

# PALM DESERT RESPONDS TO HURRICANE HILARY




PALM DESERT



# BEFORE THE STORM:

- Emergency Operations Center Activated
- Communications Strategy
  - New webpage created, updated every 30 minutes during and after the storm
  - Press release sent to media, and newsletters were sent to residents, businesses, and HOAs on resources
  - Message and flyer sent to all PDHA tenants
  - Twitter, Facebook, Nextdoor, updates, roughly every 20 minutes throughout the storm
  - Positive public perception of the City's response to the storm



Sandbag Distribution  
Civic Center Park  
8/19/2023

# PUBLIC WORKS RESPONSE

- Distributed over 50,000 sandbags to residents
- 35 City staff activated
  - Administrative staff
  - All Street team activated
  - All Landscape team activated
- Roughly 300 tons of sand provided
- Checked all roadway drainage systems and turned off irrigation to parks and city property
- Prepared all storm equipment: chainsaws, pumps, rain gear
- Prepared traffic control in preparation for road closures



Cook Street

# WHAT OCCURRED DURING THE STORM




- Hurricane Hilary caused widespread flooding due to heavy rainfall
- City staff quickly coordinated a response plan and held regular Zoom meetings, enabling efficient collaboration on our strategy




**FLOOD MITIGATION  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
WORKED AS IT  
SHOULD**

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Cook Street at  
Whitewater Channel

A photograph showing a flooded street next to a concrete channel. The water is murky brown and turbulent. In the foreground, there are blue corrugated metal structures. In the background, there are buildings and palm trees under an overcast sky.



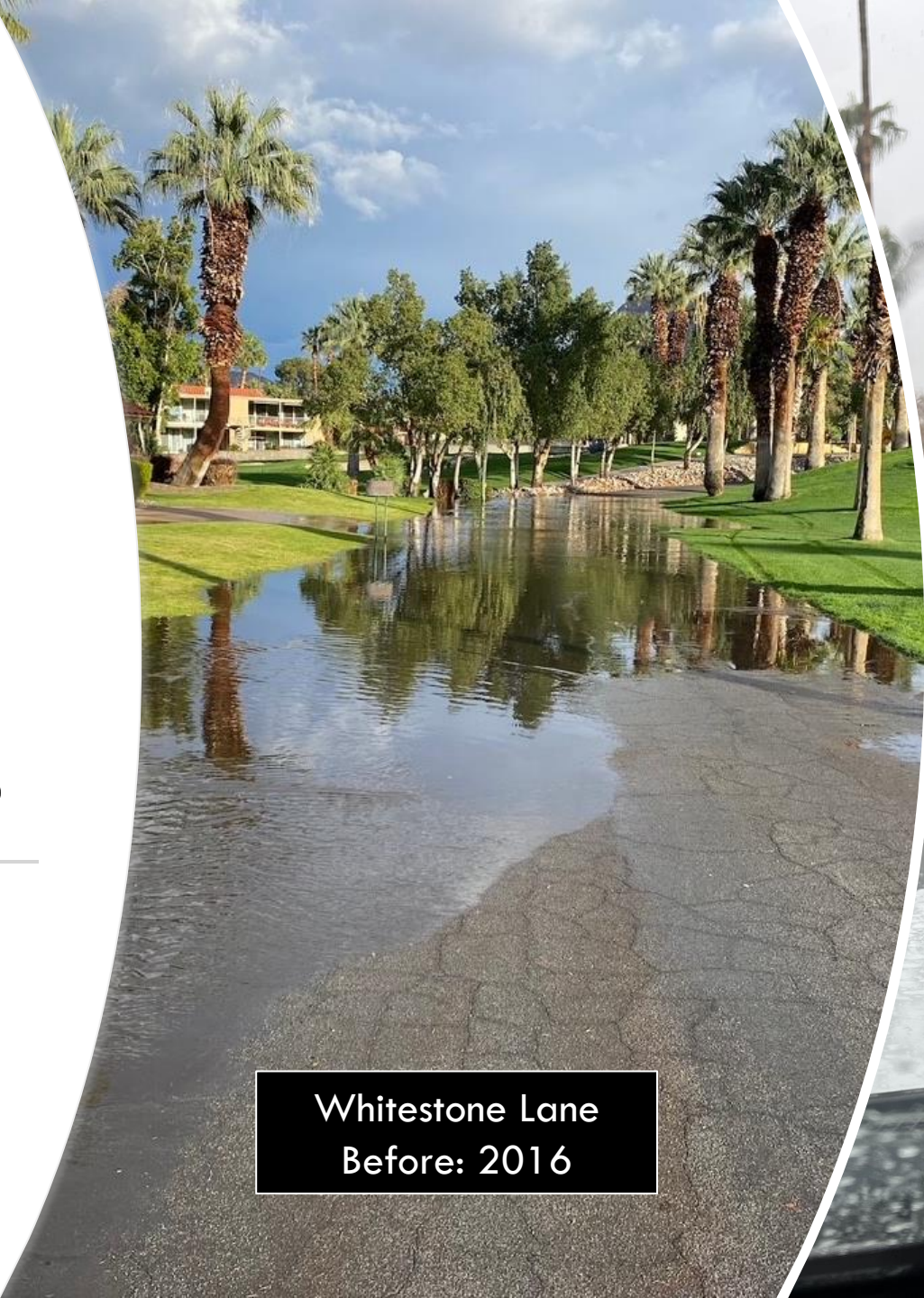
Retention Basin Near  
Hovley Lane West

A photograph of a retention basin with concrete slabs and a red curb. The basin is filled with brown floodwater. There are trees in the background and a utility pole with power lines.




**INCLUDING  
RECENT  
INVESTMENTS**

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A photograph of a well-maintained residential street, Whitestone Lane, in 2016. The street is paved with dark asphalt and is bordered by a lush green lawn. Several tall palm trees and other green trees line the street. In the background, a multi-story building is visible under a clear blue sky with some light clouds.

**Whitestone Lane  
Before: 2016**

A photograph of the same residential street, Whitestone Lane, in 2023 during a storm. The street is completely flooded with water, and the view is from inside a car, looking out through a rain-streaked windshield. The background shows a house with a red-tiled roof and palm trees, but the scene is obscured by the heavy rain and water.

**Whitestone Lane  
During Storm: 2023**



University Park East



Fred Waring



NE Corner of  
Freedom Park



Freedom Park

# Post-Storm Assessment

- Park issues
  - Flooding
  - Damage to park structures
- Landscape
  - Damage to approximately 300 to 400 trees
- Street issues
  - Flooding & trees on roadways
  - Traffic signals

# SPANISH WALK



Flood on Paseo Bravo



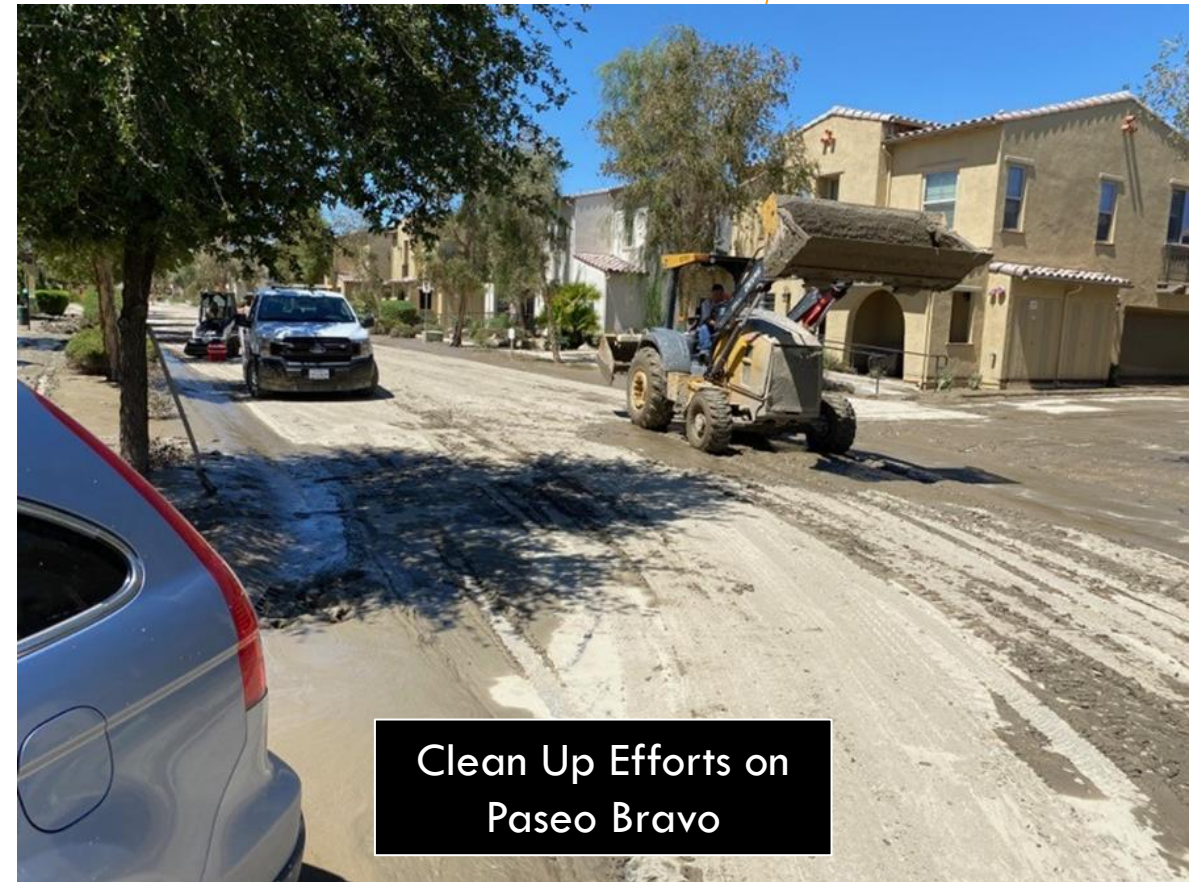
Paseo Bravo Looking Southeast

- City and Riverside County Fire notified of a major drainage channel topping its berm and flooding the Spanish Walk neighborhood
- 34 homes red-tagged for life and safety purposes
- City staff transported displaced residents by vans loaned from Family YMCA of the Desert
- City found temporary shelter for displaced residents and provided food and drinks



# SPANISH WALK SINCE THE STORM

- A new temporary berm structure was created northwest of the community
- Community drained of water and streets cleaned of mud and debris
- Ongoing assessment for other mitigation efforts



# MAJOR TROUBLE SPOTS

- Channel at Spanish Walk / clean up
  - Berm / Regional solutions
- Cook & Gerald Ford
- Gerald Ford and Frank Sinatra
- Looking for permanent solutions to low points in roads
- Traffic signal outages



Gerald Ford



Gerald Ford at Cook



Fred Waring at Tenn.

# STRATEGY FOR PARKS REOPENING

- Pumps to dewater flooded areas
- Landscape Contractors on cleanup and debris removal
- Inspect electrical, irrigation, and playground equipment



# NEXT STEPS

- Prioritize remediation efforts
- Comprehensive drainage study
- Expedite Section 29 Drainage Basin Project
- Methods of possible reimbursement
  - Talked to CJPIA regarding reimbursements for city-owned assets
  - Taking steps to pursue State or federal funds



Hovley Soccer Park

# THANKS TO OUR STAFF & VENDORS

- All City staff who supported storm preparation and remediation efforts:
  - Public Works
  - Capital Improvements
  - Landscape
  - Streets Team
  - Facilities
  - Emergency Services Coordinator
  - Communications

- And our fast-acting vendors:
  - Family YMCA of the Desert
  - Granite Construction
  - Tri-Star Construction
  - CTI
  - West Coast Arborists
  - Residence Inn by Marriott
  - Burrtec
  - Wilcorp