

COUNTY'S ROAD SELECTION PROCESS NEEDS REVAMPING

Last year, Green Valley received \$650,000 for road preservation, which was one-third of the amount allocated to District 4. The Pima County Transportation Advisory Committee (PCTAC) had allocated less than \$60,000 to Green Valley but the Green Valley Council and our Supervisor, Steve Christy, fought to receive our fair share of the road money, including funding to fix roads rated poor, in addition to the better roads selected by the County. The Board of Supervisors concurred, and we received the \$650,000.

This year, Green Valley is slated to receive \$1,885,012 in road restoration money which is its fair share of District 4's total allotment of \$5,069,840. The total Pima County allotment for rural roads is \$24,295,677, which County Administrator Chuck Huckelberry squeezed from the Pima County budget by proposing "pay as you go" budgeting—possible because of the County's overall debt reduction; cutting staff costs in the Public Works Department; and finding other savings. The Council applauds Pima County for launching a serious effort at restoring our horribly deteriorated roads.

However, the Council is extremely disappointed that the work of its Road Prioritization Committee and the community was ignored. Only one road recommended by the Committee will be repaired. Camino Casa Verde. The County instead chose the roads to be paved using the following justifications:

At the April 23, 2019, the PCTAC Committee voted on the criteria for prioritizing the pavement road program for FY 2019. The Council and Road Prioritization Committee agree with the need to set criteria for decision making that include the following: (a) Distribute the money equally between the Districts--this was done and we agree; (b) Distribute 50% of the funding to local roads and 50% to arterial/collectors--this was done and we agree; (c) Generate a road list using street saver algorithms maximizing value--this was done but could be better formulated; (d) prioritizing local funding to repair the worst roads first--this was done and we agree. All of these criteria embody the discussions surrounding the 2018 allocation.

But—and here's the kicker—the final criterion states:

Allow the Department of Transportation staff to adjust and generate final road list selection through minimizing mobilization costs through strategic grouping; minimizing fragmentation of the work within subdivisions or along arterial/collector roadway segments; and, selecting additional roadway segments to allocate budget remnants.

The result is that the "worst of the worst" roads are not getting paved. Based on this standard and without taking the Road Prioritization Committee's recommendations into account, the County has elected to repair a whole subdivision's roads. Fairways III roads will be milled and filled (i.e., scraped down and repaved) even though the Council's assessment is that not all of those roads need mill and fill and other roads are in worse condition. The County will also be milling and filling Abrego Road from Continental to the South end of Abrego, something that the Council did not

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even consider. The Council does agree that milling and filling W. Camino Casa Verde from N. La Canada to N. Avenida Del Abaco is appropriate.

How did this happen? Over 50% of Green Valley's roads are in poor or failed condition--that is over 50 miles of Green Valley Roads. Within "failed condition", there is a spectrum of road conditions from the best of the worst to the worst of the worst. Pima County only recognized "worst" and lumped them all together in the selection process. Our Road Prioritization Committee looks deeper, rating gradations of "worst". Last year the County honored our assessment. This year it did not.

What are we doing? Understandably, we would like to have more community involvement in the decision-making. But we also need to work with the Pima County Department of Transportation's professionals and with the Board of Supervisors to underwrite a process that would include the community's voice in the selection of roads for the future.

We will be working through a new subcommittee created by PCTAC, of which we are a member. We are recommending a new method of rating roads, one used by the Corp of Engineers, the AZ State Highway Department and many other cities in Arizona. It takes into consideration the full spectrum of road conditions in each category so that anyone can distinguish the worst of the worst from the best of the worst. In addition, with our Supervisor Steve Christy's help, we are asking that community input be taken into consideration. In particular, our Green Valley community input, based on a ten-year track record of our Road Prioritization Committee, demonstrates a much more in-depth awareness of how the road conditions impact the community.

Stay tuned. This is not the end of the road saga. After all, we are the ones who live and drive on these roads. We will keep you informed as we work for a better system of road selection.

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