

THE CITY OF SUMMIT

N E W J E R S E Y

CITY HALL 512 SPRINGFIELD AVENUE SUMMIT, NJ 07901

Letter to the Editor

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SUMMIT, NJ, March 2, 2023

Dear Neighbors:

The City of Summit recently shared an important update on a major infrastructure project that will be completed by PSE&G in our downtown beginning on March 13 and continuing through June 2023.

For the past two years, PSE&G has been working on streets throughout Summit to make important upgrades to gas utility infrastructure. This work has been a disruption in many of our neighborhoods and I thank you for your continuing patience.

It was known that gas infrastructure upgrades would eventually need to be completed in the downtown. Originally, PSE&G stated that work in the downtown would begin in March and take a few weeks to complete. Unfortunately, PSE&G has adjusted that timeline, providing more detailed information on a project that is much more extensive and significantly more potentially disruptive to Summit's Central Retail Business District.

As outlined in the city's recent press release, PSE&G will be fully replacing the gas lines and more than 80 connections to buildings throughout the downtown including Springfield Avenue, Beechwood Road, Woodland Avenue, and Maple Street. This work is estimated to begin in March, will likely take several months, and is dependent upon good weather and several other factors including supply chain issues and contractor availability. City staff are coordinating with other utilities who could potentially perform work in the area at the same time.

Undoubtedly, we will experience traffic, congestion, noise, and loss of parking spaces because of this critical infrastructure work. I recognize the unfortunate timing of these repairs is bad for everyone who enjoys spending time in our downtown during spring and summer months, but this utility work must be done.

The good news is that these disruptions will be temporary. We have weathered similar disruptions to our downtown in the recent past, including in 2015 when our streets and sidewalks were repaired, repaved, and upgraded. Much like then, the city will work diligently to make sure businesses, employees, and residents are informed and prepared.

PSE&G will be providing a more detailed schedule and location information to the city in the coming days and weeks. A representative will also be attending the Common Council meeting on March 21 to answer questions from council and the public. Our Communications Office has prepared a communication plan, and as always, will share the information we receive from the utility as quickly as possible.

Unfortunately, the revised scope and timeline for the project will have an impact on whether to close Maple Street this year. The Common Council Capital Projects and Community Services committee has reviewed the information provided by PSE&G and does not believe a seasonal closure is feasible while major infrastructure work is happening in the downtown. I have added an item for discussion to the Tuesday, March 7 Common Council agenda for Common Council to deliberate this matter.

As always, I am thankful for our dedicated city staff, my colleagues on council, and for everyone in this community for your passion, engagement, and patience.

Thank you,
Greg Vartan, Council President