



# Seeing Farther

Infrastructure for where you're going.

A publication of Prein&Newhof.

Summer 2010

## Leveraging grants really adds up

*By combining two funding packages, Muir gets an extra \$1.1 million.*

People can work together. Communities can work together. But what if grants could work together?

At the Village of Muir, P&N has found a way to do just that, leveraging ICE and Rural Development grants to fund a \$1.5 million project with just an 11% local contribution.

### First Things First

Muir is a community of about 700 in northern Ionia County. P&N began meeting with Village leaders last year to help them apply for an Infrastructure Capacity Enhancement (ICE) grant through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC).

Muir hoped to replace a number of inoperable valves and hydrants in its aging water system. Because it is a low-to-moderate income community, Muir received a \$220,000 ICE grant, which required a \$160,000 local match, for a total of \$380,000. Muir was planning to fund the local match with a short-term loan from a local bank.

Unfortunately, the State of Michigan was resistant to the project, recommending that Muir's aging water mains be replaced at the same time as the valves and hydrants.

"We went back to the drawing board and defined a project that cost the same but would replace 1,200 feet of watermain and associated

streets," said Jason Washler, P.E., P&N's Project Manager. "The MEDC agreed to switch the project and keep the grant terms the same."

### Big Ideas

The breakthrough came when P&N engineers were reviewing Muir's water data to decide which water mains should be replaced.

---

"We have good relationships with funding agencies, and we want to know what a client's odds are of receiving a particular grant or loan before we spend too much money going after it."

---

"We learned that Muir has high water rates," said Washler. "And we thought — a low-income community with high rates, that's the perfect formula for Rural Development funding."

Before any paperwork was completed, P&N and Muir representatives met with Rural Development (RD)

and MEDC to see if they could get the two grant packages to work together.

"We didn't want to waste Muir's time and money chasing ghosts around," said Washler. "We have good relationships with funding agencies, and we want to know what a client's odds are of receiving a particular grant or loan before we spend too much money going after it."

The RD program is managed through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and had received a boost of funds from the American Reinvestment & Recovery Act (ARRA). At that time, RD was

see **MUIR**, back page

Prein&Newhof  
www.preinnewhof.com

---

"P&N seems tailored to small communities like ours. They understand the limited local resources we have, and they don't try to give us more than we need. It's nice that there's someone looking out for the little guy."

Al Crooke, President  
Village of Muir

---

---

"The engineers have all been very helpful and easy to work with. They're good at communicating, and can explain things in layman's terms, which is just what our community needs."

Laura Stewart, Clerk  
Village of Muir

---

## Creative financing makes Allegan's \$10 million dreams come true

The City of Allegan has considered retrofitting its water treatment plant for years, but struggled with the cost and complications of converting its lime-softening system within the confines of an old building. In addition, the site of the water plant, which draws the area's water supply from three wells, is in a floodplain that happens to flood a lot.

Despite these challenges, Allegan's new water plant and Michigan's first lime-softening to Reverse Osmosis (RO) conversion project is under construction. How is this possible?

"We leveraged Perrigo's plans to increase its drug manufacturing in the City for a \$3.7 million US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant to build the water treatment plant," said P&N Project Manager Trevor Wagenmaker, P.E.

With the improved treatment and reliability of the new plant, it is possible for Perrigo — a manufacturer of pharmaceutical products — to grow and bring more jobs to Michigan.

Taking into account the \$3.7 million EDA grant, with a \$10 million price tag for the new treatment plant the City was still looking at



about \$6.3 million to pay for its project. "During the design phase, we learned that Michigan's Drinking Water Revolving Fund program would forgive 40% [almost \$2.5 million] of our requested loan using federal stimulus funds," said Allegan City Manager Rob Hillard. Allegan will finance the remaining \$3.8 million as a low-interest loan through the DWRP.

The new water plant is being constructed on the same site as the existing plant, but unlike its predecessor, it will rest above the 500-year flood plain. The MDEQ approved P&N's proposal to raise the site four feet to prevent future flooding in exchange for removing lime lagoons on the site and extending the floodplain.

If your community is considering a water plant, contact **Trevor Wagenmaker, P.E.**, at (616) 364-8491 or [twagenmaker@preinnewhof.com](mailto:twagenmaker@preinnewhof.com).

---

"We're getting a state-of-the-art water treatment facility for a fraction of its value and a much-improved site. P&N, Rob Hillard and City Finance Director Tracy Stull are to be commended for getting the funding and making this a reality."

Ray Berkin, Superintendent  
Allegan Water Treatment Plant

---

# P&N Vice President and three projects honored

Prein&Newhof recently received a number of awards from professional societies:



The Michigan Society of Professional Engineers (MSPE), Western Chapter, named P&N Vice President **Michael Fuller, P.E.**, its *2010 Engineer of the Year*. Mike received the award for “actively serving the residents of West Michigan throughout his 39-year career. Mike is a great mentor to younger engineers, who seek him out for his advice. And his even temper and thoughtful personality make him valuable to his clients.”

The American Public Works Association (APWA), Michigan Section, named the

Kalamazoo Avenue reconstruction in Kentwood its *2009 Project of the Year* in the Transportation, \$2-5 Million category. The project converted Kalamazoo Ave. between 44th Street and 60th Street from a traditional 4-lane street into a 4-lane boulevard with indirect left turns.

In addition, the PARCC Side Clean Water Plant in northern Kent County received two honors:

- The American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) of Michigan gave the projects its *2010 Engineering Eminent Conceptor Award*. This is the highest honor ACEC gives to an engineering project.
- The Michigan Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers (MI-ASCE) gave the project its *Outstanding Civil Engineering Achievement Award* for 2009.

## Michigan licenses 3 P&N engineers

The State of Michigan recently licensed Helen Davis, Matthew Hulst, and Jonathan Reimink as Professional Engineers (P.E.)



**Helen Davis, P.E.**, holds Bachelor of Science degrees in Civil Engineering and Engineering Public Policy from Carnegie Mellon University. She works from the firm’s Kalamazoo Office as a Project Engineer on

environmental site assessments, stormwater compliance, and site plan reviews. In 2007, she became P&N’s first LEED-accredited professional.



**Matt Hulst, P.E.**, holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering from Calvin College. He works from P&N’s Muskegon Office as a Project Engineer on watermain, sewer, road, and marine projects.



**Jon Reimink, P.E.**, holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering from Calvin College. He is currently working from the firm’s Grand Rapids Office as a Project Engineer on airport, road, and utility projects. Most recently, Jon has been assisting in the design of water and wastewater treatment projects and overseeing their construction.

## Muir – continued from front

offering funding packages that were 75% grant and 25% low-interest loan to low-income communities with high rates.

Washler hoped Rural Development would count the \$220,000 MEDC grant as their “25% loan” and offer Muir a \$660,000 grant.

## Bigger Surprises

In fact, Rural Development offered to leverage the entire MEDC grant package, giving Muir a loan for the whole MEDC amount (\$380,000) and a grant for the remainder (\$1,140,000). Muir will use the MEDC grant to pay off \$220,000 of the Rural Development loan immediately, leaving Muir with just \$160,000 debt to pay off over 40 years at a rate of 3.25%.

Nearly 90% of the project will be funded by state or federal grants.

With funding in place, P&N reviewed Muir’s water reliability study and helped the Village determine its priorities: improving fire flow, replacing older pipes with larger ones, and replacing valves and hydrants.

“Our goal is always to give the client the most we can for their budget,” said Washler. “We find potential funding and help the community figure out what’s affordable.”

If you’re wondering how your community can qualify for grants and loans, contact **Jason Washler, P.E.**, at (616) 364-8491 or [jwashler@preinnewhof.com](mailto:jwashler@preinnewhof.com)

Prein&Newhof specializes in civil and environmental engineering, environmental consulting, surveying, GIS, and laboratory testing.

## Corporate Office

3355 Evergreen Dr. NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49525  
616-364-8491

## Byron Center

365 84th St. SW, Suite 4  
Byron Center, MI 49315  
616-878-9296

## Kalamazoo

7123 Stadium Dr.  
Kalamazoo, MI 49009  
269-372-1158

## Muskegon

4910 Stariha Dr.  
Muskegon, MI 49441  
231-798-0101

## Laboratory

3260 Evergreen Dr. NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49525  
616-364-7600

## Our Values

- Invest Wisely
- Develop Relationships
- Take Responsibility
- Build Expertise
- Build Our Community

Visit [preinnewhof.com](http://preinnewhof.com) to learn more.

## Seeing Farther

is published for clients and colleagues of Prein&Newhof.

Please send comments and address corrections to Lisa Tjapkes, Managing Editor, at [info@preinnewhof.com](mailto:info@preinnewhof.com).