

Mayor's Report on Chino Valley Road Repairs

One of our local businessmen contacted me the other day with some questions regarding the condition of our roads here in Chino Valley, and I thought it would be a good opportunity to bring the rest of our community up to speed on the subject of street repair. As most of our citizens know, funding for road and street repair comes largely from Highway User Revenue Funds (commonly referred to as HURF funds), which comes from vehicle license fees as well as gasoline and diesel taxes. The funds are then distributed to each city and town according to population. Unfortunately, during the last few years the Arizona state government (in order to balance their budget) has taken money out of that fund – with local governments losing right at one billion dollars of road repair funds over the last ten years. Since the usage of those funds had to be somehow related to the highway system, the money was placed into the budget for the Department of Public Safety.

Now, anyone who travels our streets and highways has probably noticed the plethora of brand new blue and white SUV's with the Department of Public Safety insignia on the side. Since one of those SUV's fully equipped costs around \$47,000 and a mile of chip sealed road costs about \$100,000, a quick calculation shows that two SUV's are roughly the equivalent of a freshly paved mile of road in Chino. The money would go even further if used to prevent the deterioration of our existing streets.

Now, a wry observer would probably note that the loss of HURF funds is actually a boon for Chino Valley citizens, since rougher streets mean slower speeds, slower speeds mean less tickets, and less tickets mean lower insurance costs for the average driver. I suppose when we look at it in that light, it really is a win/win situation.

All that aside, it looks like our State government will hopefully reduce the amount that it will be taking from our HURF funds this year- so there's a chance that the years to come will see some desperately needed repairs to our streets. That will make life easier for all of our citizens.

Chris Marley, Mayor of Chino Valley