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CITY OF MUSCATINE PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MISSISSIPPI DRIVE, 2ND STREET REOPEN AS RIVER RECEDES

Riverside Park to remain closed; City expects to begin park cleanup next week

MUSCATINE, Iowa – Mississippi Drive and 2nd Street will be reopened to traffic late Friday (June 14) morning as the Mississippi River continues to recede back to within its banks.

Department of Public Works (DPW) staff began taking down Flood Structure No. 1 (flood wall at Mississippi Drive and Mulberry Avenue) early Friday morning and will then move to open Flood Structure No. 2 (flood wall at Mad Creek on 2nd Street).

“Once we remove these structures and do some final cleaning, we will begin to remove the barricades,” Randy Howell, Street Maintenance Supervisor, said.

Howell urged drivers to be patient as city workers remove the barricades and to use caution as the streets are reopened.

After reaching the third highest crest in Muscatine history on June 2 (24.52 feet), the Mississippi River has dropped to 18.93 feet and is expected to fall below flood stage by Tuesday night. The June 2 crest was the second crest of 2019 to reach the historic top five following a 24.33 crest on May 3, 2019.

It has been 18 days since Mississippi Drive and 2nd Street was closed to traffic for the second time in 2019 due to flooding. City officials first closed Mississippi Drive and 2nd Street on March 25, a closure that lasted 57 days. The flood walls were removed and the streets reopened on May 20 but another rise in river levels prompted a second closing of the structures and the streets on May 28.

RIVER ROAD TO OPEN FRIDAY

Another street impacted by the Mississippi River flooding was River Road from Cannon Avenue to Sherman Street. DPW staff indicated that they plan to have that section of River Road open to traffic by 5 p.m. Friday (June 14).

RIVERSIDE PARK TO REMAIN CLOSED

As the Mississippi River continues to recede and with work on reopening Mississippi Drive and 2nd Street complete, DPW staff will turn their focus on Riverside Park. Together with staff from the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Muscatine Fire Department, the City anticipates beginning work on the downstream end of Riverside Park as early as Monday (June 17) with the Mississippi River expected to be below 17 feet.

The first task will be cleaning the parking area near the old boat ramp.

“This area has been underwater for almost three months and there is a lot of sediment and debris left,” Howell said. “Even the sediment that we were able to pile up last month when the river receded enough for us to work in there, is still there.”

Howell said that DPW crews will begin on the downriver side of the park and move upriver as the cleaning progresses.

“The park will remain closed until we make substantial progress in cleaning,” Howell said. “We ask that residents do not try to enter the park until we completely remove the barricades for the safety of the workers and the safety of the residents.”

One of the major problems with cleaning the sediment and debris is the contamination that could be present.

“Our staff will be wearing protective gear while working in the area,” Howell said. “We have heard several reports of city workers in places upstream that became sick while working in or around the flood waters, and we want to ensure the safety of our staff.”

Nick Gow, Park Maintenance Supervisor for the Department of Parks and Recreation, has lined up a growing list of volunteers who will be at the park June 21 to assist in the cleanup.

“I urge anyone who is volunteering to help with the cleanup to wear protective clothes and that includes wearing rubber gloves,” Howell said. “You just don’t know the amount of bacteria that you may come into contact with, and it is better to be safe than sorry.”

Riverside Center and the Pearl City Station have both been surrounded by water since early March with Parks & Recreation crews waiting to get inside and inspect for damage.

A date to reopen Riverside Park has not been established as yet.

2019 FLOOD BY THE NUMBERS

- 92 consecutive days above flood stage - The Mississippi River has been above flood stage (March 15-June 14).
- 60 consecutive days at or above moderate flood stage (18 feet) – The Mississippi River was at or above moderate flood stage March 17-May 16. After a two-day period at 17.7 feet (May 17-18), the river returned to moderate flood stage with 87 of the last 89 days (as of June 14) in that range.
- 20 consecutive days at or above major flood stage (20 feet). The Mississippi River was at or above major flood stage for 59 of the 82 days between March 23 and June 12 (03/23-03/30 – 8 days; 04/01-04/20 – 20 days; 04/27-05/11 – 15 days; and, 05/28-06/12 – 16 days).

- 5 rises and 5 falls. The Mississippi River has risen and fallen five times since March 15 ... cresting at 19.34 feet March 18, 20.73 feet March 25, 21.95 feet April 10, 24.33 feet May 3, and 24.52 feet on June 2.

1993 FLOOD BY THE NUMBERS

- 103 total days above flood stage – During the 1993 flood the Mississippi River spent 103 days over a 121 day period above flood stage (April 5-August 4) including 55 consecutive days (June 10-August 3) and 45 consecutive days (April 5-May 19).
- 32 consecutive days at or above major flood stage (20 feet). During the 1993 flood the Mississippi River was above major flood stage for 32 consecutive days (June 27-July 28) and earlier for 10 days (April 21-April 30).
- 36 consecutive days at or above moderate flood stage (18 feet). During the 1993 flood the Mississippi River was above moderate flood stage for 36 consecutive days (June 25-July 30) and earlier for 23 days (April 8-May 4).

MORE HIGH CRESTS DURING APRIL

- The April 9, 2019, crest of 21.95 feet was the eighth highest in Muscatine history and the third highest April crest.
- On April 29, 1965, the Mississippi River crested at 24.81 feet, a level that held the record for the highest crest until 1993. The second highest April flood came on April 25, 2001 when the river crested at 23.50 feet, the seventh highest crest overall.
- Five of the top 10 and 13 of the top 25 Mississippi River crests occurred during April.
- Also in the top 25 were three in July including the record 25.61 foot crest (July 9, 1993), three in May including the fifth highest at 24.33 feet (May 3, 2019), two in June including the third highest crest at 24.52 feet (June 2, 2019), two in March, and two in October including last year's 20.73 foot crest (October 13, 2018).

FLOOD ASSISTANCE

The Muscatine County Emergency Management Agency encourages those affected by recent flooding in Muscatine County to register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

There are four ways to register for disaster assistance:

- Online at: www.disasterassistance.gov.
- Visit a state/FEMA Disaster Recovery Center (DRC). Go online to www.FEMA.gov/DRC to find the nearest location.
- Call 800-621-3362, voice/VP/711. Multilingual operators are on duty. TTY 800-462-7585. Phone lines are open 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. local time.
- Download the FEMA app on your smartphone at www.fema.gov/mobile-app.

Information on Iowa's flooding and disaster assistance can be found at floods2019.iowa.gov.

SBA OPENS BUSINESS RECOVERY CENTER

The U.S. Small Business Administration and the Iowa Small Business Development Center have opened an SBA Business Recovery Center in Davenport to provide a wide range of services to businesses impacted by severe storms and flooding that began March 12, 2019. The Center is open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, and 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Fridays at Eastern Iowa Community College located at 101 West Third Street, Davenport, IA 52801.

[SBA Disaster Loan Assistance](#)

[SBA Fact Sheet – Disaster Loans](#)

Additional Information:

Flood Safety Tips and Resources <https://www.weather.gov/safety/flood>

Iowa 2019 flooding www.floods.2019.iowa.gov

Severe Weather Awareness Week and links to local NWS websites www.beready.iowa.gov

National Weather Service – Quad Cities www.weather.gov/dvn/

Levee Breach Study - <http://www.muscatineiowa.gov/745/Levee-Breach-Study>