

Letter: Fanny Bridge transparency questioned

To the community,

After spending the last three and a half years reviewing the documentation provided by the Tahoe Transportation District (TTD) to the public on the proposed Highway 89 Fanny Bridge Revitalization I am amazed at the continued use of falsified information to justify the project. Initially the TTD may not have done adequate research on the information they used to file the California Access Program Project Application for the federal funding for the proposed project; however, the continued use of misleading information is unethical.

The current Caltrans Bridge Inspection Report dated June 9, 2014, states that the girders, columns, abutments, footing and pier caps are structurally sound. With accurate information provided to both the TTD and the TRPA, both agencies have continued to falsify the actual condition of the bridge.

On May 19, 2015, the TTD published: "Because it serves as the sole vehicular and emergency access and evacuation route over the Truckee River for West Shore residents, Fanny Bridge's deficiency also proposes a safety risk to local residents and visitors."

The TRPA staff also presented the same information to the TRPA Governing Board on Feb. 18, 2015. Confirmation from Caltrans was provided to both agencies on Nov. 4, 2014 when Caltrans confirmed that the repairs to Fanny Bridge are minor in nature. Much of the information provided in the funding application fell into the same category.

Actions taken by the TRPA during the vote on this project did not follow its past direction in protecting the Tahoe environment. The executive director for the TRPA held a public

meeting a few years ago and displayed a Tupperware box with road sand in it. Stating that road sand is the No. 1 cause in the decline of lake clarity. TRPA further stated: "TRPA years ago established an urban boundary to stop sprawl, capped the roadway capacity of the basin to reduce reliance on the private automobile" and "Limiting the amount of land coverage at Lake Tahoe will continue to be a cornerstone of TRPA's plan to protect Lake Tahoe's water quality."

The proposed project approved by the TRPA governing and advisory boards adds road sand to an expanded highway system resulting in approximately 4.4 acres of land coverage some of which is through a stream environmental area.

On April 14, 2015, I met with the staff of Sen. Dianne Feinstein to request the senator's involvement in the SR89 Fanny Bridge Project. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, who co-authored the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act and prides the achievements of the act by eliminating roadways through forested land, protecting the irreplaceable environment and protecting the SEZs; after over a month from meeting with her staff, Feinstein has remained silent on whether the impacts to the environment, community and businesses out way the proposed cost of \$33 million.

The outcome of the SR89 Fanny Bridge Community Revitalization Project was decided on over a year ago, which was confirmed by a representative of Placer County. Based on factual information there is no justification for the project.

I would like to thank all of the members of the North Shore community, League to Save Lake Tahoe and Friends of the West Shore who supported me on my passion to try and provide the best project possible for our irreplaceable environment, community and businesses.

Jim Sajdak, Tahoe City