



Residential Street & Sidewalk Program

A voter approved tax on electrical and natural gas services in Cheney is expiring later this year. This dedicated funding paid for the repair of nearly 18 miles of existing residential streets, and nearly six miles of existing residential sidewalks throughout the city over 14 years. The four percent electric and natural gas tax will expire at the end of 2012. The expiration of this tax will reduce Cheney’s overall revenue stream by roughly \$380,000 annually.

The Program 1999 - 2012

Promised

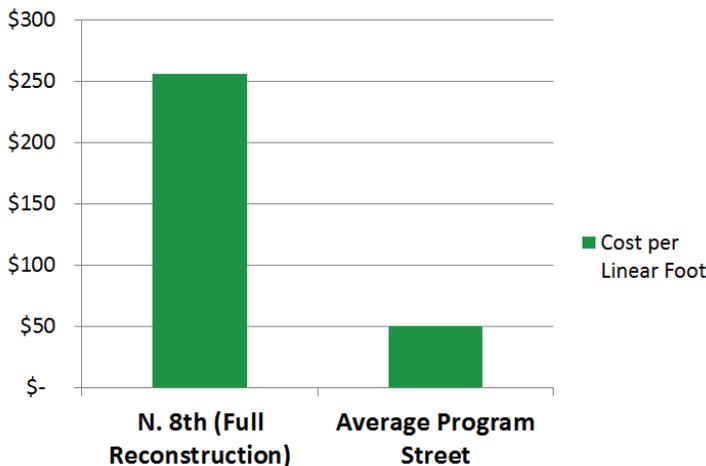
- Repair 18 miles of residential streets
- Repair 6 miles of residential sidewalks
- Program lasts 14 years

Delivered

- 18 miles of residential streets repaired
- 6 miles of residential sidewalks repaired
- Leveraged local money to win grant funding to replace 2 miles of water main

Future

- 5 miles of streets currently identified for repair
- \$2 million estimated cost is not funded
- Currently highly rated streets are cheaper to maintain than rebuild



Program Savings

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Streets brought to “good” condition are less costly and labor intensive to maintain. At the beginning of the program it was estimated that neglecting the targeted streets would ultimately require them to be completely reconstructed at a cost approximately three times that of the proposed program.

For comparison, a portion of N 8th had to be fully reconstructed in 2011. The cost of \$256 per foot was

nearly five times more expensive than the average cost for the other streets in the program.

The funds raised through the streets program helped the City of Cheney realize a major overall cost savings by bundling street and water projects together. Because water projects often require digging up streets, many of the street repair projects were used as local matching funds to win nearly \$900,000 in state and federal grant money for water main installation and repair that would have otherwise been funded directly by Cheney rate payers.

The program saved Cheney water rate payers \$881,700 by attracting grant awards for water main replacement.

Frequently Asked Questions

Effect on Taxpayers?

The four percent tax to pay for residential streets & sidewalks currently amounts to roughly \$2.50 per month for the average residential electrical customer, and \$2.70 per month for the average natural gas customer.

Effect on Revenue?

The Residential Street & Sidewalk portion of the electric and natural gas tax will expire at the end of 2012. The expiration of this dedicated funding source will reduce Cheney's overall revenue stream by roughly \$380,000 annually.

Why couldn't this program be paid for by property taxes?

Cheney has a relatively low ratio of property values to population. In 2011, Cheney's property valuation ranked 116th in the state, and had to support operations for the 75th largest city (mrsc.org).

Why can't sales taxes pay for this?

Like with property taxes, the city boasts the 75th largest population in the state, but ranks 91st in sales tax revenue to pay for city services (mrsc.org).

Why couldn't this program be paid for by gas taxes?

Currently, some gas tax revenues help pay for upgrades to arterial streets in Cheney, but the majority covers operational expenses associated with streets; like sweeping, plowing, and sign installation and maintenance.

Why couldn't this program be paid for by vehicle registrations?

Students at Eastern Washington University significantly raise Cheney's population, but as students, many of them keep their vehicles registered in their "home" cities. This ratio of population to registered vehicles would make a fee largely out of line with fees charged by other cities.

Why are there now 5 more miles to do?

The original Residential Street & Sidewalk plan only included 80% of Cheney's residential streets. Now those streets that were not included in the program, those addressed early, and streets that have been built since 1999 will need attention in the coming years.

