

Published September 2nd, 2009

Orinda Council Receives Bicycle, Trail and Walkway Master Plan

By Jonathan Seclow

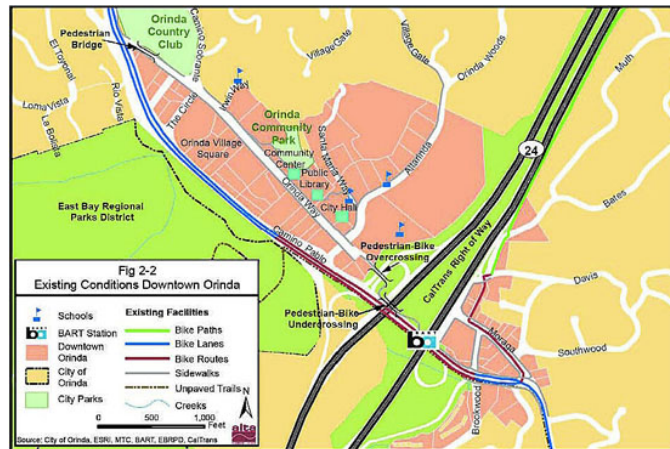


Figure 2-2: Existing Conditions Downtown Orinda Alta Planning + Design

While Orinda's City Council and staff continue to grapple with how to improve road conditions for motorists, they have also begun to take steps to make it easier to get around town on foot and by bike. The Orinda Bicycle, Trail and Walkway Master Plan is finished and was presented to the City Council at its meeting on August 18th. The city contracted Alta Planning + Design to create the plan in April of last year. The plan was presented to the Council by Lauren Ledbetter and Bruce Wolff from Alta Planning + Design.

The primary goal of the Council in contracting the plan was to have designs for the improvement of bicycle paths, trails, and walkways on hand in order to benefit from grants and other funding sources when the opportunity arises. Therefore, the plans created are not slated for immediate deployment, but instead represent a long term plan for path and trail improvement in Orinda.

"The goal was to create a 20-year blueprint for the future of walking, biking, and hiking in Orinda," said Ledbetter.

The improvements recommended by the plan aim primarily at improving the safety of pedestrians and bikers. By improving their safety and creating designated trails and paths for them, the City Council and Alta Planning + Design hope to promote biking and walking as modes of transportation in Orinda.

The City Council did not discuss any of the specific improvements included in the plan at the meeting. Instead, the Council will review the plan in detail during a future workshop, at a time and date to be determined.

At press time the 158-page Master Plan was not available on the city website but can be downloaded from Alta Planning + Design, <http://www.altaprojects.net/orinda/documents.html>.

The plan contains an extensive list of improvements that could be made to existing bike paths, walkways and trails, and recommends the creation of many new ones. Among non-construction items, the Bike/Trail/Walkway Master Plan recommends:

- Education and encouragement programs for residents of all ages and city employees.
- The creation of a citywide Safe Routes to Schools program, using a variety of multi-disciplinary programs aimed at walking and biking to school and improving traffic safety around school areas.
- Implementation of 'Sunday Streets', which is a community event based around a street closure to automobiles, featuring business and recreational opportunities for residents.
- A bicycle and pedestrian website offering one-stop shopping for walkers and cyclists - listing of local walk/bike clubs and organizations, area maps and information about ongoing projects.
- Employer incentives, dynamic parking meter rates and programs such as Adopt a Trail,

Share the Road and Neighborhood Speed Watch. L. Borrowman

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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