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ConnectOrinda launched in Orinda

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Photo Sora O'Doherty

Residents were served refreshments and asked what changes they want to see in downtown Orinda at the Oct. 13 launch event for ConnectOrinda, the city of Orinda's Downtown Streetscape Master Plan project. Participants took time to write suggestions on a large map provided, and Planning Director Drummond Buckley and Assistant Planner Adam Foster and others conducted walking tours through the village and the theater district, also known as the crossroads sections of Orinda.

The first walking tour was of the village and was led by landscape architect and urban planner John Gibbs, principal at WRT, an Oakland-based urban design firm. Community groups (Friends of Orinda Creeks and Orinda Vision) served as volunteer docents at certain points along the tour.

The second walking tour of the theater district and the area between the two sides of downtown was led by Ryan McClain, principal at Fehr and Peers, a Walnut Creek-based transportation planning firm. Community groups (Save Orinda and the Orinda Historical Society) served as volunteer docents along certain points of that tour.

Copies of the ConnectOrinda Briefing Book prepared by Eisen|Letunic were distributed. The Briefing Book contains pertinent facts and figures regarding downtown Orinda gathered by staff and consultants during the first phase of the project.

For children and teens, there were scavenger hunts, with small prizes for all participants and case prizes for the winners in each category. Both scavenger hunts were developed with input from the Orinda Teen Advisory Council.

Following the collection of public input, the next stage in the process will be in January when there will be a meeting to present a summary of the community feedback and three different sets of near-term projects and longer-term visions that represent the range of comments.

Residents of Orinda can continue to provide input by filling out online surveys and submitting comments regarding specific places or points on an interactive map at <http://connectorindasurvey.fehrandpeers.net/>.

More information regarding the ConnectOrinda project is available at <http://www.cityoforinda.org/connectorinda>.

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