



Take notice that the City of Ashland Committee of the Whole will meet immediately following the adjournment of the City Council Meeting in the City Hall Council Chambers, 601 Main Street W. Ashland, WI, to consider and act upon the following agenda.

To attend the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/500263957>

Or dial in using your phone. United States (Toll Free): 1-877-309-2073 Access Code: 500-263-957

Please contact the Clerk's office if you require accommodations to attend the meeting.

Tuesday, July 8, 2025 Ashland Committee of the Whole Meeting Agenda

1. **Roll Call**
2. **Approval of Agenda**
3. **Council President's Report**
4. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**
 - A. **Presentation and Discussion of the City of Ashland Property Maintenance Enforcement Process (*Goyke*)**
 - B. **Discussion Regarding Stormwater System Maintenance and Projects (*Public Works*)**
 - C. **Vacant Housing Ordinance Draft for Review and Discussion (*Administrator*)**
5. **Items for Future Discussion**
6. **Adjournment**

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SUBJECT: Presentation and Discussion of the City of Ashland Property Maintenance Enforcement Process (*Goyke*)

RECOMMENDATION: NA

DEPARTMENT OF ORIGIN: Councilor Goyke

CLEARANCES: Planning and Development Director

EXHIBITS:

COMPLIANCE WITH STRATEGIC PLAN: The 2022-2026 Strategic Plan and draft Strategic Plan both mention Property Maintenance enforcement as a priority. Staff have continued to increase property maintenance efforts consistent with the Strategic and Comprehensive Plans.

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

Councilor Goyke has asked for an overview of the City's Property Maintenance enforcement process. The Property Maintenance program is housed within the Planning and Development Department. One full-time Property Maintenance staffperson handles year-round code enforcement duties and an additional part-time Limited Term Employee (LTE) has assisted in 2024 and 2025 with enforcement efforts during the summer months. Enforcement efforts include a mix of proactive and complaint-based inspections and follow-up paperwork.

Property Maintenance staff spend time each day in the field doing inspections. Staff drive through portions of the City and view properties from the public right-of-way (street and alley). If no violation is present, no action is taken and staff continue to the next property or the next location on their list of follow-up inspections. If a violation is present staff will stop and note the address of the property. They photograph the property/violation(s). Generally staff have conducted inspections during the morning and completed their paperwork in the afternoon. If a violation is identified and photographed, staff creates a case in the code enforcement system where all relevant images and files for the case are kept. The Department Head continues to work with the staff to ensure that violation notices, citations, case notes, etc. are in accessible files for each case.

For tall grass/weeds or snow, staff leave a door tag and send a violation notice once per growing or snow season. For all violations, a notice is sent and includes a description of the violation(s) present, applicable ordinance section(s), compliance date by which a violation needs to be corrected and property re-inspection will occur, and images of the violation(s). Staff create a

case file in the system. If/when staff verify that the violation is corrected by the compliance date, the case is closed. If grass/weeds or snow remain in violation at a property, staff have the grass/weeds cut or snow removed and the cost of correcting the violation is assessed to the owner as a special charge which goes on the property taxes. Subsequent grass or snow violations for the same property during the growing or snow season result in the City having the grass/weeds cut or snow removed and the cost billed to the property without additional follow-up notices. The City generally has not issued citations for lawn and snow violations but corrects the violation and bills the charge to the property.

Staff photograph and create cases in the system for junk and debris or garbage-related violations. Similar to lawn or snow violations, a notice is sent and a re-inspection/compliance date is provided in the notice. Staff give owners time to get in touch with Property Maintenance staff and create a plan to ensure compliance or correct the violation. The amount of time varies depending on the scope of the violation. For lawns/snow, staff have given a week, for many garbage-related cases two weeks, and for issues such as graveling a yard, often 30 days. In some cases, staff allow longer if an owner is showing efforts to actively address the issue(s). Staff have also allowed additional time in situations where a violation is identified in late fall or early winter and an owner may need the ground to thaw in order to address specific violations.

In situations where a violation remains after the initial compliance date, staff generally send a follow-up/final notice with a new compliance date stating potential citations and/or further enforcement action. The Property Maintenance Ordinance and Comprehensive Fee Schedule allow the City to issue service fees for follow-up inspections where properties remain in noncompliance. Staff continue to work on implementing the service fees. Citations are issued in situations where owners have not complied with the initial or follow-up notices and properties remain in violation. If a citation is issued, it is served to the property owner by law enforcement and/or mailed if necessary. A court date is set with the Ashland County Circuit Court and the owner has the option to appear and make a plea there. The City Attorney handles the prosecution duties. If the owner fails to appear in court, a default judgment is issued. The City issues increased citations for continued noncompliance. Often the lead time between issuing a citation and the court date can be a month or more.

For properties where multiple citations were issued and violations remain, the City has started to use the abatement process. Staff compile all relevant documentation on the case and complete a case log. Staff send the materials over to the City Attorney's office, who then drafts the complaint. Once the complaint is drafted, the attorney's office works with the relevant law enforcement agency to have the property owner served with the complaint. The court hearing is set, which could be months after the complaint is drafted. In situations where law enforcement is unable to serve the property owner(s), the City publishes a Class III notice in the newspaper and must wait a period of time afterward prior to proceeding in court. For this reason, often the abatement process can take months and is reserved for the worst/chronically problematic properties where no other methods have worked. Once the court hearing occurs and if the judge rules in the City's favor, the City has a warrant to go onto the property and address the violations that were included in the complaint, and the City (Public Works) crew will correct the violations. Public Works staff certify the costs of cleanup, which are assessed to the property owner. It becomes a lien on the property if the owner fails to pay it.

This is an overview of the process and staff are starting to address more building code and Conditional Use Permit/zoning issues also. Efforts so far have focused mainly on Property Maintenance/public nuisances but Planning and Development staff are working on more follow-up across multiple enforcement areas. The process involves multiple departments, particularly in cases involving abatement. If Councilors have any questions or would like additional information, please reach out to Planning and Development Director Steven Wiley.

SUBJECT: Discussion Regarding Stormwater System Maintenance and Projects (*Public Works*)

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion Only

DEPARTMENT OF ORIGIN: Public Works Director

CLEARANCES: N/A

EXHIBITS:

1. Best Management Practice Presentation
2. Public Works - Storm Sewer Maintenance Budget

COMPLIANCE WITH STRATEGIC PLAN: Infrastructure & Water Quality

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

The Public Works Director would like to provide some information related to various activities, grants and maintenance efforts associated with the City's storm sewer system. Consideration should be given to mapping and condition assessment of downtown storm sewer for the 2026 budget. In addition, the Public Works Director is requesting direction from the Council on developing, through the Public Works Committee, a City policy to govern the level of service (LOS) provided on the City's storm water system. The LOS policy would present information on strategies for managing the system and associated discharge to Bay City Creek and Lake Superior with consideration given to budgetary constraints.

GIS Mapping- the City utilizes Geographic Information Systems in a very positive way, specifically for mapping of underground assets. Records for water and sewer systems are estimated to be 90% accurate but records of the storm sewer system are estimated to be 30% accurate. Staff made some progress on this in summer 2024 in the vicinity of Bay City Creek via Jason Lundmark, who was an engineering intern for two summers. Jason has moved on and this work continues in a more limited fashion via Niles Fetter, Civil Engineer- Streets.

Any future discussions on stormwater management in the City should begin with this topic. It is impossible to effectively manage any system without knowing what we have, specifically the number and location of stormwater assets such as catch basins, manholes, piping, outfalls and treatment devices.

Cleaning & Televising- the GIS mapping is coordinated with Public Works staff from the Streets Division cleaning the system, which helps to identify the location. For roughly the past

10 yrs, the City has not had a program for regular maintenance, which does not align with any industry best management practices (BMPs). The only stormwater assets regularly cleaned was the system on US 2. Public Works is implementing a more regular maintenance program but there are conflicts with other duties. The Public Works Director is recommending continued prioritization of cleaning catch basins, manholes and pipes as a means to improve water quality in Lake Superior. The City's equipment used for cleaning is old, prone to breakdowns, and has limited capacity. The Wastewater Utility has similar equipment and it may be possible to share equipment in the future. The Public Works Department does not have televising equipment so this work is done by the Wastewater Utility, which takes time away from their assigned duties.

Street Sweeping- The City maintains a regular street sweeping program and purchased a new sweeper in 2023. Street sweeping has demonstrated impacts on improving the quality of stormwater discharge. Currently, the City provides the same LOS to all streets and avenues throughout the City. In 2023, a City Hall intern completed research that recommended that certain high traffic streets, in commercial/industrial areas and those adjacent to surface water be prioritized. Staff are interested in looking further at implementing this but it would have the effect of reducing the LOS in low traffic, residential areas.

Treatment Devices- over the years, the City has installed various treatment devices on the stormwater system, commonly referred to as green infrastructure. Examples of devices in the City are retention basins, constructed wetlands, hydro dynamic separators, and bio swales. The City's storm water discharge is not regulated so these efforts are voluntary. Public Works staff lacks competency in the function and maintenance of these devices. Continued implementation of the devices needs to be aligned with development of staff and budget for maintenance.

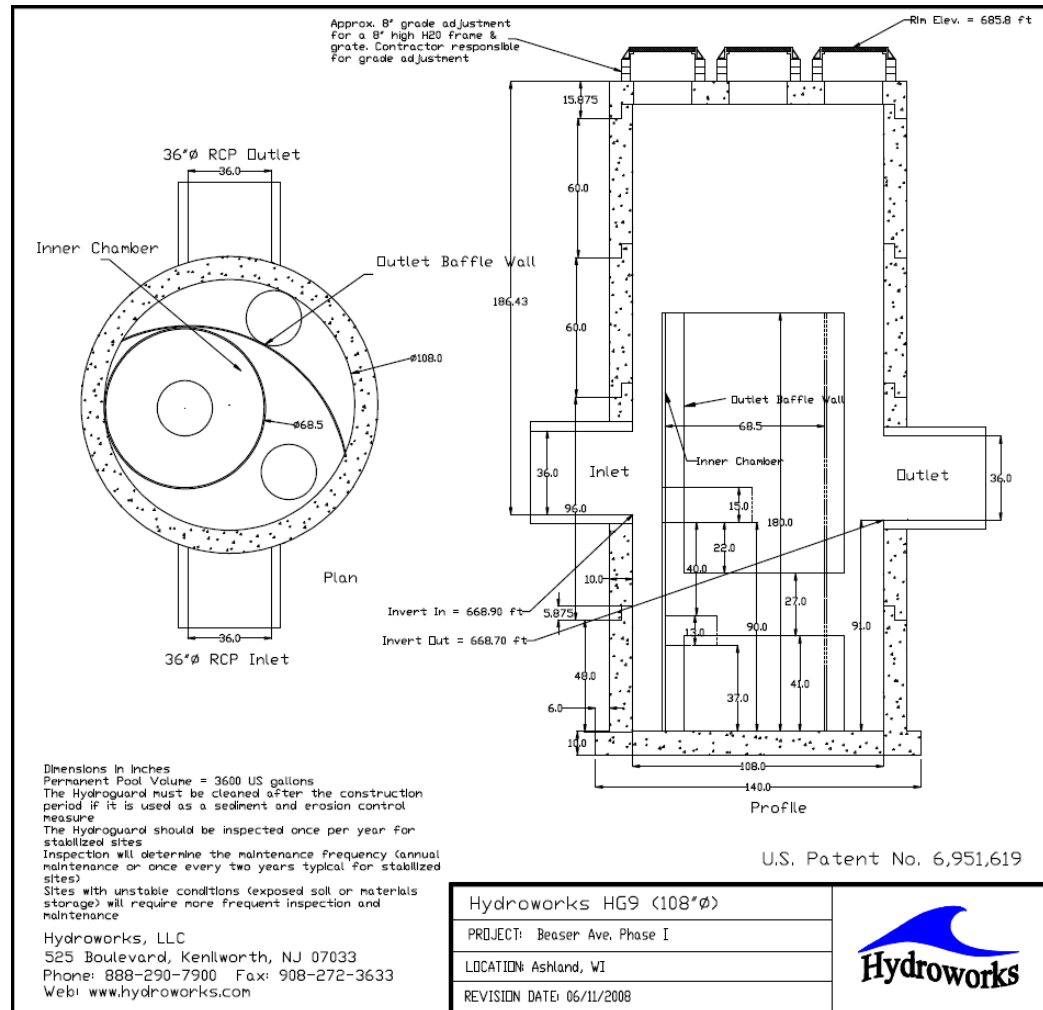
Sanborn Ave Trail- the City recently cleaned a stormwater retention basin as part of Waterfront Trail repaving. The basin had not been maintained since construction. The cost of the cleaning and disposal of sediment was \$14,500, with 40% coming from a grant and 60% coming from the City's Capital Improvement Fund. This project is an example of ongoing cost of storm sewer maintenance. For reference, the total 2025 budget for storm sewer maintenance, including staff wages and benefits, is \$125,000.

Bay City Creek & Snow Dump- the City has received grant funds to improve water quality in Bay City Creek. A component of the grants is storm sewer management, including development of a hydraulic model, mapping outfall locations, improvements to the snow dump, and possible improvements to an outfall. The hydraulic model is critical to assessing the impact of changes to the system, such as increases in impervious areas and climate change. The snow dump is located behind the old Stuntz Fire Station and will become more critical following the future development of the Roffers site across from the Police Station. The snow removed from downtown streets and avenues is known to be contaminated with road salt and oil/grease from vehicles so treatment prior to discharge to the creek is a BMP. In 2024, Public Works Engineering staff discovered a storm water retention pond at this location that has not been maintained in over 10 yrs. Staff is looking into performing the maintenance in summer 2025 but is balancing budgetary constraints. The possible improvements to an outfall should be aligned with an existing need of the City and consider ongoing maintenance costs.

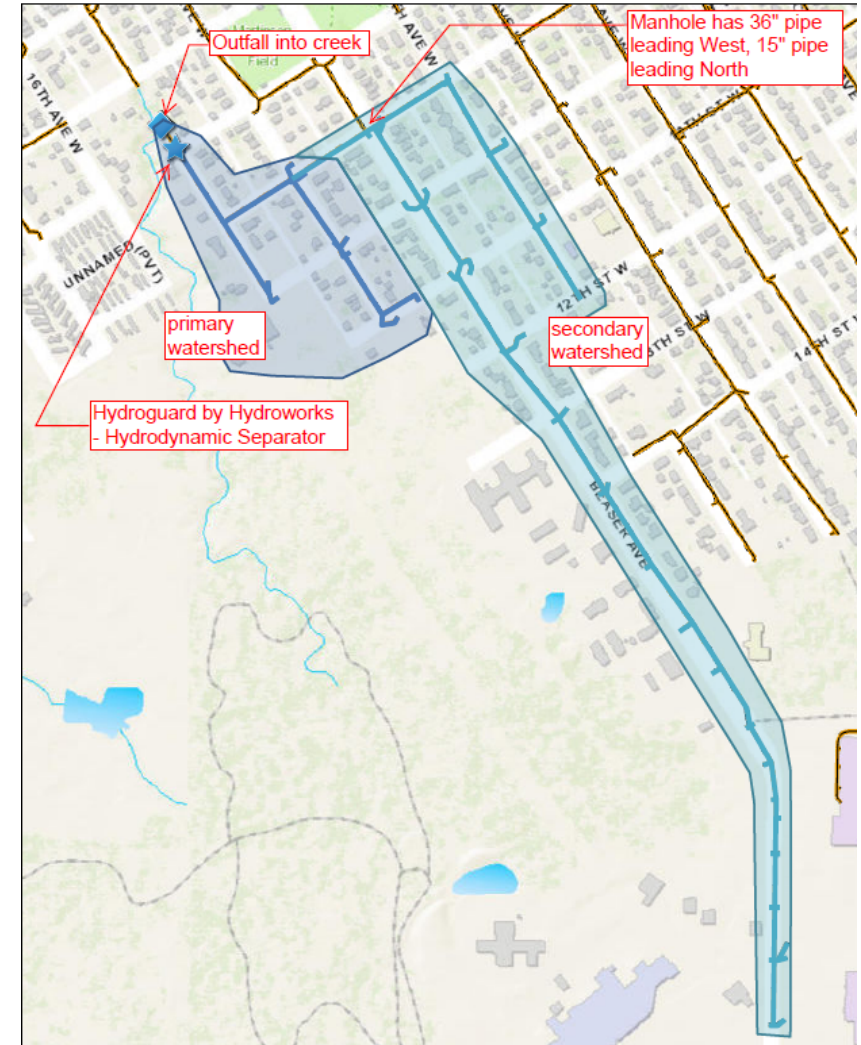
Downtown Storm Sewer- the downtown area has been built up in the early 1900s due to flooding of the downtown. Deep storm sewers were constructed to drain existing ravines in the area. Public Works staff has responded to some pipe failures over the years and has some idea on the location of this infrastructure. However, it is not mapped and has not been inspected via televising. Given the location, depth and complexity of this infrastructure, the risk exposure associated with lack of mapping and condition assessment is significant. Public Works staff wrote a grant that, if funded, would help with some of the work needed but more City funds are requested. The Public Works Director is requesting that this issue be given consideration during 2026 budget discussions.

Storm water BMPs & Assessment

Hydrodynamic Separator



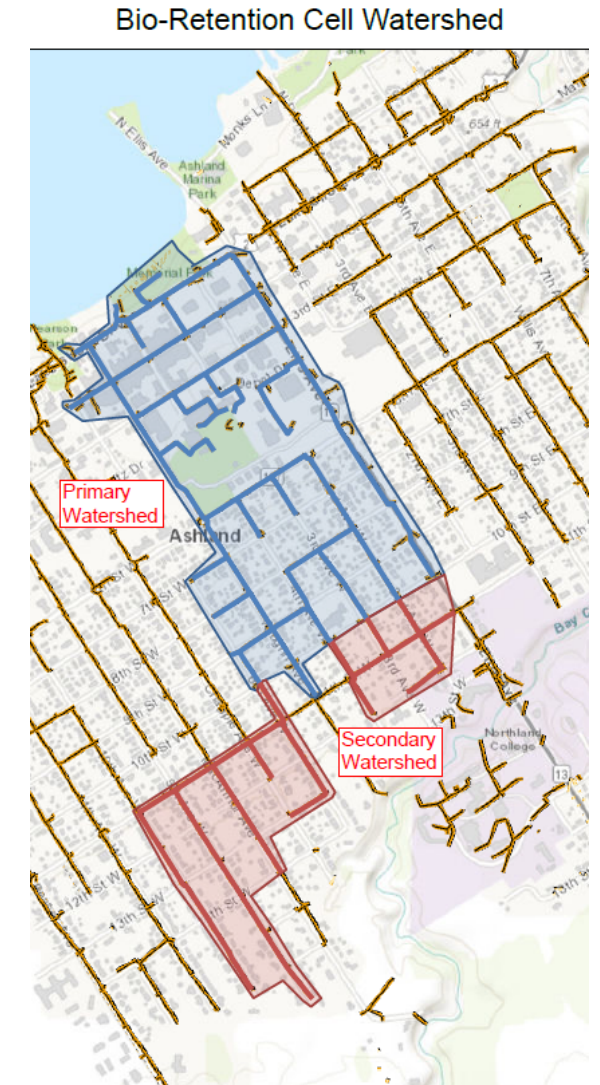
Hydrodynamic Separator Watershed



Hydrodynamic Separator



Lakefront Bio-Retention Cell



Lakefront Bio-Retention Cell

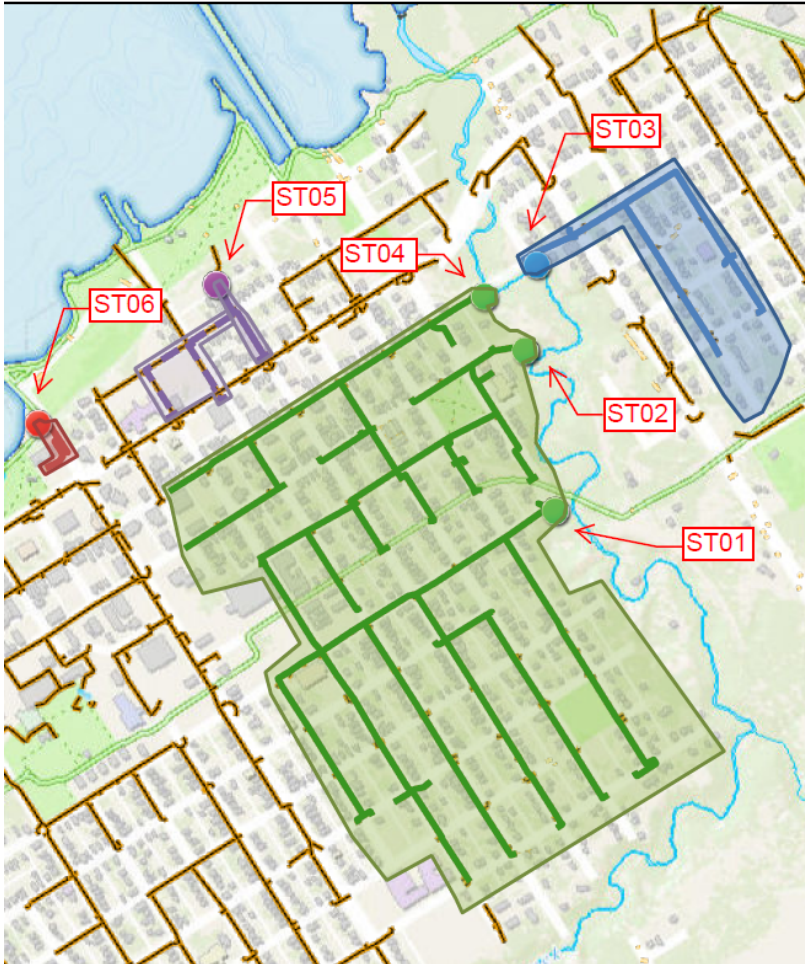


3rd St E Retention Pond



Storm Outfall Water Quality Testing

Storm Testing Watersheds



	Suspended Solids (mg/L)		E. Coli (colonies/100 ml)		Phosphorus (mg/L)	
	5/20/2024		5/20/2024		5/20/2024	
ST01	23.8		> 2419.6		0.23	
ST02	29.6		> 2419.6		0.33	
ST03	19		2419.6		0.25	
ST04	92		> 2419.6		0.36	
ST05	37.8		> 2419.6		0.26	
ST06	39.6		920.8		0.27	
benchmark	100		406		0.325	

- Test quality of water at outfalls first
- Inspect and clean all facilities that lead into outfall
- Test water quality afterwards

MSA Storm Water System Assessment - Capacity

- Largest rain event system can handle is 2-yr storm (mismatched sizes of inlets & pipes)
- Costs to upgrade storm system to handle 24-hour rain events (2009 dollars, add up to 30% contingency)
 - 2-year: \$3.5 million
 - 5-year: \$4.6 million
 - 10-year: \$6.1 million

Estimated Cost to Upgrade Collector Storm Sewers

Diameter (in)	Existing Length (Prorated) (ft)	Required Length of Upgrades	Required Upsize	Pipe Unit Cost (\$/ft)	Total Cost (\$)
		49%	12-inches		
<12	3,402	1,700	12	35	\$59,500
12	55,298	27,100	24	48	\$1,300,800
18 ¹	23,040	22,300	30	60	\$1,338,000
24	34,577	17,000	36	70	\$1,190,000
30	8,398	4,200	42	80	\$336,000
36	7,710	3,800	48	100	\$380,000
42	412	300	54	127	\$38,100
48	2,337	1,200	60	160	\$192,000
54	379	200	66	187	\$37,400
60	702	400	72	235	\$94,000
66	185	100	84	285	\$28,500
TOTALS		78,300			\$4,994,300

1. Includes 15" diameter pipe

Estimated Costs for Manholes

$$(78,300\text{ft} / 400\text{ ft/MH}) \times \$2,500/\text{MH} = \$489,375$$

Estimated Costs for Inlets

$$1,301\text{ inlets} \times 15.6\% \text{ increase} \times \$1,500/\text{inlet} = \$304,434$$

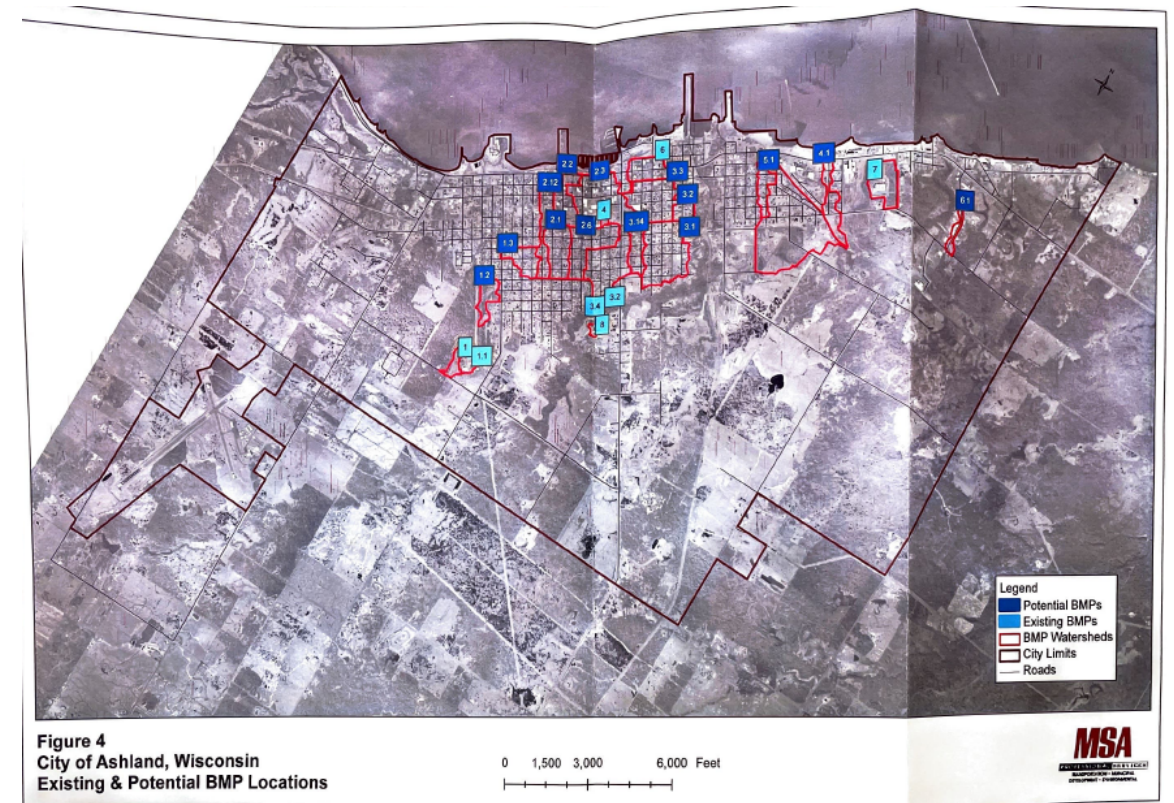
Estimated Costs for Inlet Pipes

$$1,301\text{ inlets} \times 15.6\% \text{ increase} \times 49\text{ feet of } 12''\text{ pipe} \times \$35/\text{ft} = \$348,070$$

$$\textbf{\underline{TOTAL COST = \$6,136,179}}$$

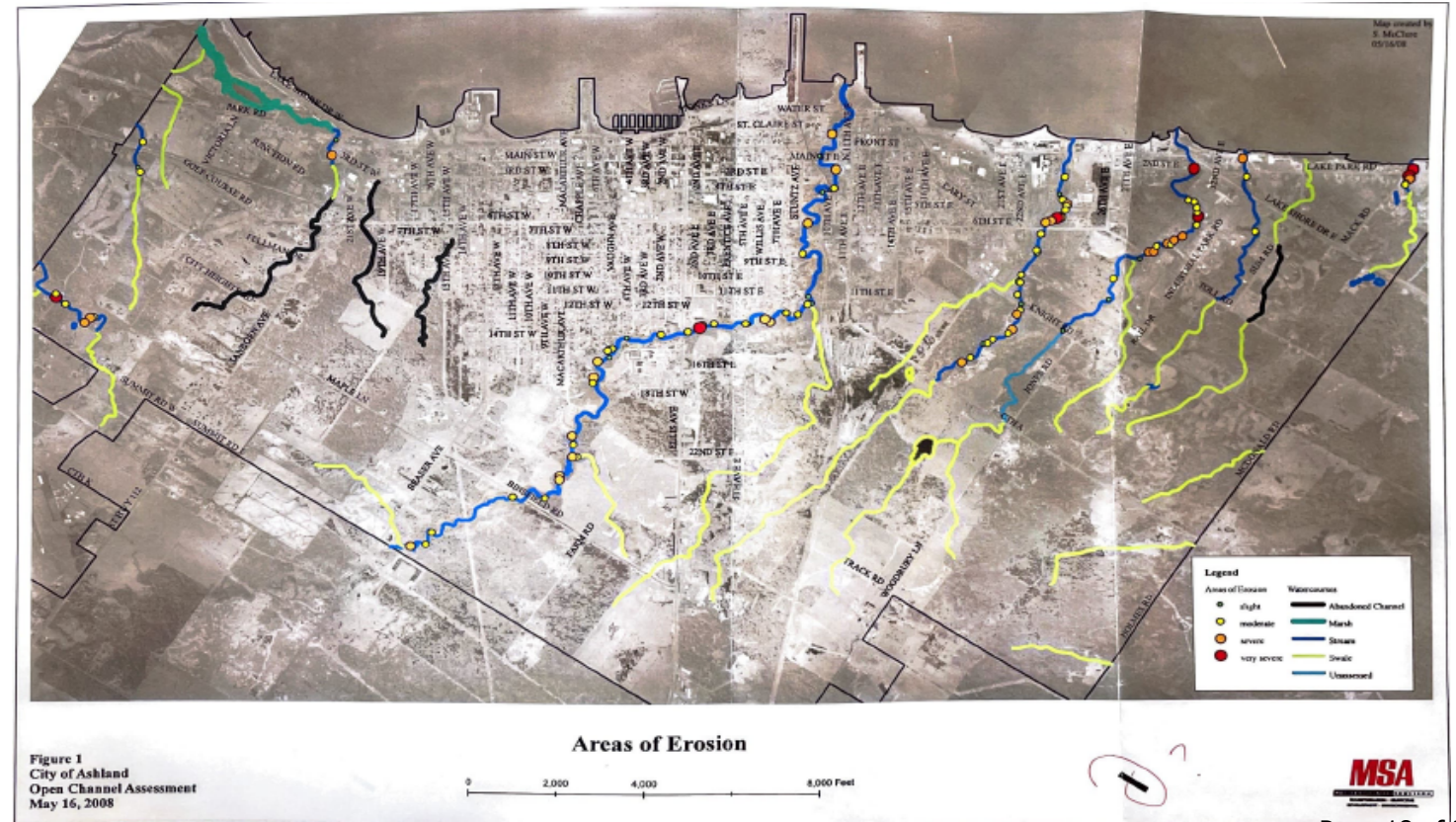
MSA Storm Water System Assessment - Quality

- Currently producing a total of 430.1 tons/year of TSS
 - Street Sweeping: -1.6 tons/year
 - BMPs: -11.2 tons/year
 - TSS Reduction Rate: 3.0%
- Adding 13 more BMPs around the city & a more in-depth street sweeping program would reduce TSS by 20%



MSA Storm Water System Assessment – Open Channel Erosion

- 107 erosion sites found in 10 miles of stream bank
 - About 272 tons/year TSS is released
 - 5 worst sites release 112 tons/year alone (40%)
 - Next 6 sites: 60%
 - Next 12: 80%



**CITY OF ASHLAND
2024 BUDGET**

Fill in these

PUBLIC WORKS-STORM SEWER MAINTENANCE

DESCRIPTION				2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 Actual	2023	2024	Percent
PERSONNEL COSTS				Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	to June 30	Estimate	Budget	Change
100	53441	111	SALARIES & WAGES	36,252	36,187	34,873	26,604	50,366	9,592	19,184	49,446	-1.83%
100	53441	112	OVERTIME WAGES	53	307	0	228	1,000	51	102	1,000	0.00%
100	53441	125	WAGES/TEMP/OTHER	1,330	2,664	1,020	419	2,134	467	934	4,934	131.21%
100	53441	151	SOCIAL SECURITY	2,722	2,844	2,595	1,959	4,068	741	1,482	4,247	4.40%
100	53441	152	EMPLOYER SHARE RETIREMENT	2,378	2,463	2,354	1,744	3,585	656	1,312	3,610	0.71%
100	53441	154	MEDICAL & DENTAL	10,315	10,237	10,654	8,295	16,160	2,723	5,446	16,840	4.21%
100	53441	155	LIFE INSURANCE	190	175	224	173	203	39	78	202	-0.45%
100	53441	156	WORKER'S COMPENSATION	1,672	1,514	1,343	956	1,844	0	650	1,684	-8.68%
100	53441	157	HSA CONTRIBUTION	1,728	1,417	1,634	1,221	1,902	306	612	1,965	3.34%
TOTAL PERSONNEL COSTS:				\$56,638	\$57,808	\$54,697	\$41,599	\$81,262	\$14,575	\$29,800	\$83,928	3.28%
SERVICES												
100	53441	221	WATER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	NA
100	53441	290	CONTRACTUAL SERVICES	0	0	0	24,661	10,000	0	7,000	20,000	100.00%
TOTAL SERVICES:				\$0	\$0	\$0	\$24,661	\$10,000	\$0	\$7,000	\$20,000	100.00%
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES												
100	53441	320	ADVERTISING/PUBLISHING	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	NA
100	53441	340	OPERATING SUPPLIES	13,633	16,257	1,173	6,829	18,000	132	6,800	18,000	0.00%
100	53441	351	R&M HEAVY EQUIPMENT	1,905	5,769	5,100	3,293	5,000	670	5,000	3,000	-40.00%
TOTAL MAT. & SUPPLIES:				\$15,538	\$22,026	\$6,273	\$10,122	\$23,000	\$802	\$11,800	\$21,000	-8.70%
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES												
TOTAL CAPITAL EXP:				\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	NA
TOTAL PW-STORM SEWER MAINT:				\$72,177	\$79,834	\$60,970	\$76,382	\$114,262	\$15,377	\$48,600	\$124,928	9.33%

Ref: 2025-163

COMMITTEE AGENDA:
4.C. (7/8/2025)

SUBJECT: Vacant Housing Ordinance Draft for Review and Discussion (*Administrator*)

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion and Possible Action

DEPARTMENT OF ORIGIN: Administration, Planning

CLEARANCES: The Council as Committee of the Whole previously discussed and approved this item to return for further discussion.

EXHIBITS:

COMPLIANCE WITH STRATEGIC PLAN: Housing

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

Staff have been working on creating more housing within the City of Ashland as part of the City's Strategic Plan. Administrator Kucera will introduce sample ordinance language from other municipalities and ask Council for input in order to create an ordinance.

SUBJECT: Items for Future Discussion

RECOMMENDATION:

DEPARTMENT OF ORIGIN: Clerk

CLEARANCES: Council President

EXHIBITS:

COMPLIANCE WITH STRATEGIC PLAN: NA

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

The Committee of the Whole is a forum for discussion and potential action.

The intention of this item on the Committee of the Whole agenda is to give Councilors an opportunity to air any topics or issues they feel would be worthy for discussion. There are multiple ways the topic can be directed - return to a Committee of the Whole agenda, forwarded to a designated committee, or followed up directly by a member of the City's staff. With the direction of the Mayor, Administrator, and Council President, the Clerk is requesting a process be followed before the item reaches a future agenda.

Councilors are welcome to introduce items for future discussion which they may feel are noteworthy. Items mentioned during this time will need a majority vote to determine the direction of action. If it's agreed to put the item on a future agenda, an agenda report is needed in order to supply the pertinent background information to be vetted. The agenda report should include:

TITLE: What is being asked to discuss. A title such as *Raingardens* can be fairly vague. Do you want to see more of them? Do you want to see fewer of them? Do you want to regulate them? A better title might be *Encourage Citizens Who Own More than 2 City Lots to Implement a Raingarden on Their Property*.

Recommendation, action or desired outcome. Would you prefer to move this to a committee for research? Are you asking for a resolution or ordinance amendment? Are you seeking staff assistance or action?

Exhibits. A report, spreadsheet, photo - anything to add to the cause.

Compliance with the Strategic Plan. A short time ago, Council asked for an explanation of how the topic relates to the goals of the strategic plan. A copy of this plan is available on the City's website, or can be sent to you upon request.

Summary Statement. Offering a statement is required for an item to be discussed at the Committee of the Whole. This shares with the Council and more so the public the reason the item was introduced, what is the goal, how this will benefit the City as a whole, what are the financial implications, what staff will be involved, how the community will be affected or benefited, and what needs to be done to make that happen. Much of this should be discussed during the meeting, but it's best to gather as much background as possible to allow other councilors to bring questions, thoughts and suggestions to the table.