

Opinion: Loop road possibilities need to be studied

Publisher's note: *This letter was sent to the South Lake Tahoe City Council and is reprinted with the author's permission.*

I sat in at the Lodging Association meeting last Thursday and heard the loop road presentation from Carl Hastings. [sic]

I was not happy with Plan No. 1 or Plan No. 2, so am glad the City Council voted for a third option.

Here's my two cents for a third option:

1. Being that two-thirds of the traffic on Highway 50 goes right on through the state line without stopping (according to Carl Hastings) [sic] let's excavate the Highway 50 corridor and put through traffic underground.

2. Leave the existing loop road, businesses and resident homes intact.

3. Close off H50 at Park Avenue where traffic would either turn right for Raley's, Marriott, Harrah's, etc. or left toward beach, Harveys, Horizon and Edgewood on the lower loop road.

4. Close traffic off at the loop road by Edgewood and traffic either goes right or left locally onto the existing loop road as above.

5. Casino parking is off the loop road.

6. The western facing traffic tunnel would start between Kingsbury Grade and the loop road intersection on the NV side.

7. The eastern traffic tunnel would start somewhere near the

entrance to Tahoe Meadows on the CA side.

8. The existing Harveys to Harrah's pedestrian tunnel would be removed and replaced with pedestrian overpass with shops and gambling space or restaurant over the road. (That would be up to Harrah's.)

9. The traffic tunnel would be one lane either way going underground with a drop off lane in front of each casino for buses, etc.

10. A middle lane for emergencies. Five lanes total underground.

11. Entrance and exit to the tunnel would be one lane down and one lane up.

12. The walking mall would be designed so traffic could go through there in an emergency.

Results:

Fantastic Walking Mall between Park Ave. and Edgewood Loop intersection.

An area that will enhance a future convention center (Hole in the Ground).

As the casinos go out of business (Horizon) can be converted to a Macy's type shopping center possibly or a large entertainment venue.

Increase in value of the "hole in the ground" and encourage someone to finish it.

Reduce air pollution and the stop and go traffic as there would be no lights for submerged through traffic until they got to Kingsbury Grade.

A mall atmosphere would exist that locals would like to go.

It will cost more than the other plans, but a public works project should be done first class.

Nearly every major city in Europe has a grand square that bans cars and is the place for locals and tourists to visit and shop.

Who is going to pay for it? All of us.

Happy trails,

Les Wright, South Lake Tahoe