



# The Daily Courier

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## Editorial: Paying for roads to get muddier

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The nation's gasoline price crisis also has caused a gasoline tax revenue crisis.

At a recent meeting of the [Central Yavapai Metropolitan Planning Organization](#), Rakesh Tripathi, director of multimodal planning for the [Arizona Department of Transportation](#), painted a daunting picture of the state's ability to complete future transportation projects that depend on revenue from gasoline taxes.

"People are not driving as much because of gasoline prices," he said. "Revenues are down drastically."

The situation is so drastic, he added, that once the department completes its five-year planning of projects through 2014, ADOT estimates it will have little or no revenue for new road projects.

Not to add to the gloomy outlook but it's likely going to get a lot worse.

If the next president accomplishes nothing else in office, he must start the nation on the path of energy independence from foreign nations.

That almost certainly means weaning American motorists off gasoline power in favor of electricity, natural gas, hydrogen fuel cells or hybrids combining alternatives.

The American people will need to take an active role in sorting out that issue. They need to inform themselves on the various options for fueling cars and offer the government guidance in establishing infrastructure to support the ultimate choice or choices.

As America sorts out the future predominant means of fueling automobiles in the future, we also will have to figure out how we will generate the revenue necessary to keep the roads they use not only in decent repair but also expand them to meet future needs.

That endeavor promises to be as painful as it will be difficult.

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