

# **1972 - I-40 Opens and Oasis Palms becomes a Ghost Town**

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Oasis Palms began to exhibit the inevitable signs of aging. The idyllic family-oriented tourism boom of the 1950s had faded into the past. The Vietnam War had ushered in a period of national turmoil while skyrocketing gas prices burdened the country. Floyd and Lloyd's circle of friends, which included hot-rodders and hippies, contributed meagerly to the town's dwindling revenue. Families, once regular visitors to Oasis Palms' outdated attractions, became a rare sight. Then, in 1972, with the opening of Interstate 40, the traffic on Route 66 dropped precipitously, dealing a final blow to the town's already struggling economy.



## Progress

For decades Route 66 brought travelers to the small towns along the Santa Fe route in the Mojave. In 1972 The opening of Interstate 40 drove all mandatory traffic away from Route 66 leaving most of the booming roadside towns in complete despair. Within a year Oasis Palms was a ghosttown.

As revenue declined, town maintenance and upkeep were increasingly deferred, leading to a visible decline in the condition of Oasis Palms. The passing of Lefty in 1978 further destabilized the family's affairs. Mortgages loomed, bills went unpaid, and insurance premiums lapsed. The once-thriving town, now reduced to a population of five remaining residents, teetered on the brink of collapse.