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Letters to the Editor

Editor:

At a city council meeting about our roads, they said that 50% of Orinda's roads are in very poor condition and the city of Orinda doesn't have the funds to fix them. A tax measure(s) needs to be passed in order to repair Orinda's roads. The roads are in a horrible state; taxpayers must act quickly to repair them and pass a tax to bring in the revenue necessary for such improvements.

Orinda's roads are dangerous to bicyclists, walking pedestrians, joggers, and car tires. Many people, including my neighbor, have been injured by the uneven roads with many cracks and potholes in them while riding their bicycle. My neighbor broke his arm, chipped some of his teeth, and torn all the skin off the side of his face because he ran into a pothole while riding his bike and crashed. Walking pedestrians on several occasions have tripped in a pothole or crack in the road. If the road isn't fixed soon, there could be many more injuries and damage to automobiles and the city could be liable for these unsafe conditions.

Not only are the roads in a terrible condition, but they are getting worse and becoming more costly to fix. Today, the estimated cost to fix the roads is \$55,000,000, as stated at a previous city council meeting about our roads. We should act now to fix the roads before the cost to fix them increases dramatically.

Though Orinda should act now, the city doesn't have enough money to take care of its roads. Just to maintain Orinda's roads, the city should pay \$3,100,000 each year. Over the last ten years Orinda has only spent \$1,000,000 per year to maintain the roads. This means that they are over \$2,000,000 short each year in maintenance costs.

The citizens of our city should prioritize and pass a new tax or taxes to receive enough funds to fix the roads. You may want the roads to be fixed but not want to pay the extra taxes. There is no other way to raise enough funds to fix the roads other than extra taxes. The longer you wait until you start to pay for the roads, the more money you will have to pay. Therefore, an extra tax or taxes should be accepted and paid to fix the roads.

Orinda's roads are dangerous, causing more expense the longer we wait to fix them, and we don't have enough funds to fix them. We need to accept a tax measure or measures to fix the roads. Some people may think the roads will be fixed even if they don't pay any money, but they are WRONG! We need you and all other citizens of Orinda to pay their share to fix the roads.

Submitted as a project for Boy Scout troop 57, by:

Steven Rein
Orinda

Editor:

The Citizens Infrastructure Oversight Commission made its annual report to the Orinda City Council on May 1. It reported that Orinda's major roads have seen significant improvements in the past several years and that all major roads are projected to be improved to the level of at least "fair" by 2015. However, none of the 60 miles of residential streets have seen any improvements and the City lacks the funds to repair the 45 miles of streets in poor and failed conditions. Further, while the CIOC encouraged the Council to develop a plan to address these residential streets, in the six years since the Infrastructure Committee report quantified Orinda's crumbling infrastructure issues, no plan has been developed. A proposed half cent sales tax would fall far short of providing any meaningful improvements.

As a means for developing a workable plan, the grassroots group FAIR announced that they created a website, www.OrindaRoadFacts.virb.com, detailing Orinda's infrastructure challenges and listing options for solving these. Orindans need to understand the issues and demand action from their leaders or our roads will never be improved.

Steve Cohn
Orinda

Editor:

Residents of the Glorietta neighborhood in Orinda have formed a Neighborhood Action Team (NAT) and are asking drivers using Glorietta Blvd. to help keep their kids and neighborhood safe by driving 25 mph. Speeds on Glorietta have greatly increased since the street was repaved a few years ago. 85% of drivers are not traveling the posted 25 mph, but rather 36 mph, mandating a speed limit increase to 30 mph unless residents can get drivers to significantly slow down before the next traffic study in mid-May.

Glorietta, a minor arterial street without sidewalks, has an elementary school located on it halfway between Moraga Way and the Lafayette border. With the average speed now at 36 mph, the street is even more dangerous for pedestrians, including kids walking and biking to and from school. Statistics show that a pedestrian hit by a vehicle in a 30 mph zone is 3 times more likely to die than one hit in a 25 mph zone (General Estimates Database on Police Reported Accidents - 1999). And, driving 36 mph along the entire length of Glorietta actually only "saves" people about 40 seconds, which is not worth endangering lives.

The NAT fears that, if the limit is raised to 30 mph, drivers will exceed the new limit, creating an even greater safety hazard for pedestrians, and requiring yet another increase when the next traffic study is performed 5 years from now. The NAT is working with Orinda's Traffic Safety Advisory Committee (TSAC) to educate people using Glorietta about the issue. The NAT hopes that, through education, people will slow down, making maintaining the 25 mph limit possible, while improving walkability and safety.

Nan Reed, a NAT member who just ended her six-year term on TSAC, encourages people to get out of their cars and walk, to see what it feels like to have a car pass right next to you going 35-40 mph. Drivers using Glorietta should consider the Glorietta neighborhood as if it were their own neighborhood and slow down.

Thank you,
Vanessa Imberg
Orinda

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