

THE COUNTRY'S GREENEST CONFERENCE

By JC Porter, CAPP

I recently returned from the Pac-12 Conference and am declaring it the greenest conference in the nation. I am certain there will be those who will disagree with my declaration, but after reading about the many accomplishments of Pac-12 schools, I invite dissenters to follow up this article with why your conference is the greenest.

The University of Arizona provides a bike valet for students while they attend classes. Fulfilling the “people” part of the planet, profit, and people equation of sustainability, U of A offers a ticket diversion program—if someone receives a parking citation but cannot pay, he or she can take an online course. This has been enormously popular with both students and university departments that use it to publicize their services.

At Arizona State University (ASU), every square inch that can be covered with solar panels has been, helping generate 25 megawatts of power. All students, faculty, and staff are issued solar-paneled hats to wear on campus (that’s a joke, courtesy ASU’s vice president for university business services). All joking aside, ASU will soon embark on a public-private venture to reach 50 megawatts of power and has implemented a campus access management plan for bikes, pedestrians, skateboards, carts, and vehicles to provide safe access for all modes of transportation. Infrastructure improvements, such as walk-only zones, golf cart pods, day-use cart parking areas, card-access bike facilities, shared-use paths, and skateboard parking racks, were implemented, and three bike valets run during the fall and spring semesters.

The University of California, Berkeley, is using technology to make the most of its limited parking areas. With a daily utilization rate of 85 percent, UC Berkeley is testing a locally grown app for demand-based parking pricing and rebates for those who choose not to drive.

The University of Colorado (UC) and the University of Oregon are doing great things. UC offers transit passes to all employees as a university benefit paid for by the university. Oregon has a new bus-tracking system to help increase ridership and customer service.

Oregon State University and Washington State University have zone permit parking. Both have seen better parking utilization as they have transitioned from a “hunting permit” system. They also have experienced an increase in customer satisfaction and a decrease in campus traffic as permit holders are now able to find spaces without circling.




Stanford University is moving toward an all-electric bus fleet, doubling the number of electric bus chargers to meet increased demand. For longer distance routes, Stanford uses double-decker coach buses that transport roughly 40 percent more passengers on almost the same amount of fuel. All shuttles are equipped to accommodate bikes.

UCLA has implemented three sustainability plans: a bike master plan, a climate action plan, and a sustainable transportation plan. UCLA has also installed EV charging stations, choosing Level I chargers and building the infrastructure while waiting for funding for Level II and III chargers.

The University of Southern California (USC) has taken its safe ride program to the next level. USC partnered with Uber to decrease wait times, using a resource that was already in place.

The University of Washington provides a commute concierge service that offers a personal touch for students, faculty, and staff to identify the best way to commute to and from campus. This program has become such a success that human resources promotes the service in the new-hire process.

As you can see, the Pac-12 is the most sustainable conference in the country. If any other conference would like to try and compete, submit your school’s accomplishments to IPI’s Sustainability Committee via Rachel Yoka, yoka@parking.org. 



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