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## Meet the Orinda Council Candidates: Linda Delehunt

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Linda Delehunt

Orinda has roughly a \$10 million annual budget - small when considering the programs it offers and problems it faces. What shape is the City in - and what must our leaders do over the next 10 years to improve our fiscal picture?

I am very concerned about the great needs related to the infrastructure roadwork that has been a necessity in this city for over 20 years. We seem to be making little progress in terms of addressing this looming issue. My concern is our deficient infrastructure is a safety issue and puts the very quality of our lives as well as our property values at risk.

The reality is that six years ago the Infrastructure Committee identified that we will need \$100 million to repair Orinda's roads. The sales tax measure on the November ballot is projected to generate approximately \$600,000 annually. The city has stated that it will cost \$2.2 million annually to simply maintain the roads after the \$100 million infrastructure repair that has not been done. The bottom line is that the sales tax solution is really not a solution since it does not even cover annual road maintenance.

Additionally, a sales tax increase will negatively impact Orinda small businesses.

While the \$100 million repair figure is staggering, we do need to face these figures head on and utilize our best collaborative citizen thinking to come up with a plan that is acceptable to Orinda residents and that truly addresses the problem. The current 2017 and 2021 bond plans as proposed by the City as a solution are really not a solution

since those measures will require the onerous 2/3 majority vote that is seldom an electorate choice and has been identified by surveys as being unacceptable to Orinda residents. We need to address these issues comprehensively now.

What can Orindans do right now to help?

Each citizen should attempt to utilize his or her time in such a way as to contribute to the betterment of life in the community. Everyone's life is a little different and even the smallest contribution can have an impact.

Orinda residents should become actively involved in learning all sides of the issues facing the city. They should also understand that even though the community is an affluent community, the city does not reflect this affluence. City coffers do not have adequate resources to support all of the current city needs including infrastructure needs.

I served as a Girl Scout Leader and founded the first Girl Scout Daisy Troop in Orinda. I am proud to say that, some 20 years later, almost every girl in my Girl Scout troops has gone on to achieve high professional goals and are currently leaders in many sectors of life. I am also particularly proud of the work I have done with the schools both in the local area as well as throughout the state of California.

Theatre Square is thriving again, delighting residents, but other "downtown development" issues roil the waters. What needs to happen with the downtown, and why?

At Cal, I was fortunate to be a student of Allan Temko ... former Orinda resident and Pulitzer Prize-winning architectural critic. I attempt to live by his high architectural standards. As I look at the various websites and talk with people throughout the city, I can't help but be impressed by the thoughtful plans that the various sectors of our community have crafted. I do believe that there ... can be a "meeting of the minds".... I don't believe there has been enough dialogue ... it is clear to me that many residents feel left out of the conversation.

Small business needs to have particular consideration for the purposes of this discussion. We need to encourage small business development in our city.

Orinda is a relatively new city ... we have to consider that our model of city government may need some revision based on our low revenue and high need status. I would be in favor of examining the operational model of other highly successful small cities with the intent of compiling a list of best practices that we might consider adopting.

I would be in favor of instituting town-hall style meetings that might assist the city in reaching a suitable renovation and operational city model.

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