

Letter: Questioning lack of Measure T defense

Publisher's note: The following letter was read to the South Lake Tahoe City Council on Feb. 7, 2017, by city resident Tami Wallace and is republished with permission.

Honorable mayor and City Council. I must admit that I'm glad that I get to talk and you can only listen. I wish marriages and children came with that feature.



Tami Wallace

Last summer a varied group of citizens circulated an initiative petition that was meant to allow all the voters a chance to vote regarding the proposed loop road; 1,400 signatures were found to be valid.

Then, Measure T passed by a very large 20 percent margin. Almost 4,000 of your constituents voted for Measure T giving you, the City Council, what we believed was clear direction.

But a council candidate had sued the citizens, the city and El Dorado County to keep the voters from having input.

Many were suspicious when the county and the citizens were excluded from the lawsuit by the plaintiff and his expensive Sacramento law firm. Only the city remained as a defendant. Why was that?

Also, to this day we don't know who paid the legal expenses on

a lawsuit against the citizens of our city.

In reality most people aren't against some version of a loop road, but many have had individual reasons for wanting to have a say based on the current proposal.

Some were concerned that over a dozen businesses would be moved or worse removed.

Some were concerned that traffic would be backed up for four years of construction.

Some were concerned that a planned shopping complex in Nevada would be waiting at the end to take away California sales tax dollars.

Many worried that new taxes would be needed for the \$90 million 1-mile project when we have hundreds of miles of city streets that are broken and filled with pot holes.

Some were concerned that no new parking would be included.

Many were worried that up to 87 families would be displaced with no funds yet identified for their replacement. How does a Chicago style high rise apartment complex built next to the highway or moving those families into the old middle school in Nevada effectively solve the issue?

An almost unspoken reason has been the racial overtones of dividing a mostly Hispanic community, while no other part of town would ever allow this to happen.

Another concern is that TTD (Tahoe Transportation District), the loop road proponent, is responsible for the poorly run, underfunded bus system that does not have enough sheltered bus stops to protect the riders from the weather with such late arriving buses.

Why were the county and the citizens removed from the lawsuit?

Was it so that the city could pretend to defend but intend to lose the lawsuit against Mr. [Jason] Collin, a fellow councilmember?

I have in my hand the transcript of the court proceeding where your attorney says and I quote:

“With respect to the petitioner, Jason Collin, the City does not oppose a preliminary injunction and/or a permanent injunction under the theories of statewide concern.”

Needless to say your legal counsel either did this on his own or the City Council directed him to sell your constituents down the river. Which was it?

The language of the measure could have easily been amended by agreement with the citizens.

I'm here to tell you how disappointed we are and that this is not the end of this matter.