



**City of Orinda:**  
www.cityoforinda.org  
Phone (925) 253-4200  
**Chamber of Commerce:**  
www.orindachamber.org  
**The Orinda Association:**  
www.orindaassociation.org

**City Council Regular Meeting:**  
Tuesday, Aug. 20, 7 p.m.  
Orinda Library Auditorium  
**Planning Commission**  
Tuesday, Aug. 23, 7 p.m.  
Orinda Library Auditorium  
**Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission**  
Wednesday, Aug. 14, 6:30 p.m.  
Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22 Orinda Way

## Dublin City Manager Linda Smith selected as new Orinda City Manager



Photo provided

### New Orinda City Manager Linda Smith

Orinda Mayor Darlene Gee announced the selection of Linda Smith to serve as Orinda's next City Manager on July 11. The Orinda City Council will consider approval of the City Manager Employment Agreement at its July 16 meeting.

Smith, who is the current City Manager of Dublin, CA, will start her tenure with the City of Orinda on Oct. 14. "Orinda is excited to have attracted an experienced and knowledgeable City Manager who is from a nearby community and who is familiar with regional and other issues of interest to Orinda to serve as our next City Manager," said Gee. "Her strong background in economic development, communications, and a wide range of local government operations will serve the City and community well."

The selection of Smith came after an extensive recruitment process which resulted

in a well-qualified candidate pool. Smith was determined by the city to be the best choice.

Smith has spent more than 22 years working in local government. She joined the City of Dublin in 2009 and served in a variety of positions before becoming City Manager in 2019. She previously worked for the cities of Brentwood and Tracy in economic development roles.

Prior to working in local government, Smith spent a decade working in the private sector as a communications and marketing executive for emerging technology companies in the Silicon Valley, as well as for companies such as Levi

Strauss, Visa, Bank of America, and the Clorox Company. A graduate of San Jose State University, Smith is also active in a number of professional associations including the International City/County Management Association.

In anticipation of the approval of her employment agreement, Ms. Smith said "I am thrilled by the opportunity to join the City of Orinda. I plan to deliver on the priorities set by the City Council, provide leadership and mentorship to the city's team of professionals, and tackle issues faced by this community." - S. O'Doherty



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## Orinda hires new Planning Director, previously with Contra Costa County

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda officials, including Mayor Darlene Gee and City Manager David Biggs, are expressing their delight at hiring Lashun Cross to be Orinda's next Planning Director, replacing long-serving Drummond Buckley who retired after many years with the city. Cross was a senior planner at Contra Costa County before joining the city team.

Originally from Miami, Florida, Cross moved to California when her childless aunt and uncle offered her a home in San Leandro. They had only one condition: she had to agree to work. Cross had no problem with that, and was soon working at a pizza restaurant, while she finished high school early. She enrolled in classes at Chabot college during her senior year, and only applied to UC Berkeley and San Luis Obispo.

Knowing that her aunt and uncle would prefer that she stay close to them, Cross enrolled at Berkeley in 1992, entering the School of Environmental Design. Cross says that her grandfather has averred that she

always wanted to be an architect from a young age.

The new Planning Director agrees that she has always been fascinated with how things look. "I've traveled a lot," Cross says, "from Egypt to Russia to France and Italy, and Egypt impressed me the most because of how different it looked."

After graduation, Cross worked for the city and county of San Francisco, under then Mayor Willy Brown in the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Streets and Environmental Services, and later working at the airport dealing with regional water quality control compliance issues. Cross still remembers getting a license to drive on the tarmac, and being the subject of a complaint from a pilot on her first time trying it out. "I didn't think I was that close to the airplane," she recalls.

In her more than 24 years with Contra Costa County, Cross worked on the airport land use commission and the Doherty Valley development in San Ramon - a



Photo Sora O'Doherty

### New Orinda City Planning Director Lashun Cross

development of 11,000 housing units in the unincorporated county area later annexed to San Ramon. Cross was with the county as the project went from paper to built.

Cross, who lives in Pinole with her partner and her adopted son, says that what really drew her to Orinda was Plan Orinda. She likes the small town feel of Orinda and wants to see the downtown precise plan implemented. Cross added that she looks for

inspiration close by, citing the development of downtown Lafayette and Walnut Creek.

Cross is spending her time getting to know the staff and the Orinda code. She had her first meeting with city attorney Osa Wolff. "I fell like this will be a good relationship," Cross said. "I like that she gives her reasoning and respects you." After taking a quick break to Hawaii, Cross is now settling in to work at the Orinda Planning Department.



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## Orinda offers residents more money to increase fire code compliance

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creating 6-foot gap between the lower tree canopy and the ground; removal of juniper and

bamboo; and removal of hazardous vegetation or combustible material to a minimum height of 15 feet within three feet of

a fire apparatus road measured from back of curb or edge of pavement.

Cash payments can-

not be reimbursed; there must be written proof of payment, such as a cancelled check or bank statement.

More details are available, along with the application form, on the City of Orinda's website: [www.cognitofirms.com/CityOfOrinda1/MeasureRFireFuelsReductionIncentivePilotProgramApplication](http://www.cognitofirms.com/CityOfOrinda1/MeasureRFireFuelsReductionIncentivePilotProgramApplication)

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**Creekside Weekend Couples Retreat**  
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With Dr. Darrell Christian

Is it time to inject some new life into your relationship?

If so, you and your partner are invited to a weekend couples retreat that will take place on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of the retreat is to foster a more "Conscious Relationship". The retreat will help couples improve their communication, deepen their emotional connection, learn tools to negotiate conflict more effectively, and begin or extend a conversation about intimacy and sexuality.

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- Schedule: Friday evening wine and cheese reception, followed by sessions from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM on both Saturday and Sunday.
- Meals: Continental breakfast and lunch provided each day.
- Location: Creekside cottage in Lafayette, CA

To contact me or for further information:

- Website: [darrellchristian.com/couples-retreat/](http://darrellchristian.com/couples-retreat/)
- Email at: [CouplesRetreatwithDrC@gmail.com](mailto:CouplesRetreatwithDrC@gmail.com) • Phone: (925) 935-8646
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