

CITY MANAGER



Meeting Date: May 24, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor & Council Members

From: George Garrett, City Manager

Subject: Update On Progress With Sombrero Boulevard Improvements

INTRODUCTION & STATUS:

For as long as any of us have been here, the section on Sombrero Boulevard from roughly 53rd Street to the west end of Skip Jack's has flooded during heavy rains and king tide events. This is a stretch of Sombrero Boulevard that is approximately 750 yards long.

Multiple things have changed in the past year which have magnified the impacts of the flooding events:

1. The Country Club installed a required stormwater berm whose intent is to contain stormwater on the country club property
2. King Tides are a regular concern
3. El Nino weather patterns through this past year and this winter
4. Heavier than average rain events have occurred

The berm has clearly restricted the flow of stormwater containing it entirely to the Sombrero Boulevard right-of-way. The berm also tells a story about the topography of the area. After extensive survey work over the past several months, City engineers determined that the north side of Sombrero Boulevard is uniformly higher than the south side. Thus, stormwater flows from the condominiums and Skip Jack resort and collects against the berm now in place ultimately covering the road as well.

Historically, the stormwater flowed in the same way but was not impeded by the berm. Thus, the stormwater flooded onto the golf course with minimal visual or physical impact to Sombrero Boulevard. As now, extreme rain events did create a ponding effect on the road, but typically not as bad.

With the obvious impacts of the current flooding two things have happened.

1. We currently manage the flooding by actively pumping the water down a stormwater well located in the immediate area.
 - a. We typically begin pumping the stormwater immediately as a storm begins and will not cease pumping until the water is gone. This effort is currently manually managed by the City's Public Works staff.

b. In the worst case, it has taken staff a little over a day and a half to eliminate the water covering the road (eg 11:00 AM, 052024 through 4:00 AM 052224)

2. The City Council directed staff to initiate a project to eliminate the problem. That effort has been underway since earlier this year (February-March). Initially, the effort required extensive survey work. It then requires engineering design ultimately to creating 100% permittable plans. Once plans are complete, they must be submitted to the South Florida Water Management District for necessary permits. Once permitted, the project is bid for construction. The City Council will approve necessary contracts and construction will begin through to project completion.

a. See the attached projected timeline for the completion of the Sombrero Stormwater Improvement Project

LESSONS LEARNED / PLAN FOR FUTURE EVENTS:

1. Applicable to the Section of Sombrero Boulevard from 53rd Street and Manor Lane to the west end of Skip Jack Resort only (not the active golf course).
2. Through efforts and lessons earlier this year, the City now has a four-inch pump on hand, and we are able to immediately pump stormwater under the force of the pump pressure down our stormwater wells.
3. The City is acquiring a second pump set-up as back-up in case pumps break down or there is more than one area requiring stormwater water displacement.
4. The City is now able to have the pump and necessary hose in place before the onset of an anticipated storm.
5. City staff will begin pumping water down our stormwater wells before the start of a significant rain event.
6. For future rain events, the following will occur:
 - a. Pumps and necessary well piping will remain in place and be maintain on a continual basis in place.
 - b. Pumps will be started immediately under virtually any rain event.
 - c. The City will establish lane closures, if necessary. to ensure that all traffic may travel safely through the shallowest part of flooded areas on Sombrero Boulevard
 - d. The City will maintain traffic control on-site using City staff until both flooded lanes of Sombrero Boulevard are clear.