

Caltrans will look at requests to modify safety project

By Nick Baptista/ The Valley Springs News/ March 18, 2015

Caltrans is open to taking another look at its project to improve safety along State Route 26 between Vista Del Lago and Country View drives.

“Caltrans has met with business people and Supervisor (Steve) Kearney and will consider their requests,” Caltrans spokesman Rick Estrada said on Monday.

Projected safety work along State Route 26 between Vista Del Lago and County View drives has raised the concerns of several businesses along the roadway.

He was referring to a March 5 meeting at La Contenta Golf Club where local business owners outlined their concerns about the proposed route for the safety project. Owners of businesses along the highway believe the improvements should be concentrated along undeveloped land west of the highway.

The highway improvement work calls for the addition of left turn lanes at the State Route 26 intersections with St. Andrews and Country View Drive.

To make room for the left turn lanes, Caltrans plans to shift much of the roadway to the east side where it will have a detrimental impact on La Contenta Golf Club, 10th Green Inn and the Thomas Center, the owners say.

“Caltrans’s goal is always to select a solution that is less impact on a community yet still meet the needs of the project,” Estrada said.

La Contenta would lose a portion of its golf path, while 10th Green Inn and Thomas Center would lose parking spaces. In addition, La Contenta might be forced to install a nearly \$1 million safety net to keep wayward golf balls from reaching the highway and distracting drivers.

The safety project is scheduled for this year and Estrada said it was too early to speculate whether re-evaluation of the project will impact the starting date.

In addition to the turn lanes, the intersection of State Route 26 and Vista Del Lago is scheduled to receive a traffic signal in 2016.

District 5 Supervisor Kearney and District 1 Supervisor Cliff Edson are both working on the issue and plan to ask new County Public Works Director Jeffrey Crovitz to write a letter to Caltrans expressing the county’s concerns that the present plans for realignment will have a detrimental impact on businesses along the highway and set up future meetings with Caltrans to discuss those concerns and reach an acceptable solution.