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Lamorinda Market Statistics

YTD through June (SFR)	2024	2023
Median Sales Price	\$2,025,833	\$1,957,667
Avg Sales Price/SqFt	\$839	\$830
Avg Days on Market	17.7	28.7
Number Properties Sold	266	248

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Orinda to survey conditions of private roads

By Sora O'Doherty

On the recommendation of its Infrastructure Committee, the Orinda City Council on July 16 voted four to one to enter into a contract to assess the condition of the city's private roads. Council member Inga Miller disagreed and voted against the measure, which she also said was unethical and perhaps an unconstitutional use of public money for private benefit, refusing to agree with the public benefits cited by the committee.

After decades of arguments over the 20% of roads in Orinda that are deemed private for a variety of reasons, the committee put forward a recommendation that the city use the same company that assesses the condition of public roads to conduct a similar assessment of the private roads to gather data on what condition the roads are in now.

In accepting the recommendation, the council agreed to appropriate \$30,000 from Measure R to fund a Pavement Management Technical Assessment of private roads following the same criteria and methodology used in the Metropolitan Trans-

portation Commission Pavement Management Technical Assistance Program (P-TAP).

The committee cited a number of public benefits of conducting the survey of private roads, including the fact that some private roads are used by the general public and knowing the condition of private roads may assist in evacuation planning and emergency response.

Additionally, the committee said that private roads often intersect with public roads and their condition may impact the maintenance of public roads or planning and coordinating utility infrastructure work. Private roads subject to slope instability, the committee noted, may have impacts to the public system, hinder evacuations, and disrupt utilities.

Under the agreement, the city will employ Harris & Associates, the firm that conducts the annual assessment of Orinda's public roads, to immediately commence assessing the private roads. The data on the private roads will not be aggregated with the data on public roads because to do so could

cause a change in the city's pavement condition index rating (PCI).

Miller repeatedly said that the survey would not be the same as that conducted on the public roads because it would only be a visual inspection and would not include any maintenance history.

Mayor Darlene Gee pointed out that the first time the public roads were surveyed, there was no maintenance history, but that the contractor was prepared to accept any maintenance history submitted by the private road owners.

Miller also asked what was the purpose of the survey. Vice Mayor Latika Malkani, a member of the committee, responded to Miller's comments and questions. She took issue with Miller's assertion that the public benefits were pretextual. "They are not at all pretextual," she said.

In responding to Miller, Malkani went on, explaining why she wanted the survey "because for too many years the discussion around what we refer to as publicly maintained or privately maintained roads has been, in my opinion,

riddled with exaggeration and hyperbole and inaccuracy. On all sides from various perspectives, and ultimately from a lack of data." She concluded, "I really really want to know some of this information. This is assessment. Nothing more, nothing less, but very critical."

A number of written and in-person comments strongly supported the move to survey the private roads. One public speaker, Kim White, appeared to speak against the motion, talking about "public citizens" and "private citizens." While agreeing with the issues discussed concerning private and public stormwater drains, White concluded that she doesn't feel responsible for paying for somebody's private road.



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Millions of neighbors take part in National Night Out across thousands of communities from all fifty states, U.S. territories and military bases worldwide on the first Tuesday in August (Texas and select areas celebrate on the first Tuesday in October). Neighborhoods host block parties, festivals, parades, cookouts, and various other community events with safety demonstrations, seminars, youth events, visits from emergency personnel, exhibits and much, much more.

Lafayette - Stop by the Lafayette Library and Learning Center Amphitheater (3491 Mt. Diablo Blvd.) from 5 to 7 p.m. on Aug. 6, to meet your local police officers and firefighters. Food will be available for purchase at Ofie's Kitchen Food Truck.

Orinda - Orinda Police Department is inviting the community to join them for a BBQ, on Aug. 6, from 5 to 8 p.m. If you bring a backpack or school supplies to donate, you'll have a chance to dunk the Chief of Police in the Dunk Tank. - S. O'Doherty

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