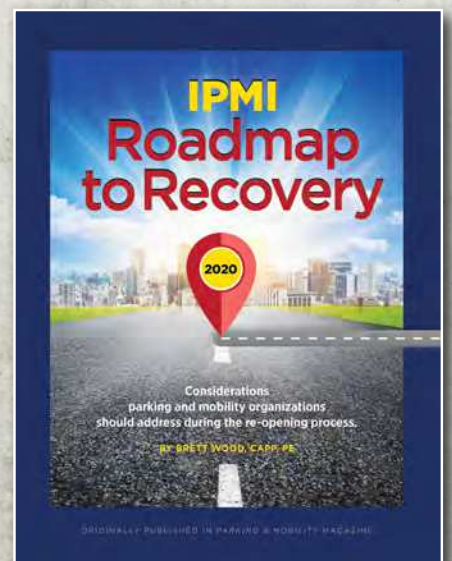


University **PLANS** and **STRATE** for **Fall**

A panel of experts discusses recovering from COVID-19 in the academic world.



GIES 2020

THE PAST FEW MONTHS HAVE BEEN **CHALLENGING** for everyone in our industry. From dealing with abrupt revenue loss, staffing changes, maintaining safe and secure protocols for both employees and customers, it has been unique and new at almost every turn, and most certainly disruptive. The previous articles of IPMI's Research and Innovation Task Force—see our [Roadmap to Recovery publication](#)—have focused on the municipal recovery, which has been ongoing as cities and states re-open during various phases and paradigms.

However, the effects have also been felt far and wide in the academic world. The main difference is the large sense of unknown as the spring semester was quickly changed to virtual and the fall semester loomed in the not-so-distant future. As of the writing of this article, there are still many unknowns about the make-up of campuses in the fall—largely online? In person? Hybrid of the two?



As universities plan for the return to campus in the coming months (or in 2021), we felt it was the right time to help think about strategy, both short- and long-term. The task force asked a number of academic parking and mobility leaders to share their experience and their expertise to help us all navigate the road ahead.

What’s been the biggest impact to your organization thus far?

Jennifer Tougas, CAPP, PhD, Western Kentucky University: WKU has closely followed the Governor’s Health at Home approach to managing the pandemic. In mid-March, all instruction moved to an online format and most employees started telecommuting, so campus parking demand dropped to almost zero. We issued 20 percent refunds for all student permit holders, which had a substantial impact on our cash flow. Transit services and all special events ended when students left campus.

Brian Shaw, CAPP, Stanford University: Revenue loss from allowing free parking for three and a half months and the suspension of campus TDM programs due to a high degree of remote working. We’ve also begun moving to contactless visitor parking.

Josh Cantor, CAPP, George Mason University: Financially we expect a \$7 million-plus impact by the end of the fall semester between refunds from spring and summer and projected lost visitor, event, and permit revenue. Fortunately, we have built a healthy reserve over the past decade to absorb this impact.

Peter Lange, Texas A&M University: The financial impact (currently \$5.2 million and climbing) and the extremely fluid nature of the circumstance we are dealing with.

How are you and your team addressing these impacts?

Tougas: We closed our office to the public, provided remote customer service, moved our permit sales to 100 percent online, and strongly encouraged mail-home options for permit delivery. We’ve worked on several projects that have previously been pushed to the side due to the put-out-the-fire nature of our day-to-day operations.

Shaw: Parking charges were restarted July 1. We are investigating how to track travel to restart TDM programs.

Cantor: We are making operational budget cuts to maintenance and shuttle operations. Staffing levels were decreased considerably in April and although they will increase again in August, we only expect to be at 50 percent staffing levels for the fall semester.

Lange: The financial impact will be dealt with by cutting expenses, deferring capital maintenance and capital projects, and we are working a three-year plan to recover from the impact. As far as the fluid nature of the situation, we typically work up multiple plans and then implement when we have all the operational details.

How have your mobility programs changed and been affected?

Kim Jackson, CAPP, Princeton University: Our shared services, bike- and car-share, are no longer offered. Actually, the bike-share company is no longer operational. The elimination of shared mobility services will impact graduate students currently on campus and any students during the upcoming academic year.

Shaw: Our Clean Air Cash and Carpool programs were suspended and will continue to be until there is a way to track travel.

OUR PANELISTS



JOSH CANTOR, CAPP, is director of parking and transportation at George Mason University. He was previously at Cal State Fullerton. He serves on

IPMI’s Board of Directors and served on the Board of the Parking Association of the Virginias for 11 years, five of which he was President. Josh is the father of three boys and therefore drives a lot. He has a bachelor’s degree from Cornell and master’s degree from the University of Kentucky and was in the U.S. Naval Reserves for 11 years.



KIM E. JACKSON, CAPP, provides leadership, expertise, and management for university transportation and parking operations, services, facilities,

and programs. In 2008 she was hired as the first Director, Transportation & Parking Services for Princeton University. She previously worked at the IPMI as executive director and at Rutgers University in New Jersey, where she was responsible for the university’s parking and transportation programs. She is a past chair of IPMI’s Board of Directors.



PETER LANGE is associate vice president of transportation services at Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, and co-chair of IPMI’s

Parking Technology Committee. He is responsible for one of the largest parking, transportation and fleet operations on any college campus in the country.

Rotational class loading could limit the number of students, faculty, and staff on campus daily, which should allow for lower loading on buses and capacity to oversell facilities and permits to support increased vehicular demands.



SHUTTERSTOCK/JONI HANEBUTT

Cantor: While we will be extending our e-scooter pilot program with several vendors, we are suspending our bike checkout program. We also have made modifications to our carpool programs as well as transit and bike commuter programs as many employees will continue to telework and not be on campus as frequently.

Kris Singh, Central Florida University: We are modifying our buses, including requiring masks on short runs within the one-mile radius, (majority of apartment complexes). For longer runs, one in three

seats will be usable. This will cause a need for an additional buses on some routes. Loading and unloading occurs by back door and not via front door where driver is seated.

What's on the immediate horizon for the full semester?

Tougas: WKU is finalizing the mix of face-to-face, hybrid, and online instruction, with a greater emphasis on the latter than we've had in the past. We anticipate



KRIS SINGH is parking and transportation director at the University of Central Florida. He was a police officer for 10 years and holds a bachelor's degree from UCF. He has worked in parking and transportation for 22 years.



BRIAN SHAW, CAPP, is executive director, transportation, at Stanford University and co-chair of IPMI's Sustainability Committee. He has spent his 25-year career fostering commuter travel choices and innovations in parking management. He has worked primarily in higher education at some of the leading research institutions across the U.S., including Emory and Penn.



JENNIFER TOUGAS, CAPP, PHD, is interim AVP of Business Services at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Ky. She has extensive experience in higher education parking and transportation operations, starting at UGA in 1998 and at WKU since 2004. She earned her CAPP in 2009 and currently serves on IPMI's Board of Directors.

that demand for daily parking will increase as commuting students and telecommuting faculty and staff spend less time on campus. We are taking a number of steps in the transit operations to reduce passenger loads and enforce social distancing.

Shaw: We're allowing freshmen to buy parking for the first time in 30 years. We're also having fewer on-campus residents and staff.

Cantor: We expect more to purchase daily permits or use visitor parking than commit to semester permits. In fact, with few exceptions, we aren't selling annual permits with the uncertainty of the university's operating status for the academic year. We intend to expand mobile payment options as well as offering printable daily permits to minimize the need to use pay stations or come to the parking office. With shuttles, we will only have 25 to 50 percent of normal seating capacity and will only be operating half of our normal routes.

Singh: UCF will hold all classes with more than 100 students online, and classes with less than 100 students will remain on campus. Parking is extending existing permits with an August 31 expiration date through December 31. No new permit will be required unless the student/faculty/staff member does not already have one. We're pushing to have permits mailed out to students instead of them coming in person to pick up.

Lange: Rotational class loading could limit the number of students, faculty, and staff on campus daily, which should allow for lower loading on buses and capacity to oversell facilities and permits to support increased vehicular demands. It will require lots of communication about our operations, bus capacity, masks, parking options, cleaning protocols, etc.

Have you found any silver linings for your organization?

Jackson: Yes, we now know we can all work remotely!

Shaw: COVID will allow us to phase out our pay stations and meters, saving money. It also gives us the opportunity to revamp our permit prices. We can focus on things we need to be doing and do a reset—an opportunity to rethink how we do our jobs and how we run our business.

Cantor: We have worked to further automate processes and find ways that make it easier for the customers as well as for our business practices.

What does your longer-term planning look like?

Tougas: We are expecting an increase in telecommuting, a change in attitude towards the close quarters of mass transit, and increased demand for modular parking options or packages.

Shaw: We need to revamp how we sell parking to be more demand-based and done on a daily basis vs monthly. Rather than a monthly permit, we could focus on daily pricing and help improve our TDM program offerings. We can use data from our program to define price levels to start leveling the demand out across campus.

Do you expect parking and transportation to change in the future because of current changes?

Cantor: There is a real possibility that the extension of online class work could limit the need to build more parking in the future. Let's see how things go in the next two to three years.

Lange: We don't know what's going to happen with campus. We may not need the garages that are planned, so the question is how does parking demand change the need for more supply.

Shaw: We are at 80 percent work-from-home now. That will go down as things come back online, but we expect more work from home, which will change the commute patterns we've built our program for.

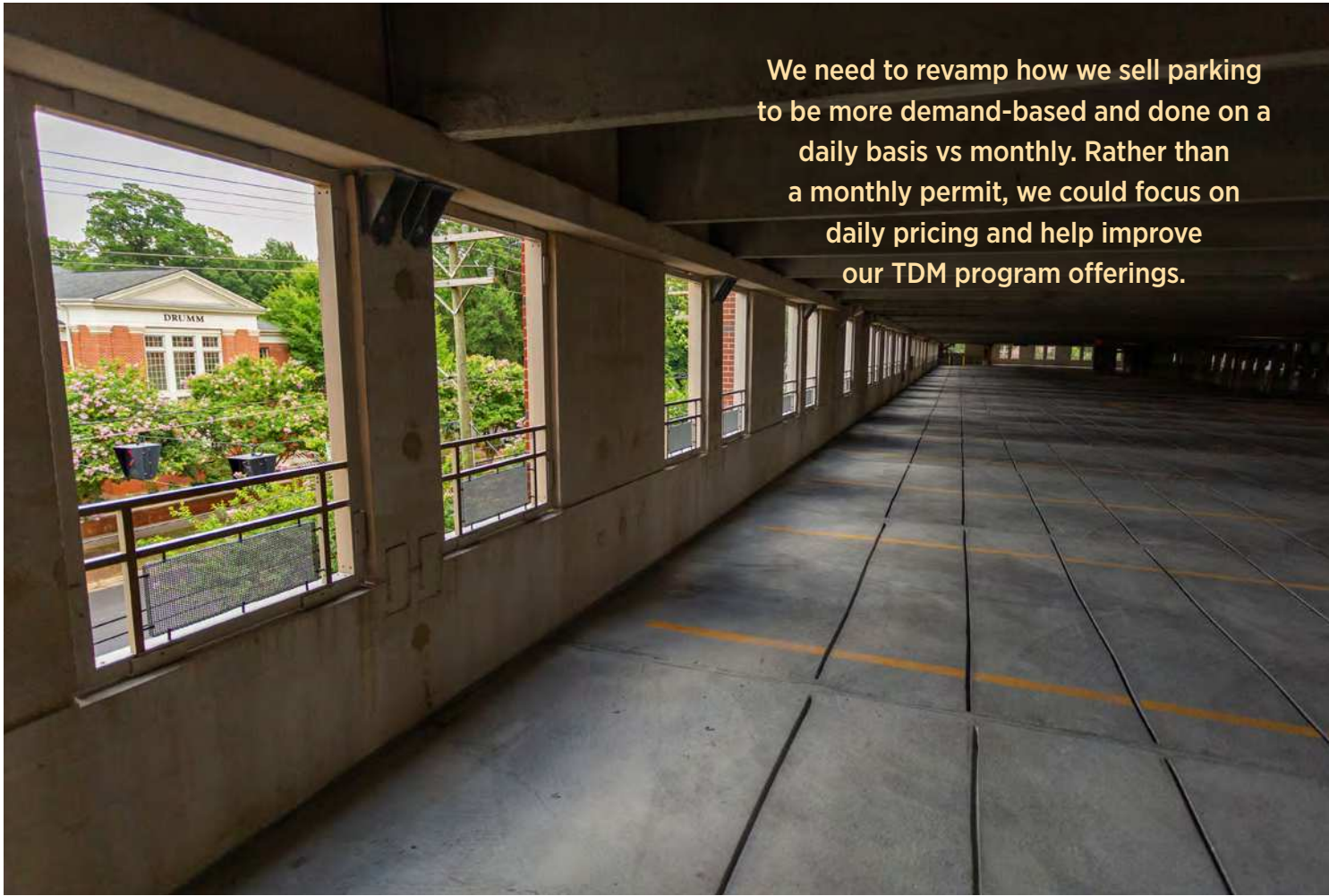
Do you have any advice for other academic institutions as they tackle similar challenges?

Tougas: If you have questions, reach out to your colleagues. This industry is great at helping each other and sharing strategies and information. Take advantage of that.

Jackson: Remain flexible, follow all safety protocols, and work within the guidelines of your institution.

Shaw: Don't stop charging for parking and if you have, get it back up and running as soon as possible. Don't consider any of your policies or programs sacrosanct. There may be a different set of conditions today that you need to consider, like letting freshmen buy parking.

Lange: Try your best to be consistent, think about policy changes thoroughly, it is never good to have to make an immediate about-face. Make sure your administration is synchronized with your decisions. Have plans for multiple scenarios on the shelf ready to go.



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Anything else would you like to share?

Tougas: Based on experience of past global pandemics, this will have impacts that are far reaching and lingering that will take us years to understand. Stay vigilant to protect the health of your staff and customers.

Cantor: Stay positive and make sure not only you are addressing the needs of your customers, but you are making sure that your staff is taken care of and that everyone's health is more important than any amount of lost revenue.

Singh: Auxiliaries will feel the brunt of the pandemic as they are self-supported and not supported by the state. Transportation fees, citation revenues, permit fees—major reductions due to COVID-19. Over summer, no fees were charged.

Conclusions

As you can see by the responses from our panelists, there are a number of similarities. However, there are also a number of unique differences created by campus

location, institutional policies, and decisions for the fall semester.

In each case, decisions about how to address changes to the parking and transportation system require a combination of best management practices from peers and context-sensitive solutions for your unique campus.

IPMI plans to continue to help facilitate the collection of those best management practices with resources like our online community, [Forum](#), the ever-expanding [COVID-19 Information Clearinghouse](#), as well as our ongoing series of shoptalks. As we continue to document the roadmap for our industry's recovery, we intend to revisit these academic issues and decisions to determine opportunities for our members. ♦

This feature was compiled and contributed by **BRETT WOOD**, CAPP, PE, president, Wood Solutions Group and co-chair of IPMI's Research & Innovation Task Force. He can be reached at brett@woodsolutionsgroup.com.