



Bell Road reconstruction will start in the fall

Tony Lombardo

The Arizona Republic

May. 25, 2007 08:25 AM

Surprise leaders have drafted a new plan for major Bell Road reconstruction, with work starting as early as this fall.

The reconstruction would stretch from Grand Avenue west past Loop 303.

The plan is included in the municipal budget, which will be put to a final vote June 14. The budget tentatively allots \$2.5 million per year to the project through 2012.

If construction costs increase, that number may have to be adjusted in future budget discussions, Management & Budget Director Michael Schrock Jr. said.

The Bell Road repairs will occur in phases in the following order:

- Westbound lanes from Grand Avenue west to Parkview Place. Work will start in the fall, with an estimated July 2008 completion.
- Westbound lanes from Parkview Place west to Loop 303, with an estimated July 2009 completion.
- Both sides of the street from Loop 303 west to the Beardsley Canal, with an estimated July 2010 completion.
- Eastbound lanes from Parkview Place east to Grand Avenue, with an estimated July 2011 completion.
- Eastbound lanes from Loop 303, east to Parkview Place, with an estimated July 2012 completion.

The work will entail a major roadway overhaul, with a new base and asphalt planned in many cases, Public Works Director Bob Beckley said.

"The city spent more than two years working with two consultants analyzing the current condition of the pavement and also the sub-base," Beckley said. "Based on the type of pavement failures (cracking and potholes) that we're experiencing, it's become obvious to us that the majority of the road section must be replaced."

The construction, to take place from this fall through 2012, would stretch about six miles west from Grand Avenue past the Loop 303 to Beardsley Canal. Estimated cost is approximately \$12.5 million.

The plan is contingent on the Surprise City Council's passage of the budget, which will go to a vote June 14. The council tentatively agreed on the \$452.1 million city budget at Thursday's meeting.

Initially, budget talks touched on delaying major Bell Road construction until 2013, which didn't sit well with council members. Earlier this month, city staff offered a clearer plan to the council that allowed reconstruction to take place sooner.

The city will set aside \$2.5 million in pavement preservation funds each year through 2012 for Bell Road reconstruction. The remaining \$2 million in pavement preservation money will be used for the city's other streets, Schrock said.

About 84 percent of the city's pavement preservation money would come from the general fund, with the rest coming from the city's share of the state gasoline taxes, Schrock said.

Rehabilitation east of Grand Avenue will continued as needed under the plan.

Once complete, the new streets would last 20 to 25 years without maintenance. The city's plan, however, is to administer preventative maintenance and stretch that estimate, Beckley said.

In as early as a year, construction could start on the Bell Road overpass at the Loop 303 intersection, which the Arizona Department of Transportation is overseeing, City Engineer Bob Maki said. The timeline for that project is unknown, he said.

Reach the reporter at (602) 444-6912.