



City Council Regular Meeting:
 Tuesday, Sept. 3, 7 p.m.
 Orinda Library Auditorium
Planning Commission
 Tuesday, Sept. 10, 7 p.m.
 Orinda Library Auditorium
Supplemental Sales Tax Oversight Commission
 Wednesday, Sept. 11, 6:30 p.m.
 Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22 Orinda Way

City of Orinda:
 www.cityoforinda.org
 Phone (925) 253-4200
Chamber of Commerce:
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SOLD 112 Ravenhill Road, Orinda 2BR 2.5BA 2,060±SF \$1,555,000	SOLD 11 Valley View Road, Orinda 3BR 3BA 2,463±SF 1±AC \$2,495,000

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Chris Swim
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Caltrans updates Orinda City Council about vegetation management on Highway 24

By Sora O'Doherty

How Caltrans deals with wildfire fuel along Highway 24 through Orinda was explained to the City Council on Aug. 20 by Helen Blackmore, Acting District 4 Office Chief and Dave Despain, Maintenance Manager for the East Bay/Delta Region. District 4 covers 2.8 million people, representing 36% of the Bay Area.

With a PowerPoint presentation, they reviewed the history and future of vegetation management since 1987, when the agency adopted a policy of removing vegetation within four to eight feet of roadway pavement with pre-emergent pesticides.

In 1992, however, a programmatic environmental impact report triggered a new, more holistic integrated vegetation management policy, allowing for site specific treatments. Tools

available to CalTrans were expanded to include mowing, weed-wacking, hand removal, herbicides, mulch or concrete, and other design elements. This resulted in much reduced use of herbicides. Herbicide use was cut in half from 1992 to 2000 and is still trending downwards.

Blackmore thanked the Moraga Orinda Fire District, because their efforts to have Caltrans address wildfire fuel on Highway 24 in 2019 led to statewide efforts being adopted. The Caltrans representatives particularly called out MOFD Chief Dave Winnacker for his instrumental role in getting fire fuel reduction not only in Orinda but throughout California.

From 2020 to 2021, workshops were held with local fire departments, and in 2021 the

pilot East Bay Vegetation Management Plan (VMP) was published – the first such plan in the state.

In 2022, Caltrans began scaling up its statewide practices to include permanent Caltrans fuels reduction crews, strike teams, and fuels reductions service contracts. District 4, which includes Orinda, was the first ever Caltrans district to have a VMP and fuels reduction service contracts.

In 2025, all 12 Caltrans districts will publish their first five-year VMP, outlining all vegetation management activities and priorities. Next year Caltrans headquarters also plans to publish a public-facing vegetation and wildfire map viewer. District 4 plans to reach out to the City of Orinda three times a year with updates.

Caltrans has a fuels reduction contract for

State Route 24 through Orinda for 2025/26 that includes application of pre-emergent herbicides every November, mowing and weed-eating every March/April, and year-round tree trimming, as needed.

During council discussion, City Manager David Biggs talked about interaction with Caltrans and other agencies such as East Bay Municipal Utility District in areas where each has some responsibility for fuel reduction.

One public commenter addressed an area in the city where there appears to be a disagreement between the city and Caltrans about who is responsible and requested clarification and a written agreement. Mayor Darlene Gee said that she hopes that an agreement can be worked out to not leave any areas uncovered.



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2024 Lamorinda Idols selected at Orinda Theatre

By Sora O'Doherty

Master of Ceremonies Steve Harwood, "The Voice of Orinda," declared that the Lamorinda Idol 2024 Finals event "was nothing less than magical!" The free event was held on Aug. 18 at the Orinda Theatre.

This year, the winner of the K-2 Solo competition was Erin Koh. 3-5 Solo winner was Piper Lillquist. Quinn Pennington won 6-8 Solo, and Sadie Poole won in the 9-12 grade solo category.

There were also solo competitions for groups in three groups. K-5



Photo provided

Group was won by Dafne & Oliver; group members Dafne Evans and Oliver Cacovean. Triple Threat won the 6-8 Group; group members were Colette Goodman, Cara Impallomeni,

and Ceci Bayley. Lila Weis and Mia Cortesio, performing as Mia & Lila, won the 9-12 group award.

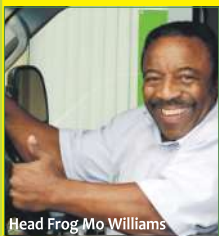
The audience gave its award to Margaret Meckes. TV anchors Diane Dwyer and Claudine Wong were the Masters of Ceremonies, along with Alec Home, former Lamorinda Idol winner, singer, and actor. The competition was judged by Sally Hogarty, Raz Kennedy, Teresa Kali, Lois Grandi, Kelly Fosdahl Burge, Lleyton Allen, David Pinkham, Tielle Baker, and Jackie

Purcell. Details about the judges are available on the Lamorinda Arts Council website.

Established in 2006, Lamorinda Idol is a singing program open to Kindergarten through 12th grade students who either attend a school or reside in Lamorinda. Singers may enter as soloists or in groups. Students outside Lamorinda can participate in the group categories, provided that at least one group member meets the residential requirement.

Photos and videos of the finalists and the award winning performances will be posted later on the Lamorinda Arts Council website. <https://lamorindaarts.org/idol-2/>

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