

Teamwork a key as Clark Patterson Lee expands workload



JOED VIERA

Jennifer Michniewicz and Steve Tanner are principal associates at Clark Patterson Lee.

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Jennifer Michniewicz and Steve Tanner work well together.

They are principal associates in the Buffalo office of Clark Patterson Lee where Michniewicz focuses on transportation infrastructure projects and Tanner's primary responsibility is municipal engineering.

"A lot of what we do in all of our disciplines gets interwoven," she said.

For the region's sixth-largest engineering firm and seventh-largest architectural firm, transportation and municipal engineering projects contribute to the bottom line. Michniewicz estimated that 20 percent of the office workload is based on transportation infrastructure projects and Tanner said municipal engineering accounts for 50 percent.

In recent months, CPL wrapped up a multiyear

effort to widen and rebuild a five-mile section of Goodrich Road in Clarence.

The \$8 million project ran from County Road south to Tonawanda Creek Road and included widening Goodrich Road from 20 feet to 28 feet.

"It was so narrow before that school buses had nowhere to go," Michniewicz said.

The project included dealing with 14 wetlands sites and required approval by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and state Department of Environmental Conservation.

"Complicated? Yes," she said. "But it is nothing we haven't seen or handled before."

The firm is working with Buffalo Urban Development Corp. on a series of streetscape upgrades on Northland Avenue on the city's East Side. Northland is the infrastructure spine through the \$100 million-plus Northland Training Center being developed by BUDC.

For CPL, it meant overseeing a \$5.5 million project on Northland Avenue between Grider Street and Fillmore Avenue that including making

cuts for utility line upgrades, repaving the street and adding parking lanes.

"Doing that project and knowing what it means to Buffalo and the region is gratifying in its own way," Michniewicz said. "Like any project, we want to leave an area in better shape than we found it."

Tanner said he gets that same sense of satisfaction from his workload.

Among the projects he oversees are a revitalization plan for Lackawanna, upgrades to the Village of Akron's water treatment facility and repairs to the Town of Evans water storage tank.

"A lot of what I do is buried in the ground or inside a building where the public never sees the work," Tanner said. "If we are doing our job well, the average person may not even be aware of us."

CPL has a growing reputation for municipal work. Indeed, it is one of the firm's fastest-growing segments.

"Some cities have hired us to be their entire infrastructure department," Tanner said. "A healthy infrastructure base matters."