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Mandatory fee may be in store for road maintenance

The county engineer says he needs more funding to repair subdivision roads.

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A top Marion County transportation official suggests it might be time for some homeowners to pay more for their road maintenance.

County engineer Mounir Bouyounes recently told the County Commission he needs extra funding to keep pace with needed repair on subdivision roads.

So far, brainstorming sessions have not produced a feasible solution to finding that money, Bouyounes said.

One answer - and possibly the only one - may be a "mandatory assessment" to cover the costs to properly maintain and resurface such roads, he added.

"I cannot emphasize enough - because we have not done any work in subdivisions, only patching potholes - I cannot emphasize enough that we need to be more aggressive on residential streets," Bouyounes told the board during a workshop late last week.

Yet, Bouyounes added, "All the funding sources we have in place . . . are dedicated to the major road system, and we don't have enough to take care of the major road system."

It was unclear, however, which subdivisions fell into this category and exactly how many miles the county was responsible for.

The suggestion emerged at the commission's yearly update of the county's five-year transportation improvement program.

The document previews county road projects through 2015.

Commissioners are expected to take a formal vote to ratify the plan in a few weeks.

Among the big-ticket items that will be handled in the coming year:

\$14.3 million for building the extension of Southwest 42nd Street between 27th Avenue and State Road 200, a project that includes an overpass at Interstate 75.

\$9.5 million to acquire right of way for the first phase of the Belleview Beltway, overall a 5.2-mile segment that loops around the eastern side of the city to connect County Road 25 to Southeast 92nd Place.

\$3.8 million to add two lanes to 1.2 miles of Southwest 95th Street between 60th and 49th avenues.

