

Redundant Force Main from Pump Station 16 to South Cross Bayou Water Reclamation Facility

What is the Redundant Force Main Project?

The Pinellas County Redundant Force Main project will replace an existing 20-inch wastewater force main that serves the Seminole/Pinellas Park area. The project includes designing, routing, permitting and constructing a new force main from Pump Station 16, located near the corner of Park and Seminole boulevards, to the county's South Cross Bayou Water Reclamation Facility on 54th Avenue North. The project also includes connections with the existing, parallel 36-inch force main, so all the flows can be routed to either pipeline should one be taken out of service for repairs or maintenance activity in the future.

Why is the project necessary?

Pinellas County's existing 20-inch force main in the Seminole area is more than 50 years old and has failed twice in the last five years. This force main must be replaced to protect public health, improve wastewater service reliability, improve operational flexibility and protect the environment.

What do you mean by "redundant?"

The new force main will include valves and connections to another force main in the area so all the flows can be routed to either pipeline should one be taken out of service for repairs or maintenance activity in the future.

What is the project schedule?

The entire project will be completed over approximately three years. Route selection, design, permitting and community outreach will continue through 2016. Design and permitting is scheduled to be completed by mid-2017. The county will advertise for construction contractors in the summer of 2017. Construction is scheduled to begin by the end of 2017 and be completed by mid-2019.

Which route was selected?

Alternative Route B was the selected route as it has the least impact of the top-ranked routes to busy Park Boulevard, has fewer special crossings, takes advantage of wide rights-of-way along the southern portions of the route, and is the least costly. The route is 3.4 miles long and goes from the pump station at the corner of Park and Seminole boulevards eastward in Park Boulevard to 84th Lane, south in 84th Lane to Park Street, then south in Park Street to 62 Avenue North, where it heads east to the South Cross Bayou Water Reclamation Facility.

What criteria did you use to select a route?

A number of factors were considered in evaluating potential routes, including safety, the environment, permitting, location of other utilities, constructability, cost, traffic impacts, community input and more. Each route option was evaluated using weighted selection criteria that included community input.

Will you be excavating to install the new force main or will you be tunneling?

Most of the pipeline will be installed in open cut trenches. In some areas, the contractor will likely use trenchless construction to tunnel under major intersections, waterways and other significant features.

How will you handle the traffic during construction?

A maintenance-of-traffic plan will be developed to keep motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians safely moving through the area. While it is too early to know the specifics, residents can expect to see some lane closures during construction. Whether detours or flagman will be utilized is not known at this time. If work areas affect pedestrian and bicycle pathways, alternative pathways will be identified.

Will you coordinate the traffic lights on Park Boulevard during construction?

Yes. Traffic flow and signals will be an important part of the maintenance-of-traffic plan.

How long will you be in front of my neighborhood?

Construction duration will vary by location, depending on weather conditions, soil conditions and whether the force main is being installed in open cut trench or by horizontal directional drilling (trenchless construction). Open cut installation usually moves at a rate of approximately 80 feet per day, plus three days per intersection. The duration of a directional drill varies with the length of the drill. A directional drill under a typical waterway or major intersection usually takes approximately four to five weeks to complete.

What about school buses and public transportation?

We will coordinate closely with Pinellas County School Board, Pinellas County Transit Authority, first responders and other emergency services before construction begins to ensure these services continue without interruption.

Will the contractor be working at night?

Possibly. It may be advantageous to do certain work at night, when traffic is lighter. If night work is required, we'll make sure residents know in advance so they may plan accordingly.

What kind of pipe is being used for the new force main?

The exact pipe material is not yet known, but could include ceramic-lined ductile iron pipe, polyethylene pipe or PVC pipe. The design will specify the appropriate pipe materials for the construction techniques selected and for longevity.

How long will the new force main last?

The life expectancy of the new force main is approximately 50 years.

Are you doing improvements to Pump Station 16 as part of this project?

No, there are no improvements planned at this time for Pump Station 16.

What will happen with the old force main?

Part of this project includes assessing the condition of the old 20-inch force main to determine possible future uses. If the old force main cannot be used, it may be filled with a grout material and left in place.

Will the county keep us updated during construction?

Yes. We will provide advance notification of construction activity, lane closures and possible road closures and detours. Information will be distributed on the county's social media feeds, including Twitter (@PinellasCoNews) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/PinellasCountyNews/). Citizens may also subscribe to receive notifications from the county at www.pinellascounty.org. Select "Subscribe to E-News" for email notices or "Sign up – Community Notification Services," to receive notices via telephone, text message or TDD/TTY devices. Information is also posted online at www.pinellascounty.org/utilities.

Will you be running reclaimed water lines as part of this project?

No. The county's reclaimed system is at capacity and cannot serve additional customers at this time.

How much does the project cost?

Engineering services for the project cost approximately \$1.7 million and are being funded through the county's sewer enterprise fund. Engineer's estimate for construction of the selected route is approximately \$11.6 million.

Will this project increase my utility bill?

No. Funds for this project are available in the county's sewer enterprise fund, which is an account financed through sewer rates paid by county customers. The enterprise fund recovers the cost of sewage collection and treatment through each customer's sewer bill. Your monthly bill includes charges for treatment, capital costs to cover any existing bonds issued to build facilities, as well as renewal, replacement and rehabilitation costs to keep the system reliable and efficient.

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