

Measure R support

I support the passage of Measure R because of what I have learned about the threat to Orinda from catastrophic wildfire. Chief David Winnacker was the catalyst when he spoke to a neighborhood group about what fire scientists know about where and how a fire would be likely to start in our area: Briones, at night from a lightning source, after dry winter excess fuel buildup, with windy conditions, and CalFire strained by other fires. If that doesn't sound familiar, turn on your TV or log in. Better yet, make sure you are registered for the CWS alert system and pay attention to evacuation information.

Involvement with the Firewise Neighborhood Council has taught me that citizens in this community are eager for aggressive fire suppression. Many neighborhoods are organized to promote fuel mitigation, but we lack the resources needed to catch up to the dry fuel backlog built up over many years. Measure R will front load that effort and provide an ongoing source of funds to continue the work in the future. The national CV-19 virus situation and the smoky sky outside my window demonstrate once again how interdependent we are. This tiny tax increase allows the community to invest in vital roads and storm drains in addition to fire prevention. The Orinda Firewise Council is committed to oversight of Measure R spending to ensure it is focused on the needs identified in the neighborhoods. This is an investment in the common good.

Dan Detzner
Orinda

Measure R Q&A

Another General Sales Tax? No Way!

I hate taxes, too. Name a country that doesn't pay for infrastructure with taxes and let's move there. Of all the property taxes we pay, the city only gets \$.07 of each dollar. If you want to start a movement to fix that, call me. Otherwise, we are stuck with a hobbled City Hall.

This is a terrible time for a tax! Covid! The Economy!

When is it a good time to tax? Covid will end someday. The economy goes up and down. Wildfires are getting worse every year. What if we don't make it through a fire season while we're waiting for better times? The city has a moral and fiduciary responsibility to engage around fire mitigation and the infrastructure.

State Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara states that insurance companies look at how well neighborhoods have hardened their homes AND how functional the infrastructure is as part of their risk assessment. While waiting for a good time to tax ourselves, our insurance gets cancelled or triples due to bad infrastructure and excess fuel just waiting to catch. Penny wise, pound foolish?

This tax is regressive

Not as regressive as a parcel tax is. Plus, groceries and prescriptions are exempt.

This tax hurts Orinda businesses

If you've been shopping in Moraga or Walnut Creek to avoid paying taxes here, you have been paying a 1% added tax there. Lafayette has no extra tax. Bet you haven't even noticed that on your receipts.

How will we know the money is spent the right way?

City council members have come through on the current general tax so far. They know that we are concerned and they are scared of losing their own homes or lives in a wildfire, too. The Orinda Firewise Council and the citizen oversight committee assigned to this tax will ride herd on this like never before. The state has been burning up all around. This is serious. This is scary. This is a problem we can make a lot better. Vote Yes on R.

Melanie Light

Orinda