



Independent, locally owned and operated!

www.lamorindaweekly.com 925-377-0977

Published September 29th, 2010

Want Roads Fixed - Need More Money

By Cathy Tyson

Unless a new revenue source is found, the road repair backlog will never be solved, suggested Tony Coe, Engineering Services Manager, at a recent City Council meeting discussing Lafayette's five year capital improvement program (CIP). "The status quo will not resolve the (road repair) backlog," said Coe. "Staff observes that the backlog cannot be eliminated without sustaining a higher level of capital funding on a continuous basis into the future. Even sizable one-time special revenues such as the Palos Colorados payment will only result in an initial drawdown of the backlog, but they are not large enough to solve the problem entirely over the long term."

"Entering 2011 there are 97 streets awaiting reconstruction," said Coe. There is a shortfall of \$14 million to repair all of these roads, plus an additional \$2 million for associated drain repair, a grand total of \$16 million.

Several "What if" scenarios were presented to the City Council to illustrate possible road repair options. Sometimes a picture really is worth a thousand words - Coe had several charts that show a line representing current funding and a line representing road and drain needs. Bottom line - if nothing changes the failed road situation is never solved - the lines never cross.

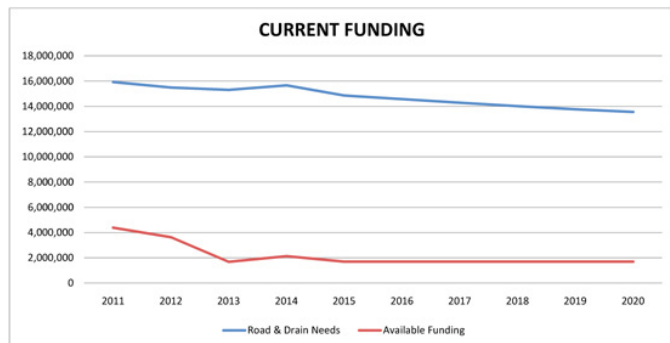
Another scenario showed the effect of current funding plus an additional \$400,000 annually from the General Fund - in this case the projected time to eliminate the shortfall is around 29 years. At the recent Budget Workshop there was some discussion about adding \$400,000 more from the General Fund to put toward road repairs - but it couldn't be done without un-balancing the budget and dipping into City reserve accounts.

Even with current funding plus \$400,000 from the General Fund plus money from Palos Colorados, plus the Redevelopment Agency (RDA), the shortfall will take 19 years to be eliminated.

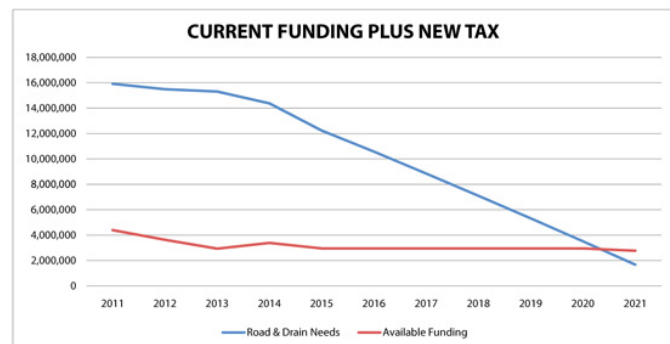
With current funding and an unspecified new revenue source that would generate \$1,250,000 per year, the shortfall will be eliminated in eleven years. The lines cross in 2021.

Finally the rosier picture includes all possible funding sources: current funding plus Palos Colorado plus RDA plus a new tax. This combination is projected to eliminate the shortfall in nine years.

One possible very small bright spot on the horizon is Measure O - proposed by the Contra Costa County Transportation Authority, a \$10 - \$15 vehicle license fee from each car owner. If passed, the measure could bring an estimated \$175,000 per year to Lafayette. While this amount is nothing to sneeze at and would help the situation, as noted above the city needs almost ten times that amount going forward to solve the road repair problem.



<http://lafayette.waterware.com/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-4639/September%2013,%202010%20City%20Council20100908122449.pdf> (page 19, 23)



<http://lafayette.waterware.com/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-4639/September%2013,%202010%20City%20Council20100908122449.pdf> (page 19, 23)

Reach the reporter at: cathy@lamorindaweekly.com

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA