

Novasel talks roads, other EDC topics

By Kathryn Reed

Road projects dominated the conversation Monday night between El Dorado County Supervisor Sue Novasel and those at the South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce meeting.

“In concept I think it’s wonderful. I see it as an economic driver,” Novasel said of the proposed loop road near the state line.

The county won’t have a say on the project. However, Novasel is on the Tahoe Transportation District board, and it’s that agency which is spearheading the Highway 50 realignment. She is also the county’s rep on the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board, which will have a say regarding some aspects of the project.

Her biggest concern with the loop road is parking.



Supervisor Sue Novasel on April 18 talks at the Cantina to chamber members about an array of El Dorado County issues. Photo/LTN

Carl Hasty, who heads the TTD, last week said the project is not designed to deal with parking.

Novasel likes the idea of a more walkable-bikeable area.

At the other edge of her district that is part of the Lake Tahoe Basin, the proposed roundabout at highways 50 and 89 generated much discussion.

Angie Olson, a Meyers resident, said, "Every morning I smell hot brakes. How are trucks going to slow down for the roundabout?"

Novasel said she has the same concern, as does the California Highway Patrol. It has been brought up with Caltrans, which is the state agency that desires the **roundabout**. A final decision has not been made to build this. A four-way stop and traffic signals are also possible.

The supervisor said she is lobbying for a designated chain control area. She has also asked Caltrans to create a computer-generated model to simulate what the traffic pattern could be like.

She said Caltrans plans to host a meeting in May about the roundabout, but no date has been set.

Novasel is also encouraging the transportation department to build the roundabout – assuming that is the desired fix for the intersection – at the same time the **Echo Summit bridge** is rebuilt. Construction is likely to occur in two to three years.

Other items touched on at the meeting:

- Tahoe Paradise Park will allow dogs on leashes starting May 5.
- At today's Board of Supervisors meeting changes to the vacation home rental ordinance are expected to be approved.

They include mandating owners have a business license and endorsing the **Good Neighbor** policy.

- Novasel believes hiring a public information officer will help the county to better get its message out.

- Regarding the **senior center**, the supervisors have asked for the property to be assessed, as well as an analysis of financial value of the whole area. She said she'd like to write in a deed restriction so certain services would always be provided, like meals for seniors, which is a county program.

- She defended her **Feb. 23 vote** not to allocate more money for roads, saying, "It was not a vote against roads, it was a vote against the process."

- Novasel said she wants to get money from Red Hawk Casino's deal with the county so money comes to the basin to deal with roads. "It's almost an act of God to get that contract changed," she said. However, when the **county in 2012 revised** the 2006 agreement Tahoe was not and has never been a beneficiary of the tribe's money.

- When budget hearings begin later this spring for the fiscal year that begins July 1, money is expected to be allocated so the Meyers Area Plan can go through California Environmental Quality Act environmental review.