Airport.

Ultimately, City Council voted to charge landing fees for all fixed-wing aircraft EXCEPT military, medical, and charitable flights. (Flights by Robinson Helicopter are not eligible for landing fees as Robinson uses their private helipad.) The final vote on landing fees was as follows: Yes—Asam Sheikh, Jon Kaji, Aurelio Mattucci, Mike Griffiths. No—Mayor George Chen. Recused—Sharon Kalani. Abstained—Bridget Lewis.

When attendees from the RHA finally walked out of the Council meeting at 1:00 AM, we felt that the results were worth the late night. While landing fees are merely one step in disincentivizing the overuse of Torrance Airport, we are pleased that the City Council has finally begun to listen to its residents.

Light Rail Update

The [C-/Green Metro Line](#) was scheduled to go through Redondo Beach to Torrance on existing track by 2033. However, some of our City Council Members (such as our own district’s Aurelio Mattucci) objected to this. The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority will decide in January which of the following routes to approve (with input from the Torrance City Council): an expensive elevated train along Hawthorne near 190th Street, continuing the line on the existing track, or not continuing the rail further into Torrance.

The RHA recommends emailing your City Council with your sentiments on both the airport and light rail at CityCouncil@TorranceCA.gov or CityCouncilPublicComment@TorranceCa.gov.

Ask the RHA

Dear RHA,

I live in the upper Riviera and I absolutely HATE my neighbor's tree. It's massive, and its branches extend way over onto my property. The stupid tree is constantly dumping leaves and pollen on my roof, my lawn, and my car. When I complained, the neighbors had a tree trimmer thin the branches, but it's STILL dumping pollen and there are so many dead leaves that they don't even fit in my green waste bin! I told my neighbors this, hoping they would finally cut the thing down. All they did was get an extra green trashcan. Now they just have their gardeners blow the pollen and leaves off my roof and out of my yard and put it in their extra green container.

I asked them to cut the branches back to the property line and they refused, saying it might hurt the tree.

My gardener says he can trim it. He says he cuts back trees all the time and it's legal and the tree will be fine. Is this true?

Peeved About Pollen

Dear Peeved,

Issues with neighboring trees abound in the Riviera. The general rule of thumb is that unless your property falls within [the Torrance View Equity Ordinance](#) and a neighbor's tree impedes your view, you have no legal standing to trim or remove their tree, no matter how annoying you find it.

As for your gardener's insistence that he can legally trim the offending tree's branches, that may not be true. If the tree was planted by the city or is on city property, you must apply for a permit and use the city's licensed tree trimmers. In certain areas of Torrance, trees are specially protected and no permits will ever be issued. Check with the City of Torrance [here](#) for more information. If said tree is a city tree and you break off a single branch, you can be fined hundreds of dollars.

If the offending tree is not a city tree, your gardener is correct and you do have the right to trim it back to the property line. However, we recommend working with your neighbors. This shouldn't be too difficult in your case as your neighbors have been responsive the tree's impact (at their own expense!) already. Hire a certified arborist to ascertain the health of the tree. The arborist will most likely make a recommendation on the amount of trimming that is safe for the tree. Hopefully, you and your neighbors can agree with the arborist's suggestion and tree trimming can commence.

If you opt to act unilaterally and allow your gardener to trim the tree back to the property line, the tree might die. In that case, you would be liable for the cost of a replacement tree. (FYI, the cost of replacing a mature hardwood such as an oak is \$15,000-\$100,000.)

The other thing to consider when trimming a tree is the birds. If there is a nest with active baby birds chirping, please do not trim until the fledglings have left the nest. The [Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act](#) and the [California Fish and Game Code](#) protect the nests of many birds and

ALL birds of prey. (California recommends not pruning trees from March 1st to August 15th.) If you destroy a raptor's nest, you can face [a minimum of \\$1,000 in fines and 6 months in jail.](#)

Good luck.

-Your RHA

Do you have a question or concern about the Hillside Overlay, traffic, or other issues in the Riviera? Send your question to: info@hollywoodriviera.org! We may answer it in our next newsletter.

RHA Membership

Your yearly membership of only \$25.00 supports newsletters, neighborhood display signs, meeting space rentals, and gives scholarships to high school seniors.

We also accept donations of any amount.

Mail checks to: RHA Membership
PO BOX 1074
Torrance, CA 90505

To pay via PayPal/ credit card:
visit [our membership page](#)
or use your phone to scan the QR code



The RHA is always looking for sponsors to advertise in our newsletter, [on our website](#), and to support our programing.