

MOTION

PUBLIC SAFETY

The series of recent atmospheric river storms that struck Los Angeles produced widespread damage to City streets, hillsides, and stormwater infrastructure. Residents in hillside communities have been forced to contend with road closures, erosion, mudslides, and other serious hazards as a result of the storms. It is essential that the City be fully prepared to respond to these storms and their effects.

More than 80% of all floods on the West Coast of the US can be attributed to atmospheric river storms. As climate change intensifies, atmospheric river events like the ones that produced the recent storms we experienced will become more common and more intense. Residents in hillsides and other flood-prone areas depend on City services before, during, and after major storms to share information, distribute resources, and address damage to minimize these storms' impacts.

The ARkStorm Los Angeles project suggests that the likelihood of catastrophic damages from flooding is equal to the likelihood of a major earthquake hitting Los Angeles, but the economic damages of such an event could be much higher. A 25-year storm event could place as many as 1,700 City residents at immediate risk for flooding impacts and cause up to \$85 million in damages to private and City-owned properties. Risks from stormwater flooding are also an environmental justice issue, as these projected impacts would be concentrated in low-income communities of color.

City departments must be equipped to respond in the aftermath of floods caused by atmospheric rivers. City departments, Council District offices, and City residents need a clear understanding of how to respond to major weather events, including clear methods for communicating essential safety information in the aftermath of storms, both internally between City departments and externally to the public. The City's Emergency Management Department is well equipped to serve as a coordinating authority in these situations.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the Emergency Management Department, with assistance from any other relevant departments, to report back within 30 days with an overview of existing plans to manage weather-related emergencies with distributed impacts across the City, in addition to lessons learned from the January 2023 storms and corresponding adjustments that will be made, a clear delineation of responsibilities for preparing for and responding after an emergency, and an identification of channels for the communication of critical safety information between City departments, Council offices, and residents.

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