

# Back to normal, but better

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WAYNESBURG - In about two weeks, High Street in Waynesburg will be back to normal and very much improved.

At that time, most of the work on the streetscape project will be completed, normal traffic patterns will resume and parking will again be permitted in the two-block stretch where construction has been ongoing since early August.

The lead contractor on the project, SET Inc., is now finishing up planting the trees, completing concrete work and setting up the new streetlights, borough manager Bruce Wermlinger said Friday.

"In about two weeks they'll be closing up and temporarily moving out and the street will be opened for residents and businesses for the coming holiday seasons," he said.

Some work will still remain to be finished on the \$1.6 million streetscape project. Allegheny Power must remove utility poles from High Street and the area in front of the Greene County Office Building and Victoria Square must be done.

The sidewalk in front of the county office building and Victoria Square were not completed because of problems that developed after large vaults, or rooms, were discovered beneath the sidewalk.

The borough had to have new engineering designs prepared to address the problem. The work would have required continuing construction and traffic restrictions on High Street through the first of the year, Wermlinger said.

The borough instead decided to do that work in the spring. "We don't want to inconvenience residents and business owners by having the street closed through November and December," he said.

The streetscape project, which began April 19, involved burying utility lines and installing new decorative sidewalks, streetlights and trees on High Street from Cumberland to Washington streets, and on Washington Street from High to Wayne streets.

Though many problems arose during the six months of construction, fortunately, the borough was able to work through them, Wermlinger said.

"I have received numerous comments about how great the improvements look," he said. "SET has been a pleasure to work with, and I feel they've done an excellent job."

Waynesburg Prosperous and Beautiful, which applied for the original streetscape grant, is now attempting to obtain additional grant money for the second phase, which will involve sidewalk improvements from Washington to West streets.

During the streetscape construction, the state Department of Transportation was completing a separate project in the borough to install handicapped-accessible curb cuts on Morris, Richhill, Greene and High streets.

Two curb cuts, one at the corner of High Street and Fruit Alley, and the other at the corner of High and Morris streets, remain unfinished because of vaults also discovered there. Wermlinger said a PennDOT official told him this week that a contractor should be back in the borough in two or three weeks to complete the work.

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