

Priority Setting Session 2 Wednesday April 3, 2024
Santa Clara Convention Center

Deferred maintenance or maintenance backlog is repairs to assets and infrastructure that get delayed or rescheduled into the future due to limited resources. These are maintenance tasks that have to be completed eventually, either to avoid safety issues, breakdowns or damage. Deferring maintenance can lead to large issues in the future such as long-term costs, reduced equipment efficiency, safety risks, downtime and system failure.

In the long run, continued use of worn or damaged parts may result in an abundance of failures across the system, which eventually causes it to crash.

In 2021, the City Council affirmed the following priority areas; First and second on that list are as follows;

- 1.) Deliver and Enhance High-Quality Efficient Services and Infrastructure
- 2.) Manage Strategically Our Workforce Capacity and Resources

Toward the above two priorities we are requesting that the city of Santa Clara allocate sufficient funding to cover deferred maintenance and repair necessities within the historic Park Court and University Square neighborhoods. Age and neglect have taken their toll. Issues with improper grade and drainage have left standing water in multiple areas above ground. At least two major water main breaks within the past four years; one on December 12, 2020 and another on January 10, 2024 within Park Court have contributed to the undermining of pavement substrate and curbing. We have lived in Park Court for more than 35 years, the neighborhood is 100 years old in 2024 and yet it has been consistently overlooked for overdue repairs. There is also a critical need for a task force to help gain a better understanding regarding the rising water table and its' resultant effect upon the historic neighborhoods with basements in the Old Quad. The residents have been left to cope with their flooding basements, installations of sump pumps and attempting to deal with ongoing water intrusion. The city has offered no support, guidelines or potential solutions whatsoever for how residents should deal with this massive shallow groundwater problem or how to properly dispose of said water. Lastly, the ripple effect of the SVP power outage of February 4th and 5th 2024 underscore the critical need for making communication to the public a priority of paramount importance during emergencies. Keeping the public informed and effecting needed repairs must go hand in hand. Silicon Valley Power should be commended for the otherwise tremendous service they provide to Santa Clara residents but also must acknowledge and repair their shortcomings.

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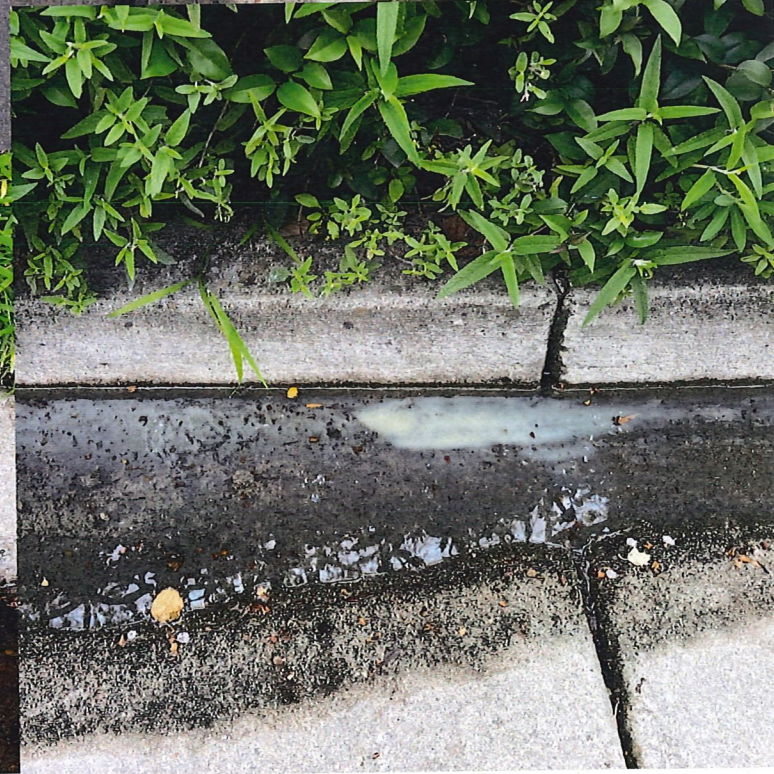


Water Main Breaks 12-12-20 and 1-10-24 Park Court Santa Clara



Street and Curb Damage Examples Park Court March 28, 2024





Standing Water Examples Park Court March 28, 2024



Sump Pumps Draining Examples Park Court March 28, 2024

City of Santa Clara Priority Setting Session
April 3, 2024
Public Presentation

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I ask that the City Council prioritize infrastructure refurbishment and replacement including street maintenance, water systems and sewer systems in the historic Park Court and University Square neighborhoods. This infrastructure has not been addressed for years. Maintenance has been deferred. Only patchwork repairs have been made, inevitability leading to further repairs being needed. This is a basic responsibility of the city which is not being addressed. And this is necessary to ensure that homes in these historic areas are not damaged further as was recently the case during the storms in February 2024.

In addition, I ask that the City of Santa Clara prioritize upgrading the capabilities of Silicon Valley Power to prepare for and respond to extended power outages with emergency communication and notification systems. Many other service providers communicate outage information including expected resolution time by text messages and by app messages as well as maintaining a robust website with status updates. SVP needs these capabilities. And SVP needs to advertise and communicate its plans for extended outages as well as provide assistance to those needing back up power systems, particularly for medical devices such as oxygen supplies or CPAPs, and for important home systems such as sump pumps.

Recent events have highlighted these issues.

The storm and power outage of February 4-5 caused significant damage in our neighborhood—Park Court, Park Ave, Alviso St, Hilmar St and Camino Drive. This area is subject to high ground water levels. Nearly all the homes have basements and most have water heaters and furnaces in the basement. Most homes have had to install sump pumps to mitigate the water intrusion. The recent storm further increased the ground water levels causing significant water intrusion in homes in the neighborhood. A short walk around the neighborhood reveals nearly every home with water being pumped out of the basement and into the storm drains. The flow of water continuing nearly constantly has eroded the street surfaces. This affects the streets of the neighborhood including Cypress Alley. Note that there are only a few storm drains in the neighborhood. Water in many cases has to flow 500-1000 feet around the block to empty into a storm drain.

Inadequate repair, particularly of Cypress Alley, is not sufficient to mitigate the damage from constantly running water. Water pools in low level areas. Asphalt and concrete are wearing

away. Numerous potholes have developed. The streets and alley are badly in need of resurfacing to prevent further deterioration. In addition, there have been multiple issues with water lines and sewer lines needing repairs in recent years. Some of these systems date to the building of Park Court 100 years ago.

Compounding the issues in our neighborhood was the power outage of February 4-5. Our neighborhood was without power for between 12 to 18 hours varying by block. We tried unsuccessfully to reach SVP for updates. There was no information on the SVP website or the City website. Power went out in the neighborhood around 4:00 PM on February 4. It was restored along the south side of Hilmar St about 3:00 AM but the rest of the neighborhood was not restored to power until 10:00 AM on February 5. Notably a power line was downed during the storm at Park Avenue and Hilmar St around 4:00 PM. SVP did not respond to this line down until the morning of February 5. Perhaps a prioritized response from SVP would have restored power to our neighborhood in a timelier fashion. While SVP has provided great service and quickly restored power during outages in the past, timely updates from SVP would have aided us in taking appropriate measures to mitigate damage to our properties.

As a result of the power outage, none of the homes in our neighborhood were able to operate their sump pumps. Within an hour flooding of our basements was significant. Within a few hours, water heaters, furnaces, walls and floors as well as personal possessions all suffered damage. Multiple homes had to replace water heaters (\$2000 to \$3000 expense). Many homes had to replace furnaces (approximately \$7000 to \$10,000). Homeowners have had to engage contractors to pump water out of basements at a cost of \$1000 to \$2000 during the height of the storm. Repair and replacement of damaged floors and walls and personal possessions has been very expensive (\$5,000 -- \$10,000). Some neighbors had to move out of their homes due to the water damage. Most homeowners have had to purchase additional water pumps and to purchase generators to provide backup systems for their sump pumps. This has been a very expensive incident for our neighborhood.

We ask the city to make it a priority to maintain the streets and alleys of Santa Clara, particularly in historic neighborhoods, such as ours. We ask that the city prioritize the repair and refurbishment of our water and sewer systems to protect our neighborhoods. And we ask that the city make it a priority to upgrade the ability of SVP to communicate with customers during outages and to prioritize vulnerable neighborhoods such as ours.

Photos attached of our neighborhood.

