

# Inspiration GALORE

Creativity reigns Among IPI's *Parking Matters*<sup>®</sup>  
Marketing & Communications Award Winners.

## BEST OF 2015 AWARDS

### LEXINGTON PARKING AUTHORITY

#### Food for Fines

Community food drives are a common event during the winter holiday season, but the Lexington, Ky., Parking Authority (LPA) developed a food donation program with an uncommon twist. Last November and December, LPA promoted its first “Food for Fines” canned food drive that invited citizens to pay for each of their parking meter fines, including past-due fines, with a donation of 10 cans of food. The campaign resulted in more than 6,200 cans of food that were donated to God’s Pantry Food Bank, providing more than 5,000 meals for hungry Fayette County families.

Food for Fines created a local and national media relations buzz. The program garnered more than 30 media mentions, including coverage in *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *foodworldnews.com*, and live interviews on MSNBC.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *Think outside the box to find ways to raise the visibility of your parking organization and serve your community.*



### VANCOUVER'S EASYPARK

#### Retooling Brand Awareness

The City of Vancouver's EasyPark wanted to promote its brand and what it stands for: safe, convenient parking with first-class customer service across the entire company. The idea was that parking should be a retail, rather than institutional offering, with the result that parkers would choose EasyPark whenever a choice was available, increasing traffic to the company's lots.

EasyPark planners asked employees in each department to brainstorm ideas to increase brand awareness. From those ideas, each department formulated an independent action plan and budget in coordination with other departments as needed. The result was a coordinated effort with specific rebranding initiatives from each EasyPark department. For example, IT changed the face of EasyPark on the web and in social media, updating banners, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to increase brand visibility and promote the holiday season. The newly branded EasyPark app allowed customers to find EasyPark lots. Customer Service created Customer Appreciation and Random Acts of Kindness days and introduced bright orange

**LOOKING FOR INSPIRATION?** The 16 winners of IPI's second annual *Parking Matters*® Marketing & Communications Awards will get your creative juices flowing. You'll find ideas you can adapt to your own organization that help advance the parking profession, educate audiences about the value of parking expertise, communicate about parking and transportation options and technologies, improve parking efficiencies, or otherwise communicate positive parking messages. All of these programs have one important factor in common: They worked!

Details about each of the programs, along with downloadable support materials, insights from those involved, outcomes, and lessons learned, can be found at [parking.org](http://parking.org) in the awards section under the professional development tab.



uniforms and even umbrellas to highlight EasyPark's customer focus. Operations rebranded the company vehicles and decorated parking lots for the holidays. Finally, Marketing developed a radio contest that promoted EasyPark's mobile parking app.

Evaluation was a key part of the campaign and included tracking revenues and expenditures at specific parking lots and analysis of customer complaints. The results: revenue increased 10 percent above budget with an expenditure of less than 2.5 percent of increased revenue growth, for a return on investment of 400 percent. Customer complaints dropped, and compliments dramatically increased.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *Involve employees in your marketing and communications programs. Engaging them in generating ideas helps create employee enthusiasm and buy-in for your programs. In addition, rebranding is most successful when it involves all company departments.*

Existing parking meters were retrofitted to meet current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, 10 percent of metered spaces were reserved for people with disabilities, and all drivers were required to pay to park. Working with the Mayor's Commission on Disabilities, PABC and a local PR firm developed a comprehensive, research-based communications strategy. Research through focus groups, individual interviews, and data review helped inform branding and the ProjectSPACE tagline: "More space for all." A website, brochure, postcards, ads, and event giveaways reinforced the new policy and key messages, combined with a robust media relations campaign consisting of a press conference, op-eds, letters to the editor, and story placements. Community outreach before the program launch and at community meetings and events informed target audiences about the policy change. Social media outreach included online videos, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.

The result was a smooth transition to the new policy. Abuse of disability placards declined even before the program's official launch. The number of available parking spots has increased, and theft of disability placards dropped from 23 per month from 2007 to 2013 to only one in the three months after program launch.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *Research is essential when developing a comprehensive communications campaign. Low-cost focus groups and one-on-one interviews allow you to understand target audience's opinions and attitudes about sensitive policy changes, which is essential to campaign development.*



**PARKING AUTHORITY OF BALTIMORE CITY**

**ProjectSPACE**

For years, Baltimore allowed drivers with disability placards to park for free at metered spaces. But in some areas, abuse of the policy led to most parked vehicles displaying disability placards or disability license plates. As a result, parking for people with and without disabilities was less available and people with disabilities were often the target of thieves who stole the placards. In July 2014, the Parking Authority of Baltimore City (PABC) launched ProjectSPACE to curb abuse of disability placards and license plates and increase available parking for people with and without disabilities.





**WASHINGTON STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Mobile App and Smart Marketing**

**W**hen tunnel construction required removing hundreds of on-street parking spaces in two of Seattle’s most-visited historic neighborhoods, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) faced a serious challenge: how to

maintain business vitality and attract visitors and customers to the affected area. The answer was a partnership with the City of Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and businesses in the affected neighborhoods to create a program that enables drivers to find convenient, safe, and affordable parking in 2,000 off-street garage spaces at on-street rates while promoting the garages through a mobile app and smart marketing.

The first step was to arrange partnership agreements for low-cost parking with six garages in the neighborhoods affected by the on-street space removal. Next, WSDOT engaged a local agency to develop a website and mobile app (DowntownSeattleParking.com) that lists low-rate garages, displays available spaces at those garages, and provides hours, parking rates, and driving directions. An advertising and public relations campaign, developed with input from SDOT and businesses affected by the construction, reinforced the message that “there’s still plenty of parking.” The result: Garage use increased in 2014 over 2013, and the mobile app was a hit, with median monthly site visits increasing from 3,500 in the first six months of 2013 to 23,000 during the last six months. Web traffic to DowntownSeattleParking.com increased, with close to 70 businesses linking to the site from their websites.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *Collaboration beats going it alone. Here, engaging local businesses and other stakeholders affected by the construction helped leverage the program’s impact and the message about low-cost parking availability.*

**ADDITIONAL AWARD WINNERS**

**VANCOUVER’S EASYPARK**

**The EasyPerks Benefit Card**

**B**uilding customer loyalty is a smart strategy for any business. But Vancouver’s EasyPark went further with a strategy that not only builds customer awareness and loyalty but also increases revenues for EasyPark, its customers, local businesses, and clients. A first-of-its-kind value-added program for the Vancouver area, the EasyPerks Benefits Program offers monthly parking customers special savings through EasyPerks’ program partners, which include high-profile businesses, museums, art venues, restaurants, specialty retailers, car washes, and health and fitness organizations.

Monthly parkers who enroll in EasyPerks are given a distinctive orange and gray card and information about the program and partners. EasyPerks cards are issued to more than 7,000 monthly parkers each year, which translates into more than 16,100 potential customers (family members can use the cards). Partners offered discounts as much as 20 percent and \$50 or two-for-one admissions.

Partners renew their offerings once a year. The program has exceeded expectations, with new monthly parkers eager to join the program and businesses calling to inquire about becoming partners.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *Find ways to differentiate your parking services from those of your competitors by offering added value. Adding value to parking services with a partnership benefits program increases customer retention and loyalty, helps grow your customer base, and is a win-win for partners.*



## Destination Aggieland

**G**ameday traffic snarls can take the fun out of any university football game. When Kyle Stadium capacity grew from 82,600 to 106,300 with accompanying parking and traffic pattern changes, Texas A&M University Transportation Services planners knew they needed to provide information to fans from home and visiting teams before they set out for games. The answer was Destination Aggieland, a free app that uses near real-time and static tools to give football fans tips on vehicle and pedestrian routes, traffic patterns, parking, shuttles, disability services, and weather; airport and stadium information; dining options; and FAQs—basically everything fans need to make their travel to the game more predictable.

The app was a months-long collaborative project involving hundreds of hours of meetings with university departments (Transportation Services, IT, Environmental Health and Safety, and Marketing and Communications), city and county departments, police, the chamber of commerce, and the convention and visitors bureau. Key campaign messages encouraged fans to “download before you go,” “discover what’s different,” “learn your route,” and “arrive early/stay late.” The campaign resulted in more than 24,000 app downloads, along with new records for gameday ridership on complimentary transit shuttles, 6,200 prepaid parking reservations, and congestion levels similar to or better than previous years, despite the increased number of fans.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *Parking apps are a powerful tool to inform customers about parking options and traffic patterns and can be enhanced with additional value-added information.*

### MIAMI PARKING AUTHORITY

## Virtual Parking Payment District

**H**ow do you get community buy-in when you plan to replace free parking with regulated parking to reduce gridlock? The Miami Parking Authority (MPA) faced this challenge in the Wynwood Business Improvement District (BID), which experienced quadrupled parking demand and snarled traffic as a result of a redevelopment boom. The answer was a careful, flexible planning process that engaged business owners, tenants, residents, employees, BID board, Wynwood Arts District Association, and elected officials in a campaign that forged partnerships with the community, gained community acceptance of the new parking program, and positioned the MPA in a positive light.

**KYLE FIELD GAMEDAY TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

Texas A&M University has added 20,000 seats to Kyle Field for the 2014 football season. The addition will mean that 106,300 Kyle Field ticket holders will need to get in and out of Bryan/College Station on gamedays while having a good time in the process. The Kyle Field Gameday Transportation Plan provides pre- and post-game strategies for moving ticket holders and additional tailgaters to and from the Texas A&M campus. The goal of the plan is to efficiently manage the increase in traffic created by 28 percent larger crowds.

**1. What is changing? How will that happen?**  
Transportation experts at the Texas A&M Transportation Institute worked with university and community leaders to develop an improved plan for the 2014 and 2015 football seasons. Improvements include traffic and bus timing changes, better application and control flow lanes, safer pedestrian paths, shuttle bus routes, prepaid parking, more efficient entry, and a smartphone app.

**The plan will**

- open contraflow lanes on Witham Road and Discovery Drive, creating four lanes for outbound traffic;
- improve signal time to address bottleneck points;
- create an improved pathway for fans walking from Kyle Field to Waco Campus after the game;
- increase shuttle bus routes to travel to and from the game; and
- prepare visitors for the changes with the addition of a smartphone app.

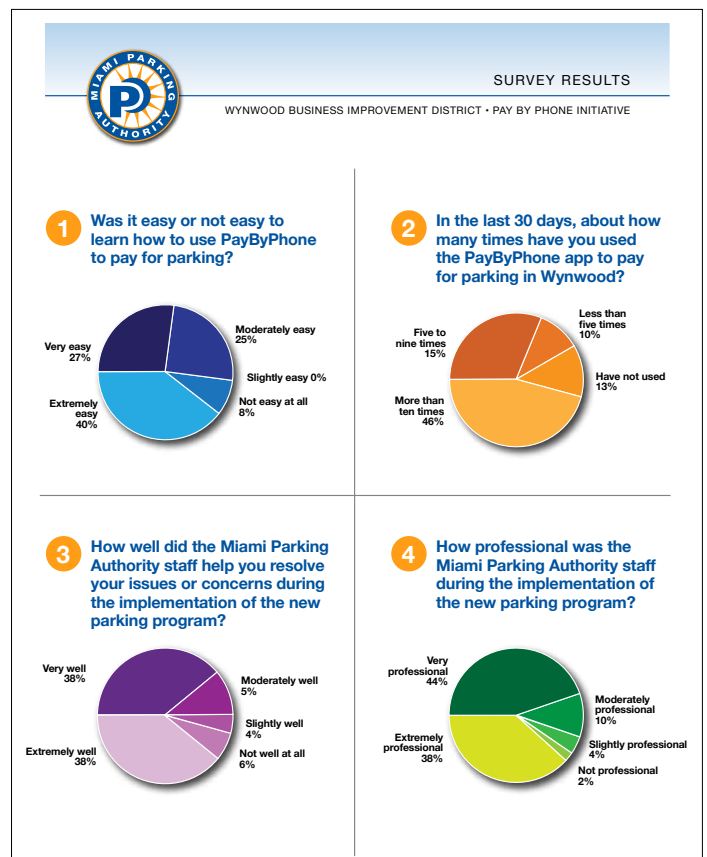
**2. How can visitors plan ahead before traveling to campus for gameday?**  
Visitors can find the transportation plan by downloading the Destination Aggieland app before they travel to College Station. The app includes maps, traffic and parking information, shuttle bus routes, gameday events, and a robust guide to local dining and entertainment venues.

Visitors can plan their arrival and departure based on where they are parking and/or where they are going after the game. For example, fans going to Houston after the game should park on the south or west side of campus, fans going to downtown Bryan afterwards should park on the north side. Maps and information are available at [go.aggie123.com](http://go.aggie123.com) and on the Destination Aggieland app.

As a result of input from its stakeholders, MPA created a virtual parking payment district using PayByPhone only. To address the diverse needs of the Wynwood audience, MPA developed a four-legged parking program that included affordable employee parking, a monthly payment component for business owners and tenants, loading zones, and spaces for the disabled. Changes were made to accommodate a few pay-and-display devices, improve traffic flow on narrow streets, and offer limited-time parking on main arteries to increase turnover. The program was promoted in English and Spanish through social media, as well as print and broadcast media. In addition, MPA staff canvassed the BID door-to-door to discuss the new parking program. Due in part to MPA's

community engagement process and partnership with the trusted BID, the program garnered widespread community acceptance.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *Community engagement and flexibility are essential when you ask stakeholders to make a change. It's important to listen to the community and adjust program elements to address concerns whenever possible.*





## STANFORD UNIVERSITY PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

### Creative Transportation Demand Management

When the construction of new teaching, research, arts, and medical facilities displaced hundreds of parking spots, Stanford University sought fresh, engaging ways to encourage drive-alone commuters to switch to alternative transportation. The result was a creative program that featured contests and a special event, rewarded existing Stanford Commute Club members, and used marketing collateral to encourage other university faculty, staff, students, and hospital commuters to abandon their single-occupancy vehicles.

Stanford Commute Club members were invited to enter a contest in which they submitted photos that showed “why I commute the way I do.” Winning photos were featured in a Commute Club calendar, poster, banner, and on the website and winners received \$50 gift cards of their choice. To heighten visibility of the calendar and encourage co-workers to consider alternative transportation, the calendar was mailed to Commute Club members’ work addresses so it would be displayed at work. In addition, to celebrate the Commute Club’s 10-year anniversary, Stanford hosted a Commute Club Photo and Cupcake event. Attendees were given cupcakes and featured in a group photo that was used in a poster, outreach mail, and banners. An event raffle was held with two prize drawings for \$500 and a breakfast or lunch. The campaign led to increased Commute Club membership, from 8,300 in 2012 to 9,500 in 2014, as well as increased shuttle ridership. The drive-alone rate for university employees declined to 49 percent in 2014, from 52 percent in 2012.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *Contests and prizes engage target audiences and can be leveraged to create marketing collateral that reinforces your messaging.*

## PARK CEDAR RAPIDS

### Amenity Services Program

It’s every parker’s nightmare—a parked vehicle that won’t start. But if you park in a Park Cedar Rapids lot and encounter an unexpected dead battery, on-site staff will jumpstart your vehicle. This service is one of several offered through Park Cedar Rapids’ Amenity Services Program, through which onsite staff carry out basic services, such as tire fills, jumpstarts, and security escorts, at no additional cost to

parking patrons, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition, the program offers free seasonal shuttles to help customers get from the parking facility to their destinations during cold Iowa winters. Park Cedar Rapids also partners with local businesses that have situations that require third-party intervention, such as lockouts, tire changes, and towing services.

The Amenity Services Program began in 2010 and has continued to improve and grow in popularity. Park Cedar Rapids and its shuttle transportation partner now offer customers the option to text the shuttle driver and receive an estimated arrival time at stop locations. In 2014, Park Cedar Rapids answered more than 65 amenity calls, with jumpstarts being the most requested service. The Amenity Services Program is promoted through signage, business cards, and brochures, all designed in-house. Park Cedar Rapids also uses email marketing, a short video, and social media to engage and inform customers.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *Producing promotional materials in-house saves money, while social media through Facebook, Twitter, and other platforms engages customers and helps keep them informed on a regular basis.*



## CALGARY PARKING AUTHORITY

### Child Safety Awareness

It’s a potentially fatal combination: children left unattended in parked cars on hot days. Recognizing the risk, the Calgary Parking Authority launched its Child Safety Awareness Campaign in June 2014, reminding Calgarians to never leave a child unattended in a parked vehicle during the summer months. The inspiration for the campaign was IPI’s similar campaign, “Preventing heatstroke deaths in parked cars” on [parking.org/safety](http://parking.org/safety).

To obtain additional support for the campaign, the parking authority approached the Calgary Police Service, Calgary Fire Department, and Emergency Medical Services, all of which agreed to be involved. The campaign targeted city drivers, including the thousands of visitors to the Calgary Stampede. Using radio spots during morning, mid-day, and evening drive times for two weeks in August, social media (Facebook and Twitter), a campaign web page, and yellow and red posters and signage, the campaign reminded drivers: “NEVER leave a child in a parked car. Not even for a minute.” The campaign resulted in retweets from members of the public, businesses, government officials, and other stakeholders, as well as chatter in the community. It also set the stage for future collaboration with first responders.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *There’s no need to reinvent the wheel. The Calgary Parking Authority based its campaign on IPI’s Parking Safety Matters initiative to prevent heatstroke deaths in parked cars but made it its own with great graphics and a local focus.*

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EXTENDED ECONOMY PARKING	\$8.00	\$6.00
OFF-SITE PARKING A	\$7.60	\$13.02
OFF-SITE PARKING B	\$5.00	\$13.25
OFF-SITE PARKING C	\$4.50	\$17.00



GRANT OLIVER CORPORATION

## The Oliver Family

When the Grant Oliver Corporation, parking manager for the Pittsburgh International Airport, wanted to raise awareness about its new online parking reservation system, it decided on a light-hearted approach with a human face. The corporation's ad agency created the Oliver Family, an animated mom, dad, and two kids who were designed to appeal to traveling families, college students, and the traveling public. (Future Oliver campaigns will target business travelers.) During the eight-week campaign, the Oliver family appeared in TV, radio, print, and web ads; on a mobile app; in a social media contest; and on a digital billboard. Planners conducted research to locate the best placements for maximum exposure to the target audiences. Their messaging stressed that onsite airport parking is more convenient and economical in most cases than using off-site parking vendors.

The campaign resulted in a doubling of web traffic to PghFrequentFlyer.com, and contest posts on Facebook reached more than 54,000 people, with page likes increasing by 3 percent. The contest received more than 500 entries.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *A light-hearted approach can help engage target audiences, especially if it has a human face.*

OREGON HEALTH AND SCIENCE UNIVERSITY  
TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

## Communications Overhaul

How can you best present the full range of transportation options to a large number of employees, especially when you are located in a city with a cap on parking, six bus lines, CarShare, an aerial commuter tram, a university shuttle, and a robust bike program? The answer for Oregon Health and Science University (OSHU) was a communications overhaul that highlighted the options and encouraged alternative transportation to more than 14,000 employees, new hires, and visitors.

Because most customers go to the web to learn about transportation options, OHSU built an entirely new, easy-to-navigate website that featured accurate information about all campus transportation products and resources. A key element was the addition of short, easy-to-remember URL sub-sites for each transportation mode (e.g., ohsu.edu/bike). In addition, OHSU designed and launched a new employee onboarding outreach program that included transportation presentations with simple, attractive visuals and an information booth. Finally, print materials presented the full range

of transportation modes, from least to most expensive with equal emphasis on each mode. All materials were designed to facilitate quick scanning with concise language and pleasing visuals.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *Collateral materials with attractive visuals and concise language are more likely to engage audiences and keep their attention. You don't want to make reading your materials a chore!*



UCLA EVENTS AND TRANSPORTATION

## Commuter Services a la Mode

Located in the most traffic-congested city in the United States, the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) has long sought to be part of the solution by offering sustainable transportation programs, commuter options, and parking services. But its marketing was largely ad hoc with no cohesive branding or messaging. When the Bruin Commuter Club (BCC) was launched in 2012, UCLA's five primary alternative transportation modes (carpool, vanpool, public transit, bicycling, and walking) were brought under one umbrella. BCC's website portal provides access to products, services, information, and special benefits to UCLA students, faculty, and staff who use alternative transportation.

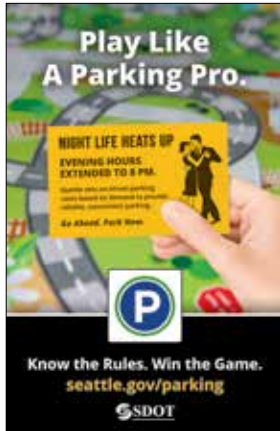
Following the launch of the BCC, the time was right to repurpose and rebrand UCLA Transportation's Be a Green Commuter blog and information portal. The rebranding effort used compelling photography and mode-specific titles to give each of the five alternative transportation options a UCLA and California feel along with a unified look and brand message. For example, the vanpool photo shows the camaraderie of vanpooling and asks, "Ever have a baby shower in a van?" In the 13 months since the launch of the new Be a Green Commuter blog, the total number of site visitors and page views has more than doubled to 21,999 and 47,528, respectively. Planners believe UCLA is positioned as a more accessible, sustainable, and progressive campus.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *When using photos or other images, be sure they will resonate with your audience, reflecting their age, gender, ethnicity, and other characteristics.*

## SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### A Game Approach

Seattle's Department of Transportation (SDOT) uses a performance-based parking pricing program to manage its 11,500 on-street parking and balance supply with demand. But in 2014, when SDOT lowered



rates in five areas, raised rates in eight areas, implemented seasonal rates in one area, and extended paid hours into the evening in five areas, it was clearly time for an educational campaign that would inform Seattle drivers about the new parking rates and how the demand-based policy offers more reliable, convenient parking.

The campaign played on Seattle residents' desire to be smart, savvy urban dwellers, aware of changes and strategies for parking. The message: "Play like a parking pro: Know the rules. Win the game. Parking is a game people

can win!" The campaign relied on temporary signs at pay stations posted several weeks in advance of the rate changes, as well as temporary orange flags that drew attention to newly extended weekend paid parking. Radio and print ads, as well as neighborhood-specific postcards, were produced and distributed. In addition, the SDOT planners placed ads in neighborhood-specific blogs and newsletters and developed a YouTube video that was shown at local movie theaters and online. The campaign was well-received by key officials and anecdotally by the public. Complaints have also been reduced, and SDOT believes there is more parking available in crowded areas.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *Make it fun! Seattle's approach to educating drivers about a complex parking rate system emphasized that finding a spot with a lower rate is a game people can win.*

## CITY OF DALLAS POLICE DEPARTMENT

### One Meter at a Time

Even parking meters can serve as a support for public art, transforming the visual character of the streetscape. That's what happened in Dallas when the Office of Cultural Affairs (OCA) and Dallas Police Department (DPD) partnered to implement a pilot program of temporary public meter art. Believing that public art can be inspirational and transformative, OCA, with funding from DPD, commissioned six local artists to perform "cre-

ative interventions" on existing parking meters in three areas of the city. Each artist was given at least 20 contiguous meters in a designated geographic area and paid \$50 per meter. The result was eye-catching, fanciful and colorful painted meters with removable graphics, as well as some wrapping projects that had a sculptural appearance.

The project created new audiences for the artists and their work, as well as for DPD and its public parking improvements.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *Public art and parking can work well together, both in parking facilities and on the street. Adding public art puts a friendly face on parking facilities and engages the public with parking operations.*



## WINNIPEG PARKING AUTHORITY

### ParkSmart

Illegally parked vehicles often obstruct or delay police, fire trucks, ambulances, and other first responders. Instead of using an enforcement approach to address this public safety issue and improve compliance, the Winnipeg Parking Authority (WPA) decided to educate first with a program built around communication, education, and safety. The WPA partnered with the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service and Winnipeg Police Service to launch its ParkSmart program.

WPA compliance officers visited schools and events to raise awareness of the safety hazards caused by ignoring posted parking regulations. Instead of issuing citations, they distributed ParkSmart brochures or warning tickets. For example, at the many well-attended community yard sales in Winnipeg, officers distributed more than 3,000 brochures and issued 400+ warning tickets, compared with 800 warning tickets in 2010. At schools, WPA established a School Zone Safety strategy. Officers monitored student drop-offs and pick-ups, issuing brochures and warnings to help make people aware of the dangers of parking illegally. WPA has created additional brochures for snow routes, disabled permits, event information, and vehicles parked too far from the curb.

**Marketing communications takeaway:** *Including the logos of partner organizations in collateral materials adds credibility and helps improve the images of all partners.*



Entries for the 2016 *Parking Matters*® awards open September 2015.