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As Official Results Near, Measure L Winning Comfortably

By Sora O'Doherty

Although Contra Costa election results are still not certified by the County Registrar, it is fairly certain that Orinda's Measure L - a \$25 million bond issue dedicated to roads and drains - will pass comfortably. As of June 24, the fifth update to the election results posted by the County, yes votes on Measure L were at 68.52 per cent while no votes were at 31.48 per cent. As a bond revenue measure, it is required to pass with a two-thirds majority.

To raise the \$25 million approved by the bond issue, the best estimate of the total debt service, including principal and interest, required to be repaid if all the bonds are issued and sold is approximately \$36,7 million. The annual cost to Orinda property owners is estimated at slightly over 2 cents per \$100, which translates to approximately \$20 per \$100,000 of assessed property value, or approximately \$200 additional tax per \$1 million.

This will be in addition to the \$12 parcel tax for the San Francisco Bay restoration that was not favored by Contra Costa voters but passed with sufficiently high numbers in the other affected counties to become law. The first ever parcel tax in the history of the state to be levied throughout an entire region encompassing multiple counties, the nine-county parcel tax for the Bay will expire in 2037.

City staff had asked County Elections to not assign the road bond measure the letter L to prevent confusion with Orinda's 2012 Measure L half-cent sales tax, but, as luck would have it, in 2016 Orinda was again Measure L on the ballot, leaving Orinda with two concurrent Measures L: the half-cent sales tax, in effect until 2022, and the new Measure L bond issue.

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