

**THE UNIFIED GOVERNMENT OF ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY
COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM**

SUBJECT: Freeman Drive Sewer Force Main Replacement

DATE: November 19, 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This agenda report requests Mayor and Commission award a contract for replacing the failed existing sewer force main in Freeman Drive that was constructed for the People of Hope development. The existing force main has failed and is unserviceable. This project proposes to replace the line with a new force main.

BUDGET INFORMATION:

CAPITAL REVENUE: \$48,724,374 Evaluate & Rehab Sewer Lines

CAPITAL EXPENSES: \$19,086,412 Replace & Upgrade Designated Projects
\$28,906,814 Expenditures & Encumbrances
\$731,148 Freeman Drive sewer force main replacement

FUNDING SOURCE: Water & Sewer Enterprise Fund

COMMISSION ACTION REQUESTED ON: January 6, 2026

PURPOSE:

To request the Mayor and Commission:

- a. Authorize an appropriation of \$731,148 for the Freeman Drive Sewer Force Main Replacement project;
- b. Award a unit price construction contract to RDJE, Inc., Inc. for \$603,980;
- c. Award a project management/resident inspection contract to Hazen and Sawyer PC for the provision of professional services during construction in the amount of \$60,700;
- d. Authorize the Manager (or the Manager's designee) to approve additive project change orders that do not collectively exceed the overall appropriation of \$731,148, or any deductive change orders; and
- e. Authorize the Mayor and appropriate staff to sign all documents related to the contracts.

HISTORY:

1. On July 1, 1978, the City of Athens adopted a Sewer Use Ordinance regulating connections to the public sanitary sewer system.
2. On October 3, 1995, the Mayor and Commission (M&C) enacted new provisions to the Sewer Use Ordinance, which requires any and all connections to the public sanitary sewer system by means of any force main from a pumped facility or apparatus be approved by the M&C. Single-family residences and duplexes containing two-family units were exempt.
3. On June 1, 2004, the M&C approved the Financial Element, the final element of the Public Utilities Department's 2004 Service Delivery Plan (SDP). The SDP included Project No. 7-102 "Sandy Creek/Freeman Drive Interceptors" to install gravity sewer in the Sandy Creek drainage basin and serve Freeman Drive.
4. On October 5, 2004, M&C authorized the People of Hope, Inc. (POH) development at 225 Freeman Drive to connect to the ACC Public Sanitary Sewer System by means of a pump station and force main. This approval was based on the pump station being "an interim facility until such time that a gravity sewer main (Service Delivery Plan Project No. 7-102, entitled "Sandy Creek/Freeman Drive Interceptors") is installed in the basin serving this property".
5. On April 6, 2010, M&C approved the 2010 SDP, which removed the Sandy Creek Interceptor Sewer Project at the direction of M&C.
6. On April 30, 2010, construction began on the approximately 2,000-foot-long Freeman Drive sewer force main for POH. Construction of the force main was completed later that year, while the pump station and site development still remain incomplete.
7. On May 4, 2021, M&C approved the Hope 139 House planned development at 225 Freeman Drive. The Public Utilities Department (PUD) noted at that time that the force main was completed, but the developer would need to construct the pump station and site gravity sewer at their own expense.
8. On April 26, 2024, Hope 139 House began construction at 225 Freeman Drive. This work included finishing construction of the pump station.
9. On August 25, 2025, PUD pressure tested the existing force main in anticipation of the pump station coming online. The force main repeatedly broke during the pressure testing, and it was determined that the main would need to be replaced before the pump station can discharge through it.
10. On December 5, 2025, unit price bids were received from PUD's on-call contractors, RDJE Inc. and Site Engineering Inc., to replace the force main in Freeman Drive.

FACTS & ISSUES:

1. The Hope 139 House development at 225 Freeman Drive is located in the Sandy Creek drainage basin. PUD does not currently serve this basin with gravity sewer.
2. Extending gravity sewer to 225 Freeman Drive would require significant engineering design effort and capital investment. Because PUD had planned to make these investments in order to serve this area of the Sandy Creek drainage basin, sewer service to the POH development was evaluated based on the nearest PUD sewer manhole, which is located in Sunny Hills Drive.
3. Due to the topography of the property, the elevation of 225 Freeman Drive sits below the invert elevation of the tie-in manhole at Sunny Hills Drive; therefore, replacing the existing force main with a gravity outfall is not possible. The force main is needed to serve this development.
4. The existing force main is unserviceable. The line has broken in multiple locations throughout the force main. Full replacement of the line is needed in order to serve the development at 225 Freeman Drive.
5. The replacement force main follows a similar alignment to the existing line (**Attachment #1**). The force main is located entirely within ACC right-of-way. No additional easements are anticipated for this project. Construction plans are available for review in the PUD Administration Office located at 124 E Hancock Avenue.
6. The Hope 139 House project is currently under construction. Time is of the essence to replace this line. Due to the urgent nature of this replacement project, PUD intends to use its on-call contractors to construct the replacement force main. To maintain competitiveness, both on-call contractors were asked to bid on this project. A tabulation of bids follows:

RDJE, Inc.	\$603,980
Site Engineering, inc.	\$678,625

7. RDJE, Inc. is the apparent low bidder.
8. The project budget is \$731,148. This includes a 10% contingency amount of \$66,468.
9. Anticipated Project Schedule:

M&C Approval of Contract Award:	January 2026
Project Start:	January 2026
Project Completion:	April 2026

10. This recommendation supports the following Mayor & Commission Strategic Goal & Strategy:

a. Built and Natural Infrastructure Goal 6, Strategy B: *Ensure equitable access to infrastructure to enhance safety and identity*

OPTIONS:

1. Mayor and Commission:
 - a. Authorize an appropriation of \$731,148 for the Freeman Drive Sewer Force Main Replacement project;
 - b. Award a unit price construction contract to RDJE, Inc., Inc. for \$603,980;
 - c. Award a project management/resident inspection contract to Hazen and Sawyer PC for the provision of professional services during construction in the amount of \$60,700;
 - d. Authorize the Manager (or the Manager's designee) to approve additive project change orders that do not collectively exceed the overall appropriation of \$731,148, or any deductive change orders; and
 - e. Authorize the Mayor and appropriate staff to sign all documents related to the contracts.
2. Mayor and Commission deny the request.
3. Mayor and Commission Defined Option.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDED ACTION: Option 1 a, b, c, d and e

DEPARTMENT: Public Utilities Department

Prepared by: Hollis Terry IV

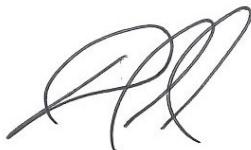
Hollis Terry IV

November 19, 2025

Hollis Terry IV

Date:

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS:

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION: Option #1 a, b, c, d, & e

December 10, 2025

Bob Cowell, Manager

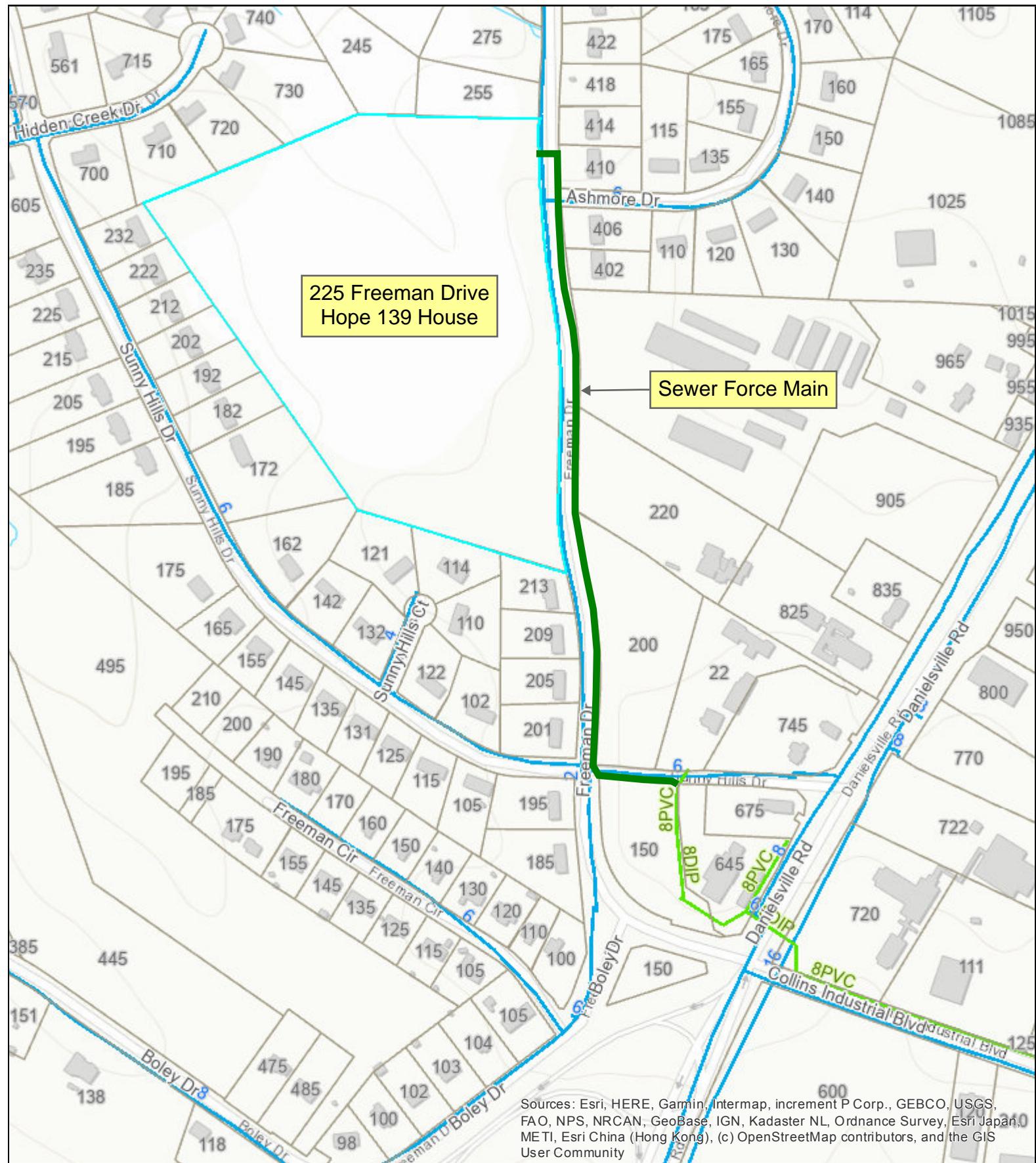
Date:

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment #1 - Map

Freeman Drive Force Main Replacement

Attachment #1



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



Athens-Clarke County Public Utilities

Freeman Drive Force Main Replacement

All line sizes and locations are approximations and should be field verified for design purposes.

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