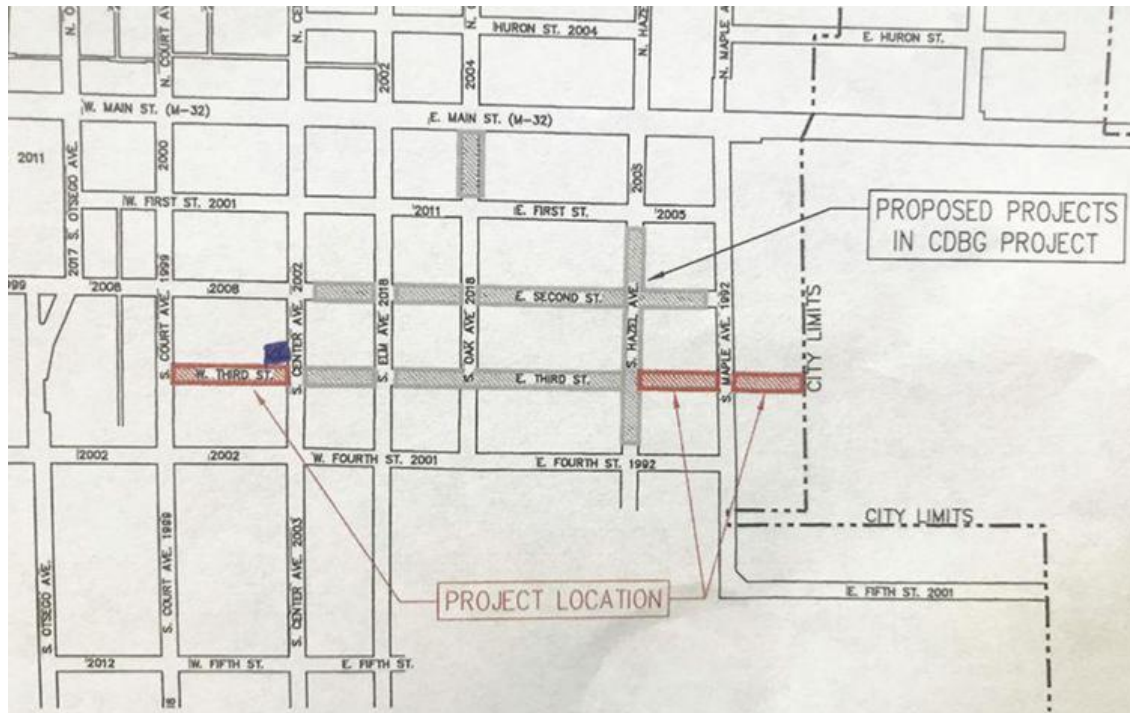


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Elmer's to complete upcoming street improvements

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The shaded areas of the map represent areas in Gaylord to undergo street work during the spring and summer season.

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GAYLORD — A local construction company was approved for its bid to complete the next wave of street improvements in the downtown area.

Elmer's Crane and Dozer had its bid of \$2,560,401.85 unanimously approved by Gaylord's City Council April 8 to complete the upcoming Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Infrastructure Project. The Traverse City-based company has 14 locations in Michigan, including Gaylord.

The project plans to focus on street improvements covering East Second Street and East Third Street from South Center Avenue to South Maple Avenue, as well as a couple additional blocks.

Council approved proposals for the construction project in September. The projects are set to begin in late spring or early summer, according to Joe Duff, city manager.

The CDBG project awarded to the city provides a grant of \$1.43 million to assist in fixing the outlined streets.

The city is responsible for the difference in Elmer's approved bid and the amount awarded through the Block Grant.

"It will come from the normal street fund millage money that we collect each year that we normally use to do these types of projects," Duff previously said.

Though the CDBG covers a majority of the proposed improvement areas, Duff said the city decided to add three blocks onto the area since it was already planning major construction work.

Those three blocks were approved under the city's 2019 Streets Improvement Project and includes three blocks on Third Street — one block west of South Center Avenue and two blocks east of South Hazel Avenue.

The estimated cost of the three-block addition would include \$442,820 for construction plus \$65,100 for design, bidding and construction engineering — all of which the city would be responsible for as the project is separate from the areas covered under the grant.

"We were allowed to include this on the same proposal because the MEDC gave us permission as long as the city is paying 100 percent of the cost," Duff said.

Duff outlined a number of benefits the construction will provide such as providing more reliability of public utilities and fewer sewer obstructions.

"First of all, there's a lot of things that are unseen," he said. "Residents will receive what we consider an upsize to the diameter of the water mains, so you will have greater water pressure sometimes in your home."

Duff said the increased reliability of the public utilities comes for new leads into properties. Additionally, Duff said improvements to the end of driveways and sidewalks will provide greater accessibility and safety for residents.

The project will likely take the entire construction season to complete, Duff said.

The city received two other bids in addition to the one from Elmer's.

Dozer Construction, Inc. was the low bid of the three at \$2,379,079.53.

According to a resolution by the city to accept Elmer's bid, the low bid from Dozer was not accepted because the city felt Dozer did not have enough experience working with projects of similar size and complexity, the ability to comply with the rigorous documentation and submission requirements, the ability to retain sufficient manpower to complete the project and the ability to obtain sufficient financial credit and bonding to comply with the contract.

J & N Construction submitted the third bid of \$2,822,448.16.

Brian Bliss

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