

# Consultant recommends 12-step program for city's sewer system

Written by [Kevin Kelley](#) on November 21, 2014 — [Leave a Comment](#)

**By Kevin Kelley**

*Fairview Park*

An engineering firm recommends the city's anti-flooding efforts focus on two areas – between West 210th and West 229th streets north of Lorain Road, and south of Marlene Drive. Black & Veatch, the firm hired by the city to evaluate the persistent problem of flooded basements, also calls on the city to develop a computer model of its sanitary sewer system.

The consultant did not identify any “magic bullet” solution for the flooding problem, and city officials had not expected it to.

Instead, Black & Veatch proposed a 12-step, short-term plan for the next 12 months that will lead to a list of prioritized sewer projects the city can implement over the long term.

“The goal and objective of this overview is to provide the city roadmap to address and resolve the city's flooding problems,” the 22-page report stated. “A phased approach will provide an opportunity to identify the root cause of the problem, thereby the ability to develop and implement a plan to reduce flooding within the city.”

The suggested short-term steps include the development of a computer model of the sanitary sewer system and additional steps to reduce inflow and infiltration of stormwater into the sanitary sewer system.

Mayor Eileen Patton said the city's service department, in conjunction with the Mackay Engineering and Surveying, which provides the city engineering services, is developing a plan of action in response to the Black & Veatch report. Patton said the plan will be discussed at a Nov. 24 City Council committee meeting. She declined to discuss details of the plan in deference to council members.

The Black & Veatch report noted that the city has invested approximately \$9 million in Fairview Park's sewer infrastructure during the past 15 years.

“We're on the right path,” Patton said.

The city needs to further narrow down which neighborhoods require further action, she told West Life. The mayor also said the report will help city officials budget for future sewer projects.

Service Director Rob Berner said one main benefit of the report is that it summarizes decades of sewer projects in a single document. Engineers from Black & Veatch have not performed any field work as yet, Berner noted.

To successfully develop a computer model of the sanitary sewer system, data from flow meters will be collected. Flow meters, small devices that measure water volume and speed with sonar, will be placed under manholes, Berner explained. During days with little or no rain, the amount of water flowing through the sanitary sewers will be compared with expected amounts based on water usage. This data will show how much additional water the system can handle during rainstorms, Berner said.

Flow meter data will be collected for two months in the spring, the service director said.

City officials decided to hire Black & Veatch in August after a heavy rainstorm caused a significant number of basements to flood, primarily in the northwest section of the city.