

# ACCREDITED PARKING ORGANIZATION® PROGRAM

## MANUAL FOR APPLICANTS

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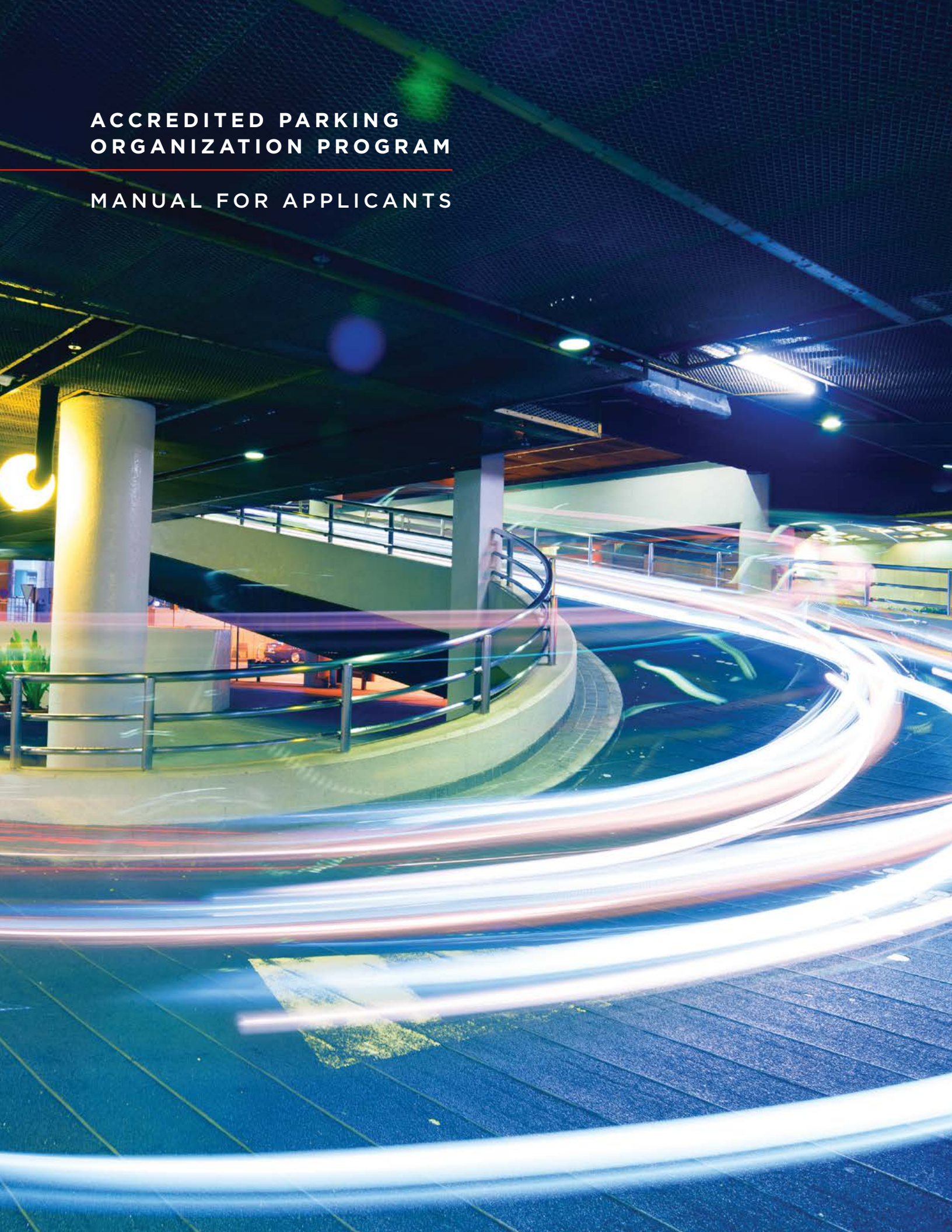




ACCREDITED PARKING  
ORGANIZATION PROGRAM

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Accredited Parking Organization (APO) Program, which establishes a benchmark of the quality by which a parking management organization conducts its business and maintains its facilities and services. An APO designation assures the public that a parking program meets national and internationally endorsed standards for professionalism, accountability, creativity, responsibility, and performance.

The parking industry's sectors include educational institutions, colleges, and universities; health services and medical centers; airports and intermodal transport hubs; municipalities; and office buildings, shopping centers, and other private facilities. All large and small, full- and partial-service organizations will share a single accreditation format that recognizes areas of advanced and exemplary services and innovations, as well as entrepreneurial spirit.

One of the goals of accreditation is to inspire organizations to improve their programs, facilities, services, and results continuously. By undertaking this process, your organization demonstrates its commitment to ongoing evaluation and improvement of program outcomes through the implementation of industry best practices.

## Why Your Organization Should Become an APO

Until now, there has been no centralized accreditation or quality measurement system for parking organizations; rather, parking organizations have created and maintained their own standards and promoted them as good and effective—rather than “industry best”—practices. While this has been successful in gaining some recognition for individual programs, it has not encouraged the emergence of a unified brand or concept of a parking product that has positive effects in the minds and imaginations of customers and stakeholders.

The process of becoming an APO engages managers and staff in research and strong progress toward learning and adopting industry best practices and focuses organizations on the continuous improvement of internal efficiency and profitability.

It also promotes continuous development and improvement of industry products and services in a manner that is generally recognized by industry peers, internal and external administrators, and the general public. This will result in improved facilities and services as well as improved utilization and revenues.

## Becoming an APO

### 1. Understanding APO Standards and Best Practices

Accreditation is the final act for a program that compares and measures existing practices against objective standards, resulting in a measured validation that certifies competency, authority, and/or credibility.

Standards are formal documents that establish uniform criteria, methods, processes, and practices related to a given activity or industry. Primary standards define the key characteristics of an individual item or practice and are supported by a hierarchy of secondary, tertiary, and check standards. A custom, convention, or corporate practice that becomes generally accepted and dominant is often referred to as a de facto standard.

Standards may be developed privately or unilaterally by a corporation, trade or occupational group, regulatory body, military, or other authoritative source. They may be developed by edict or a formal consensus of technical experts and usually are retained in the custody of a national or international standards body created expressly for that purpose.

International standards are directly imposed by an authoritative international governing body and sometimes are modified to suit local conditions; equivalent, national standards may differ somewhat in appearance, use of language, and definitions. They may reflect conflicts in governmental regulations or industry-specific requirements caused by geographical, technological, or



Jeremy Brooks

infrastructural factors, or the stringency of a given authority. International standards represent one method of overcoming barriers in international commerce caused by differences among nations or economic regions.

Best practices are methods or techniques that yield consistently superior results in public policy and business management activities. Used in nearly every industry and professional discipline, they serve as benchmarks of standardized ways of doing things that continue to evolve as improvements are discovered. Best practices often are used as an alternative to mandatory legislated standards and can be based on self-assessment, peer assessment, or formal benchmarking. Prior to becoming a “best” practice, a particular activity might be described as a smart, good, or promising practice. These best practices are the backbone of formal accreditation programs.

## 2. Why Standards Are Important

Standards form the fundamental building blocks for product and service development by establishing consistent practices and protocols that can be universally understood and adopted. This helps fuel compatibility and interoperability between products and services; in manufacturing, they simplify product development and speed time-to-market; in service industries, they simplify delivery techniques and form consumer expectations. Standards make it easier to understand and compare competing services. They propel the development and implementation of the products, services, technologies, and economics that influence and transform the way we live, work, and communicate.

At a consumer level, standards provide a safety net for many areas of our individual experience. They remove consumer anxiety by informing us about the reliability and fitness of the goods and services we buy and use, offer us greater choice, and instill confidence in the businesses we patronize. At a service-supplier level, standards provide clear guidelines toward targets that reflect best practices and offer protection from lesser rivals who might otherwise damage an industry’s reputation. They provide an excellent selling point and a benchmark that can be used for communicating the specification and characteristics of a product, service, or system. They help explain improvements and innovations, and offer a competitive advantage by making it easier, cheaper, and more efficient to produce and sell industry products and services, both locally and internationally.

A good example of the power of standardization is the Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) mobile communication technology network and its successors (3G, 4G, etc.). Although GSM originated in Europe, the technology has been adopted worldwide, helping travelers to communicate about and use familiar services globally.

While modern society views standardization as a given in technological fields, consumers and service providers are less accustomed to applying standards to everyday services. The parking industry has matured rapidly and possesses an entrepreneurial spirit. While these characteristics lend great vitality and value to the industry, the absence of generally accepted standards creates a gap between what customers expect and what the industry can deliver. By establishing standards for facilities and service delivery, we create a level playing field for the industry that assures customers and stakeholders of the highest quality.

## 3. What the APO Standard Represents

The APO standard for parking facilities and services represents the industry’s best efforts to collect, assemble, and develop a reputation for achieving higher levels of quality and professionalism.

The APO program is intended to be both a visionary, guiding standard and a day-to-day performance standard that is achievable by all industry organizations. Based on the scope and scale of individual organizations operating in different environment and service sectors, the program reinforces the industry training and professional certification initiatives developed by IPMI and available to the industry worldwide.

The APO designation is awarded at the Accredited or Accredited with Distinction level. Organizations may apply for either APO or APO with Distinction. Those organizations that wish to pursue APO, and then APO with distinction at a later date, are permitted to do so through a new application. This manual is constructed to include both levels to educate and inform organizations that wish to pursue the accreditation.

Applicant organizations will be asked to gather and transmit information as objective evidence of attainment of the accreditation standard they are seeking, and to work with a third-party, IPMI-approved Site Reviewer to organize and present evidence that demonstrates accomplishment of each required item. A series of nominal fees will apply to process the application and sustain the program. The reviewer will visit the applicant site and work through the evidence to determine suitability, and whether the

evidence item is material (applicable or not applicable) to the application. Based on the reviewer's recommendation, IPMI, through its APO governance process, may award the APO designation at the appropriate level.

The APO program is designed to evolve and become more demanding over time, in accordance with industry practices. It will continue to "raise the bar", facilitating and encouraging continuous improvement in the industry.

#### 4. The APO Board

The APO standard is trademarked (international) and is the intellectual property of IPMI. The IPMI Board of Directors has established the APO Board to provide oversight and strategic direction for the APO program. The APO Board ensures and supports the development and maintenance of industry standards representing the highest level of professionalism and competency. The Board is responsible for maintaining a benchmark of excellence for the industry and provides a means for parking and transportation organizations to demonstrate their proficiency and competency and be recognized by their peers, employees, employers, regulatory agencies, customers, and the public.

The accreditation standard will be amended and updated approximately every three years, or as may be required by the ongoing evolution of the industry. Amendments or change to the standard will be made at the sole discretion of IPMI and its governing bodies.

#### 5. Eligible Organizations, Definitions, and Summary of Criteria

##### Eligible Organizations

**Parking Organization** – A parking organization is an entity that operates, manages, owns or leases parking facilities (defined as: parking lot(s), garage(s), ramps, carparks, etc. and on-street parking spaces).

*Example: ABC airport has parking that is close to the airport and also runs multiple airports within the state.*

**Multi-Site Parking Organization** – A parking organization may operate, manage, own or lease parking sites that are not in close physical proximity. Despite geographic distance, sites are managed with common policies and procedures by the same parking organization. In this case, they may be included in the same APO application.

*Example: ACME University operates, manages, owns or leases parking facilities that are not in close proximity, for instance in separate cities.*

##### Criteria for APO

- Meets 100 percent of the required criteria in Section 1 of the APO Matrix.
- Meets 80 percent of the remaining criteria in Section 1 of the APO Matrix.
- At least one facility meets 80 percent of criteria in Section 2 of the APO Matrix as a Premier Facility. Applicant organization may submit up to three as part of accreditation fee. Additional facilities may be added for a per-facility fee.
- Payment of Accreditation fees, including \$250 application fee, and \$2,500 for accreditation period. Accreditation fee includes up to three Premier Facilities. Additional Premier Facilities are \$500 per facility. *These are IPMI member rates, additional fees apply for non-members.*
- Complete Site Review for each site seeking Premier Facility status, documented by IPMI-approved APO Site Reviewer. *Fees negotiated separately between applicant and site reviewer.*

Once all of the above criteria have been met and the APO Board has formally granted APO status, applicant will be notified of the successful APO pursuit, and may use the APO logo and APO Premier Facility logo at appropriate and documented sites.

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### Criteria for APO with Distinction

- Meets all of the criteria for APO as detailed above.
- In addition, meets 80 percent of the APO with Distinction criteria in Section 1 of the APO Matrix.

Once APO Accreditation and Accreditation with Distinction criteria have been met and the Accredited Board has formally granted APO with Distinction status, applicant will be notified of the successful APO pursuit, and may use the APO Accredited with Distinction logo.



### Length of Accreditation

The initial accreditation is valid for three years. The re-accreditation is valid for one, three-year term, and APOs will be provided with a streamlined application process for recertification. Upon completion of the streamlined re-accreditation application, payment of \$1,500 fee, and formal approval, the applicant's APO status will be extended for another three-year period.

After six years, a new application (based on the subsequent editions of the APO Manual for Applicants and APO Matrix) will be required, along with current applicable fees.

### Additional Facilities

Should an APO organization wish to add Premier Facilities during either its initial three-year certification term, or recertification three-year term, it may do so by having those facilities undergo an on-site facility review, meet the accreditation criteria, and pay \$500 per facility. Regardless of when additional sites are submitted, the initial (or recertification) accreditation term stands for the APO and any related facilities.

*Example: XYZ municipality earned the APO in 2016. Its initial accreditation term is through Dec. 31, 2019. In 2017 it added two additional Premier Facilities. Adding the two facilities in 2017 does not extend their initial accreditation term to 2020; expiration remains Dec. 31, 2019.*

### APO Premier Facility

As an additional benefit, facilities meeting the accreditation criteria under Section II of the APO Matrix and formally recognized by the APO Board may display the APO Premier Facility logo on their websites and at each facility having undergone the facility review and meeting the accreditation criteria.

*Note: Even though a parking organization may successfully achieve APO status, parking facilities that are not inspected nor evaluated against the APO Section 2 requirements as part of the APO application, or fail to meet the APO criteria, may not be marked as Premier Facilities. Marking or branding a facility as a Premier Facility, or as an APO site, without meeting these requirements may result in the parking organization losing its APO status.*



## 6. Getting Ready for Accreditation

An organization is ready for accreditation when it has adopted applicable recognized best practices and gathered evidence to demonstrate and benchmark these practices. Several industry publications and resources are available to assist potential applicants in preparing for the accreditation matrix, including but not limited to:

- [A Guide to Parking](#); International Parking & Mobility Institute, Routledge Publishing, 2018
- [Whats What in Parking Technology, Second Edition](#), International Parking & Mobility Institute
- [Sustainable Parking Design & Management: A Practitioner's Handbook](#)
- [Parking & Mobility magazine](#)
- [CAPP Resource Guide](#)
- [parking-mobility.org](http://parking-mobility.org)

## 7. The Matrix

IPMI freely distributes copies of the current APO matrix to guide applicants. To help applicants prepare for the process, the APO matrix is provided to applicants through a form request online at [parking-mobility.org/apo](http://parking-mobility.org/apo). Applicants are required to obtain the accreditation matrix from IPMI directly, to ensure that they receive the most current version of the matrix. It is divided into sections that can be delegated to a management team tasked with assembling the evidence, and then reassembled for inspection and reporting. During evidence preparation, the evidence-collection team corresponds with its selected reviewer to determine what evidence is required and which may not be applicable to each program. The reviewer will collect formal and informal evidence and make a complete copy for the applicant following the site review and before submitting evidence and recommendations to the APO governing authority. For more information on documentation, reference section 11 of this document. All documentation will be collected and reviewed electronically. No hard copy submissions will be accepted.

## 8. The Role of the Reviewer

Each applicant will be required to seek a qualified, authorized site reviewer to confirm facts and specifics of their application and provide a report to the APO Board supporting their request for accreditation.

Review services, available from IPMI-approved providers, include site reviews and accreditation recommendations. Most review service providers retain a number of trained and certified reviewers to assist organizations in pursuit of accreditation. In preparation for their review, organizations are encouraged to contact a reviewer to initiate a services agreement with one of these groups. IPMI provides current contact information regarding trained individuals at [parking-mobility.org/APO](http://parking-mobility.org/APO).

In consultation with a reviewer, each organization will be guided in assembling the required evidence necessary to achieve the desired level of accreditation. Evidence may be gathered and transmitted to the reviewer in a variety of ways; however, electronic copies of all evidence documents must be sent to APO via an electronic file retention or transfer process before any accreditation recommendation can be made.

When all evidence is gathered remotely, the reviewer will visit the sites and programs to independently verify the evidence's accuracy and completeness and will identify the correct level of achievement. All completed evidence collections, site-visit attestations, reports, and images must be submitted by electronic means to the APO Board for affirmation and granting the APO. These electronic records will be securely maintained for documentation purposes but will remain confidential and will not be disclosed to any person or organization other than the applicant, APO Board, or IPMI staff. The reviewer's organization will charge a fee paid directly to the reviewing organization, to be negotiated under separate contract between the applicant and reviewing organization.

Parking facilities require a qualified, trained, and objective third-party visual assessment of their facilities and services to verify achievement of the accreditation standard. The desire to keep costs as low as possible and integrate the accreditation standard into efficient local practices necessitates that site review services be available locally. IPMI has developed specialized training for local and national firms to deliver review services within a reasonable distance of most urban centers, allowing applicants to source their reviewer close to home.



All reviewers are trained and granted qualification by IPMI based on their performance in APO training seminars that focus on accreditation best practices. Companies offering review services can be contracted for services leading up to and including the final APO site-visit review. Consultant or other IPMI member organizations may offer review services as part of their own regular service packages, at rates they determine, provided that all reviewers are trained and approved by the APO Board and all reviewer quality practices are observed. Conflicts of interest that are not permitted include current employment and family relationships with the leadership team of the applicant organization. If an applicant organization wishes to pursue the APO designation, an objective third-party reviewer must be selected.

Reviewers hold their certification at the discretion of the APO Board, and those who provide questionable or substandard services in any aspect of their duties may have their approval revoked at any point. APO designations based on questionable review practices may be re-opened and re-examined subsequent to any withdrawal of reviewer certification.

## 9. Demonstrating Accomplishment of Best Practices

Organizations will be asked to gather, transmit, and retain objective and documentary evidence to support all their claimed accomplishments. It is understood that different organizations may use different documentation methodologies, and that some of the evidence may be non-specific or visual in nature. If evidence is non-specific and/or submitted as an equivalent substitute for the documents, the equivalent must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the reviewer and, ultimately, the IPMI APO Board. All supporting evidence must be retained and transmitted to IPMI by an approved site reviewer for custodianship prior to being accepted. A detailed description of the evidence required by the APO Board follows.

Once IPMI and the APO Board have reviewed all materials, IPMI and the APO Board may grant accreditation. An organization is considered accredited when it receives the affirmation letter and certificate from IPMI, accompanied by award displays, permissions, and instructions for communications with the public. The accreditation is conferred by IPMI and may be upgraded or revoked at IPMI's sole discretion at any time for any cause, including a shortfall in new achievements or performance.

## 10. Scope and Scale of the Organization

The APO Matrix assumes a complete and full-service organization that performs in all areas of parking management. If an applicant does not participate in some areas of parking management (i.e., operating parking garages), the applicant should identify that item or section as “not applicable” and mention this to the reviewer for consideration and appropriate documentation, generally a statement of why that criteria is not applicable. Affirmation that the item is not applicable by the reviewer and the APO Board will exclude it from the score and nullify any negative effect.

Applicants are encouraged to use the checklist to implement change in their organizations. When applicants approach completing the matrix, they should contact their reviewer to examine any areas of real or suspected non-applicability or non-compliance. It is recommended that applicants do not schedule a reviewer visit until all required items are addressed and all evidence is gathered and verified to be correct and complete via the preliminary meeting process.

## 11. Criteria and Documentation

This document identifies more than 150 industry best practices and program features that are present in modern institutional, municipal, medical, university, airport, private, and other parking programs around the world.

IPMI recognizes that the parking industry is broad and entrepreneurial in scope and scale, and diverse in the way it approaches daily management challenges; what is a natural administrative solution for one program is often impossible for others. Accreditation seeks to define a common theme by emphasizing what is accomplished, rather than prescribing how it should be done.

To satisfy each item, the applicant is required to present clear, objective, and documented evidence that speaks directly to its claim. As an example, if the accreditation matrix requires a mission statement containing references to financial clarity and customer service, the applicant may submit a current authorized statement satisfying these requirements. This may be presented to the reviewer and APO Board in the form of an operating charter, internal planning document, internal communication document or email, published website, or other definitive public communication.

*Other acceptable formats for communication of standards include:*

- Internal documents, letters, emails, manuals, internal descriptions, or statements of objectives and standards of service delivery.
- Diagrams, illustrations, organization charts, flow charts, photographs, or other graphically definitive presentations.
- External third-party audits or opinions; “out-of-department” reports; letters or emails; web pages; or other objective electronic or hard-copy documents that describe a task or a function and demonstrate that the principle and function requested in the matrix is regularly occurring in the parking organizational unit.

Where varying evidence formats are presented, the reviewer will advise regarding the acceptability of the evidence provided.

## 12. Accreditation

There are 25 elements in the APO Matrix that are required. All organizations seeking the APO designation must achieve 100 percent of these items.

Organizations must accomplish 80 percent of the 131 individual criteria to earn the APO designation. Accreditation at this level signifies that the organization has developed a solid and well-rounded parking program that exhibits all of the key practices in use in the global industry.

It is important to note that the parking industry evolves rapidly, with new program elements being constantly developed. Concepts move on to become advanced practices and, ultimately, “best practices” that empower and enable administration and operations in a variety of environments.

Working with experts in each environment and service sector, IPMI has assembled these key elements into an aggregate suite of key attributes or best practices that are followed by progressive and leading service providers worldwide. These practices are considered essential to achieve recognition as a progressive provider, and the standard reflects a requirement of 80 percent compliance to achieve accredited status. This level of achievement identifies a program as representing a strong mix of regulatory and business acumen, technological sophistication, service and contribution to the host community, and service to customers and stakeholders, as appropriate to the environment and service sector.

## 13. Required Criteria

The following elements are marked “Required” on the matrix and must be achieved for an organization to earn accreditation. Required criteria are indicated in bold through the following sections of this document.

- 1.1** Provides a copy of official documentation that defines a contract, charter, ordinance or enabling legislation.
- 1.2** Provides documentation showing governance hierarchy (Board of Directors/Executive Director roles, responsibilities, terms, and relationships) is current; and policy-making authority, process, record-keeping, and decision-making are transparent.
- 2.1** Provides current documentation stating short- and long-term goals and identifying measurable objectives and timelines for achievement.
- 2.3** Planning includes an annual or multi-year budget and financial projection, with periodic tracking and analysis, and coordinated with related community or institutional planning entities.
- 3.1** Mission and Vision or other guiding statements address financial principles, such as transparency, accountability, and responsibility.
- 3.2** Produces and maintains an annual budget and projects a future (three or more years) financial planning document.
- 4.1** Commitment to service is identified and detailed in mission and/or vision statements.
- 4.4** Provides and maintains a proactive customer-service training program for all staff.
- 5.1** Provides all staff with an employee handbook, or equivalent document(s) identifying roles, tasks, responsibilities, operational policies, and procedures.
- 5.3** Maintains current job descriptions for each position, and files training documentation for regular staff.
- 6.1** Maintains effective access and revenue control plan for all facilities and services.
- 7.1** Demonstrates that regular onsite inspections are an integral part of facility maintenance.

**7.7** \*Performs condition assessments by a qualified structural engineer, who conducts a walk-through inspection (annually).

**8.1** Documents current compliance goals designed to encourage voluntary compliance.

**8.2** Regulations and processes related to enforcement and appeals are transparent and available to the public.

**9.1** Outlines safety and security philosophy in organization objectives and values.

**9.3** Maintains SOPs or manuals and conducts testing, drills, and emergency communication procedures (i.e., 911, police, fire, administration, supervision).

**10.1** Demonstrates a strategic commitment to environmental sustainability.

**10.2** Demonstrates implementation of sustainable practices showcasing a direct reduction in energy or resource use.

**11.1** Demonstrates a commitment to reducing or distributing travel demand.

**12.1** Develops and maintains a communications and marketing plan that supports the program's larger strategic goals.

**12.3** Annual budget includes dedicated funding for communication and marketing activities.

**13.1** Has a defined policy for protecting sensitive data and retaining or destroying secure data.

**13.10** All equipment and services purchased are certified as PCI-DSS- or PA-DSS-compliant.

**14.1** The applicant maintains active contracts with external service providers.

\*Please note: Criteria 7.7 in this version of the matrix is currently under evaluation and not required of all organizations. It is available to earn credit toward the 80% of required items; but at this time has been removed from the 25 required criteria.

## 14. Accreditation with Distinction

Many organizations employ leading and progressive advanced practices and innovation that go beyond the broad acceptance level required for accreditation. IPMI seeks to recognize, support, and celebrate these fast-forward concepts with a higher tier of accreditation. To qualify for Accreditation with Distinction, organizations must achieve 80 percent of listed exceptional or advanced practices.

Applicants may choose to submit at the Accredited or Accredited with Distinction level. IPMI encourages organizations pursuing accreditation under this program to consider both levels when preparing for review documentation and site visits by the selected site reviewer.

Visionary and innovative programming is being developed on a small scale constantly, so advanced-standard concepts will be updated every three to five years as the industry progresses. Future best practices will be recognized as advanced achievements and may become best practices as they reach broad acceptance. To retain either level of recognition, APOs must advance and maintain standards current in the year of assessment or renewal.

## 15. When an Organization's Scoring Falls Short

The APO program's goal is for every applicant to attain the standard at the appropriate level. While some organizations may accomplish the APO standard quickly, others may take longer to gain the required experience and evidence. Organizations that have not yet attained the required level of experience and evidence are encouraged to persevere. With effort and commitment, every parking organization can obtain accredited status.

Organizations that do not achieve the necessary performance standards on first assessment will be debriefed by their reviewers on results and shortcomings and given a list of accomplishments required to achieve accreditation. Based on the scope or scale of the organization being assessed and its location or service sector, some elements of the APO matrix may not be appropriate. In this instance, the reviewer will formally identify these items as not applicable and provide the necessary justification to the APO Board for this request.



Chris Chapman Photography



## 16. Appeals

Organizations that do not achieve accreditation and wish to present an objection to IPMI may address their concerns to the APO Board. Frivolous or opportunistic appeals will not be considered. Appealing organizations should be prepared to present evidence detailing why their site reviewer's recommendation or IPMI's final decision should be re-evaluated. The Board will review the submission and render a final decision or recommendation within 60 days of receipt of the appeal.

## 17. Promoting Your Accreditation

After notification of accreditation, IPMI provides a comprehensive package of benefits and support for the organization, to include certificate, plaque, permission to use the APO logo, and branding guidelines. In addition, IPMI will provide ongoing support and visibility through its website and multiple platforms. Accredited organizations hold the designation for a three-year period, and for subsequent years following successful renewal. Benefits include, but are not limited to:

- Provision of a branding and identity package, which includes use of the APO logo (dated for the specific years of the accreditation) to display on marketing and business collateral, websites, letterhead, business cards, facility signs, plaques, uniforms, and other visible public areas (samples and electronic formats provided).
- Press release by IPMI showcasing the organization's achievement in national media and template for use by the APO to local media.
- Recognition at the annual IPMI Conference & Expo, including the presentation of a certificate and plaque showcasing the organization's Accredited status.
- Identification at the appropriate level of accreditation in IPMI documents.
- Highlighted status on parking-mobility.org, as well as a full website profile for the organization.
- Public relations support through IPMI programs.

## 18. Renewal

Once granted, the APO designation is good for three years, after which it will lapse and trigger a renewal process. The APO Board may choose to provide an expedited review process based on the prior submission, depending on improvements to the APO Program during that three-year period.

At this time, the APO Board has provided a streamlined renewal process. Applicants reapply for accreditation through an application provided by IPMI six months prior to renewal. IPMI staff review the application and determine whether the written documents meet the re-accreditation requirements. IPMI staff will communicate any required changes to the organization. Site review by a qualified third-party APO Site Reviewer will not be required as part of the renewal.

Applicants who have met the re-accreditation requirements will be notified that their renewal application has been accepted, reviewed, and approved. IPMI will then generate an invoice for the APO renewal fee. Once these steps have been completed and payment received, IPMI will send a confirmation letter and the new APO or APO with Distinction logo.

Applicants who fail to demonstrate that they have met the re-accreditation requirements will be asked to submit further evidence and the renewal application will be re-assessed. Applicants will be informed of these changes at least six months prior to the expiry date of their accreditations to allow sufficient time for review and resubmission requirements.

After the first three-year cycle and successful renewal for the second three-year period, a full examination of documents, site review, and recommendation will be required to re-award the APO designation.

19. Fees

Participation fees to support the APO program are listed below and may be adjusted annually. Reviewer fees will be contracted separately between the applicant and reviewing agency. The application fee will be paid to IPMI when the request to pursue accreditation is submitted via the form posted on the website. The APO fee will be paid to IPMI when the full application and all documentation is submitted by the applicant and reviewer to the APO Board. The APO fee includes the initial submittal of complete documentation including the reviewer’s report and allows for one resubmission to the APO Board if additional documentation or clarification is necessary.

If a second resubmittal becomes necessary, an additional fee may apply.

Questions or comments regarding the APO process should be directed to the designated staff point of contact listed at [parking-mobility.org](http://parking-mobility.org).

Fees	IPMI Member Rate	Non-Member Rate
Application	\$250	\$750
APO (3-year period)	\$2,500 *Accreditation fee includes up to three Premier Facilities.	\$4,500
Additional Facility	\$500 *Fee applies to the fourth and any additional Premier Facilities.	\$500
Review Process	Determined by applicant and reviewer*	
Renewal Fee	\$1,500	\$3,000

The above fees are paid directly to IPMI to support the APO program. The required reviewer fee will be contracted and paid directly to the selected reviewer from the applicant. IPMI recommends that the applicant budget a minimum of \$5,000 for reviewer fees, report, travel, and expenses, but acknowledges that each organization is unique and may require a customized approach.



## Introduction

The APO Board has adopted a Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility (Code of Ethics) that establishes the expected level of professional conduct and practice for an organization that holds APO Accreditation or Accreditation with Distinction. The APO Board retains the right to amend the Code of Ethics as required.

To promote and maintain the integrity of its APO program for the benefit of designation holders and stakeholders, the APO Board has the ability to enforce the provisions of the Code of Ethics. The APO Board shall be required to enforce sanctions against APOs who violate the regulations as written in the Code of Ethics. The APO Board will follow its disciplinary rules and procedures when enforcing the Code of Ethics. Any reference below to an APO also includes an APO's officers and directors.

## APO Code of Ethics

The APO Board is the sole body authorized to award the APO designation. The APO designation bestows a recognized level of excellence in the field of professional parking organization, management, and operations. Part of that competence relates to an understanding that APOs and their leadership and staff will abide by the Code of Ethics, thereby protecting the public they serve. The purpose of this Code is to direct APOs to lead their organizations with competency, honesty, professionalism, integrity, and fairness, and to provide a benchmark code of conduct that stakeholders may expect.

To this end, the APO Board hereby establishes this Code of Ethics stating that all APOs are bound to:

- I. Conduct their businesses according to high standards of integrity and fairness and to render that service to customers so that any "prudent person" would agree that the APOs conduct their businesses in a manner that is beyond reproach.
- II. Provide competent, customer-centric service that serves all stakeholders and specifically protects the public.
- III. Abide by all applicable governing rules, regulations, and standards.

The Code consists of two parts: The Principles and The Rules. The Principles embody the ethical and professional standards expected of APOs. These principles address the substance and not merely the form of service to customers. The Principles are the guidelines of professional conduct—the same conduct any customer would expect of any professional organization on which they rely. The Rules serve as a description of best-practice or APO standards and outline how The Principles must be implemented in specific circumstances.

## The Principles

**Principle 1.** Organizational Competence: The APO shall provide services to stakeholders in a manner that demonstrates organizational competency. Organizational competency must be maintained through participation in recertification activities that demonstrate the APO has maintained the standards and criteria established in the APO Manual for Applicants and ancillary documents required in the role of the APO. Organizational competence also includes maintaining the organization's standing as an APO through continuous improvement and recertification.

**Principle 2.** Confidentiality: An APO, including its staff, shall not disclose any confidential customer information without the specific written consent of the customer unless the disclosure is made in response to a legal proceeding, to defend against charges of wrongdoing by the APO, or in connection with a civil dispute between the APO and a claimant. Confidentiality is a fundamental aspect of trust on which the professional customer relationship is based.

**Principle 3.** Professionalism: Conduct by the APO, including staff, in all matters shall reflect professionalism and good character, as expected by the APO designation. An APO represents the accreditation and may not behave in any manner that would discredit the designation or the program.

**Principle 4.** Fairness and Integrity: An APO shall perform its business and professional services in a manner that is fair and reasonable to customers, prospective customers, colleagues, employers, and regulators, and shall disclose any conflicts of interest associated with service as an APO. The APO must demonstrate integrity by serving customers, staff, and the public with steadfast adherence to the APO Code of Ethics Rules and Principles, and the policies and procedures of the APO Board.



## The Rules

### *Rules that Relate to Principle I: Competence*

**Rule 101:** APOs shall keep informed of developments in the profession and provide continuing education to improve professional competence among all staff.

### *Rules that Relate to Principle II: Confidentiality*

**Rule 201:** An APO, including its staff, shall not reveal or use, without the customer's consent, any personally identifiable information relating to the customer except and to the extent that disclosure or use is reasonably necessary to: (a) comply with legal requirements or legal process; (b) defend the APO against charges of wrongdoing; or (c) defend the APO in connection with a civil dispute between the APO and the customer.

**Rule 202:** An APO, including its staff shall maintain the same standards of confidentiality to employers and employees as to customers.

### *Rules that Relate to Principle III: Professionalism*

**Rule 301:** An APO shall use the designation in compliance with the current rules and regulations of the APO Board, as established and amended.

**Rule 302:** An APO shall engage in fair and honorable competitive practices.

**Rule 303:** An APO who has knowledge that another APO has committed a violation of this Code must promptly notify the APO Board. A violation would be any act that raises substantial questions as to another APO's integrity, competence, or business practices. For the purposes of this Rule, knowledge means no substantial doubt.

**Rule 304:** An APO who has knowledge that raises a substantial question of legally actionable, unprofessional, fraudulent, or illegal conduct by an APO must promptly inform the appropriate regulatory body if appropriate, as well as the APO Board. For purposes of this Rule, knowledge means no substantial doubt.

**Rule 305:** An APO who has reason to suspect illegal conduct within the APO organization shall make timely disclosure of the available evidence to the designee's immediate supervisor and/or partners or co-owners and take appropriate measures to remedy the problem. The APO shall, where appropriate, alert the proper regulatory authorities and the APO Board.

**Rule 306:** In all professional activities, an APO shall perform services in accordance with: (a) applicable laws, rules, and regulations of governmental and other applicable authorities; and (b) applicable rules, regulations, and other established policies of the APO Board.

**Rule 307:** An APO shall always act in the best interest of the customer and/or stakeholders, serving the overarching requirement to protect the public.

### *Rules that Relate to Principle IV: Fairness and Integrity*

**Rule 401:** An APO shall not, during the course of rendering professional services, engage in conduct that involves dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation, or knowingly make a false or misleading statement to a customer, employer, employee, professional colleague, governmental or other regulatory body or official, or any other person or entity.

**Rule 402:** An APO is prohibited from the unauthorized or misleading use of the APO designation. If the APO renewal date has passed and the APO has not fulfilled requirements to maintain accreditation, the APO designation may not be used until the APO meets all requirements and pays all outstanding fees and fines. Additionally, APOs are prohibited from using the APO designation to represent their organization as specialists in a particular business service, or from using the designation in any way to mislead stakeholders about their expertise or breadth of experience.

**Rule 403:** An APO and its leadership shall not discriminate against others based on, but not limited to, gender, race, age, religion, disability, nationality, or sexual orientation.

## Violation of the Code of Ethics

APOs that violate the Code of Ethics shall be subject to disciplinary action.

## Content Area I: Accreditation Criteria

### 1. Governance and Organization

A parking organization's role, authority, responsibility, management expectations, and obligations are always defined in some documentation: a charter, ordinance, regulation, or other official document that is promulgated through the governance levels of the organization. An accredited program must be well-defined and empowered with a vision and mission statement or equivalent, and the organizational structure must be appropriate to meet the program's stated role and operational requirements. Its operations must be clearly aligned with the organization's governance document and defined by an effective and efficient organization structure.

#### Objective

To complete this section successfully, the applicant must demonstrate this alignment and provide accountable, transparent, responsive, justifiable, inclusive, and participatory parking, transportation, and mobility services to the community or constituencies it serves.

#### Accreditation Criteria

- 1.1 Provides a copy of official documentation that defines a contract, charter, ordinance or enabling legislation.\***
- 1.2 Provides documentation showing governance hierarchy (Board of Directors/ Executive Director roles, responsibilities, terms, and relationships) is current; and policy-making authority, process, record-keeping, and decision-making are transparent.**
- 1.3 Regulations regarding limits or restrictions on the organization's authority to change/amend rates, fines, use of funds, agency jurisdiction, operating rules, etc., are current and well-defined.
- 1.4 Current operational policies and procedures are documented with amendments and/or revisions.
- 1.5 Mission and Vision statements (or equivalent definitions of purpose) are current and available to the public, and to stakeholders and parent companies or organizations.
- 1.6 A current organizational chart is available and reflects the program's mission.
- 1.7 Comprehensive organizational structure is in place that clearly defines relationships between functions, process and staff assignments.
- 1.8 Appropriate and accurate position descriptions are in place and current within three years of the accreditation inspection date.

#### Accredited with Distinction Criteria

Additional points will be awarded to organizations that further contribute to the accountable, transparent, responsive, and justifiable significance of governance and organization.

- 1.9 There is an active stakeholder committee, with a documented Terms of Reference, that participates in governance.
- 1.10 There is a senior leader or Executive Director with professional training in planning and delivery of parking services.
- 1.11 The senior leader or Executive Director represents the parking organization in public and the media.
- 1.12 Retains annual reports or departmental profiles that explain the role and mission of the parking organization.
- 1.13 Retains past performance documentation.



Arielle Brown

\*Criteria in bold are required elements of the APO program

## 2. Planning and Monitoring

Modern industry organizations and activities are developed to coincide with or be part of larger public transportation and mobility programs. Even private-sector activities, though not directly subject to government involvement, are guided in their course in accordance with public policy standards, as permitted through zoning and licensing requirements. All organizations possess goals and objectives that focus on desired outcomes and all organizations monitor and measure results to demonstrate progress toward those outcomes. IPMI APOs routinely utilize a methodical and objective process of planning and monitoring based on regular and consistent observations, measurements, and analysis.



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### Objective

To complete this section successfully, the applicant must demonstrate that planning for the parking system, including any related transportation and communication elements, is consciously placed within the broader context of community or institutional planning goal. Regular monitoring of relevant performance indicators is an active part of the system management process.

### Accreditation Criteria

- 2.1 Provides current documentation stating short- and long-term goals and identifying measurable objectives and timelines for achievement.**
- 2.2** Provides documentation outlining planning process and procedures that translate daily activities into long-term or strategic planning – minimum two years beyond current fiscal year.
- 2.3 Planning includes an annual or multi-year budget and financial projection, with periodic tracking and analysis, and is coordinated with related community or institutional planning entities.**
- 2.4** Maintains a detailed and up-to-date inventory of all parking resources (permits, facilities, parking stalls).
- 2.5** Conducts parking supply, demand, and utilization studies at regular intervals.
- 2.6** Uses performance measurements in decision-making and regular benchmarking activities.

### Accredited with Distinction Criteria

Additional points will be awarded to organizations that regularly apply the principles of planning and monitoring to daily operations and utilize these principles to maintain a culture of quality service and continuous improvement.

- 2.7** Demonstrates a solid understanding of the operational use of study results, metrics, and benchmarks.
- 2.8** Demonstrates a practice of using metrics to explain and illustrate features of the parking program to the public.
- 2.9** Participates in broader industry benchmarking and measurement studies and initiatives outside of the individual organization or corporation.
- 2.10** Planning outlines the schedule and process for key day-to-day operational and administrative activities, including responsible staff, timing/communication, frequency and documentation to indicate activities are a well-established part of the organization's management process.

## 3. Financial Budgeting and Financial Management

While the financial expectation of any parking organization is defined in its role and mission, APOs operate in an atmosphere of transparency, accountability, and responsibility, in support of their role. The applicant must be committed to providing accurate and responsible financial transparency in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) or equivalent as may be determined by the organization's senior leadership.

### Objective

To complete this section successfully, the applicant must demonstrate sound financial management practices in all aspects of planning, budgeting, cash and account management, and audit and reconciliation processes to accurately report the organization's financial position.



### Accreditation Criteria

- 3.1 Mission and Vision or other guiding statements address financial principles, such as transparency, accountability, and responsibility.**
- 3.2 Produces and maintains an annual budget and projects a future (three or more years) financial planning document.**
- 3.3** Produces a monthly report identifying revenues and expenses, as well as variance budget to actual.
- 3.4** Maintains and regularly reviews organization's capital plan noting project status and associated budget financial status.
- 3.5** Maintains a calendar of planned and completed audits (revenue control, employee safety, environment, labor control and management, cost management, etc.).
- 3.6** Audits include all aspects of finance and operations, including cash and financial record keeping and management, as well as utilization and inventory control.
- 3.7** Maintains audit protocol and procedure documents.
- 3.8** Circulates documentation identifying audit findings or shortcomings to senior management, and management reviews recommendations.
- 3.9** Senior leadership (audit committee, etc.) responds to audit findings and recommendations and decides upon a plan of action and completion timeline, and documents response and plan of action.
- 3.10** Maintains current SOP for accounts payable/accounts receivable.



Annemarie Mountz

### Accredited with Distinction Criteria

Additional points will be awarded to organizations that further contribute to an atmosphere of transparency, accountability, and responsibility of financial budgeting and management processes.

- 3.11** Reviews budget and performance documentation with authorized stakeholder groups.
- 3.12** Demonstrates consistent and acceptable financial performance year after year.
- 3.13** Financial performance meets or exceeds the targets established by the governing authority of the parent corporation.
- 3.14** Financial management is subject to routine internal audit and process improvement measures.
- 3.15** Produces a budget year-end financial report and operational summary.
- 3.16** Achieved a strong bond or credit rating based on a third-party reviewing agency.
- 3.17** Developed or achieved a level of public/private cooperation, such as a P3 partnership or other community partnership.

## 4. Customer Service

There are several components of good customer-service practices within an organization. Understanding customer needs is a top priority.

APOs include provision and maintenance of suitable customer-service infrastructure in all facilities and services, continuous customer-service improvement, a dedication to developing and/or supporting customer-service programs, and a demonstrated concern for customers' opinions and experiences. This includes follow-up and sourcing feedback regarding facilities and services and excellence in response to public and media inquiries.

### Objective

To successfully complete this section, the applicant must demonstrate a high, progressive, and sustained level of communication, care, and service to end-use customers.

## Accreditation Criteria

### 4.1 Commitment to service is identified and detailed in mission and/or vision statements.

4.2 Refers to philosophy of customer service in routine correspondence.

4.3 Refers to philosophy of customer service in long-and short-term planning documents.

### 4.4 Provides and maintains a proactive customer-service training program for all staff.

4.5 Conducts customer-service training for new staff.

4.6 Offers annual customer-service refresher training for all staff.

4.7 Responds to customer-service feedback.

4.8 Staff are available remotely or in person to assist customers.

4.9 Employs regular customer surveys (one-year interval minimum).

4.10 Demonstrates a variety of customer-service programs.

## Accredited with Distinction Criteria

Additional points will be awarded to organizations that demonstrate a commitment to flexibility and offer customers a choice of services.

4.11 Provides a variety of parking payment options.

4.12 Provides a variety of parking permit options.

4.13 Provides a variety of choice options for response to compliance tickets or citations.

4.14 Provides a choice of mode of interaction: telephone, email, text, or in-person.

4.15 Utilizes social media to enhance customer service.

4.16 Gives credit to the team.

4.17 Offers customer appreciation days, activities, or events. Conducts contests, special days, and special offers to promote its role and product, or relationship to its customers.

4.18 Engages stakeholders to assist in data collection or other tasks.

4.19 Engages stakeholders in the customer service survey and acts upon the results of the survey.

4.20 Uses rapid entrance and exit techniques for special-event parking.

## 5. Personnel Education & Development

APOs pay attention to the initial and ongoing training of employees. The competence and effectiveness of employees is a driving factor behind an organization's parking program, and personal education and development are key to establishing a strong reputation for dealing fairly with the public.

### Objective

To complete this section successfully, the applicant must demonstrate that the organization is invested in developing qualified, confident, and well-rounded individuals who are well-trained in professional parking knowledge to meet operational requirements, as well as human interaction and problem-solving to meet service objectives.



John Kreis

### Accredited Criteria

- 5.1 Provides all staff with an employee handbook, or equivalent document(s) identifying roles, tasks, responsibilities, operational policies, and procedures.**
- 5.2** Administers a training program that features a defined structure, outline, schedule, and materials.
- 5.3 Maintains current job descriptions for each position, and files training documentation for regular staff.**
- 5.4** Provides an orientation to facilities, organization, operations and lines of authority, introductions, review of personnel policies for new staff.
- 5.5** Provides formal instruction on functional responsibilities and procedures.
- 5.6** Utilizes trainee assessment/testing to test comprehension of concepts and essential information.
- 5.7** Directly supervises employees while in training before they begin performing duties independently.
- 5.8** Uses follow-up training to address identified weaknesses and documents eventual competency.
- 5.9** Maintains process for annual evaluations and professional development of staff.
- 5.10** Utilizes evaluation criteria that are relevant to the functions and responsibilities of the employee, with an opportunity for written and verbal feedback.
- 5.11** Provides employees the opportunity for documented input into evaluation.

### Accredited with Distinction Criteria

Additional points will be awarded to organizations that demonstrate advanced interest and achievement in the training and professional development of their employees.

- 5.12** In the case that an employee reports to multiple supervisors, provides opportunity for input from each supervisor.
- 5.13** Provides a range of other training programs for the benefit of employee or organization.
- 5.14** Senior manager is a CAPP.
- 5.15** Middle management team participates in CAPP or other professional development.
- 5.16** Supervisory and long-service staff participate in IPMI professional development programs (or comparable equivalent) appropriate to their employment level, duties, and responsibilities.

## 6. Access and Revenue Control

APOs are always involved in managing access to parking facilities under varying conditions and are involved in managing permits and credentials as well as cash, credit card, electronic purse, or other forms of value-accounted transactions. As these transactions are of relatively small value and usually occur in high volumes, the quality management of credentials and value—particularly cash value—is of central importance to the way organizations function and how they are perceived to function by our peers, stakeholders, customers, owners, and the public.

### Objective

To complete this section successfully, the applicant must demonstrate a high level of sophistication in the care of physical assets used to manage and control access to parking stall inventory and to revenue accruing from the sale of parking stall inventory, as well as its related tokens, permits, fees, fines, and other products.

### Accreditation Criteria

- 6.1 Maintains effective access and revenue control plan for all facilities and services.**
- 6.2** Provides appropriate control methodologies (PARCs, timed parking, meters, etc.).



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- 6.3 Provides a current SOP that includes access and revenue control requirements.
- 6.4 Provides a systematic and documented process for obtaining and evaluating collection data.
- 6.5 Equipment used to control facilities provides sufficient documentation for revenue generated.
- 6.6 Incorporates reporting features into accounting reconciliation and reporting processes that include both transactions and revenue.
- 6.7 Maintains a standard counting and reconciliation practice.
- 6.8 Conducts periodic unannounced or opportunity counts or audits.
- 6.9 Demonstrates that employees responsible for revenue management are trained in relevant policies, procedures, and audit processes.
- 6.10 Provides a write-off policy/procedure.
- 6.11 Maintains copies of bank transaction reports on at least a weekly basis that includes all forms of payment.
- 6.12 Requires supervisory sign-off on void transactions and reconciliation documentation.
- 6.13 Provides a process to resolve financial discrepancies.
- 6.14 Provides a current letter, contract, or agreement in-place between the applicant and any special event clients.
- 6.15 Provides an automated process for reserving and/or vending parking space for events.
- 6.16 Has the ability to issue a receipt to the customer during special-event parking operation.
- 6.17 Captures utilization reporting and routinely debriefs management and staff on the outcome of each event.
- 6.18 Vault or counting room is monitored and access control is maintained.
- 6.19 Properly limits and controls access to bulk permit or card stock.
- 6.20 Documents custody of unissued permits and access cards.
- 6.21 Inventories and counts meter canisters.
- 6.22 Procedures and/or report slips show cashier stations are subtotaled and cash counted periodically during each shift.

### **Accreditation with Distinction Criteria**

Additional points will be awarded to organizations that show an advanced level of cash security, scrutiny, audit procedures and resources, and sound cash-management processes in all areas of its operation.

- 6.23 Monitors gate equipment and cashier positions controlling revenue areas with cameras.
- 6.24 Audit process includes periodic review of statistical patterns related to equipment activity, cashiering functions, and field revenue collections.
- 6.25 Provides a copy of most recent third-party audit (external or internal).

## **7. Asset Maintenance**

APOs manage major public facilities in such a way as to provide responsible, efficient, and valuable customer services to their customers, in support of their stakeholder and owner objectives.

### **Objective**

To complete this section successfully, the applicant must demonstrate an active asset maintenance program that ensures regular and consistent monitoring, cleaning, and repair of parking facilities and supporting assets.

### **Accreditation Criteria**

- 7.1 **Demonstrates that regular onsite inspections are an integral part of facility maintenance.**
- 7.2 Tests emergency systems regularly.

- 7.3 Maintains a maintenance program that includes inventory of maintenance items.
- 7.4 Maintains copies of current maintenance agreements with third parties.
- 7.5 Maintains a capital renewal plan.
- 7.6 Budgets for maintenance reserves or funds set aside for parking facilities and services replacement and upgrade.
- 7.7 **\*Performs condition assessments by a qualified structural engineer, who conducts a walk-through inspection (annually).**
- 7.8 Performs condition assessments by a qualified structural engineer who conducts a full condition assessment including all disciplines (once every three years at a minimum).
- 7.9 Provides a reconciliation report and schedule of repair completion for items identified in the condition appraisal.

\*Please note: Criteria 7.7 in this version of the matrix is currently under evaluation and not required of all organizations. It is available to earn credit toward the 80% of required items; but at this time has been removed from the 25 required criteria.

### Accreditation with Distinction Criteria

Additional points will be awarded to organizations demonstrating an advanced level of care and attention to detail invested in asset inspection, maintenance, and updates. The applicant must confirm that an advanced maintenance program is functioning in accordance with a developed and formal work order and tracking process.

- 7.9 Maintains a maintenance program in accordance with Parking Consultants Council or equivalent guidelines, including a formal work order and tracking process.
- 7.10 Posts maintenance, ownership, and contact information and hours of operation.
- 7.11 Regulations and restrictions are posted and explained at customer-service locations.
- 7.12 Replaces lighting ballasts and illuminators on a regular basis.
- 7.13 Encourages customers to report security breaches or risks and follows up with recorded action.
- 7.14 Conducts routine physical security audits.
- 7.15 Offers car wash, concierge, laundry, vehicle repair, or other value-added services.

## 8. Regulations, Enforcement, Adjudication and Collections

APOs often operate, or influence the operation of, enforcement programs intended to discourage non-compliance with public laws or ordinances, or private- property management standards. The purpose of an enforcement program is to hold vehicle owners personally and sometimes financially accountable for their actions, to raise awareness through education, and to promote and encourage corrective behavior to avoid a repeat situation. While the traditional enforcement role sends a negative message, organizations are increasingly developing practices and techniques that emphasize the positive side of encouraging compliance, rather than discouraging misuse.

### Objective

To complete this section successfully, the applicant must demonstrate that their organization provides professional and flexible services in accordance with modern technologies, service-delivery options, and best modern compliance practices.

### Accreditation Criteria

- 8.1 **Documents current compliance goals designed to encourage voluntary compliance.**
- 8.2 **Regulations and processes related to enforcement and appeals are transparent and available to the public.**
- 8.3 Uses data to allocate resources and improve effectiveness (voluntary compliance).
- 8.4 Conducts periodic review of patrol zones and activities.
- 8.5 Reviews officer performance and productivity monthly.
- 8.6 Utilizes positive customer-service techniques to encourage compliance.

- 8.7 Conducts daily shift briefings or other daily communication/updates.
- 8.8 Details role of enforcement and compliance in training materials.
- 8.9 Uses technology to monitor patrol routes and officer activities.
- 8.10 Uses digital images to document and improve the accuracy of the enforcement process.
- 8.11 Officers are identifiable and uniformed.
- 8.12 Utilizes hand-held computer, license plate recognition, or equivalent systems that tie regulation, customer performance, and administrative service delivery together in a comprehensive way.
- 8.13 Offers a transparent and publicly available appeals program.
- 8.14 Offers appellants access to a multi-level review process.
- 8.15 Considers the views of adjudicators when regulations are designed.
- 8.16 Demonstrates that citations written in error represent fewer than 2 percent of all citations.
- 8.17 Uses a fine-collection process.
- 8.18 The fine collection process collects 80 percent or more of fines.
- 8.19 Maintains a boot/tow policy.
- 8.20 Trains officer/third-party providers in the boot/tow process in customer service and conflict resolution.
- 8.21 Provides 24-hour service at impound facility and vehicle storage areas.



InventorChris.

### Accreditation with Distinction Criteria

Additional points will be awarded to organizations that demonstrate an advanced approach to gaining compliance through enforcement, adjudication, and collection systems, as well as positive compliance-gaining techniques.

- 8.22 Demonstrates an advanced degree of care for the customer during the enforcement, adjudication, and collection process.
- 8.23 Enforcement staff works with customer service to ensure that service issues are dealt with in the office environment rather than in the public eye.
- 8.24 Uses principles of parking supply/demand measurement, capture, and patrol frequency to optimize the enforcement process.
- 8.25 Works proactively with the court system to ensure that regulations are being documented and processed in an acceptable manner, and that new practices and procedures will be supported by the adjudication process.
- 8.26 Utilizes customer-performance data to determine appropriate corrective action.
- 8.27 Provides appellants access to an objective third party (court of law, adjudication committee, etc.).
- 8.28 Adopted parking ambassador program or approach.

## 9. Safety, Security, and Risk Management

APOs work proactively to establish a superior personal safety and property security presence for their customers and stakeholders and manage their owners' risk responsibly.

### Objective

To complete this section successfully, the applicant must demonstrate that their organization meets essential safety and security guidelines and practices, including appropriate SOPs and manuals, as well as drills, inspections, testing, and training.

### Accreditation Criteria

- 9.1 Outlines safety and security philosophy in organization objectives and values.**
- 9.2 Documents effective workplace safety and risk management practices.**
- 9.3 Maintains SOPs or manuals and conducts testing, drills, and emergency communication procedures (i.e., 911, police, fire, administration, supervision).**
- 9.4 Conducts periodic inspection of facility infrastructure and maintains documentation of inspections.**
- 9.5 Incorporates passive and active security measures in facility design and operation.**
- 9.6 Responds to public safety inquiries.**
- 9.7 Security staff are identifiable and uniformed.**
- 9.8 Trains security staff to respond to public safety and security issues.**

### Accreditation with Distinction Criteria

Additional points will be awarded to organizations that can demonstrate an exemplary level of safety and security awareness and response.

- 9.9 Participates in community safety and security organizations.**
- 9.10 Utilizes customer surveys in assessing security and safety measures.**
- 9.11 Develops safety-oriented partnerships with stakeholder and other interested groups.**
- 9.12 Provides onsite security staff or equivalent personnel.**

## 10. Sustainability

APOs demonstrate a high level of attention to progressive environmental practices and standards and show leadership in all aspects of their roles as environmental stewards.

### Objective

To complete this section successfully, the applicant must demonstrate that the program sets specific goals for energy and resource consumption and shows progress toward reaching its sustainability goals.

### Accreditation Criteria

- 10.1 Demonstrates a strategic commitment to environmental sustainability.**
- 10.2 Demonstrates implementation of sustainable practices showcasing a direct reduction in energy or resource use.**
- 10.3 Provides incentives to promote use of low-emitting and fuel-efficient or alternative fuel vehicles.**
- 10.4 Demonstrates use of alternative-fuel fleet vehicles.**
- 10.5 Provides payment system in parking facilities to reduce idling upon exiting.**
- 10.6 Recycles or repurposes materials and equipment (recycling paper, reusing signs).**
- 10.7 Uses energy-efficient lighting systems and/or controls in parking facilities.**
- 10.8 Uses energy-efficient, environmentally favorable heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems and/or controls in facilities requiring ventilation, or facilities designed without mechanical ventilation.**
- 10.9 Uses halon-free fire-suppression systems.**
- 10.10 Demonstrates planning for continued sustainability gains.**



Center for Watershed Protection, Inc.



## Accreditation with Distinction Criteria

- 10.11** Achieved Parksmart, LEED, Green Globes, or equivalent certification for at least one parking facility.
- 10.12** Posts policies regarding sustainability in prominent public space.
- 10.13** Manager(s) directly responsible for day-to-day parking operations has earned and maintained a qualified environmental sustainability credential.
- 10.14** Implemented external wayfinding system to reduce time spent searching for a parking space.
- 10.15** Implemented internal wayfinding system within parking facility or facilities to reduce time drivers spend locating a space.
- 10.16** Installed and maintains electric vehicle charging stations.
- 10.17** Provides tire inflation stations or mobile tire inflation services.
- 10.18** Implemented water-reduction technologies/strategies.
- 10.19** Roofing system designed to reduce heat-island effect and/or provide stormwater mitigation.
- 10.20** Generates renewable energy on site, and/or purchases of renewable energy credits.
- 10.21** Provides proactive parking facility maintenance plan.
- 10.22** Uses permeable materials in at least one surface parking facility.

## 11. Access Management

APOs champion transportation solutions that connect people to where they need to go while reducing congestion, wear and tear on surrounding infrastructure, and environmental impacts.

### Objective

To complete the section successfully, the applicant must demonstrate a commitment to travel demand management strategies, employing techniques designed to support multi-modal transportation solutions that promote walking, cycling, and transit use, and control motor vehicle access.

### Accreditation Criteria

- 11.1 Demonstrates a commitment to reducing or distributing travel demand.**
- 11.2** Charges for parking to impact transportation choice.
- 11.3** Provides for or supports the use of bicycles.
- 11.4** Provides for or supports the use of carpooling or vanpooling.
- 11.5** Uses parking guidance, traffic management, or parking reservation systems.
- 11.6** Provides for or supports car-share programs or services.
- 11.7** Provides for or supports bicycle-share programs or services.
- 11.8** Parking facilities are located within a .25-mile radius from mass transit services.

### Accreditation with Distinction Criteria

An additional score will be awarded to organizations that demonstrate the development of enhanced mobility programs and/or policies to support users of alternative transportation modes.

- 11.9** Participates in a TMA/TMO or similar organization aimed at reducing congestion and travel demand.
- 11.10** Provides for or supports guaranteed ride home programs and services.
- 11.11** Provides for or supports ride-matching services.
- 11.12** Provides for or supports transit, universal bus pass, or shuttle services.

**11.13** Provides short-term, occasional parking options for flexible commuting.

**11.14** Parking facilities are part of, or proximate to, transit-oriented developments.

## 12. Marketing and Communications

APOs recognize the need to educate and form their customers' impressions and responses to the parking environment, as well as its current standards and best practices. This is accomplished through marketing and communications programs targeted at individuals, customers, or stakeholder groups, as well as ownership authorities and the general public.

### Objective

To complete this section successfully, the applicant must establish commitment to strategic excellence in communications, marketing, and community relations.

### Accreditation Criteria

**12.1 Develops and maintains a communications and marketing plan that supports the program's larger strategic goals.**

**12.2** Strategic-planning documents specifically focus on communications and marketing, which are reviewed annually and current.

**12.3 Annual budget includes dedicated funding for communication and marketing activities.**

**12.4** Provides opportunities for customer feedback (at least quarterly) and responds to feedback.

**12.5** Media relations protocols include a specific list of approved media spokespeople and chain of command for approving and reviewing information that is released to the media.

**12.6** Employs a current media list that includes key media organizations and contact information for key staff.

**12.7** Uses a press/news release template.

**12.8** Crisis/emergency situation protocols, including a specific list of key contacts, clearly defined chain of command, and areas of responsibility are in place.

**12.9** Maintains expedited method of communication specifically for crisis/emergency situations.

**12.10** Maintains policies and/or procedures for addressing annual, seasonal, campaign-based, and event-specific communications functions in a timely manner (i.e., special events, construction, service disruption, and routine maintenance).

**12.11** Branding includes a logo or distinct visual marker that is consistent across media.

**12.12** Website includes 1) map of facilities, pricing, payment options; 2) contact email, phone number, hours of operation; 3) instructions for after-hour emergencies; 4) how to pay and/or appeal a citation; 5) information on monthly parking, if applicable; 6) ADA information.

### Accreditation with Distinction Criteria

Additional points will be awarded to organizations that demonstrate an exemplary and exceptional commitment to marketing, promotions, and community outreach.

**12.14** Shares best practices in marketing and communications with parking industry colleagues.

**12.15** Conducts information sessions for the public and can demonstrate how feedback is incorporated into operational efforts.

**12.16** Posts up-to-date information on programs and practices in public places and online.

**12.17** Participates in public events, public-education sessions, lunch-and-learn sessions, or other awareness- and confidence-building activities.

**12.18** Utilizes new communication technologies (YouTube, social media, blogs, etc.) to reinforce its message to the public.

**12.19** Uses resources to support community quality-of-life programs.



### 13. Data Management and Security

The industry is experiencing increased gathering and retention of personal data. Some of this data is critical to management functions and some is not. APOs recognize the need to retain key data points for the purpose of compiling histories, assessing behaviors, managing programs, facilitating purchases, and educating customers; the need to protect this information while in custody; and the requirement to discard this information when it is no longer relevant or necessary.

#### Objective

To complete this section successfully, the applicant must clearly demonstrate a commitment to data security in compliance with Payment Card Industry (PCI) standards and parking industry best practices.

#### Accreditation Criteria

##### 13.1 Has a policy for protecting sensitive data and retaining or destroying secure data.

**13.2** Provides a policy that outlines the type of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) used/collected, individual responsibilities, how sensitive data is processed when expired, and references appropriate laws.

**13.3** Provides a policy that defines how access to systems is managed and controlled.

**13.4** Contractually requires all vendors to follow the applicant's data and IT security policies.

**13.5** Maintains inventory of all IT assets and data assets and where they are located.

**13.6** For organizations accepting payment cards, submits to Payment Card Industry (PCI) certification or self-certifications and ensures timely security scans; any issues are documented and resolved in a timely manner.

**13.7** Employing tokenization for web-based transactions.

**13.8** Reviews existing systems to ensure that necessary patches and updates (operating systems, applications, etc.) are performed and implemented in a timely manner.

**13.9** Uses firewalls, gateway antivirus, intrusion-detection devices, and other forms of dynamic monitoring to screen for vulnerabilities.

##### 13.10 All equipment and services purchased are certified as PCI-DSS- or PA-DSS-compliant.

**13.11** Vulnerability scans should be performed and reviewed monthly (at a minimum).

**13.12** Encrypts all sensitive personal information and credit card data.

#### Accreditation with Distinction Criteria

**13.13** Conducts a quarterly review of users and their permissions.

**13.14** Vulnerability scan should be performed and reviewed weekly (at a minimum).

**13.15** Servers are in locked cabinets or secure locations and firewalls are actively managed with consistent monitoring for intrusion (PCI requirement).

**13.16** Purges non-essential data in accordance with the data-retention policy.

**13.17** Ensures that all employees complete annual data security, PII, or PCI recurring training.

**13.18** Retains an inventory of all devices connected to network that touch or store personal or credit card data.

**13.19** Has limited or eliminated the use of removable data/media storage and any writeable media related to personal or credit card data.

**13.20** Has a response plan for a data security breach.

**13.21** Employs Point to Point Encryption solutions.



## 14. Third-Party Contractors and Service Level Agreements

Most private parking facilities and services utilize multiple service providers to deliver elements of their services. APOs establish high-quality standards in the selection and retention of their contractors. In some cases, individual contractors may seek IPMI accreditation for the services or elements of services they provide.

If a service provider has been independently accredited by IPMI based on achievement of basic or advanced best practices, and those practices have been officially and completely adopted and implemented by the facility or service owner (individually or in a group of practices), IPMI will award points equivalent to the contractor's achievement. If a facility or service owner has recently changed contractors, the owner must advise IPMI of the change and provide a statement and copy of contractual clauses that assure accredited activities will remain in place. If these activities do not remain in place or standards have perceptibly declined, APO status will be revoked.

### Objective

APOs engage in a constant process to ensure that contracts and agreements are properly structured and reviewed appropriately, and that both service provider and facility owner are meeting their responsibilities in support of service delivery.

### Accreditation Criteria

#### 14.1 The applicant maintains active contracts with external service providers.

14.2 Uses Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) or Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with internal service providers.

14.3 Contracts/agreements include a defined start and end date, and clear and precise renewal terms.

14.4 Contracts/agreements include a statement of work that clearly defines the work to be performed by contractor/service provider.

14.5 Contracts/agreements incorporate specific performance objectives and a written process of measuring and assessing progress toward goals and objectives.

14.6 Holds periodic performance reviews with third parties and identifies performance deficiencies against performance objectives annually (at a minimum).

14.7 Documents the specific modules of accreditation that third parties deliver on behalf of the applicant.

14.8 Maintains process/policy for amending contracts/agreements, including clear documentation of changes.

### Accreditation with Distinction Criteria

An additional point will be awarded to organizations that demonstrate a strong commitment to contracted quality service standards.

14.9 Requires performance guarantees in contracts, MOUs, and/or SLAs.



## Content Area II: Site-Visit Assessment

APOs portray an exemplary image to the customer, in keeping with global best practices. This is one of the most important elements of accreditation. As part of the assessment process, a reviewer will visit each site pursuing the Premier Facility designation as noted on the application and independently review these facilities to ensure the following items are in place and functioning in support of APO standards. The site reviewer will submit a Part 2 Field Assessment for each site applying for the Premier Facility designation.

- 1.1 Approach, internal, and guidance signage is clear, concise, appropriate, and appears to be “fresh” and well-maintained.
- 1.2 Signage clearly shows posted hours of operation and rates.
- 1.3 There are no unnecessary, out of date, overly redundant, or unprofessional looking signs.
- 1.4 Compliance and information signs are visible to drivers.
- 1.5 Reserved or special needs signs are correctly placed for the reserved group or individual served.
- 1.6 Compliance and information signs use international symbols and are in common use.
- 1.7 Wayfinding, identification and regulatory signage and associated systems are current, clear, concise, and refreshed.
- 1.8 Signs are designed with highly-contrasting elements (dark background with light graphics or vice versa).
- 1.9 Deck-level guidance information is available.
- 1.10 Pay-by-cell signs or labels are present and generously distributed.
- 1.11 Area is free of dangerous conditions, i.e., materials, activities, construction, refuse.
- 1.12 Emergency and communications services are clearly marked and functional, with all lights and systems functioning.
- 1.13 All areas accessible to the public are open and visible, and devices are placed so to minimize dark or non-visible areas.
- 1.14 Sight lines are clear to exits.
- 1.15 Lights make use of bright, white light.
- 1.16 Lighting is complete and intact, all lights are active, and there are no dark areas.
- 1.17 Lighting, fixtures and machine surface fixtures or interfaces are shatter-proof and/or protected.
- 1.18 Entry/exit plazas, parking bays and drive aisles are evenly illuminated.
- 1.19 Lighting spill over is mitigated.
- 1.20 Parking surfaces and pedestrian areas are clean and free of road grit, water, refuse, and non-vehicle items or storage.
- 1.21 Asphalt and concrete surfaces are free of chips, potholes, cracks, or slab heaves and trip edges.
- 1.22 All curbs and stall demarcations are freshly painted and visible to the parker.
- 1.23 Parking and pedestrian areas are free from snow/ice/water and other obstructions.
- 1.24 Sign posts are straight and appropriately placed.
- 1.25 Landscaped edges, boulevards, grass, and gardens are trimmed and weeded.
- 1.26 Layout and perimeter edge treatments allow easy pedestrian access and egress.
- 1.27 Overhead railings, pipes, conduits, and other level surfaces are free from dust, dirt, soot, bird droppings, or other substances.
- 1.28 Concrete spalls or delaminations have been repaired and patched.
- 1.29 No salt or water stains.
- 1.30 Membranes intact and complete.
- 1.31 Expansion joints are secure.

- 1.32** Decks are not leaking.
- 1.33** Heating or climate control processes, if fitted, are functioning and in place.
- 1.34** Outside pedestrian doors are glazed (have glass panes or panels for visibility).
- 1.35** Field test of payment system functions properly.
- 1.36** Where cash change is available, correct change is returned.
- 1.37** Machine issues receipts that include the name of the parking vendor, date/time limits, and fees associated with the purchase.
- 1.38** Information on what to do if the machine is out of service is clearly communicated.
- 1.39** All field transactions have credit card or other remote payment capability.
- 1.40** All field booth facilities are neatly maintained and painted.
- 1.41** Where a PARCS is used, all machines are operational and in good order.
- 1.42** Where a PARCS or metering is used, there are additional machines for redundancy (in case one goes offline).
- 1.43** Speed control devices, if fitted, are functional and effective.

## APO Application

Congratulations on taking the first step to pursue the Accredited Parking Organization (APO) designation. Earning the APO designation assures the public that a parking program meets nationally and internationally endorsed standards for professionalism, accountability, creativity, responsibility, and performance. By undertaking this process, your organization demonstrates its commitment to ongoing evaluation and improvement of program outcomes through the implementation of industry best practices.

**Date of Application<sup>1</sup>:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization/Company Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**IPMI Member** ☐ yes ☐ no \_\_\_\_\_ **IPMI Member Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Type:**

- ☐ Academic (college/university, school)
- ☐ Airport
- ☐ Commercial Operations (private operators, shuttle services)
- ☐ Corporate (building owners, developers, entertainment, resort, retail)
- ☐ Hospital/Medical or Healthcare Facility
- ☐ Public (city, economic development, municipality, public works, police, law enforcement)
- ☐ Transit/Transportation (bus highway, rail)
- ☐ Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

This application is for (select one of two choices below).

- ☐ **Parking Organization** — A parking organization is an entity that operates, manages, owns, or leases parking facilities (defined as: parking lot(s), garage(s), ramps, carparks, etc. and on-street parking spaces).

*Example: ABC airport has parking that is close to the airport and also runs multiple airports within the state. IPMI*

**OR**

- ☐ **Multi-Site Parking Organization** — A parking organization may operate, manage, own or lease parking sites that are not in close physical proximity. Despite geographic distance, sites are managed with common policies and procedures by the same parking organization. In this case, they may be included in the same APO application.

*Example: ACME University operates, manages, owns or leases parking facilities that are not in close proximity, for instance in separate cities.*

**Please provide a short narrative providing detail on the scope of your organization  
(i.e. number of facilities, type of facilities, etc.):**

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<sup>1</sup> IPMI will confirm receipt of application. On the date that the applicant organization receives confirmation, the one-year submission period begins. Applicant must submit full documentation package to IPMI within that one-year period, or the application process will start anew with a new application and accompanying fee.

**Website:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary Contact Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Secondary Contact Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(if applicable)

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fees:**

Application fees are due at the time of application (\$250 IPMI member/\$750 non-member<sup>1</sup>).

Accreditation fees for the three-year accreditation (\$2,500 IPMI member/\$4,500 non-member) are due at the time of submission of complete documentation package.

Please note that payment and completed application must be received before candidate may begin the accreditation process.

**Check one:**

☐ I have included a check with this application. Check # \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I have paid for the application fee online at parking.org.

**Initial the following:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I have reviewed and understand the requirements and criteria outlined in the APO Manual for Applicants and the APO Matrix. I have conducted an internal self-assessment of my organization and have determined that I am eligible for Accredited and/or Accredited with Distinction status, and that my organization will be able to provide documentation to support the criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to abide by the Code of Ethics contained in the APO Manual for Applicants.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand the application fee is non-refundable.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the applicant organization will be responsible for the cost to procure a Site Review by an IPMI-approved Site Reviewer<sup>2</sup>, and that this is a required and critical step in the accreditation process<sup>3</sup>.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I will be required to submit a Site Reviewer Potential Conflict of Interest Form when a Site Reviewer is selected, which will disclose existing relationships required (vendor/client, former employee/employer, other relationships, etc.)<sup>4</sup>.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> Member rates apply to the organization pursuing accreditation, not to the selected Site Reviewer.

<sup>2</sup> IPMI recommends that applicants budget \$5,000 for reviewer fees, report, travel, and expenses for a two-day, on-site meeting and review, but acknowledges that each organization is unique and may require a customized approach.

<sup>3</sup> Accreditation is based on a third-party review and final approval by the APO Board, and IPMI is not responsible for the outcome of the accreditation process.

<sup>4</sup> Conflicts of interest that disqualify a site reviewer from performing services include: 1) existing employee of applicant organization or 2) family relationship to employees of applicant organization.