

## Arizona lacking money for new roads and mass-transit projects

by **Glen Creno** - Nov. 12, 2008 12:00 AM  
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Cash-strapped states around the country are looking hard for new ways to pay for expensive transportation projects.

And they're coming up with some unusual options.

Oregon, South Dakota and Pennsylvania have considered billing people for the number of miles they drive. In California, transportation officials want to sell advertising on highway message boards to generate cash. New York City proposed billing drivers who go in and out of Manhattan's business district on workdays.

What's happening in Arizona? Not much.

The state has been sounding the alarm about dwindling transportation money, which comes primarily from gas taxes. But a \$42.6 billion ballot initiative to raise money was disqualified, leaving fast-growing Arizona once again without a way to pay for what officials call "critical" transportation projects such as new roads and mass transit.

The state Department of Transportation says there is no discussion about alternative

funding strategies. It says policymakers and voters would have to take up that issue.

Curtis Lueck, a Tucson transportation consultant, said someone needs to advocate some ideas.

"We've got to get off the dime in Arizona," he said. "We're on a collision course with more congestion, with air-pollution issues. Somebody's got to be willing to step up and make a decision."

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