

# **NEWS** *from Middletown, Pa.*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Chris A. Courogen

Director of Communications

(cel) 717.903.5534

e-mail: [ccourogen@middletownborough.com](mailto:ccourogen@middletownborough.com)

## **Phase 3 of downtown project gets underway**

Middletown's downtown infrastructure project moves to its next phase Monday, when work on South Union Street shifts to the block between Emaus and Brown streets.

The \$1.6 million infrastructure project involves replacing the 100-plus years old sanitary sewer main under South Union Street and installing new water mains. In the process, crews have also been detecting, and mitigating, improper connections to the sanitary sewer system which contribute to the Borough's significant inflow and infiltration (I&I) problems.

Inflow and infiltration refers to the flow of clean water entering the sanitary sewer system. I&I causes clean water to be treated like sewage, raising the cost of treating sewage. It also can subject wastewater treatment plants to flow volumes that exceed the plant's capacity during heavy storms.

The section of the sanitary sewer system included in the project, which runs from Spring Street to Ann Street has been identified as a major contributor to Middletown's I&I problems due a combination of the leaky, brick and mortar sewer main which allows groundwater to infiltrate the system, and numerous improper connections to the sewer main that cause high volumes of fresh water inflow, especially during storms.

During the first two phases of the project, which covered the area between Ann and Brown streets, crews discovered a number of improper connections, including a 48-inch storm sewer pipe that appeared to actually allow water from the Swatara Creek to backflow into the sanitary sewer system during high water conditions.

Phase Three of the project will start with crews working to place new pipes under the Middletown and Hummelstown Railroad tracks at the intersection of Brown and South Union streets. A special boring machine was brought in Friday to tunnel under the tracks. By tunneling under, instead of tearing up the tracks and digging a trench, the M&H is able to maintain uninterrupted freight service to its customers while the new mains are being put into place.

While South Union Street will be closed between Emaus and Brown streets during this next phase of the project, plans call for only closing one cross street at a time to facilitate access to downtown businesses.

Emaus Street will remain open until crews reach the intersection of Union and Emaus. By that time, work in the Brown-Union intersection will be complete and Brown Street reopened.

Free parking with easy access to the businesses in the area of the construction is available in the municipal lot at the corner of South Catherine and Brown streets, behind Borough Hall. Temporary signs will be installed to help guide visitors to that lot.

This phase of the project is expected to take approximately four weeks, with plans to reopen this section of South Union Street on or about Monday, September 1. Through traffic on state Route 441 will continue to use the Ann Street truck route as a detour until construction is completed.

Plans call for the downtown infrastructure work to be completed by November. The infrastructure improvements will be followed by streetscape enhancements next year. That project is currently in the final design phase.