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FOR INFORMATION CALL

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Ald. Jim Bohl
Ald. Ashanti Hamilton
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Flooding Study Task Force to Vote on Recommendations

The city's **Flooding Study Task Force** will hold its final meeting Friday (June 10) and is expected to adopt more than a dozen recommendations for remedying the basement backups and street flooding that has plagued city neighborhoods after recent heavy rain events.

The task force will meet at 9 a.m. Friday in room 301-B at City Hall, 200 E. Wells St.

The task force was created after last summer's devastating flooding and basement backups resulted in millions of dollars in property damage and eventual disaster assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The task force, which met nine times between January and this month, was charged with recommending remedies for storm water and sewage backup flooding of city residential and commercial properties, and flooding of streets and alleyways.

Alderman Jim Bohl, task force co-chair, said the panel determined quickly that multiple factors are contributing to the problem of basement flooding. "There is no silver bullet or single action we can take to correct the problem, because street flooding, basement flooding and sanitary sewer overflows are all different aspects of the effect of urbanization on the hydrology of the city and region," he said, noting also the problem has been aggravated by deteriorated infrastructure, deficient city building code regulations prior to 1955 and recent extreme rainfall events.

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Flooding Task Force/ADD ONE

Alderman Ashanti Hamilton, task force co-chair and alderman for neighborhoods that saw major residential property damage in last year's flooding, said the city has placed a high priority on upgrading city-maintained storm and sanitary sewer related infrastructure. "But the task force found that private property sources account for up to 85% of the clear water that is entering and inundating sanitary sewer systems, and any attempted solution to basement flooding will need to substantially address those private property sources," he said

Among the task force's many recommendations, a few key ones include:

- Taking a close look at the results of a pilot demonstration project by the city now underway to inspect and potentially rehabilitate/repair sewer laterals and cap foundation drains to reduce clear water flow into the sanitary sewer system (sometimes referred to as I&I or "inflow and infiltration") during heavy rain events.
- Pursuing green infrastructure elements that help control/reduce storm water problems.
- Greater collaboration with Milwaukee County to determine where existing parkland can be improved to provide storm water benefits.
- Targeted separation of the combined sewers.
- Establishment of targeted zones in the combined sewer area where mandatory downspout disconnection can be implemented.