

UP FOR THE

IPI launches the landmark Accredited Parking Organization program and introduces the industry's first accredited organizations.

By David Hill, MA, CAPP, CD

Those of us approaching middle age are fortunate to have seen many firsts in our lives—first computer microchip, first mobile phone, first email message, first solar-powered airplane. I remember the first man on the moon; as a kid, I was glued to the television while Neil Armstrong announced his “small step for man and giant leap for mankind.” While Neil was actually the one dropping off the ladder, the magnitude of collective effort and the scale of the accomplishment was glorious to be part of, even for one small spectator who was allowed to stay up much too late.



We are not often called upon to contribute to such an effort. These opportunities to utterly change and irrevocably elevate the way we view ourselves, our world, and our mission only come at key moments in our history. Our environment must say to us, “Evolve and adapt or be consumed.”

A Watershed Moment

Such a moment has arrived for the parking industry. As we continue to integrate parking business and operational activities more deeply into Smart City or other information-based complete mobility solutions, we are forced to more clearly and sharply define our role and contribution and voice our values and accomplishments so we are not consumed. As parking professionals, if we do not raise the bar for ourselves and our organizations, it will be done by others and we will ultimately lose most of the credibility and influence we have gained during the past 30 years.

The IPI Board of Directors identified this as a challenge at the 2011 IPI Conference & Expo in Pittsburgh and set about organizing a response. As Neil Armstrong was not available, the Board established a volunteer committee to investigate and propose a program for standards accreditation of parking organizations that



CHALLENGE

would be applicable in our own North American environment, as well as for other parking industry organizational environments around the world.

The Accredited Parking Organization (APO) program was envisaged to link with the renewed CAPP certification for individual accomplishment and would catalogue and codify current industry best practices so they could be taught in CAPP classes and close the loop in our professional education and recognition program. The initial committee members comprised a group of recognized and passionate deep thinkers in the industry: Dennis Burns, CAPP; Casey Jones, CAPP; Barbara Chance; Max Clark; Mike Drow, CAPP; Lee Bourque; Rachel Yoka, CAPP; and Vanessa Solesbee. David Feehan represented a solid stakeholder's opinion, and I was asked to bring an international viewpoint (my committee members also hoped I would pay for lunch). Christine Stewart and Anne Guest joined the team in 2013.

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to boldly do what no one had done before: return with a product that could be rolled out to the entire industry and get it done within its five-year mission mandate.

The composition of the team was key to getting the job done. All seasoned professionals with individual skills and accomplishments in the industry, the group took some time to gel. As with any launch into the unknown, it was rather shaky and uncomfortable at times and loud and scary at others, but once we gained enough latitude to see the big picture—the key elements of practice and creativity that make our industry unique—we stabilized around a concept and means of delivery that could

be equally applied to industry scope from airports to medical centers and to scale from enforcement to real estate investment, and we achieved the developmental equilibrium that allowed us to make headway.

Working as volunteers, progress was slow but hurried along as we made more opportunities to collaborate. The committee achieved several breakthroughs at last year's IPI Conference in Dallas and moved toward a draft accreditation program concept. By summer,

the draft was suitable for beta testing and several IPI stalwart organizations stepped up to the plate. The intrepid Beta Bunch—City of Missoula, Cornell University, City of Houston, University of Washington, and Miami Parking Authority—provided their time, patience, and cooperation while the committee worked through themes and theories and applied practical content to real-world best practices.

The result, which launched at the 2015 IPI Conference in June, is a combination of self-audit checklist and physical site review that ensures that each accredited organization stands in the top

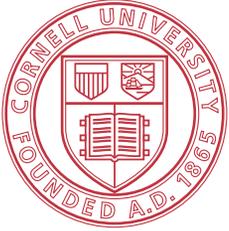
30 percent of our industry; it also provides a special recognition for those in the top 5 percent. Recognition is given within the industry and is also significantly targeted at stakeholders and the general public, with the goal of educating average people to the level of facility and service quality they should expect for their parking dollar. Over time, the Accredited Parking Organization designation will raise the bar to ensure continuing relevance and growth for parking professionals around the world.

APO is a reality. The only question is are you up for the challenge? Answer that at parking.org/apo. →

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THE FIRST CLASS OF APOS



Cornell University

Cornell University Department of Transportation and Mail Services

Cornell University's Department of Transportation and Mail Services provides leadership in developing and implementing comprehensive, economical, flexible, efficient, and sustainable programs to facilitate the movement of people, vehicles, mail, and packages.

Cornell is committed to operating in an environmentally responsible manner and encourages low-impact travel whenever possible. Transportation Services supports the university's sustainability goals by offering and encouraging alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle through the employment of transportation demand management strategies, promotion of active transportation, and generous access to public transit.

The department recently hosted the inaugural Ivy Plus Transportation Conference (see p. 16 for more) and became the first university to achieve Green Garage Certification for the Forest Home Garage.





Miami Parking Authority

The Miami Parking Authority (MPA) manages and operates affordable and convenient parking facilities in the City of Miami. It manages more than 31,000 parking spaces and provides parking for approximately 6 million vehicles every year. MPA is one of the largest municipal parking authorities in the country and is highly regarded in the parking industry as a leader and innovator.

The authority was created in 1955 by a special act of the Florida Legislature and incorporated into the City of Miami Charter in 1968. It is a semi-autonomous agency, fully self-funded, and receives no property tax support.

MPA's mission is to meet the community's parking needs by working in partnership with and being responsible to internal and external customers by continually and measurably improving performance and striving for excellence in all aspects of the business.

MPA's planners, working closely with city officials and private developers, have built and proposed a number of developments that bring new life to neighborhoods. These developments and the revenue they generate support public safety, drive consumer and commercial traffic into business districts, enhance development programs, and add to Miami's quality of life.





Missoula Parking Commission

The Missoula Parking Commission (MPC) is located in Missoula, Mont., a cultural hub in the heart of the Rocky Mountain West and home to the University of Montana and its 15,000 students. With a population of 80,000, Missoula is home to one of the most vibrant and diverse downtowns in the Pacific Northwest.

Since 1971, MPC has been a leader in supporting downtown Missoula's vibrancy and securing future economic development opportunities through quality parking management. With the mission to work with government, businesses, and citizens to provide and manage parking and parking alternatives, the MPC identifies and responds to changing parking needs and opportunities. Functioning as an enterprise fund, the MPC is governed by a five-member board of directors appointed by the mayor and approved by the city council.

Under the leadership of Anne Guest for 23 years, MPC is a comprehensive parking program that includes administration, enforcement, collections, and maintenance.

With 12 employees, MPC manages approximately 1,100 on-street metered spaces and 1,275 off-street parking spaces in 12 lease lots and operates three parking structures that offer both short- and long-term parking. Its jurisdiction extends beyond the central business district and includes a residential parking permit program adjacent to the University of Montana.

MPC's Park Place parking structure received the 2014 IPI Award of Excellence for Architectural Achievement, and Parking Enforcement Officer Cyndie Winchell received the 2009 IPI Parking Staff Member of the Year Award for her outstanding service.



City of Houston Parking Management Division

The City of Houston Parking Management Division (PMD) strives to develop a superior, customer-oriented parking system, responding to the current and future needs of the citizens, visitors, employers, and property owners. Through active planning, management, community partnerships, and communication, the division collaborates with stakeholders to make parking a seamless transition to the customer's ultimate destination. Its parking programs provide customized management plans and services unique to each urban area, business district, and neighborhood.

As a division of the administration and regulatory affairs department, PMD services and maintains more than 9,200 on-street parking spaces and 19 parking facilities. PMD partners with other city departments to create sound, data-driven regulations for all commercial and residential areas to enhance pedestrian safety, support mobility, and ensure that emergency vehicles reach their destinations. The division actively works to raise awareness of parking safety while supporting public transit initiatives.

As a solution-focused partner, PMD supports the City of Houston's economic development goals by providing superior customer service, investing in cutting-edge technologies, and building active partnerships with diverse stakeholder groups from across Houston. Its vision is to establish a premier municipal parking organization for the greater Houston area.





University of Washington Transportation Services

Acknowledging its role as a vital first impression for visitors, employees, and students arriving at the University of Washington campus, Transportation Services (TS) is dedicated to providing customers an exceptional experience and a lasting impression of Husky hospitality. The department provides clean, safe, and convenient parking resources, as well as services that make other modes of travel to campus—transit, walking, and biking—easier and more cost-effective options for members of the UW community with varying needs.

TS is an evolving organization comprised of closely linked work groups that include shuttles, fleet, parking and parking maintenance, enforcement, sales, and commute options. All are united in a shared mission to provide innovative and sustainable transportation solutions that facilitate the educational, research, cultural, and service missions of our university.

The department's vision is to be the provider of choice for its customers and to serve as a model of excellence for our industry. P



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