



Mr. Avi Bar
Head of Public Policy
Waze
1350 Charleston Rd.
Mountain View, CA 94043

Mr. Wilson White
Director, Public Policy & Government
Relations
Google
345 Spear Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

February 12, 2019

Dear Messrs. Bar and White,

On June 5th, 2018, the County of El Dorado, CA and the California Highway Patrol sent a jointly-signed letter urging Waze to discontinue its practice of redirecting drivers from westbound Highway 50 to Lake Tahoe Boulevard through residential neighborhoods. Not only does that create a potential liability for drivers because Waze directs them to circumvent an Agriculture Inspection Station, which is a misdemeanor, but it has created a complete backlog of traffic in residential areas, particularly the town of Meyers. Our previous letter focused on the legalities of Waze's mapping around the Agriculture Inspection Station. To our disappointment, we have received no response.

This time, the County of El Dorado and Barton Hospital are joining to point out the public safety issue your traffic mapping application creates. These are issues that can be immediately ameliorated if Waze would institute an electronic closure to traffic in residential areas as drivers exit South Lake Tahoe and head west.

With an influx of approximately 12,000 vehicles to South Lake Tahoe on any given weekend and up to 4,000 more during a three-day holiday weekend, the amount of traffic is indeed more than Highway 50, the only route out of South Lake Tahoe for those returning to their homes in the Sacramento region and the Bay Area, can accommodate.

Officials from State, County and local government jurisdictions continue to take steps to mitigate the traffic issue that has at times had people stranded in their vehicles for up to eight hours on a trip that normally takes less than two. Implementing meaningful solutions from government won't come quickly, but private industry can help *right now*.

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Waze and Google
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Because of the backlog of cars on the highway, Waze directs drivers onto residential roads in Meyers, creating gridlock and, more importantly, a safety issue for residents who live there and are virtually stuck in their homes. These residents include on-call physicians at Barton Hospital, the only Level III Trauma Center and Emergency Department in Lake Tahoe. The next closest hospital and emergency room is in Carson City Nevada, 34 miles away.

Waze's routing drivers through residential streets making them impassible during peak travel times creates a threat to public safety. Specifically, the response time of County ambulances are delayed. In addition, physicians and nurses who reside in Meyers are unable to arrive in time for their normal shift, and even worse, unable to respond in a timely manner in the event of an emergency. While the original request from the County and the California Highway Patrol failed to result in a response from Waze, much less any corrective action, we are hopeful that presenting you with the very real public safety issues routing traffic through residential neighborhoods will.

We respectfully request Waze become a partner with us and take steps to institute an electronic closure to traffic in residential areas as drivers exit South Lake Tahoe and head west in advance of what is sure to be another high-traffic volume, high-anxiety weekend during President's Day on February 18th as throngs of visitors take advantage to the several feet of newly-fallen snow the area has received in the last two weeks.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to hearing from you and would be happy to discuss any other alternatives which you believe would mitigate these public safety risks.

Sincerely,



Don Ashton, MPA
Chief Administrative Officer
County of El Dorado



Clint Purvance, MD
Chief Executive Officer
Barton Memorial Hospital

cc: Frank Rush, City Manager, City of South Lake Tahoe
Brian Uhler, Chief, South Lake Tahoe Police Department
Lieutenant Terry Lowther, California Highway Patrol, South Lake Tahoe Area
Amarjeet Benipal, Director, District 3, Caltrans
El Dorado County Supervisor Sue Novasel, District V



Carla Hass <carla.hass@edcgov.us>

Urgent request for mapping change re Level III Trauma Center before President's Day Weekend

Avi Bar

Wed, Feb 13, 2019 at 3:14 PM

To: carla.hass@edcgov.us

Hi Carla,

Thanks for reaching out. I didn't receive any previous communication from you. Please note that this is my correct email address and I always try to reply within a few days.

I'll ask the team to look into this matter and get back to you as soon as possible. I just want to set expectations straight as from my experience traffic issues are far too complicated to be solved by a quick fix by any one application.

Thanks,

- Avi Bar
- Public Policy Manager
-

On Tue, Feb 12, 2019 at 8:30 PM Avi Bar

wrote:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Carla Hass** <carla.hass@edcgov.us>

Date: Tue, Feb 12, 2019, 19:43

Subject: Fwd: Urgent request for mapping change re Level III Trauma Center before President's Day Weekend

To: <avi .com>

Mr. Bar,

I'm unsure if you currently work for Waze. Your Google emails have bounced back. Hopefully this email reaches you.

If you're not affiliated with Waze and know who I can contact, your assistance is very much appreciated.

Regards,

Carla

Carla B. Hass

Carla.hass@edcgov.us

530-621-4609

www.edcgov.us

www.facebook.com/EIDoradoCountyNews

www.twitter.com/countyeildorado

Begin forwarded message:

From: Carla Hass <carla.hass@edcgov.us>

Date: February 12, 2019 at 7:31:08 PM PST

To: wilsonw , abar

Subject: Urgent request for mapping change re Level III Trauma Center before President's Day Weekend

From: Carla Hass <carla.hass@edcgov.us>
Date: February 12, 2019 at 5:38:33 PM PST
To: Carla Hass <carla.hass@edcgov.us>
Cc: Donald Ashton <don.ashton@edcgov.us>, Clinton Purvance <cpurvance@bartonhealth.org>
Subject: Urgent request for mapping change re Level III Trauma Center before President's Day Weekend

Messrs. Bar and White,

Please see the attached electronic version of a letter sent by mail today respectfully requesting Waze join El Dorado County and Barton Hospital in its efforts to maintain its ability to efficiently run the only Level III Trauma Center and Emergency Room in Lake Tahoe and enhance public safety for South Lake Tahoe residents and visitors.

We look forward to your earliest response.

Regards,

Carla B. Hass
Director of Communications & Outreach
Direct: 530-621-4609
Cell: 916-293-2046

County of El Dorado
<https://edcgov.us>
<https://www.facebook.com/ElDoradoCountyNews>
<https://twitter.com/countyeldorado>



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Carla Hass <carla.hass@edcgov.us>

Concerns regarding Waze routing

Thais Blumenthal de Moraes

Wed, Feb 13, 2019 at 4:48 PM

Reply-To:

To: carla.hass@edcgov.us, don.ashton@edcgov.us, cpurvance@bartonhealth.org

Dear Carla,

Thank you for reaching out about the concerns about Waze redirecting drivers from West Bound Highway 50 to Lake Tahoe Boulevard. I wanted to make sure you have some background on how our routing works.

- Our algorithm is global and not made specifically for each state, city or region. We use all available public roads which are open for use by all citizens, including to alleviate gridlock.
- While we get requests to alter our algorithm or refrain from routing to certain roads from time to time, our position has always remained consistent: local government has the authority and responsibility to set driving laws and travel restrictions, not Waze or any other navigation app. If the local government decides on a specific speed limits, one-way traffic designation or time based turn restrictions, the Waze map will reflect that reality. But if the governing body deems a road as public and navigable, it will be used for routing as needed for the benefit of everyone.
- We do not route drivers based on inspection stations location, checkpoints, or any other information that isn't connected to congestion levels.

Notwithstanding, we understand your frustration and we are here to help. Community is a big part of what makes Waze so special. For example, our maps are built by a community of 500,000 local volunteers, and they are the critical human layer that ensures our maps stay up-to-date.

Through our Connected Citizens Program, we've partnered with 900+ municipalities, Departments of Transportation, first responders, and nonprofits to improve traffic conditions and mobility at scale. For example, we provided the city of Boston with access to our traffic jam data, which allowed them to identify issues around problematic intersections and signal timing. This led to an 18% month-over-month reduction in congestion at key intersections.

As you can see, Waze takes its role seriously as the connector and convener between cities, citizens, and companies. We want to empower everyone to improve mobility together.

I would encourage you to consider joining our community of program and connecting with other partners who have experienced similar issues with traffic congestion.

You can find out more about our Connected Citizens Program [here](#).

Let me know if you have any questions

Best Regards

Thais

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Thais Blumenthal

Global Lead for CCP, Waze Business Development