

Construction season



Record-Eagle/Jen-Michael Stump

Construction continues on Elmwood Avenue near West Front Street on Thursday.

Residents 'love' Elmwood Ave.'s new look

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TRAVERSE CITY — A new and improved Elmwood Avenue was worth the wait for Gary Columbus. The north-south street in

the city's Slabtown Neighborhood was in terrible condition, Columbus said, and had been for years. Crews began work in April, and his stretch now features smooth, black pave-

ment with bright white concrete curbs.

"We love it; it's such an improvement," said Columbus, who lives on Elmwood between Wayne and Hill Streets. "The street was

just completely worn out."

Crews hope to complete a nearly \$900,000 redesign and resurfacing project on Elmwood between Bay and

SEE ROAD PAGE 3A

ROAD

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FROM PAGE 1A

Front streets by July 22. Work was scheduled to be done by July 20, City Engineer Tim Lodge said, but weather delays and other factors pushed the schedule back a bit.

The road was resurfaced from Bay south to Randolph Street by Thursday, and crews worked through the day preparing to pave the rest.

The new street is about 5 feet narrower than before, and its intersection with Bay Street is at an angle so cars have to slow down before turning. Both measures are designed to slow and discourage cut-



through traffic, a problem on Elmwood and other neighborhood streets.

"I think it's going to be wonderful, the way they narrowed it and angled the corner," said Amy Mueller, who for 32 years has lived on Elmwood just north of Hill Street. "The people who race through here aren't going to like it."

Elmwood from Wayne to Bay didn't have a sidewalk along the east side, but crews installed one as

part of the reconstruction project. Columbus said some residents were concerned they'd have to rip out trees along the street, but workers snaked the sidewalk around existing trees. The curved sidewalk adds character to the street, Columbus believes.

Several people along Elmwood said they were impressed with the work crews from Elmer's Crane & Dozer, the company hired by the city for the project.

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Elmwood Avenue's new intersection with Bay Street is at a curve to encourage slow speeds.

"The guys were great; they were a lot of fun," said Bernadine Dupuis, who often sat on her front porch and watched them work. "You don't realize all they have to do — connect gas, water and sewer and all of that."

Workers replaced several aging utility lines in conjunction with the project, Lodge said.

Dupuis said the street was "absolutely horrible" before reconstruction, and she's glad to see it get a fresh face.

Sue Rice lives on Spruce Street, one street east from Elmwood. She hasn't been a big fan of the work trucks that have rumbled up and down her street throughout the project, but she's not overly upset.

"You have to deal with some hardships to improve, and that was necessary," she said of the Elmwood project.