



# City of Berwyn Town Hall Meeting

Brought to you by the Berwyn City Council

*Please submit comments and questions at this time  
to the ABC members sitting at the rear of the room.*

Multi-Purpose Room  
Heritage Middle School  
6850 West 31st Street

# Welcome and Introduction

## Mayor Robert J. Lovero

David St. Pierre, Executive Director

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Mr. Gene Ryan, Chief of Planning Operations

Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Brian Pabst, City Administrator

Robert Schiller, Public Works Director

Evan Summers, Assistant City Administrator

Anthony Laureto, City Emergency Management Coordinator

John Tarullo, City of Berwyn Plumbing Inspector

Nicole Campbell, Traffic Engineer

[articles](#)

occupied some time, although contingencies, fines and dismissals made short order of them all.

One collision resulted in the damaging of a spare wheel and its carrier on the back of a Ford. The plaintiff thought that \$10 would cover the damage but after some little talk agreed to take \$8.00.

When one of these abbreviated milk trucks gets hit by an automobile, something is bound to go over and the truck did with resulting serious injuries to the driver. This accident occurred down near Stickney. The defendant was in court although the plaintiff was not. The lady defendant said she wanted to go to see her mother in Canada while the plaintiff's witnesses were not present so the judge held the case over for a time in order to get all witnesses in.

**BIG RELIEF SEWER TO HELP DRAINAGE PROBLEM**

Listed as project No. 11 of the mayor's re-employment program a large sewer is proposed to be built by the Sanitary District of Chicago. This sewer, which is planned to be 18 feet in diameter, will relieve the strain upon the present drainage systems of not only Berwyn, but Oak Park, Cicero, River Forest, Forest Park, Elmwood Park, and parts of Chicago.

It is a well known fact that many of the basements in Berwyn and these other communities become flooded every time there is a fairly heavy rain. In Berwyn there are at least three contributing causes. First is the fact that the entire area of Berwyn is practically level so far as drainage is concerned, the ridge on which Riverside drive is located doing no good because it is a ridge and not a continual slope over the entire city.

Secondly, the original drainage system of Berwyn was installed too close to the surface of the ground; in some places the sewers being not over four feet down. Because of this whenever there is a heavy rain, the sewers become full and if the basements are not built above the sewer level the water backs up and causes plenty of mess and muss. The older homes in Berwyn were built with the fact in mind that the sewers were not far down and the basements excavated accordingly. The new houses, or most of them, were put up with little regard for the depth of the basement and its relation to the sewer, and made too deep. Thus there is little pitch in the drain from the basement to the sewer in the alley.

The third contributing cause might be that when the early sewer system was planned it was not foreseen that some day Berwyn and these other municipalities would grow to be as large in population and building strength as they are today. When there are few buildings there is not much drainage water going from roofs, etc., into the alley sewers. With a house on practically every lot there is a tremendous increase in the amount of water which goes through the sewer system and in turn out into

the large intersecting sewers which in turn empty into the sewage reduction plant over on the drainage canal.

At present that section of Berwyn lying west of Oak Park avenue is drained by sewers emptying into a large sewer on Oak Park avenue. This turns east at 37th street. The rest of Berwyn is drained by sewers emptying into another large sewer which runs along the Illinois Central right of way down to Central avenue where it turns south to the sewage disposal plant.

It is now proposed to construct an 18 foot sewer at an estimated cost of \$18,000,000 to relieve the excess burden put on the present system at times of heavy rain. The different municipalities affected are attempting to arrange with the Sanitary District to have this latter body shoulder the entire burden of cost which would be spread over the whole district. It is understood that while the Sanitary District cannot by law be compelled to do this they are willing to do so if the necessary legislation is put through. It is also understood that if the Sanitary District pays the cost of this sewer this cost does not include the connecting of any of the present systems into the new one. This expense is to be borne by the separate municipalities as their part of the program.

A working committee composed of representatives of the above mentioned cities has been formed and plans are being expedited to the end that Federal aid may also be used in the construction of this project.

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# ABC Raps Berwyn Storm Sewer Plans

## SAY PROJECT TOO COSTLY, UNFAIR

The All Berwyn Committee Tuesday night notified the Berwyn city council of its objections to the proposed \$1,600,000 storm sewer project as set forth in preliminary plans. The committee reported it was its opinion that the plan for relief of flooded basements as suggested by city engineer Edwin Hancock was unnecessarily enlarged, too expensive, and the method of financing inequitable and unfair.

The ABC is scheduled to discuss the matter when it holds its regular meeting this evening at 8 o'clock in the Berwyn city hall.

The committee reported it seemed very unfair and unwise to spend almost \$2,000,000 of money borrowed without a referendum, to mortgage the city for the next 30 years and to spread the payments against sections and properties that have adequate drainage, have no water in their basements or have no basements at all.

The ABC contended the wastefulness of the whole project was shown in the estimate where about one-half the cost would go for the replacement and repair of pavement, curbs, sidewalks, trees and parkways wrecked during the sewer installation, and also by the excessive engineering costs of \$78,000 and legal fees of \$29,000.

Mrs. Amelia Oselka, chairman of the ABC committee investigating the matter, advised the city council that the committee was very much opposed to the city authorizing the drawing of plans for the project as authorized at a previous council meeting and wished those plans held up pending a thorough survey by the council water committee as to the needs of the sewer system.

Ald. B. J. Kanak of the 7th Ward, defended his motion for the preparation of plans by stating the 7th ward was in bad shape and needed immediate relief. For that reason he had sought council action on the matter, Kanak added.

6/4/54  
"Actually, this has been kicked around the council and in committees for three years and it's about time something concrete is accomplished," Kanak declared. Although some people have no children and others have children who no longer attend public schools they still consider the schools a civic necessity and pay taxes to support them, Kanak remarked.

The new sewer program impressed Kanak as much the same type of civic improvement and he wanted to go on record as believing the matter an improvement for the entire city, he declared. He said he believes all residents should pay for the project.

Ald. Sid J. Hanzlik of the 4th Ward remarked that he and the water committee had stopped the preparation of the plans pending the completion of an exhaustive study of the system being made by the committee. This survey should be completed and a report made to the city council within 30 days, Hanzlik added.

Mrs. Oselka declared the ABC merely wanted the drawing up of plans stopped pending a further study and then new plans prepared for additional sewers in those parts of the city where actually needed.

Ald. Leroy Brunette stated his ward was in worse shape in number of flooded basements than the 7th ward and he certainly agreed with Ald. Kanak that something should be done soon.

Ald. George Dolezal of the 1st Ward, compared the sewers of his ward to the open sewers of Europe and stated they were only one step removed from that condition. The matter was referred to the water committee for further study and report and the city engineer was ordered to stop the drawing of plans pending the committee report.

## Halting of Sewer Project By ABC Lauded by Official

Berwyn Ald. Sid Hanzlik told the All Berwyn Committee last Friday that the organization's survey, which was presented to the city council and resulted in the stoppage of plans for a \$2,000,000 sewer project in Berwyn, may result in a considerable savings of money to the city. Hanzlik said that the city council water committee, which he heads, has studied the ABC report in detail and has come to the conclusion that the extensive project presented by city engineers may not be needed, as was claimed in the ABC report.

Immediately after city engineers presented plans for a \$2,000,000 sewer improvement program to the city council as a means of relieving flooding conditions in Berwyn, the ABC committee, headed by Amelia Oselka, released a report in which it was claimed that a great portion of the project would be unnecessary.

The ABC claimed that many city sewers are adequate and that cleaning, rodding and other less expensive measures could be taken to relieve flooding conditions without the necessity of a large expenditure of money.

Hanzlik said the city now is conducting cleaning experiments in various areas and has found in many cases that the ABC was closer to the answer than "the technical people."

"And we have found out that the Berwyn sewer system is not as outmoded as was claimed," he said.

Hanzlik added that this does not mean that the city will abandon completely its plans for sewer improvements. It may find out that there are some areas which can receive relief only with an improved sewer system.

However, Hanzlik said that many suburbs that have put in extensive sewer improvements have found out that this did not solve the problem as was expected.

He cited Cicero, which several years ago improved its sewer facilities, as an example. The town received 12 per cent relief as the result of its huge expenditure. Other communities have gotten 90 per cent relief by a sewer cleaning program, he commented.

The city will go slow with its plans for the improvement and study all other schemes before it presents a program to the people, he concluded.

Jerome Joachim, ABC presi-

dent, pointed out that it was not the purpose of the organization to block the \$2,000,000 sewer project as some persons believe. The ABC merely asked that before such a project is undertaken, the city council should study all phases of the problem. The ABC felt that surveys did not justify such an expenditure, he explained.

Joachim said he feels the people of Berwyn should be grateful to Mrs. Oselka and the ABC water committee of Chris Heise, Louis DeFilippi, Frank Holecek and Karel Marsicek. He said he feels Berwyn is getting better answers to the flooding problem than most communities.

# Ne

Hare, an attorney, and one of the civic leaders throughout the state who are leading in the campaign for the proposed state Constitutional amendment, called the issue "the most important opportunity that Illinois voters have had in years to reduce the power of block legislators, restore true representation in the Legislature and to achieve good state government."

The amendment, which would remap the Legislative districts in the state, is a fair compromise, recognizing the basic interests of downstate, the city of Chicago and the suburban towns of Cook County, he said. It is supported by leaders of both political parties and by 77 business, labor, farm and civic organizations throughout Illinois.

Hare pointed out that the present Constitutional provision that the state be reapportioned every 10 years on the basis of population has been ignored by successive Legislatures since 1901, and there has been no change in the Legislative map for half a century.

"The result is:

1. Millions of people in Illinois are deprived of their right to a full and equal vote.

2. Legislators representing tiny vest-pocket districts on the near west, near north and near south

## ABC Asks City to Study Sewer Project Further

Basing its position on an extensive report, the All Berwyn Committee has strongly recommended that the city council reconsider its proposed plans for a \$2 million storm sewer program in Berwyn until the city studies the matter further. The full ABC body thus far has backed the recommendations of a special ABC committee which made a complete study of the problem.

The executive committee of the ABC made known its position recently after the city council ordered engineers to begin drawings of the proposed project. Numerous complaints from residents of flooded basements had brought city council action.

The ABC contends the council is acting on insufficient information and the group recommends a "careful study and consideration of this project." City fathers already have held up the drawings after hearing the ABC complaints.

The report of the special ABC committee, which is headed by Mrs. Amelia Oselka and includes Chris A. Heise, Louis DeFilippi, Frank Holecek, Joseph R. Kybic and Karel Marsicek, recommends that the city council conduct a new questionnaire survey, based on factual estimated costs, and then new plans be prepared for additional sewers in those parts of the city where actually needed. It also recommends, contrary to what is proposed by the city council, that the cost of the project be spread against the properties benefited.

City officials had recommended that the cost be spread among all Berwyn taxpayers.

The ABC charges that the city's action in basing the project on a postal card survey conducted in recent years is in error. Mrs. Oselka pointed out that out of 13,000 consumers in Berwyn, only 4,100 replied to inquiries about sewerage facilities and only about 11 per cent reported they had trouble after heavy rains.

The ABC contends this could be remedied in many cases by regular sweeping of streets, cleaning of catch-basins and service sewers clogged with tree roots and rubbish. In addition, extension pipes and basement drainage pumps would remedy others.

These methods could be carried out at a total cost less than the engineering and legal fees proposed for the \$2 million project.

Heise said the special committee divided the new system proposed by the city into 36 individual projects and after extensive study determined that only 10 of the projects are justifiable, nine are questionable and the balance unnecessary.

The ABC report contends the project is "unnecessarily enlarged, too expensive and the method of financing inequitable and unfair."

It charged the city council plans to spend nearly \$2 million of money "borrowed without a referendum," and to "mortgage our city for the next 30 years and spread the payments against sections and properties that have adequate drainage. This seems very unwise and unfair," the ABC continued.

Mrs. Oselka explained the committee's position. She said the group is not opposed to an improvement of this type, but to put it across under the guise of a community project when it will only effect certain sections of Berwyn is not the proper action.

She said she feels the city council is acting without the proper information and charged that the full text of the ABC report was not given to the council when it was read to the city fathers recently.

Immediately after being informed of the ABC opposition to the proposed sewer project, the council voted to refer the matter to its water committee. The committee is expected to report on the matter shortly.

### LIFE 8/10/54 ABC TO RESUME MEETINGS TONIGHT WITH NEW OFFICERS

Under the leadership of its president, Jerome Joachim, the All Berwyn Committee will begin its meetings for the 1954-55 year this evening at 8 o'clock at the Berwyn city hall. The group meets every second Friday evening of the month.

New officers were elected at the last meeting in June. Besides Joachim, who was reelected president they include: Charles Chandler, 1st vice president; Louis Pitelka, 2nd vice president; Robert Slater, 3rd vice president; Elizabeth Zib, secretary; James Janda, treasurer, and Rev. Dan Ludwig, parliamentarian.

Other officers are Mrs. Amelia Oselka, Abe Roff, Chris Heise and A. J. Kucera, trustees. The nominating committee was composed of Chandler J. E. Sasek and Slater.

# City of Berwyn Residential Flood Mitigation Shared Cost Program

- Will include items such as overhead sewers and backwater valves (also referred to as check valves).
- Owner occupied – residential structures with 3 units or less.
- Application and permit approval are required to qualify.
- Covers 50% of the cost up to a maximum of \$3,500.
- Reimbursement program, work must be complete and inspected.
- Applications and program details will be available end of November 2014.



## Featuring David St. Pierre, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

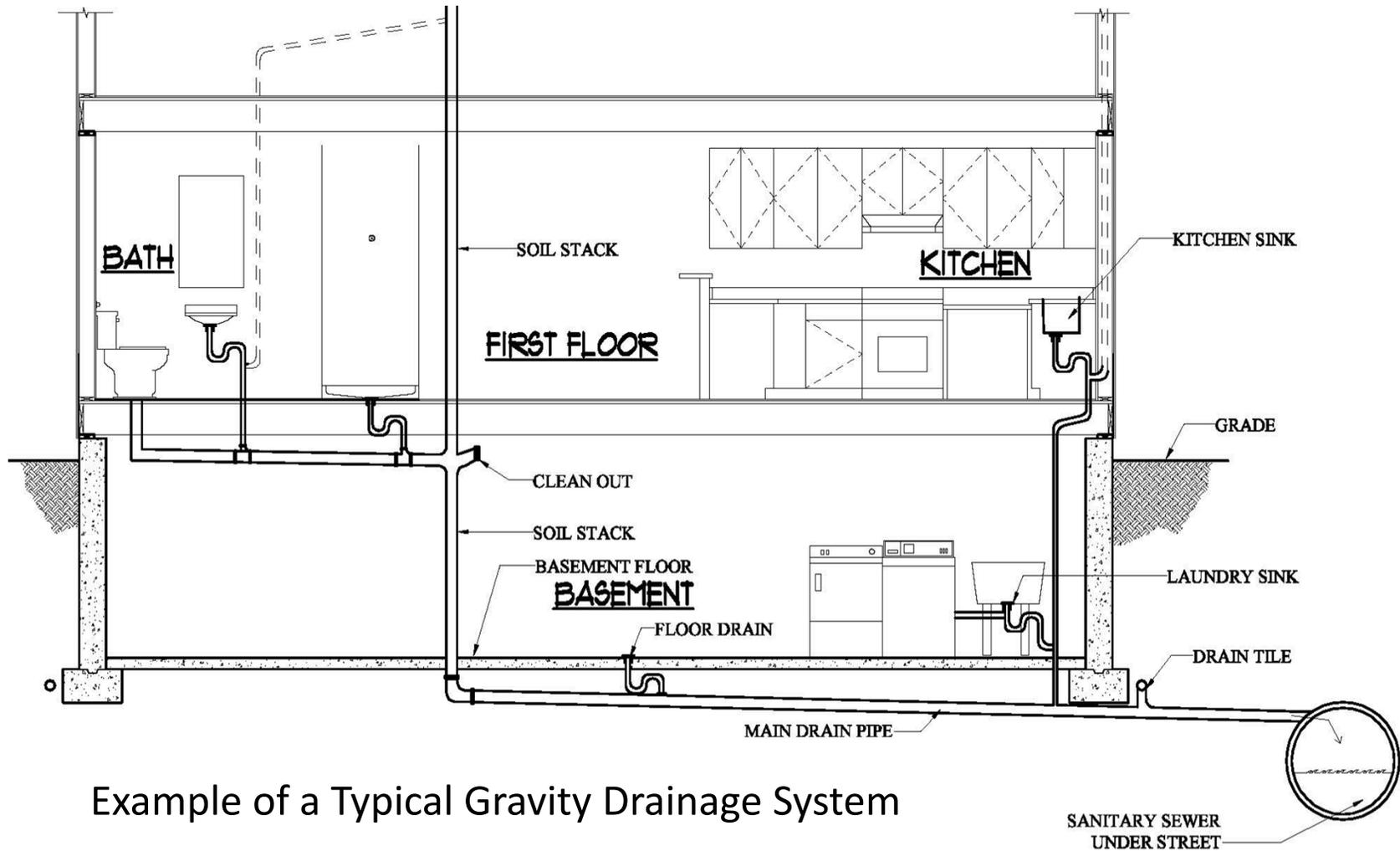
David St. Pierre is the Executive Director of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago where he manages a staff of nearly 2,000. The District covers 883 square miles and provides wholesale wastewater treatment for over five million residents in Cook County, Illinois. The District operates seven wastewater treatment plants which treat one billion gallons/day. The District also provides regional stormwater services. The District has been a leader in the industry since its creation in 1889, and David is committed to ensuring this rich tradition of leadership continues under his tenure. Among other tasks, the District is leading efforts among utilities in adopting a resource recovery model. David has been committed to excellent service and fiscal responsibility throughout his 30 year career in the water industry.

# City of Berwyn Residential Sewer System

## Existing Residential Sewer Systems

- Berwyn homes typically have a gravity type sewer.
- Sewer underneath the basement floor drains to the sewer in the street by gravity.
- City sewers can become overloaded the gravity type sewer is subject to back-up.
- Results in sewer back-ups and flooded basements during a heavy rain event.

# City of Berwyn Residential Sewer System



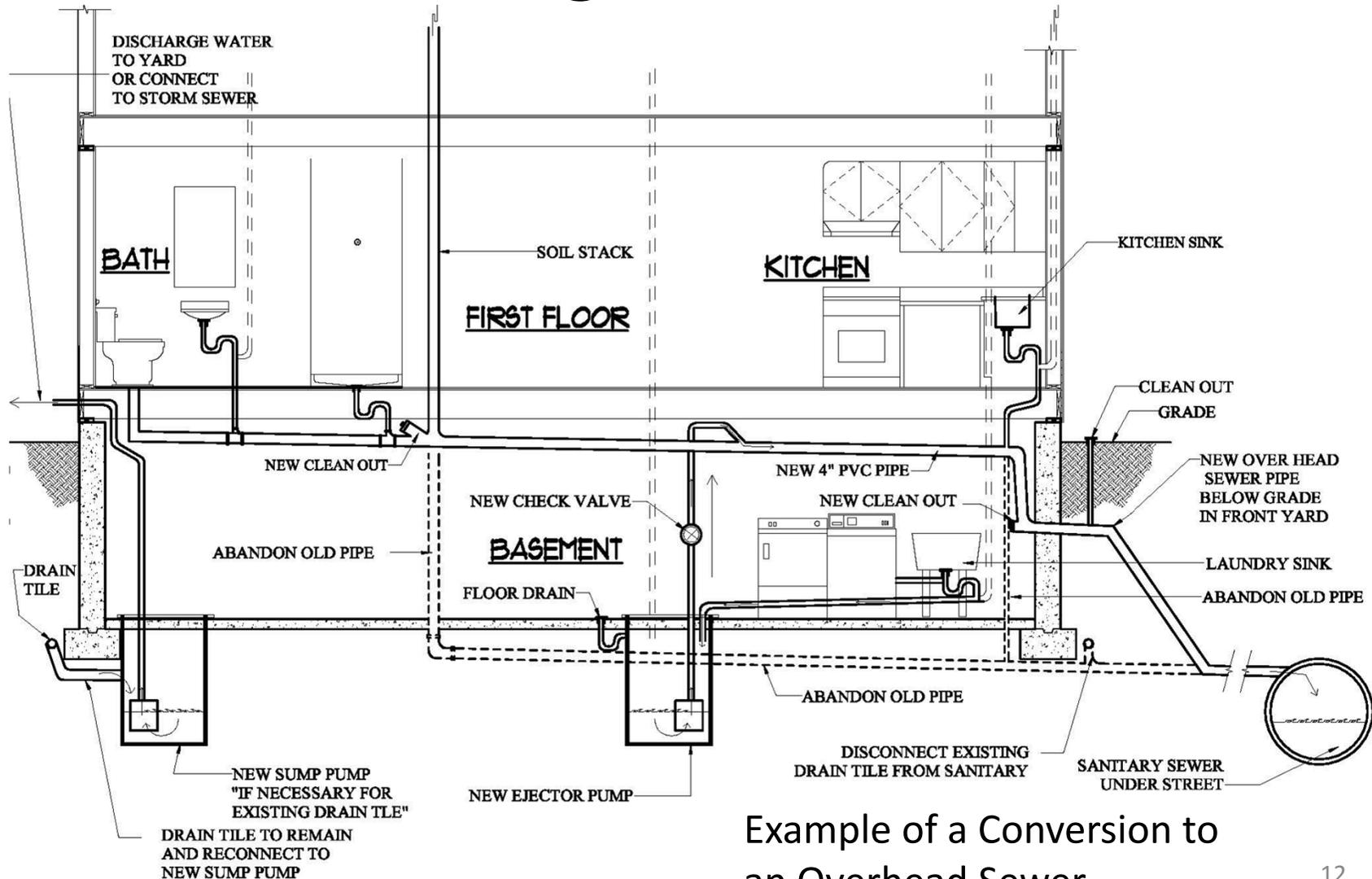
Example of a Typical Gravity Drainage System

# City of Berwyn Common Residential Flood Mitigation Solutions

## Overhead Sewer

- Overhead Sewers can alleviate basement back-ups.
- Plumbing in the basement is re-directed to an ejector pit, lifting the sewage up and overhead.
- If the City sewer backs-up, the homeowner is better protected, as the water will most likely only back-up into the steep slope area of the pipe and not into the house.

# City of Berwyn Common Residential Flood Mitigation Solutions



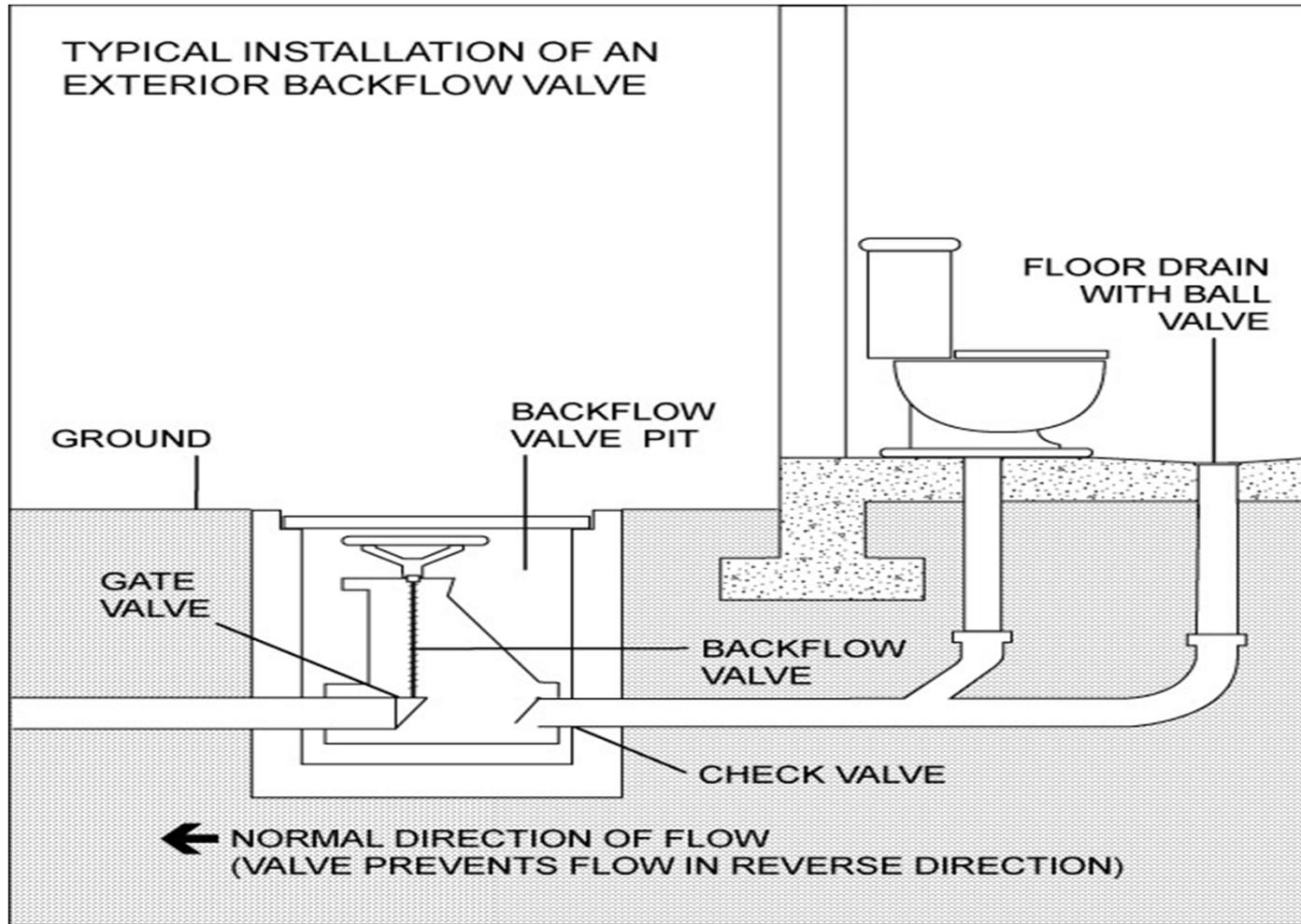
Example of a Conversion to an Overhead Sewer

# City of Berwyn Common Residential Flood Mitigation Solutions

## Backwater valves/check valves

- Check valves can alleviate basement back-ups.
- Designed to block drain pipes temporarily.
- If the City sewer backs-up, the homeowner is better protected, prevents return flow.
- Available in a variety of designs.

# City of Berwyn Common Residential Flood Mitigation Solutions



# Resident Sewer Maintenance Tips

- The resident owns the sewer service from the house to the sewer main, typically located in the center of the road.
- Use root killer in the sewer service.
- Regular sewer service and catch basin cleaning.
- Reduce water usage during heavy storm events.
- Disconnect downspouts where possible and discharge in front/rear yard.
- Use a rain barrel. Stored water can be used to water plants, lawns, etc.
- Take part in the sewer line warranty program.

# City Sewer Maintenance Efforts

City maintains 100 miles of sewer ranging in size from 8" to 7'-6" in diameter.

Sewer mains are between 50 and 110 years old.

- 160 sewer repairs January 1, 2011 to October 10, 2014.
- Televised 15,000 feet of sewer in 2013.
- Cleaned 35,000 feet of sewer in 2013.
- Daily street cleaning to remove debris from drainage structures.
- City water department staff repairs and replaces drainage structures routinely, as discovered.
- Purchase of a Vactor Truck for sewer and catch basin cleaning.

# City of Berwyn Stormwater Management Planning Approach

- The City along with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and CDM Smith, have initiated a stormwater management planning project.
- Stormwater management planning can identify problem areas/causes and on-the-ground opportunities for improvements that can reduce flooding.
- Identify potential flooding mitigation options, including green infrastructure, sewer projects for further analysis, and site-specific mitigation solutions.

Stormwater management planning approach consists of:

- Data collection and development of a GIS database,
- Data analysis to identify problems and opportunities in the community,
- Preparation of a plan and implementation strategy.

# Stormwater Management Projects

## ***StormTrap Underground Storage System – Proksa Park***

Provides 5,507 cf or 41,200 gallons of underground stormwater storage

## ***Liberty Cultural Center Parking Lot***

25,580 sf parking lot replaced with permeable pavers, reduces 6,740 cf or 50,420 gallons of stormwater entering the system during 1 month of rainfall

## ***Big Hurt Brewery***

Underground detention - 9,538 cf or 71,344 gallons of stormwater

## ***Ross Dress for Less***

Underground detention - 20,037 cf or 149,877 gallons of stormwater

## ***Northeast Corner of Cermak Road and Harlem Avenue Redevelopment***

Phase II will include underground detention.

## ***McDonald's at 6401 Cermak Road***

Underground detention – 5,814 cf or 43,489 gallons of stormwater

## ***McDonald's at 7051 Ogden Avenue***

Underground detention – 5,860 cf or 43,833 gallons of stormwater

## ***Depot District Utilities***

Larger sewers will be constructed to provide additional capacity, improved conveyance to the MWRD interceptor and rerouting to provide balance amongst the current system and respective outlet capacities. Sewers proposed to be relined will increase the life of the existing pipe, improve flow and eliminate root intrusion.

# Stormwater Management Projects

## *Items submitted for grant funding*

### **Green Alleys Improvement Program**

The proposed project involves reconstructing 8,840 square yards of alley space with Permeable Concrete.

- Reduces 20,840 cubic feet or 155,870 gallons of rainwater from entering the sewer system monthly.
- Reduces pollutant concentrations.

### **Downspout Disconnect Assistance**

This project will assist residents in disconnecting rooftop downspouts that are directly connected to the City's combined sewer system.

- Eliminates stormwater that is collected on rooftops during heavy storms from entering the combined sewer system.
- Reduces the chances of sewer backup into buildings.

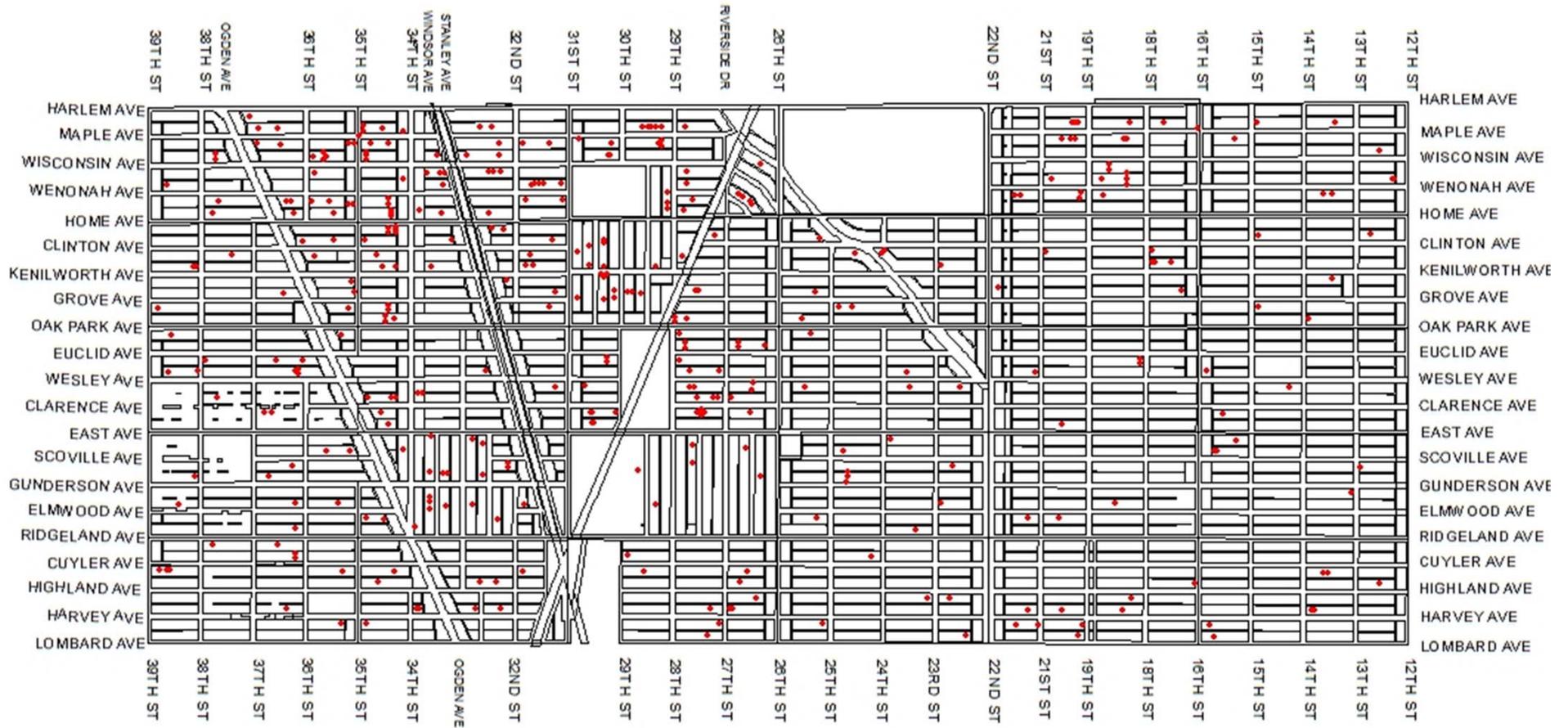
### **Depot District Streetscape**

Green infrastructure elements included will provide 54,900 cf of stormwater storage under permeable pavers, Silva Cells and bioswale/landscaped areas.

- Allows stormwater to matriculate into the ground naturally
- Decreases volume of surface runoff

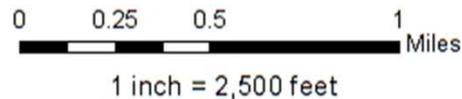


# CITY OF BERWYN: REPORTED FLOOD LOCATIONS 2013 & 2014



**Sources:**

Illinois State Water Survey  
Wunderground.com  
City of Berwyn



CREATED BY:  
CITY OF BERWYN ENGINEERING  
DRAWN BY: WAR  
CHECKED BY: NLC  
10/10/14