

# Letters to the Editor

Share your thoughts with our community!

Opinions in Letters to the Editor are the express views of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly. All published letters will include the writer's name and city/town of residence -- we will only accept letters from those who live in, or own a business in, the communities comprising Lamorinda (please give us your phone number for verification purposes only).

Letters should be 350 words or less; letters of up to 500 words will be accepted on a space-available basis. **email: letters@lamorindaweekly.com;** Regular mail: Lamorinda Weekly, P.O.Box 6133, Moraga, CA 94570

Editor:

On June 3 Orinda voters will vote for a \$20 million road bond measure (Measure J). There appears to be two camps on the issue: (A) Our roads are bad and not getting any better and we really need to start fixing them now; and (B) Our roads are bad and not getting any better but we need a plan which will insure that they will all get fixed, and define what "fix" means, before we possibly throw \$20 million down the rabbit hole. Interestingly, virtually no one says we should not fix the roads and very few say we cannot afford to fix our roads (that would be somewhat of a specious argument for people sitting on \$8 billion of residential realty). The whole problem is process and trust.

The City has had 8 years since the Infrastructure Committee released its report on the status of our roads to come up with a plan. It released the first version of its "10-Year-Plan" in 2012. Now, the City is ready to move into Phase 2 of its revised Plan: \$20 million to fix the worst of the worst residential streets over the next four years. The Plan is very specific that the Measure J money will be used only for roads and underlying drainage and that it will be focused on Orinda's worst residential streets.

The question "dissenters" have is "what comes next"? The Plan says that the City "anticipates" that all roads will then be brought up to good condition with another \$25 million over four more years. Alternative analyses (www.FixOrindaRoads.info) say it will cost another \$70 million and ten more years to fix everything properly.

It all comes down to trust. Some trust the City, and their fellow voters, to move forward bit-by-bit until all roads are fixed. Others, after eight years and little movement, want to see the plan more "fleshed out" with more of a "guarantee" it will end in completion before they commit \$20 million even though they accept that the \$20 million is desperately needed. Who's right? How do we bring them together?

Steve Cohn  
Orinda

Editor:

Please fix Orinda's roads.

Orinda's roads are in terrible disrepair. I believe these poor roads are hurting property values in Orinda. We need to fix our roads. Delaying the repair process will only cost us more in the future as the roads deteriorate more rapidly over time. The citizens of Orinda have been discussing solutions for a number of years. Measure J funding will support a terrific next step in repairing our roads. We cannot delay taking action any longer.

Measure J provides funding to fix our worst residential roads. It will improve safety for drivers, passengers, bike riders, and pedestrians. It will also improve the overall quality of life in Orinda for everyone. I urge you to vote yes on Measure J!

Sincerely,  
Craig Jorgens  
Orinda

Editor:

Home cookin' is always best.

Home cookin'... and City of Orinda Measure J? (June 2014 \$20 million bond ballot measure, to help fix Orinda's Roads)

Yes. All of the money raised will stay right in Orinda. Home cookin'.

Measure J is a unique revenue source. Few taxes will be so consistent in "staying home."

Consider our income/gift taxes: 12% of the amount paid by Californians leaves the state, to be spent in other states.

Consider our state income tax: Taxes paid by cities generally subsidize rural areas. (Average Contra Costa County tax return generates twice the amount of a Nevada County return, 5x the amount of an Imperial County return.)

Our "local" property taxes? Of \$1.00, less than 20 cents stays in Orinda, most of that spent for MOFD (fire) and not for the City of Orinda.

Local sales taxes? About 80% leaves Orinda for the County or the State.

Though part of our property tax, all of the Measure J money will stay home. Measure J fixes our roads, not the other guy's roads. (And, spending is controlled by volunteer Orinda citizens, the Orinda Infrastructure Oversight Commission).

Orinda's Measure J. Home cookin'.

Our vote is yes for both.

Dave and Sandy Anderson  
Orinda

Editor:

The opponents to the recent bond measure to improve Orinda's roads recognize that Orinda's roads are in desperate shape and need upgrading. Yet they offer nothing by way of a fix. The current bond measure, while perhaps not the complete answer, is a reasonable start toward bringing most of Orinda's roads to drivable conditions. The longer we wait to address this issue in a meaningful way, the more it will cost the citizens of Orinda in the long term.

When my family moved to Orinda in 1972, the roads were bad. Continued neglect over the years have made them worse to the point that citizen safety has become an issue. We must address these issues now. Please vote to improve our roads. No one will be coming to our rescue in the future. It is up to us now to take the first step.

Sincerely,  
Jim Roethe  
Orinda



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