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Orinda stands with Maui

By Alison Burns

Before the regular Aug. 15 Orinda City Council meeting got underway, Mayor Inga Miller asked everyone attending the meeting, whether present in the Orinda Library Auditorium or at home in front of their computer screens, to spare a thought for the suffering of the people of Maui. At that point over a hundred people were known to have died, while more than one thousand still remained unaccounted for.

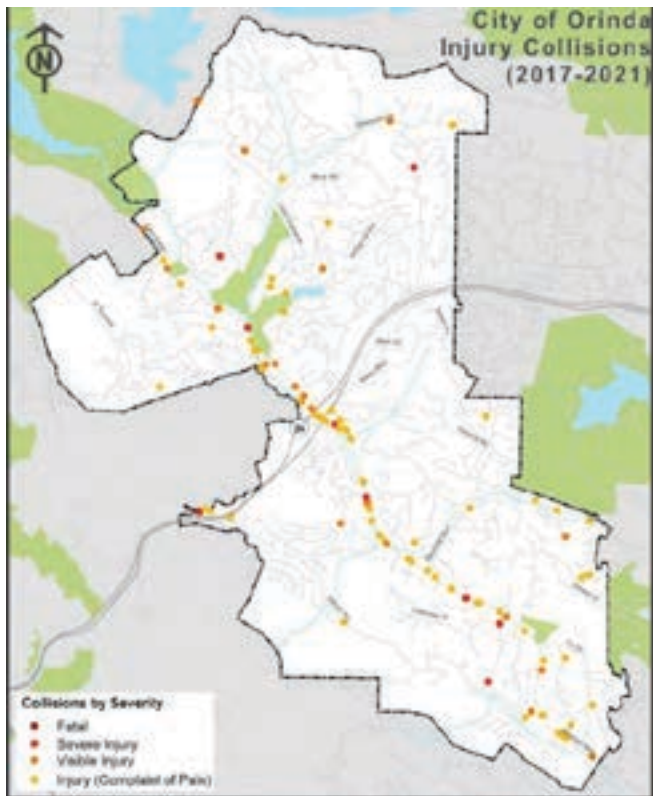
"This is an incredibly sad time," Miller said, "as we listen to the many accounts of all the lives lost in Lahaina, amid what has been the worst wildfire in the last one hundred years in the United States. We don't yet have a full tally of the devastation but as we hear the details of the victims and learn about some of their identities, we know that many more reports will be coming out."

She went on to say that in addition to this being a national tragedy, it's also one

that hits Orinda very deeply, knowing how many of the city's residents have made some of their most important memories in Maui, either as tourists or longtime homeowners.

"Our hearts are with everyone there," Miller said, "and I just ask that we all observe a moment of silence before our meeting, in preparation for the distressing news that we will continue to hear as this disaster unfolds and the community of Lahaina continues to grieve."

Orinda's Local Road Safety Plan addresses greatest concern: speed



Injury Collisions in the City of Orinda (2017-2021)

adding new pedestrian crossings or upgrading existing ones. The installation of dynamic/variable speed warning signs was also suggested.

Non-engineering strategies include a public information campaign to educate motorists about intersection safety laws, unsafe speeds, distracted driving, improper turning and driving under the influence.

Other recommendations include targeted enforcement at high-injury locations, plus an increase in the number of EMS/fire control personnel undertaking Traffic Incident Management Training.

And since Orinda is very much a town of walkers and cyclists, it was recommended that the city should use media outlets and social platforms to raise awareness of bicycle and pedestrian safety needs.

By Alison Burns

After Orinda residents were invited to report their road safety concerns to TJKN Transportation Consultants last year, it came as no surprise to many to discover that the majority of respondents identified speeding as their greatest concern.

Federal regulations require each state to adopt a strategic highway safety plan, primarily derived from data which is then tailored to the community's specific traffic needs. To this end, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) allocated around \$18 million of funding for local agencies to develop their individual plans.

Orinda's award of \$40,000 was further supplemented by around \$70,000 from the city, which then appointed TJKN Transportation Consultants to identify the problems, and solutions, on Orinda's roads. In April 2022, the consultancy began by distributing comprehensive questionnaires to Orindans, via the city website, monthly e-newsletters and social media.

This public outreach garnered 262 responses. Not surprisingly, the highest traffic concern involved speeding (92 residents), with a separate category - "unsafe speed" - adding a further 20 respondents.

Next came 64 people anxious about Pedestrian Safety, while "visibility and safety at intersections" also showed up as an area of concern.

TJKN's data collection covered the years 2015-2019 and identified five "high injury corridors." Camino Pablo (from Bear Creek Road to Santa Maria Way) accounted for 11 injury collisions, while a further 10 "high injury intersections" (three of which involved Moraga Way) tallied an additional 14 injury collisions. Of the 18 signal upgrades currently being undertaken, 13 are along Camino Pablo.

Analysts found that 25% of all collisions, and 44% of "severe injury collisions," involved hitting an (unnamed) object. The primary factor in 24% of all collisions, and 44% of serious injuries, was categorized as "unsafe speed."

TJKN advocated implementing "the five E's of traffic safety" - namely Engineering, Enforcement, Equity, Education and Emergency Medical Services.

Recommended engineering projects include installing flashing beacons at stop-controlled intersections and elsewhere as an advance warning; installing raised medians on approaches and chevron signs on horizontal curves; installing rectangular rapid flashing beacons, and



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2023



City Council Regular Meeting: Tuesday, Sept. 5, 7 p.m.
Planning Comm.: Tuesday, Sept. 12, 7 p.m.

Traffic Safety Advisory Committee Regular Meeting Wednesday, Sept. 18, 7 p.m.
Sarge Littlehale Community Room, 22 Orinda Way