

## Flooding solution for Fairview will require 'proactive plan of action'

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FAIRVIEW PARK, Ohio – City officials have said solving the 50-year-old problem of basement and property flooding in Fairview Park will take a long time. But according to Mayor Eileen Patton and Director of Public Service and Development Rob Berner, the ultimate goal of relieving homeowners' rainstorm worries will be worth the wait.

Fairview Park Director of Public Service and Development Rob Berner sits alongside Black and Veatch consultant Dianne Sumego during Nov. 24 discussions about ongoing residential flooding problems.  
Beth Mlady/Special to Sun News

**Black and Veatch**, a consulting firm the city hired to help troubleshoot the situation, recently issued a report that indicates the critical first step of data collection will begin in 2015. Ultrasonic flow meters will be installed to measure water volumes inside the wastewater and storm water systems located along the western border of the city, the section reportedly most severely affected by flooding.

A skeletal model will then use that information to determine if pipe capacities are adequate, or if there are other factors negatively impacting the flows and creating flooding.

"This new approach is something we've all been working on, and we believe it's going to really benefit us in the long run," Patton told the Environment, Public Works, Planning, Zoning and Development Committee during its Nov. 24 meeting. "Yes, we would like to fix it yesterday, but I think moving into it with a real, legitimate, concrete plan backed by city council is going to be something the residents expect and deserve."

Black and Veatch Client Director Dianne Sumego told the committee residents may see workers "out and about popping manholes" to take measurements.

"Our goal is for the model to show us where the deficiencies are within your sewer, whether it's a capacity issue or whether it's based on too much **inflow or infiltration**," Sumego said. "This will give us the start of our road map as we move forward."

Berner anticipates **city council** could receive a comprehensive plan for consideration in January. That plan would include costs, necessary steps, deadlines and funding sources. Flow metering then could be conducted from March through May, with the skeletal model to be developed in mid to late summer.

Sumego said the hope is that the meters capture data from at least three significant rainfall events, those that generate overflows from the storm water system into the sanitary sewer system. While data is being collected, Berner will work on other aspects of the project.

“We are putting together a proactive plan of action to address the capital improvements of the structure of the sewer,” Berner explained. “So, instead of just going out and making repairs or corrections, we’re actually making improvements. And that’s what our goal is going to be.”

He went on to say the city eventually will have a sewer master plan. It is too soon, he added, to know if future sewer rates will change or how much residents could possibly be assessed for fixes if flooding problems are determined to be caused by a situation created by the homeowner (i.e. downspouts connected to the sanitary sewer system; directing downspout discharges toward a neighbor’s property, etc.).

Mayor Patton indicated another public meeting with residents, **similar to one held in August**, will occur after all metering diagnostics are completed and a report of those findings has been generated.

Council committee members then voted unanimously to leave the flooding issue in committee

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