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Orinda Supports Skatepark Lot

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Lamorinda Skatepark on Moraga Road Photo Andy Scheck

Orinda's City Council recently agreed to contribute \$62,500 toward the construction of a 29-space parking lot on Moraga Road alongside the Lamorinda Skatepark, which is located in the Moraga Commons Park. Through a cost-sharing agreement, Orinda and Lafayette will cover 1/4 of the parking lot construction costs each, and the town of Moraga will kick in the other half of the estimated \$250,000 total. Currently, skaters and parents parallel park on the gravel outside the park's fence. Orinda's Parks and Recreation Commission agreed with representatives from Moraga that safer access to the skatepark and additional parking is warranted.

"The idea to have a local skatepark built started in Orinda," stated Parks and Recreation Director Todd Skinner. The request was made about ten years ago and Council member Amy Worth was already serving on the Council. "I remember the chambers were filled. About 75 or 80 young people came to the City Council meeting to request that a skatepark be built," said Worth noting when a suitable location could not be found in Orinda, the search was extended to neighboring Lafayette and Moraga. The site in the Commons was ultimately chosen, and the three communities equally funded the building of the park.

Orinda's share of the parking lot construction will be funded with park dedication fees, which are assessed when homes are built or enlarged. These fees can only be used to support capital or rehabilitation projects related to parks or recreation activities.

The Council voted four to one in favor of contributing to the parking lot for the skatepark. Vice Mayor Steve Glazer dissented indicating that he did not have a sufficient sense of the "proportionality" of the expenditure or how many Orinda teens use the skatepark. According to Skinner, 15 to 20 kids at any one time are using the skatepark on a good-weather day, but numbers specific to where users reside are not available.

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