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## **Orinda Residents to Answer the Call, Yet Again Roads polling calls to begin shortly**

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Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) will launch its fourth telephone survey of Orinda residents since 2006 within the next several weeks, said a representative of the firm during a special meeting held by the Orinda City Council on January 11.

The firm is being paid approximately \$16,350 from the City's general reserves to gauge the level of support by Orindans for a potential sales tax increase or bond measure that would raise funds in support of road and infrastructure repair. The poll will also assess residents' moods regarding the quality of City services provided to the community.

The potential sales tax increase would be one-half cent; the bond measure may ask to raise as much as \$20 million. The City Council held the special meeting in order to review the proposed questions that will be used during the poll. Several Council members asked FM3 to make significant revisions in order to ensure that residents are not only asked for their feelings regarding the proposals, but are given information about the continuing deterioration of the City's drains and roads.

Council Member Sue Severson, who serves on the Council's Roads Subcommittee with Mayor Steve Glazer, observed that "There is no perfect vehicle to accomplish what we need, especially because the problem is so great."

Several community members also commented in writing in advance of the meeting and in person during the public forum portion of the program also recommending changes to the questions, with one urging that residents be given a clear idea of how much a sales tax increase could bring in to City coffers.

Rather than trying to fund the entire \$60 million that has been estimated will be required to fix both Orinda's drains, which are reaching the end of their lifespan, and roads that need to be brought from poor to fair or good condition, City leaders are now looking at tackling the problem incrementally.

Council Member Victoria Smith urged that FM3 include in its polling an explanation to residents of what levels of repair can be achieved with the funds raised by the proposed measures. Vice Mayor Amy Worth also suggested replacing several of the questions about community services with additional questions and information relating to the condition of the roads to get as much detailed feedback from residents as possible.

Orindans may also be asked about how frequently they use various communication tools that are available to them currently, or which may be made available in the future. This is being done, said City Manager Janet Keeter, to help City staff determine the most effective ways for staff to communicate with residents.

Four hundred residents will be called during the polling period. The callers have been instructed to identify themselves as representing "FM3, a public opinion research company."

The analysis will be presented by FM3 to the Council by early February.

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