Construction crews are hard at work Monday morning, July 2, working on the U.S. 2 construction project in Iron River. This view, taken from the corner of Eighth Avenue and Adams (U.S. 2), looking east, takes in the scope of the work, including sewer and water main replacement. Additional infrastructure upgrades accompanying the road work were made by AT&T and DTE. A new street lighting system is also being paid for by a grant from MDOT, and installed by UPPCO. More photos of projects in Iron River on Page 2 of the Reporter.

Residents remain patient during construction

IRON RIVER—Amid the hammering, pounding, mud and dust, Iron River residents are taking the construction in stride, if not always in the right direction on the one-way street detours.

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At the Iron River City Council's June 20 meeting, residents' concerns were addressed by board members and engineer Craig Richardson from GEI Consultants.

Parking has been one issue. With parking bans on some streets and construction equipment parked in city lots, some residents have been finding it hard to do business downtown.

A resident complained of vehicles using excessive speed on the detour routes, in particular Cayuga Street, the east-to-west detour. A speed indicator sign will be posted.

Scheduling utility projects along with the sewer and water projects has been impacting the construction schedule, Richardson said, including the installation of new street lights on Adams Street, which may force a "blackout" period for the city for a short period of time.

In his interim city managers' report, John Archocosky wrote, "All of the construction projects scheduled for this summer are now well under way. The most obvious to the traveling public is the reconstruction of U.S. 2, as it is almost impossible to get to any destination downtown without having to take one of the detour routes.

"Although these projects have certainly resulted in some level of inconvenience to our residents, the end result will be greatly improved water and sewer infrastructure, along with some reconstruction of major and minor roads within the city.

"The contractors have been working to try to minimize the traffic delays, and our engineering consultants, GEI, have been responding quickly to correct any problems that arise."

Another area of concern for residents has been garbage pickup.

With roads closed, it has been difficult for the trash collectors to negotiate their routes. The best advice, Archcosky said, is for residents to have their garbage out by 7 a.m. on the day of pickup, or they may have to wait for the following week.

Archocosky reviewed the scope of the projects in terms of finances.

“Over the next two-year period, Iron River will be undergoing over $12 million in infrastructure improvement projects. Adding in the Apple Blossom Apartment project, the investment is $18,000,000, or over $6,000 for every individual in our small community of 3,000 people.

“These extensive projects will help strengthen our community’s ability to provide services for new and existing businesses, as well as all our residents.

“All these projects have been undertaken without the need for increased taxes or service-related fees.”