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Published February 15th, 2012

## Letters to the Editor

Editor:

Orinda NOT Subsidizing Moraga.

Recent letters from members of FAIR continue to repeat the misleading claim that Orinda is subsidizing Moraga's fire service. IF it is true that Orinda subsidizes Moraga's fire service, then it is equally true that Moraga subsidizes Orinda's County services!

Fact: Orinda is not paying more than its fair share of taxes for anything. Since Prop 13, every California homeowner pays the same tax rate, or 1% of assessed valuation, plus any additional taxes we have voted for like parcel taxes. How that 1% tax is divvied up changes from neighborhood to neighborhood.

In Orinda north of Ivy Drive, about 23 cents of the tax dollar is allocated to fire protection. In Moraga (plus South Orinda which used to be in the Moraga Fire District) about 19 cents is allocated. However, in Moraga 14 cents is allocated to County services while in Orinda the allocation is 10 cents.

Therefore, if FAIR's way of analyzing property taxes is correct, Moraga has been subsidizing Orinda's County services since Orinda incorporated in 1985! Following FAIR's logic, Moragans should be asking for their money back from Orinda to use to repair Moraga's roads.

Our fear is that FAIR will once again use this misleading claim to destroy any chance of passing a tax measure in Orinda to help pay for much-needed road repairs. We call on all Orindans to repudiate this false logic! It is time to move on and invest in our roads.

Ellen Dale

Orinda

Editor:

Come on Orinda --- Let's fix our roads

Have you heard any of these comments in Orinda?

- If the City handled the budget better they could fix the roads...
- I'm angry they built City Hall - that money could have fixed the roads...
- If Orindans paid their true fair share for MOFD there would be enough money to fix the roads...
- I live on a private road so I don't want to pay for other roads...
- I only care about my street getting fixed... tell me when that will happen
- I can't believe the City has looked at every possible way to get money for the roads...

I have heard all of them numerous times and I am sure they will continue to come up. However, the tough reality is that our community's badly deteriorating residential roads are never going to be fixed unless Orindans decide to support a new funding source dedicated to road repair.

Current costs for bringing Orinda's failing roads and drains up to an overall fair condition exceeds \$60 million. This number rises every year as the road and drain conditions continue to worsen. Our road network is like a house roof that is 60 years old and leaking. It isn't going to get any better on its own.

Here are facts that all Orindans can verify through community records:

- Orinda's entire annual budget is about \$10 million --- over 60% of that goes to police services and parks and recreation. Of the remainder, the City is able to spend \$1-2 million a year on road maintenance or replacement. These monies are well prioritized but they won't stretch to solve the problem.
- MOFD restructuring scenarios generate at best \$1 million a year for Orinda --- while MOFD changes may be desirable and fair --- the best case scenario still won't make a dent in fixing the roads fast enough to represent a solution.
- City Hall is already there --- if you didn't agree with building it you are entitled to your opinion. However, even tearing it down isn't going to keep your road from crumbling.
- You may live on a private road -but at some point you will drive on other roads in Orinda.
- The City has looked at an extraordinary range of options for funding road repairs --- and evaluated all of them with the help of many volunteer community professionals. Nothing will generate the needed level of funding except the community's willingness to contribute new funds.
- There are no State or Federal resources available for local roads beyond small and infrequent grants.
- Most Orindans are or become long term residents. We take good care of our homes and schools. We care about our community. The roads are critical to our community. We need to step up and commit the resources to fix them. Please join with your neighbors and friends that are willing to invest in Orinda.

Darlene K. Gee

Orinda

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