



TRAVERSE CITY  
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## Traverse City braces for U.S. 31 road work

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TRAVERSE CITY — A necessary evil.

That's how business owners along a 1.5-mile stretch of U.S. 31 North view upcoming road work that will snarl traffic this year on the five-lane thoroughfare.

"It'll definitely have an impact, probably more so on our locals than it would on the visitors," said Tim Olson, general manager at Pirate's Cove Adventure Golf, a miniature golf course tucked along U.S. 31 in East Bay Township. "Visitors will come to Traverse City no matter what, but locals will try to stay away. It'll be especially hard on basically everyone that's in that area."

U.S. 31 from Three Mile Road to Holiday Road will be reconstructed starting next month. The road's five traffic lanes will be reduced to two while the existing road, which is concrete covered in asphalt, is replaced with a road made of gravel covered in asphalt.

Michigan Department of Transportation officials met with business owners along the corridor for about two years to discuss a project scheduled to start April 6 and continue through June 27. If the work isn't completed by then, the entire stretch will reopen until after Labor Day, when construction will resume.

Construction crews typically will work Monday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

MDOT officials said they wanted to work with businesses -- a melange of hotels, restaurants, a bike shop and more -- as much as possible. They'll ensure local businesses can still be accessed during the construction process.

"It's really going to be about as good as it can get and we're going to try and get in and out as fast as we can," said Nick Broad, a project manager for Team Elmer's.

MDOT contracted with Elmer's to do the \$10.3 million project funded by a combination of state and federal dollars. MDOT typically develops project plans in-house, but for this project state road officials included Elmer's personnel in the planning stages.

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