

Volume 14, Number 11-November 2009

PARKING TODAY

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The
Consultant's
Issue
Page 28

NPA Opens New Parking Exhibition in Washington, D.C.





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PARKING TODAY

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Los Angeles, CA 90066

DELIVERIES

12228 Venice Boulevard, #541
Los Angeles, CA 90066

PHONE

310.390.5277

FAX

310.390.4777

EDITOR & PUBLISHER

JOHN VAN HORN
extension 2
jvh@parkingtoday.com

SALES MANAGER

MARCY SPARROW
extension 3
marcy@parkingtoday.com

ART DIRECTOR

SHELLY BROWN
extension 5
artdept@bricepac.com

GRAPHIC DESIGN

RADUNTY HERMIDA
rad@bricepac.com

CIRCULATION

PAT RESTIVO
extension 0
pat@parkingtoday.com

CLASSIFIEDS / MARKETPLACE

SANDRA WATSON
extension 4
sandra@parkingtoday.com

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

JOYCE NEWMAN
extension 7
joyce@bricepac.com

ACCOUNTING

SUE RESTIVO
extension 6
sue@parkingtoday.com

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, BRICEPAC

ANDY VAN HORN
extension 1
andy@bricepac.com

www.parkingtoday.com

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Cover: The NPA held an opening reception at the National Building Museum for the House of Cars Exhibit. Members were there in conjunction with the NPA’s national conference held in Washington DC last month.

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\$3 Billion From the Feds, Tales from Vienna, Going 'Green'

BY JOHN VAN HORN

PARKING IS SUBSIDIZED \$3 BILLION by the Feds, according to DC.Streets-Blog.org. Did you get your check? I sure didn't. The online article doesn't mean the government actually sends out money – like they do for farmers or education – but the subsidy comes as a tax break for parking expenses (i.e., when you drive to work and pay, say, \$200 a month for parking, that can be written off your taxes).

It's like your mortgage interest. The fact that you can write it off means that the government is subsidizing the purchase of your house.

Think of it this way: If you pay 25% of your income in federal taxes, and you can write off \$200 a month in parking fees, it means the government is actually paying you \$50 a month to help cover your parking costs – that's a subsidy.

What is interesting is that the IRS allows you to write off only \$100 in transportation costs (fares for buses or trains). And I thought that the Feds wanted to urge people out of cars and onto rapid transit. These tax laws don't seem to do that.

However, the wizards in Congress are attempting to fix that. They are going to set a "maximum" you can write off of \$230 a month total for both. Previously, it was \$100 for transportation and \$200 for parking. Of course, they want to reduce the "subsidy," not increase it.

This seems a tad unfair to me. If I live in New York City, \$200 doesn't cover my parking costs. However, in Des Moines, much of the subsidy goes to waste. So by the fact of my geographic location, the government subsidizes my parking and transportation more or less.

All of this doesn't make a lot of sense.

If I live in Des Moines and make \$90,000 a year, I pay the same amount of federal taxes as the poor soul who makes the same in New York. However, they get more of a subsidy in parking and transportation than I do.

And, of course, this works for only those who actually pay taxes. If I make less than, what, \$40K and have a bunch of kids, I don't even pay taxes. So the subsidy works only for those who really don't need it.

Confused? I know I am. As usual, the law of unintended consequences kicks in, and the folks with the bucks get the breaks and those without get it in the neck.

Fair? I don't think so.

I spent some time in Vienna at the European Parking Association's biennial conference in late September. Two conversations stood out.

I spoke with an international consultant. He told me that last

year about this time his business just dried up. Projects were put on hold: "There is no money." Two weeks before the conference, his phone began ringing off the hook. He now has more business than he can handle. "They are calling from everywhere, from Jamaica, from Lebanon, and from the UK. There is a lot of work to be done in parking."

The second conversation was with members of a group from one of the largest manufacturers of parking equipment in Europe. They said that for them, too, the market has rebounded strong. "Deals that were put on hold are active again. With the exception of Spain, and Italy, Europe is booming, as is the Middle East, Australia and East Asia."

Wow – that's terrific news.

The EPA was extremely happy with its show this year. Comments from the vendors were that the IPI was slow, but the EPA was rocking. Good traffic, and high-quality attendees. I looked at the content of the EPA presentations. They were top of the line. That brings good people. Parking is coming back.

Things seem to sell better today if they are "green." Not like Kermit, but environmentally sound. Cars, houses, toilet paper. We buy it because it's "green" and therefore we are doing something for the environment.

Parking is moving that way, too. How many systems in your garage can be justified, wholly or partly, because they are green? Changing light bulbs to fluorescent? Using AVI at the entrance and exit so cars spend less time waiting and lowering the CO levels, thus also lowering the electricity costs for running fans? How 'bout wiring the place so electrical vehicles can be charged?

Does the garage have photoelectric cells on the roof to generate power? How about a design so it's cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter? Where was the steel bought – is it recycled? What about the concrete? Are there vines on the outside, trees surrounding, grass on the roof where the football team practices? Do you recycle the rain runoff?

Of course, all these things are great – and maybe they even help a bit. However, we are very conditioned to them, so we accept them on face value. Now we find out that cities and universities in particular are looking for green justification so the Feds will supply more money.

The thing to remember is that these are like those balloon toys: If you squeeze here, something pops out over there.

Electric cars are super, but you have to generate the electricity somewhere. Think of all the power plants we would need if 100 million cars had to be charged every night. Of course, the batteries that run them cause death and destruction in entire regions in China, but that's OK since it's over there and not here.

We replace incandescent bulbs with fluorescent, and then we have a disposal problem and need a hazmat suit if we break one of

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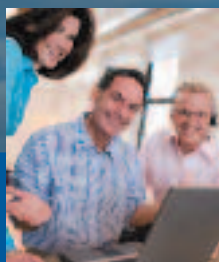
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POINT OF VIEW

from Page 6

the cute little curly things. Of course, don't even talk about the way your face looks in the mirror if you use those bulbs in your bathroom.

Ethanol has been an example of the push-pull balloon effect. We use corn to make it, and then poorer countries that eat corn starve because we take it off the market and the price goes sky high. Of course, we then find it takes more energy and creates more pollution to make a gallon of the stuff than we save when we burn it.

My problem is that "green" has become so political that we can't make reasonable decisions about it. It is important, therefore we jump through hoops.

By the way, **Parking Today** is printed on recycled paper with vegetable inks, on recycled presses that are run by piezo-electric generators and delivered in pollution-free electric vehicles.

You wish ...



PT

The **Reading (PA) Parking Authority (RPA)** broke ground Sept. 4 on a new 930-space parking structure in downtown Reading. Located across from the **Sovereign Bank Arena**, the new precast structure, designed by **Tim Haahs**, will alleviate parking demand resulting from current and future development in the area. The garage will serve patrons of the planned adjacent **Doubletree Hotel and Convention Center**. The groundbreaking ceremony marked the beginning of construction by **Whiting-Turner Construction Co.** Attendees included **Larry Lee**, the RPA's Executive Director, as well as representatives of the **Reading Redevelopment Authority**.

Rich and Associates has completed a Central Business District Parking Plan for the **City of Flagstaff, AZ**. As part of the planning process, the firm conducted a comprehensive assessment of existing parking resources, and examined whether additional parking should be provided throughout the downtown area.

Raymond F. Messer, P.E., Presi-

dent and Chairman of the Board of **Walter P Moore**, has been presented with the **Carroll College Alumni Hall of Fame Award**, which honors alumni who have given outstanding contributions of stewardship – sharing of time, talent and treasure – in distinguished service to their community and/or to the Helena, MT, college. The company also announced that **Bartley J. Miller, P.E.**, has been chosen as the 2009 recipient of its **Javier F. Horvillour Outstanding Young Engineer Award**. Also, the firm won the Gold Medal in the Structural Systems Category of the 2009 Engineering Excellence Awards competition, sponsored by the **Texas Council of Engineering Companies**, for its role in the design of **Lucas Oil Stadium** in Indianapolis.

Douglas L. Travis, P.E., a Senior Associate of **Walter P Moore**, will help clients find solutions for restoration, rehabilitation and forensic engineering challenges. He has more than 12 years of progressive experience in structural engineering design, including lead roles

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PEOPLE IN PARKING

from Page 8

in the management and execution of major projects such as the new rental car center at **Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport**.

Central Parking System has renewed its contract with **Transportation Corridor Agencies (TCA)**, which manages the toll roads of Orange County, CA. Central Parking will operate the toll plazas at three toll road corridors:

the San Joaquin Hills, Foothill and Eastern. There are 10 toll plazas and 46 manual toll lanes across 51 miles of four state highways. The multi-year agreement also opens the door to possibly interfacing with the agency on future technology.

Matthew Inman has been promoted to Vice President of Studies and Operations Consulting at **Carl Walker Inc.** In this new role, he will be respon-

sible for managing the firm's team of studies, operations and management experts; for developing expanded client-focused consulting services; and for ensuring quality customer service.

The Lancaster County (PA) **Red Rose Transit Authority (RRTA)** broke ground Sept. 3 on a new mixed-use parking structure in Lancaster, featuring transit linkages and the new location for the **Lancaster Museum of Art (LMA)**. The 450-space Queen Street parking structure will complement the existing museum and neighborhood aesthetics. The RRTA worked with **Tim Haahs**, the prime design firm, to incorporate the parking structure into the historic atmosphere of the downtown area. Attendees at the groundbreaking ceremony included **David Kilmer**, head of the RRTA; Lancaster Mayor **J. Richard Gray**; and **Stanley Grand**, LMA's Executive Director.

The Subcommittee on Bridges and Structures of the **American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)**, at its recent 2009 annual meeting, passed a resolution endorsing national technical institute certification programs as meeting the essential requirements for certification of personnel, production and other quality processes related to fabricated structural bridge components.

Genetec has launched its new Technical Assistance Portal (GTAP). The portal has been enhanced with valuable information and tools so that customers can become more autonomous in accessing the information they need, when they need it. Additions include a case management system, a self-serve system management tool, an open-discussion forum and a list of available hot fixes. Also, for the fourth consecutive year, Genetec has been ranked among the **Deloitte Technology Fast 50**, a list of the 50 fastest-growing technology companies in Canada, based on percentage of revenue growth over five years. Its 423% increase in revenues from 2004 to 2008 resulted in a 37th place ranking.

Desman Associates recently announced that the **University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV)** had opened its new Tropicana Garage, a four-level, 1,000-space, cast-in-place parking structure with a waiting area for the UNLV shuttle bus. The second of two parking structures on campus, it is

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expandable to 2,000 spaces horizontally, with additional provisions made to allow the inclusion of a future transit center to the north. **Tad McDowell**, UNLV's Director of Parking and Transportation, said the new parking structure has been well-received by faculty and students, who are delighted with the added parking inventory.

Maria Berglund-Taylor of Desman Associates has earned LEED Accredited Professional status from the **U.S. Green Building Council**. A Project Architect in the firm's Chicago office, she has 14 years of experience. She joins several other on-staff LEED AP's, who are proactive in providing parking solutions that embrace environmental and energy-efficient design.

Louis Bowman, P.E., PLS, Chairman of the Chicago engineering consulting firm **Bowman, Barrett & Associates**, was recently honored with the Guy Kelcey Award from the **American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA)**. The award was announced Oct. 7 during ARTBA's National Convention in Charleston, SC.

The **University of Baltimore** has contracted with **Next Parking** to perform a financial review of its parking operation. The analysis will evaluate the past year's financial records and supporting documents for the university's entire parking and shuttle transportation program. The purpose of the review is to ensure the accuracy of financial reporting, highlight any discrepancies, evaluate the prudence of expenditures made during this time period, and identify process changes that need to be made.

The **Spancrete Group** has named **Jeron Quincy** as General Manager of **SmartCast by Spancrete**, the first mobile precast production operation in the nation. He is based out of Spancrete headquarters in Waukesha, WI. The Spancrete Group also announced the addition of **Alan Antoniewicz** as Vice President / Chief Operating Officer. As COO, he oversees all of the company's operational aspects, including the continued pursuit of improved manufacturing and administration policies.

Standard Parking has announced that **Robert S. Roath** has been elected to serve as non-executive chairman of its Board of Directors. In that capacity, he replaces **John V. Holten**, who remains a board member. A former chief financial officer of RJR Nabisco,

Roath has been a board member since May 2004, during which time he also has served as Chairman of the company's Audit Committee.

In spite of the economic crises, **Walker Parking Consultants** has been awarded numerous major projects in the U.S. and abroad. Its Minneapolis office will provide preliminary engineering and parking consulting services for the proposed 400 to 500 space facility in

Bismarck, ND. The New York City office is providing parking consulting and design services to **Kohn Pederson & Fox Architects** for two major mixed-use projects in South Korea: the Haeundae Resort development outside Busan, with parking for more than 7,800 vehicles; and the Jamsil Lotte Tower project in Seoul, with more than 3,000 spaces. Walker's Philadelphia office is working

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PEOPLE IN PARKING

from Page 11

on its 13th station parking project for the **Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority** (WMATA). The Fairfax County, VA, project will have 2,300 spaces. Walker Boston was recently awarded the engineering and parking consulting as part of the **Freeman-White Architects** team for two garages at **Norwalk (CT) Hospital**. The Denver office continues the administration of construction at the Terminal 3 Parking Structure (with 5,954 space) of **McCarren International Airport** in Las Vegas. In Walker's Indianapolis office, design is underway for a new 1,000-space parking garage on the Indiana **University-Purdue University** Fort Wayne campus. The Houston office was recently awarded the commission to design the new Honors College Garage and Intermodal Facility at **Texas Tech University** in Lubbock. Walker Atlanta has designed the functional operation, wayfinding and signage for this 450-space parking structure, which was planned to accommodate increased traffic in the downtown. Walker Michigan is evaluating the condition of four park-

ing structures for **Wayne State University** in order to develop comprehensive energy audits and repair programs for each. **Walker Restoration** in Chicago has been awarded a major project for renovation of the regional mail-handling facility in Milwaukee for the **U.S. Postal Service**. Walker Los Angeles is continuing to monitor construction for the 2,240-space garage at **John Wayne Airport** in Santa Ana, CA, to be completed by 2010. Walker San Francisco is in the permitting stage of the 1,216-space design-build parking structure for **Kaiser Permanente** in Oakland, CA. Walker's Tampa office is wrapping up design of a 6,000-space parking garage at **Memphis International Airport** and is beginning design of a 950-space expansion to the long-term parking structure at **Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport**.

TagMaster, the leading producer of advanced RFID solutions for rail applications, has supplied RFID equipment for the Delhi Metro Airport Express line in India. **Simec**, TagMaster's distributor in Spain and Portugal, has supplied the RFID system to a

Spanish train manufacturer, which is delivering the trains to India.

The new \$20 million Southwest Parking Garage Complex at the **University of Florida** in Gainesville is the only parking facility in the Southeastern U.S. to be selected by the **National Building Museum** in Washington, DC, for its international "House of Cars" exhibition. The nine-month exhibition will feature unique or trend-setting parking facilities from around the world. Completed this summer, the complex was designed by the Boca Raton, FL, office of **Pierce Goodwin Alexander & Linville** (PGAL), a national architectural/engineering firm, to meet criteria for the highest LEED certification category, LEED Platinum.

Rick S. Scheetz has been appointed president of **High Concrete Group LLC**. Mr. Scheetz will be responsible for the overall operating effectiveness, strategy, and leadership of High Concrete Group LLC. A resident of Phoenix, Maryland, Mr. Scheetz was previously employed with Carmeuse North America in charge of the Industrial Sands busi-

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LETTERS

LA Parking Association Urged Aggressive Enforcement

Re: Parking Today, September 2009 Issue

"Point of View" and "Parking Operator Goes Down ..."

Editor, Parking Today:

Your September 2009 issue was both interesting and informative (as usual). Being of particular interest to me was your "Point of View" commentary and your opinion piece titled, "Parking Operator Goes Down – May Do Hard Time."

In my role as Chairman of the Los Angeles Parking Association (LAPA) and Vice President of Parking Concepts Inc. (PCI), our association has been diligent and assertive in trying to get the city of Los Angeles to enforce the various tax and licensing requirements associated with the lawful operation of the parking lots and garages throughout the city.

In fact, it was through our efforts and personal meetings about four years ago, with Laura Chick, Controller, City of Los Angeles, that ultimately led to the retention of the Parking Network to perform independent audits of various city parking lots and garages.

We recommended the Parking Network for contract consideration based on the reputation of the principals and, to the best of our knowledge, no conflicts of interest with the numerous city parking operators.

The LAPA did not issue a "press release," but we were collectively encouraged and hopeful that something was finally going to be done to rein in the scofflaw operators that are practically impossible to compete against due to under-reporting and non-reporting of gross receipts collected.

We (recently) met with the city's new Controller, Wendy Greuel, to convey the association's continued support for diligent oversight and aggressive enforcement of all tax and permitting requirements.

The vast majority of Southern California parking operators are professional firms that comply with the law, pay their taxes, and care about their customers and employees. They also provide a valuable and important service that is often misunderstood and under-appreciated.

Please keep up the good work. I look forward to your publication every month.

Sincerely,

Robert Hindle

Chairman, Los Angeles Parking Association
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Do You *Really* Ne

Using a Consultant to Maximize the Parking You Already Have

BY MATTHEW INMAN

PERHAPS YOU'VE JUST BEEN notified about a new downtown or campus development project that will eliminate a parking lot or increase parking demand. Or maybe you're hearing concerns from business owners about a lack of parking downtown and they're demanding a new parking facility.

Either way, you may be considering adding to the parking supply to meet current or future parking demands. This is an important decision with serious operational and financial ramifications, and therefore not one that should be entered into lightly.

Finding the resources to fund a parking structure construction project can be difficult in the best of times. Trying to balance ongoing operational and maintenance expenses for existing facilities with the costs of designing, constructing and operating a new parking structure can be challenging for even the most financially sound parking systems.

In today's difficult economic environment, funding new parking construction projects can be almost impossible. Therefore, it's crucial that every parking system explore all alternatives for addressing parking demands prior to constructing a new surface lot or structure.

Strategies for dealing with parking demands that mitigate the need to construct a new facility can help in a number of ways, including but not limited to:

- Reducing parking system expenses related to operations and debt service.
- Decreasing the need to raise parking rates to cover new construction and operations expenses.
- Improving the utilization of existing parking spaces in both public and private parking facilities.
- Increasing revenues in existing parking facilities, both public and private.
- Encouraging visitors and employees to utilize alternative forms of transportation, thereby reducing traffic, pollution, congestion and frustration.



ed That Garage?

- Helping make more land available for other development projects (e.g., commercial and residential developments).

Enlisting the assistance of a consultant specializing in parking planning and management assessments can help you determine if an investment in additional infrastructure is truly warranted or if other strategies could be employed to improve parking utilization and efficiency or reduce needs.

While there's not enough space in this article to discuss every alternative in detail, here are just a few ways a skilled parking consultant could help you decide if a new facility is right for your situation:

- **Conduct a Parking Supply/Demand Analysis** – This is usually the first step in deciding if more parking is needed. This could involve a comprehensive downtown or campus-wide analysis or a more targeted site-specific study. This analysis would

- Implementing a valet parking program to improve the utilization of available parking and to reduce visitor walking distances.

- Developing signage and wayfinding plans that help direct visitors to appropriate parking locations. Available parking spaces can't be used if drivers can't find them.

- Encouraging private parking facility owners to improve the utilization of their facilities by improving signage and operations or by allowing public parking in underutilized spaces. This would improve overall parking conditions and possibly help private facility owners generate more revenue.

- Creating a "parking cooperative" or a "parking collaborative" to foster the creation of uniform parking management strategies and to improve coordination and communication between public and private parking facility owners.

It's crucial that every parking system explore all alternatives for addressing parking demands prior to constructing a new surface lot or structure.

help you determine whether surplus parking is available to meet current or projected needs; where the available parking is located; what user group types could be supported by the surplus parking supply (e.g., daytime versus evening demands); and if the available parking is publicly or privately owned. If the results of the parking supply/demand analysis show the need for more parking, you will know how much is actually needed – possibly saving tens of thousands of dollars over constructing too much parking or not providing enough.

- **Ensure Parking Requirements Are Reasonable** – An experienced parking consultant can review your current zoning code(s) to ensure that parking requirements are reasonable and flexible. Such requirements should utilize realistic ratios, encourage shared parking, offer in-lieu fee options, and provide reasonable reductions for demand management strategies. The goal is to provide the "right" amount of parking!

- **Develop Strategies to Improve the Utilization of Available Parking Supplies** – If underutilized parking supplies are identified, strategies could be developed to improve the utilization of available parking spaces. This could include any of the following alternatives, but not limited to:

- Developing marketing and communication campaigns to help inform visitors and employees about parking issues and to direct them to locations with available parking spaces.

- Adjusting parking rates in public parking facilities to encourage appropriate parking behaviors (short-term versus long-term parkers) and to promote parking in underutilized facilities. For example, parking spaces in core areas or near primary demand generators would be more expensive than parking spaces in perimeter areas.

- **Improve the Efficiency of Existing Parking Lots and Structures** – An experienced parking consultant can review the functional design of your parking facilities and on-street parking spaces to help ensure that they are as space-efficient as possible.

- **Investigate Opportunities to Improve Parking-Related Technologies** – Conducting an unbiased parking technology assessment and integrating new technologies can help provide better control over facility access and user

allocations; accommodate more flexible parking rate structures; and provide more information for parkers (e.g., variable message directional and available spaces signs) and system managers.

- **Implement Appropriate Transportation Demand Management Strategies** – Encouraging the use of alternative modes of transportation could include a number of strategies such as providing adequate pedestrian and bicycle linkages/amenities; providing sufficient mass transit options/alternatives; subsidies for transit passes; encouraging the use of carpools and vanpools; instituting guaranteed ride home programs; encouraging telecommuting; setting up parking cash-out programs, etc.

In reality, the greatest benefit would likely be achieved by using a combination of strategies for dealing with parking demand. An experienced parking consultant can help you decide which alternatives are available and appropriate, as well as how to structure your response to growing parking demands.

Carefully considering each of the available strategies will allow a parking system to show that all applicable alternatives were investigated prior to constructing new facilities. This will enhance the system's credibility in the eyes of their customers (both internal and external) and help improve community support when a parking structure is truly needed.

Matthew Inman is Vice President of Studies and Operations Consulting at Carl Walker Inc. He can be reached at minman@carlwalker.com or at (480) 505-0088.





Sandra Smith, parking coordinator in Whistler, found herself in the middle of a major controversy.

Public Rallies Against Pay Parking in Canadian Town

BY PETE GOLDIN

THERE IS NO SUCH THING as free parking,” says Sandra Smith, Supervisor of Bylaw Services for the municipality of Whistler, Canada. This profound statement is the final word in a passionate public debate that encompassed the ski resort town in British Columbia, with the public demanding to keep free parking in a city garage that had never charged for parking before.

The commotion all started at a City Council meeting in May, when the council decided to raise street parking rates from \$1 to \$2 per hour, and to implement pay parking in a garage, adjacent to the town’s shopping area, that had always been free.

The council’s mistakes were many. First, they made it clear that the only reason for the change was to generate more revenue for the city.

“In these tough economic times, the council had their eye on the money,” says Smith, who is in charge of the city’s parking.

According to Smith, the council repeatedly made the point about revenue but did not reference other legitimate reasons to raise parking rates and implement pay parking, such as reducing overall vehicle use, single-occupancy-vehicle use, and greenhouse gas emissions – all of which may have been more acceptable to the public.

In addition, there was no consultation with Smith’s Bylaw Services department, no study of parking usage, and no communication to the public. The council simply made the decision one day and stuck to it.

Continued on Page 22

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Public Rallies Against Pay Parking in Canadian Town

from Page 20

Public Backlash

The public response was fast and furious. From the day the pay parking equipment was deployed in the garage, the discontented residents of Whistler gathered in car parks to sign petitions, sent more than 250 letters to the council, and even created a Facebook group and a website (www.freewhistlerparking.com) to voice their displeasure on the Internet.

The public's general position was that they expected the council to control their budget and reduce expenses, rather than make the residents pay for parking.

"We pushed them to it," Smith admits. "We told the public that we are not putting in any cost-saving measures. We said: 'We know times are tough, but we are going to make you pay.'"

In addition, the public stopped using the garage. Previously, it was typically filled to 95% capacity.

After pay parking was installed, usage dropped to 6%. "Pay parking went in and the garage became a barren wasteland," Smith notes.

The public outcry went on for six weeks, culminating in a shouting match at a City Council meeting. Finally, the council agreed to stop charging for parking in the garage, with plans to strictly enforce the three-hour time limit. The new \$2 on-street parking rates stayed in place, however.

"We would have engaged the business owners and the public," says Smith, when asked what she would have done differently if the council had come to her first. "We would have done some utilization studies in advance, to find out who was parking where. And we would have offered a suite of products with different rates."

In fact, Smith presented that exact parking strategy to the City Council in September, and was granted permission to move forward with the plan.

The first step is to engage the public. Smith's team will communicate the new parking plan via advertising in the local paper,

speaking with actual users in the parking lots to gain pavement-level feedback. And in a unique twist, Smith plans to use Facebook as well.

One additional important move for the future, the council is investigating the possibility of setting up a parking authority for the city.

Lessons Learned

Everyone in Whistler learned a lesson in parking this year. The City Council learned that the public takes parking seriously. Many who utilized the garage were parking there every day. This

was a part of their life. Change is part of life, too, but the council had to come up with a plan and communicate it properly to the public.

The council also realized that they were responsible to make changes in parking rates for the right

reasons – not simply to treat parking as a "cash cow."

Meanwhile, the residents of Whistler learned there is no such thing as free parking. Even when the user is not paying for parking, someone still has to pay for it. Although the people of Whistler retained their free parking garage for the moment, a new plan with variable rates is being implemented.

What some members of the public may not fully understand is that even when parking provided by the city is free to users, city residents are still subsidizing the parking through property taxes. In the end, the money has to come from somewhere.

Interestingly, Smith says on-street parking is down about 20% since the rate increase, so the 50% increase in the parking rate is clearly bringing in more revenue. The City Council will have to decide if it was worth the political price.

Pete Goldin writes for *Parking Today* and *Parking World*. He can be reached at pete@parkingworld.com.

PT

City of Atlanta Introduces New Parking Management Agency

The City of Atlanta has executed a contract with Professional Account Management, a Duncan Solutions company, for parking management services, including the management and operation of the city's on-street parking program and enforcement of parking-related regulations on behalf of the city.

This new program is designed to improve traffic flow in Atlanta and maximize utilization of parking spaces for the public, residents, business owners, employees and tourists.

The contract was to commence in November and operate for a seven-year term. It includes provisions for maintenance of parking meters and regulatory signage; parking meter collections; on-street parking and right-of-way regulation enforce-

ment; parking citation processing and delinquent collection services; and vehicle booting and towing services.

"As we were exploring different alternatives to control costs and improve services to Atlanta's residents and visitors, we quickly identified on-street parking as an area where outside investment and industry expertise could be extremely beneficial," said Atlanta Department of Public Works Commissioner Joseph Basista. Through extensive analysis and planning, we believe we have identified a partner and a contracting model that will greatly enhance Atlanta's ability to provide quality, cost-effective parking services, and enhanced technology for motorists and taxpayers."

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Traffic Congestion – Syd

BY CRISTINA LYNN

ON RETURNING FROM A RECENT overseas trip, I came across an article in the (*Sydney*) magazine titled “I have a dream,” which explored four experts’ points of view regarding the state of our city: where did we go wrong and where do we go from here?

This was quite timely as I was in the process of writing up notes and observations collected during a visit to Milan.

If you haven’t heard or read about the recent increases to the NSW parking levy, you either must live on some other planet or don’t own a car (in either case, you can stop reading now). So far, all we have been able to determine is that the levy is merely a tax grab on the part of a state government that is on the brink of disaster – a relatively easy way to collect a few more million, the destination of which nobody can tell.

Several articles appeared Aug. 24 in the *Sydney Morning Herald* heralding such headlines as “Access for all to public transport” and “Transport plan to put metropolis back on the rails.” Even more relevant was the article “Schemes to raise the \$40b needed for improvements.” In this latter article, two points are raised relating to the plan put forward by Garry Glazebrook of the University of Technology in Sydney, which includes an extensive system of new, mostly underground, Metro trains:

1. Congestion pricing in Singapore, London, Stockholm and Milan discourages residents from bringing cars into the city centres, and the money raised helps fund public transport.

2. Parking levies, such as the \$44 million the NSW Government collected in 2002 from parking in the CBD, Parramatta, Chatswood, Bondi Junction and St Leonards. That levy was raised in the mini-budget and could be further enhanced by extending it to other suburban centres as public transport in those areas improves.

I therefore thought it timely to review the systems adopted in two European cities and the benefits that have resulted from their introduction.

The London Experience

London’s responses to traffic congestion have been many and varied, including electronic parking fees, encouraging cyclists and special mini-buses. But the most innovative and important was the congestion charge, introduced in 2003, which operates as follows:

The charge applies to certain vehicles entering the Central London Congestion Charge Zone within the hours of 07:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday. The charge does not apply in the evenings, on weekends, public holidays and designated non-charging days. Signs placed at or near all zone entry points indicate the hours of operation and when the actual zone is being entered/exited. There are a couple of free through-routes to allow vehicles to cross the city without incurring the charge.

Every charge zone entrance and exit along the boundary road is monitored by a network of camera sites (which also monitors journeys made within the charge zone). The cameras



provide high-quality digital images of the vehicle to automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) software.

When the cameras read a vehicle registration, it is checked against the payment database. If this shows that the vehicle has either paid or is not liable to pay the charge, the image is deleted from the database. A further check is made at midnight on the following charging day to highlight any vehicle registrations that should have been paid for but have not been paid. The registered owners of these vehicles are issued with a Penalty Charge Notice.

How much is the charge?

If paid on the day of travel, the charge is £8 (approx. \$12); whereas if paid on the first charging day after travel, it increases to £10 (approx. \$15). The penalty charge if payment does not take place within this two-day period is £120 (approx. \$180)!

ney's Paradigm Paralysis

What are the benefits?

According to the system's official website (www.cclondon.com), more than five years after the congestion charge was launched, traffic levels are still down, but congestion has risen back to pre-charging levels. This is caused by decreasing levels of road space due to a widespread program of water and gas main replacement works and traffic management measures to assist pedestrians and other road users.

The authorities believe that congestion would be significantly worse without the sustained traffic reductions brought about by the charge. By law, all net revenue raised by the charge has to be invested in improving transport in London. Since the congestion charge scheme started:

Traffic entering the original charging zone remains 21% lower than pre-charge levels (70,000 fewer cars a day).

Traffic entering the Western Extension has fallen by 14% (30,000 fewer cars a day).

There has been a 6% increase in bus passengers during charging hours.

There has been a 12% increase in cycle journeys into the Western Extension.

£137 million (\$200) was raised in fiscal 2007/08 to invest back into improving transport in London.

Congestion Charging - Italian Style

The metropolitan area of Milan, Italy's second-largest city, is estimated by the OECD to have a population of 7.4 million. This makes it reasonably comparable to Sydney, which has a metropolitan area population of approximately 4.34 million (2008 estimate).

Milan's Ecopass congestion charge system was introduced in January 2007 as an experimental project, with the objectives of improving sustainable mobility and improving the environment and the health of the city's residents.

As part of the plan, some infrastructure projects are in implementation phase, including improvements to public transport; extension of controlled on-street parking rules; extension of priority lanes for public transport and construction of new cycle lanes.

The Ecopass Area

The Ecopass charging area is delimited by 43 electronic access locations where cameras have been installed to identify the passage of vehicles into the area. The vehicle details are transmitted to a computer that is able to recognise the car's pollution level, the applicable tariff, and the availability of credit in the customer's account.

Vehicles must have a valid Ecopass if they intend to travel within the area on weekdays between 07:30 and 19:30. No charges apply on weekends and public holidays.

How Ecopass charges are calculated

Different from the London tariffs, in Milan the congestion charge increases as the pollution class of vehicles increases. The current tariffs, which are charged per day (with no limit of entries) are as follows: Euro Class 3: €2 (approx. \$3 Euro Class

4: €5 (approx. \$7); and Euro Class 5: €10 (approx. \$13).

The account has to be validated on the day of entry or the following day, and this can be done via the purchase of a prepaid card, the Internet, a toll-free number or at certain banks and via direct debit.

The penalties

If a vehicle is identified by the cameras situated at the entry points as not having a valid activated account (within the 24 hours after the date of entry) or has registered with a lower class than the actual pollution class attributed to the vehicle or exceeds 7 metres in length, there will be a fine issued that varies between €70 and €285 (approx. \$100 and \$350).

The benefits

According to the Milan Council's website (www.comune.milano.it), these are the recorded benefits after the first 12 months of the Ecopass system:

Reductions in traffic – 5 million fewer polluting vehicles recorded in the centre of Milan in 2008.

Increases in supply of public transport – additional 10,000 public transport places in peak hour and additional 1,300 bus and tram routes.

Increase in use of public transport – additional 35 million public transport trips in 2008.

Reduction in accidents – 14.4% less accidents in the centre of Milan.

Reduction in pollution – equivalent to reduction by 62 days in which the minimum levels were exceeded.

Revenues raised by the introduction of the Ecopass in the first six months of 2009 amounted to €5.9 million (approx. \$7). The full amount was reinvested in the sustainable transport initiatives, particularly improvements to public transport.

Conclusion

Whilst Glazebrook's idea of a new rail system is undoubtedly a must for any major city, it is an expensive and long-term solution. A congestion charge system based on the London and Milan experiences would be relatively cheap and simple to introduce, and the revenues generated would help fund the rail solution.

Cristina Lynn is Managing Partner of Parking Consultants International.

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PEOPLE IN PARKING

from Page 12

ness unit, and he also served as Vice President with Lafarge North America, the largest diversified supplier of construction materials in the United States and Canada.

Next Property Management, Inc., announced that **Jeff Leicht** has joined the company as Director of Property Management. Leicht will intensify Next Realty's property management operations in both retail and parking portfolios. Leicht brings diverse real estate experience to his role, having significant experience in both the retail and residential real estate markets across metropolitan Chicago and the Midwest region.

McCarthy Building Companies Inc., one of Southern California's preeminent builders of parking structures, has been awarded the design-build contract for a \$19.9 million parking facility to be located on the Los Angeles Harbor College campus in Wilmington. The structure will bring 1,000 new parking spaces to the growing school when complete in spring 2011. "Community colleges are seeing their commuter-based student populations grow, and with that growth, sufficient parking is becoming more critical," said **Al Carroll**, McCarthy's executive vice president-parking services. "In planning the structure at Los Angeles Harbor College, there were a number of site challenges that we were able to solve through the design-build process. Now, we will be able to complete the project while minimizing the interference and disruption to the campus."

After an 18 month search and competitive bid process, the thriving suburb of Downers Grove, Illinois, has chosen **Bright Green Matrix** to retrofit its parking garage signage. The town

local government was looking for a low maintenance, environmentally friendly alternative to the traditional fluorescent tubes that were originally installed. The signage within the parking garage is illuminated 24 hours a day and provides a safe way finding route – failed tubes needed to be replaced immediately – a costly and labour intensive process.

TimHaahs is pleased to announce **Mark Santos'** promotion to Vice President. Mark began his career with TimHaahs ten years ago after completing his degree at the Pennsylvania State University. Mark quickly excelled as a project engineer and was promoted to Project Manager in 2005. Mark was promoted to Philadelphia and Corporate Director of Operations in 2007. Mark's experience with TimHaahs includes complex parking and mixed-use projects, from studies and planning through design and restoration. He has also served the Pennsylvania Parking Association on the Executive Board for three years. Mark's transition to Miami will extend the TimHaahs network of clients throughout the southern region, positioning our firm to grow throughout Florida. "Mark's move to our Miami office will benefit not only our Florida clients and friends, but the entire firm," stated CEO Tim Haahs.

ZipPark Inc. went live with its zControl Event and Valet solution at Yankee Stadium in May of this year. The parking management team at Standard Parking oversaw the successful launch and was pleased to provide its event patrons at the new stadium with the conveniences and fast processing time offered by the ZipPark system, Motorola's MC70 Enterprise Digital Assistants (EDAs), and Click and Park's online parking and routing software.

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We Have Your Back!

BY GREG LEEAN

FOR SOME IN THIS INDUSTRY, the term “consultant” can have some negative connotations. That doesn’t have to be the case!

During my career with the Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport (MSP), I used consultants many times. You can’t be involved with design and construction of more than 17,000 parking spaces and multiple transit, parking and building-related projects without using the expertise of consultants.

The specialized nature of the various disciplines that consultants can bring to the table makes them an enormous asset to building projects.

From the beginning

Like many of you, I started at the bottom and learned as I worked my way up the ladder. Starting as a vending clerk collecting money from parking meters and pay toilets, I eventually became the Assistant Airport Director/ Landside Operations. There were many stops along the way and various areas of increasing responsibility as time passed.

Having a good mentor for the first few years was a big start, but also the ability to work with skilled experts in areas such as engineering and architecture helped to build knowledge and allowed the growth for a great career path.

When we started out in parking, most of us were pretty green, and I don’t mean that in the currently popular vernacular! We all needed to “cut our teeth” in the operation as we developed skills sets and just plain experience the operation. As business grows, new challenges present themselves, such as the need for expansion, rate changes, operational changes, advertising and public relations.

We aren’t all blessed with the inherent knowledge to know enough about every subject in order to plan each expansion and to write each press release or to make each public presentation. We need the assistance of those who have lived these events before. That is where consultants are advantageous.

Areas of commonality

Running a parking operation, whether it is in a hospital, university or municipal setting or at an airport means making day-to-day decisions. It also means being responsible for tremendous amounts of revenue.

There are people to manage, facilities to clean, signs to be placed, money to be collected, reports to be completed, employees to be hired and fired, and most important of all, customers to be served.

There are revenue control systems to be operated and maintained, and massive capital spending efforts to be planned. And there are headaches, lots of headaches!

Although each type of operation is different, there are also certain similarities. The similarities lead us to specialized experts that can help us decide when it is time to expand, how to expand, how to maintain the integrity of what we have, how to upgrade the revenue control system, and how to advertise the service that we offer, among many other things.

The ability to find specialized expert assistance is paramount to success. These areas of specialty are many.

Specialty expertise

A large part of the overall responsibility of engineers and architects involves the design of sustainable structures. This effort is undertaken through various specialty areas within engineering and architectural services.

1. Engineering services

This area takes a number of forms such as:

Structural engineers design the supporting structure and foundations of the multi-level parking structures of today. They ensure the parking structure will stand up to all of the loads from people, vehicles, snow, wind and seismic forces, and other building code requirements.

Mechanical engineers design plumbing and air-handling requirements. Local and federal requirements need to be adhered to during design, as well as finding energy-efficient methods of operation.

Electrical engineers design electrical and communication routing through a project. Stable power sources and stable communication are absolutely necessary in operating the facility. The electrical engineer also likely provides design criteria for proper lighting of the facility for patron safety and operation. Back-up power is often needed for not just life-safety items, but now also for crucial revenue and access control systems to ensure smooth operation.

Traffic engineers usually get involved with egress and access design to a parking facility. Surrounding roadways have a huge impact on the design of parking operations. You can’t design more parking than the surrounding road system can adequately handle, and these engineers can provide roadway capacity studies to help determine how big your facility can be and how many access and egress points you need, and how many the street system can handle.

Civil engineers typically work on design of surface level roadways and curb and gutter, sidewalk details, and drainage of



the facility. This is to ensure that there is no standing water following rain storms or even to control rain that drips off cars traveling within the structure.

2. Architecture

Again, there are several areas of expertise in this professional category, such as:

Building architects design the aesthetically pleasing façade of the structure to be sure that it fits in with surrounding buildings. These architects typically also work with the owner to design vertical circulation and parking support buildings that are necessary components of a parking facility. These also work with existing federal and state regulations for ADA compliance.

Landscape architects develop specifications to beautify the area surrounding the parking facility once the major construction is done. Few if any structures built today don't have green space and some landscape treatment in and around the area to better "fit in" with the surrounding area.

3. Parking consultants

Here's where things can get somewhat interesting because of the cross-over of areas of knowledge.

The parking consultant can usually assist with developing an efficient traffic flow and efficient space layout within a parking structure. This requires coordination with the structural engineer as well as the project architect.

In addition, there are revenue and access control systems to specify, which will take close coordination with electrical engineers to ensure adequate conduit and electrical service for peripheral devices. The electrical engineer will need to become involved in order to specify the lane loop cutting and connections to the lane devices.

Once revenue and access control system requirements are identified, rate structures need to be evaluated in order to maximize revenue and utilization of the parking facility. Rates can be anything from hourly to weekly to monthly, depending on the type of use the facility is designed to meet.

The parking consultant will need to coordinate with the civil engineer in order to have level slabs poured for mounting of gate cabinets, lane devices and cashier booths.

To be successful on a job, the parking consultant must know the operation he or she is working on. To do that, site visits, interviews with owners as well as operators of the facility, and a complete understanding of the business rules are paramount. Since revenue and access control systems include reporting capability, the consultant also must know what the customer wants and needs in order to manage their facility.

These rather elementary descriptions are meant to just scratch the surface of what consultants can and should bring to a project. We all grow in our knowledge as we continue to manage or work in our facilities. But the specialized knowledge of the various consulting disciplines cannot be omitted from a project if you want it to be successful.

The best advice might be to recognize and honestly evaluate your own knowledge level, and to be sure to make use of the proper group of consultants to bring order and success to your project.

Greg Leean is director of Airport Transportation and Parking Consulting for the Consulting Engineers Group. He can be reached at gregleean@charter.net.

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Alan J. Cruickshank & Associates

Alan J. Cruickshank & Associates (AJC&A) has recently applied its proven approach for two diverse types of parking operations. Each operation was reviewed and included personal observation of traffic entry and exit with particular emphasis on the revenue and access control systems.



At Louisville's Kentucky Exposition Center's five entry gates, drivers either pay a flat rate with cash or use a permit or pre-paid ticket. With multiple concurrent events, lengthy queues can result. Studies of the vehicular arrival patterns, plus the cash payment and permit transactions, allowed us to develop solutions for improved revenue and access control while maintaining overall traffic flow. This included a decrease of cash accepted at the entry locations, an increase in the type and number of pre-paid permits and tickets, plus a plan to channel vehicles to lesser used entry locations, based on method of payment.



At Boston's Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) the preferred travel mode for many riders each work day is to drive to the rail station and park. The MBTA provides park-and-ride facilities that consist of 7 garages and 81 parking lots. AJC&A conducted a review of these parking facilities to identify the current revenue control operations and existing revenue control equipment to identify shortcomings. To facilitate a phased improvement program that will include use of the new MBTA transit smart card for payment of parking fees, technical, interface and operational ground rules were developed and a system design was drafted. In parallel, AJC&A developed groupings of facilities for operation by multiple commercial parking operators. RFP documentation was then developed and support provided through the selection of parking operators.



BA Group

Facilitating Urban Development with Effective Parking Strategy Implementation

BA Group passionately believes that effective parking planning, design and management is all about good urban design, economic development and the successful integration of transportation demand management considerations. In 2009, we are very pleased to be working on many projects that will successfully implement well thought out Parking Management Plans. Such projects include: the Mississauga City Centre Paid Parking Implementation Plan, the City of Ottawa Parking Management Strategy, Saint John Strategic Parking Plan, Downtown Brampton Parking Strategy, the Waterloo Regional Parking Strategy, and the York Region Park'n Ride Strategy. These studies provide detailed implementation plans to ensure that key goals and objectives are achieved in a timely manner.



Carl Walker, Inc.

Lake Street Parking Garage, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO

The Lake Street Parking Garage is the first multi-story parking garage on campus and will consist of four levels with a total of 850 parking spaces. There will also be approximately 24,000 sq. ft. of retail and office space on the ground level. The structure was designed to add parking capacity on the Main Campus, as existing parking lots are being replaced by buildings, and to increase campus retail space. As part of the University's green initiative, the roof of the garage will feature a 9,000 sq. ft. solar panel array, and the garage is being constructed on established land to help conserve existing campus green space. When completed, the project will seek LEED Gold Certification.

The project team includes **Carl Walker** (Structural/Functional Design); H+L Architects (Lead Designer); Tetratex (Civil); Shaffer Baucom (MEP); Shaw Construction (Contractor); and Long Energy (LEED). Expected completion date is fall of 2010.



Princeton University Tiger Transit System



University of Connecticut Access Management Plan

CHANCE Management Advisors, Inc.

Following approval of its new Master Plan, Princeton University retained **CMA** to develop a new campus transit system and to assist with implementation. CMA analyzed new routes and costs, developed the University's RFP, assisted with proposal evaluation and negotiations, and provided implementation support. The new TigerTransit System opened in January 2009 to much acclaim and success. It has improved service frequency and accessibility, provides real-time vehicle information over the internet, and has garnered positive reviews within university planning circles.

The University of Connecticut's Master Plan aimed to beautify and create a more pedestrian-friendly campus by closing certain roadways and altering building access points. As an unfortunate side effect, these actions contributed to unsafe driving and parking practices by service and delivery vehicles. CMA developed a campus Access Management Plan for these vehicles that would also respect the Master Plan's vision. Through new policies, procedures, and a web-based access information system, CMA is helping UConn enhance pedestrian safety and campus beauty through improved support vehicle routing.

ALAN J. CRUICKSHANK & ASSOCIATES

Alan J. Cruickshank & Associates is a transportation and parking consulting firm, that for three decades has specialized in applying a proven, structured system engineering approach to parking solutions. AJC&A's expertise includes every phase of parking system development and design: revenue control system reviews/evaluations, marketing/ business strategies, technical specifications, inspection, testing, system documentation, contract and operations management.

Alan J. Cruickshank & Associates
2986 Fuentes Lane Unit C, Simi Valley, CA 93063
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Carl Walker

At **Carl Walker, Inc.**, our goals are to create parking and engineering solutions of lasting value and provide innovative ideas that streamline and simplify the lives of the people who utilize parking. Since 1983, our parking professionals have been responsible for over 5,500 successful parking projects all over the country for hospitals and medical centers, universities, corporations, developers, airports, downtown associations, building owners, municipalities, and entertainment facilities.

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CHANCE MANAGEMENT ADVISORS, INC.

CHANCE Management Advisors, Inc. (CMA) provides customized management and operations consulting to universities, hospitals, government, the private sector, and special event centers in the areas of automated and traditional parking, transportation, access management and sustainable solutions. Founded in 1984, CMA has helped clients around the country and internationally to improve operations through a comprehensive approach to planning, management, operations and financial consulting services.

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DESMAN Associates

Bergen Town Center Parking Facility Paramus, NJ

Bergen Town Center is undergoing a dramatic upgrade and re-themeing of the original mall program. As part of the change, a new facility was designed to provide parking in the middle of the mall, with the retail flanking three sides. The grade level of the parking facility also included 95,000 square feet of retail and mall space. The architectural exterior was designed to replicate the flanking mall facades allowing the 675 linear feet of garage facade to read like the balance of the Town Center. This 5-level, 1,500 space parking facility was also designed to function as a valet-park operation during the peak Holiday season. **DESMAN** Associates is at the forefront of parking retail centers and mixed-use developments and such provided functional design, architectural production and structural engineering for this assignment.



International Parking Design: Architectural Engineering Consulting

IPD has 40 years of dedicated parking experience, and has provided design and consulting services to over 4,500 projects. We understand the unique needs of different users and tailor projects to the type of experience desired, such as shopping, entertainment, travel or work. As a result, we have deep domain expertise across diverse market segments including aviation, casinos, cities, healthcare and education.

We look to create synergy between parking structures and the buildings they support, resulting in innovative projects and strengthened communities. The parking structure offers many opportunities to efficiently integrate functions and services that can enhance everyday life.

IPD's extensive suite of consulting services assists owners analyze, assess, plan and implement effective operational solutions. We conduct feasibility studies, optimize access and revenue control systems and deliver efficiency reviews for our clients. Innovation is focused towards establishing the highest degrees of customer satisfaction and long-term client relationships.

The reward for our innovation.....numerous awards and unsurpassed client satisfaction.



Graelic, LLC

Is your parking shrinking as your facility is growing? **Graelic** provides the tools necessary to help get the most out of your parking investment. We add valuable spaces to your existing facility without sacrificing function. Graelic's design and consulting services are based on its commitment to create a parking design concept that will deliver optimum space efficiency ...and maximum cost effectiveness...tailored expressly to the user needs. We will custom tailor preliminary design alternatives optimizing function and cost per space. The end result is an efficient cost effective design to construct, safe and convenient for all users, designed and integrated into your future growth plans.



Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

Kimley-Horn was retained by Wake County, North Carolina and Empire Properties, Inc. to develop a mixed-use project in downtown Raleigh. The County needed to design and construct a parking deck to serve its downtown judicial complex. To make the best use of its property, the County engaged Empire Properties to develop a private mixed-use component as part of this project.

Kimley-Horn worked with KlingStubbins Architects to design a 993-space parking deck and a seven-level office building, along with approximately 20,000 square feet of street-level retail space. The project was designed to meet the City of Raleigh's livable streets design guidelines and is an example of a successful public-private joint venture. This venture enabled the County to meet its parking needs, while also providing an opportunity for the private sector to develop much-needed residential density in the ongoing revitalization of downtown.



Reigstad & Associates, Inc.

Red Hawk Casino Resort Parking Ramp

Built in the foothills of the Sierra Mountains east of Sacramento, California, this resort includes a 1,100,000 SF, 8-level, 3,300-car parking ramp. The 228,300 square foot resort also accommodates a gaming area and six premium restaurants. The project utilized special foundation systems to "terrace" the structures into the side of the mountain. Since level 1 of the garage is situated 85 ft. below the resort entrance, three precast bridges are used to enter and exit the parking ramp.

Founded in 1979, **Reigstad & Associates** is a structural engineering firm providing comprehensive structural engineering design, parking consulting and construction inspection services to architects, developers, contractors and owners throughout the United States. Our projects include parking structures, hotels, corporate headquarters as well as casino/gaming venues.

Reigstad & Associates is headquartered in downtown St. Paul, Minnesota with an office in Gulfport, Mississippi.

DESMAN

ASSOCIATES

DESMAN Associates is a national parking and transportation planning, architectural and structural

engineering firm and one of the leaders in the parking industry for the past 36 years. Services include: functional design; architecture; structural; waterproofing and concrete restoration engineering; traffic, parking demand, master planning and financial feasibility studies; parking operations and access/revenue control consulting.

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The Graelic, LLC team is a unique association of experienced commercial parking industry veterans. On average, each team member possesses over 19 years of experience in his/her individual area of expertise in parking design and consulting. We bring the parking facility planning and design experience of over 3,000 locations across the world. Whether you are planning a new parking facility, or evaluating an existing one, Graelic offers comprehensive parking consulting services to aid you in your decision making process. Graelic's host of parking planning services include parking master planning, functional planning and design, access and revenue control, operations consulting, parking studies, signage programming, design/build services.

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International Parking Design is the leading expert in developing parking solutions. The firm's reputation for innovative design, value and focused expertise in parking design has been earned through 40 years of dedicated work in public and private projects across the nation as well as internationally. Nationally

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The Parking Network, Inc.

The Parking Network, Inc. (TPN) is a parking financial audit and review firm, specializing in all financial and operational aspects of parking. TPN's main focus is using our experienced financial and operations audit staff to increase and protect parking revenue for our clients, while being a solid proponent and catalyst for the implementation of efficient and effective operational procedures and standards.

TPN is an industry pioneer in the quality of its operational and financial reviews and its municipal tax program services. The Company's extensive operational and financial reviews are unparalleled in the industry providing clients with in-depth analysis of their parking operation while educating clients on the industry and offering useful and innovative solutions.

With over 50 years of combined parking industry experience, TPN is able to provide clients in industries including: commercial property owners, self operators, colleges & universities, municipalities, hospitals and medical centers, transportation and airports with standards of excellence and benchmarks appropriate to any type of operation.



TimHaahs Project Honored in 2009 AIA Tampa Bay Design Awards

The American Institute of Architects Tampa Bay Chapter recently announced the recipients of their 2009 Design Awards. The Channelside Parking Garage Expansion in Tampa, designed by HKS Architects, received a Merit Award. The design-build project is a 720 space expansion of the existing Channelside garage and accommodates the adjacent cruise terminal passengers, while providing vehicle and bus staging areas. The proposed solution is a 4-story 90 degree parked garage that cantilevers out over the sidewalks, providing shade and shelter for the pedestrians below. The un-built project is anticipated to be LEED certified. **TimHaahs** is providing parking consultation, functional design and structural engineering services for the garage expansion. This project support growing demand and traffic at the Port, contributing to the growth of tourism in the city and throughout the region.



Walker Parking Consultants

Duke University Parking Garage IX, Durham, North Carolina

Several new projects in the research zone eliminated surface parking and this necessitated a new facility that will provide parking to students, faculty, visitors, and patients. The architectural context of this garage blends well with the surrounding buildings but also provides for a sustainable green design with the green walls and roof canopies. The mixture of precast spandrel panels at the upper levels and the terra cotta material at the lower levels provides a unique design solution. The garage contains flat floors with an express ramp on the north side, allowing for better visibility and passive security to the patrons. A high level of service lighting design, along with painting of the undersides of the concrete structure, provides a high level of visibility. The cast-in-place post-tensioned structure chosen should provide a long service life and contributes to the "open" feeling of the garage.



Walker Restoration Consultants

200 East Delaware Condominium Parking Structure

The owners wanted to extend the service life of the parking structure adjacent to the 200 East Delaware 36 story high-rise building in Chicago built in 1972. Located one block from Lake Shore Drive and Lake Michigan, there was extensive corrosion, poor drainage profile, and substandard lighting. Based on an intensive field study and material testing program, Walker recommended: the removal of the top four inches of concrete; providing new top steel and new concrete; re-profiling and installing more drains; applying waterproofing membrane on the two supported levels; galvanizing anodes to protect patches in the basement slab-on-grade level; installing new lighting; and painting the ceilings and walls. The recommendations were approved and restoration of this parking structure was completed in September 2008.



WALTER P MOORE

24 Waterway Avenue

24 Waterway Avenue anchors the north end of Waterway Square Park and is the largest mixed-use office/retail building for the Waterway Square District, located in the heart of The Woodlands Town Center. One of the largest Class A buildings in the Houston area, 24 Waterway features 12 office floors with restaurant and retail space and a 673 space parking garage located under the tower. **WALTER P MOORE's** Parking Services group provided functional design, parking control equipment recommendations and signage programming for the new garage. The garage utilizes a single center-ramp system to feed its five levels. For efficiency, the garage is partially located outside the tower footprint, thus keeping the infringement of building columns to a minimum. 24 Waterway utilizes a state-of-the-art parking control system with Automated Vehicle Identification (AVI) for contract vehicles and a pay-on-foot system for visitors.



Watry Design, Inc.

U.C. San Diego Hopkins Parking Structure San Diego, California

Holding 1,418 parking stalls, this structure is sheathed in rich, blue metal mesh, nestled into the hillside and incorporates Solar Trees on the top floor.



The Parking Garage Division of **Reigstad & Associates, Inc.** provides full service parking consulting to our clients nationwide. Our services include site planning, functional and conceptual design and wayfinding/signage design. Reigstad & Associates can also serve as the prime professional. We will create and manage a team to design your project and bring it to reality. We believe this approach provides a 'turn-key' solution to produce a project in a timely manner and within budget. Above and beyond all this, we make sure that a solid client relationship is the cornerstone of any project that we work on. We work closely with our clients to complete projects to their satisfaction.

Reigstad & Associates, Inc.

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Contact: **Jim Collins** at jcollins@reigstad.com

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TPN is a full-service financial audit and review firm. TPN's extensive parking reviews are unparalleled in the industry, providing clients with an in-depth analysis of their parking operation and financial health and offering innovative solutions to parking challenges. In addition, TPN's financial administration, performance monitoring, and quality assurance programs have set a new standard of merit, earning a reputation for unsurpassed professionalism as they continue to "drive the industry toward excellence."

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Fax: 484-342-0222

Miami
10305 N.W. 41st
Street, Suite 201
Miami, FL 33178
Tel: 305-592-7123
Fax: 305-592-7113

Atlanta
5500 Interstate N.
Parkway, Suite 130
Atlanta, GA 30328
Tel: 770-850-3065
Fax: 770-850-3066

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Walker Restoration Consultants

provides consulting and engineering services to help owners extend the life of their built assets using a broad array of state-of-the-art restoration and preservation strategies. These services and prescriptive recommendations enable clients to improve the long-term health and increase the value of their parking facilities and non-parking structures such as office, medical and institutional buildings; infrastructures; airports; sports/entertainment buildings; and plazas. Through customized capital-investment and maintenance programs, Walker Restoration Consultants helps owners improve their properties.

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WALTER P MOORE provides parking consulting services including parking planning, functional and graphic design, operation consulting, parking equipment consulting, ingress/egress studies, and restoration/repair engineering. The firm combines an in-depth understanding of parking with its core structural, civil and traffic engineering services to improve planning, design and operations of parking facilities. For over 50 years, WALTER P MOORE has designed parking garages that are efficient, attractive, durable, safe and economical. Contact Jerry Marcus.

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1301 McKinney, 11th floor, Houston, TX 77010
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The Consultant's Role i

BY DAVID TAXMAN

WITH THE RECENT FINANCIAL crisis, many cities and institutions (universities, airports, hospitals, etc.) are looking for creative ways to generate revenue to pay off debt, to fund projects and to pay pension liabilities. This has led some to consider privatizing their parking systems over a defined lease period in exchange for periodic or an upfront lump sum payment.

Privatization not only provides the opportunity for needed funds, it also allows cities and institutions to get out of the parking business and have a specialized and expert private operator manage the system.

In the process of privatizing a parking system, consultants are brought in to advise either the seller or the buyer. Whether serving the buyer (investment firm/parking operator) or seller (city or institution), a parking consultant serves a crucial role in the process, which is to determine the overall value of the parking system over the course of the lease period.

This financial analysis is performed before any deal is agreed upon, and is essential to help prevent the buyer from overpaying or the seller from accepting a low offer. In performing a financial assessment of a parking system, a parking consultant needs to consider a few major issues. These include future revenue potential, capital expenses and necessary upgrades in parking technology for the system.

In determining the future revenue potential, it is essential to understand the market factors that can affect the system's future parking demand.

For any city or institution, there are a number of unique factors to consider, such as population/employment growth, economic factors (GDP, median income, etc.), journey to work data, alternative modes of transportation, existing utilization of the parking system, available capacity of the parking system, future development projects and the competing parking market.

Another major factor related to the future revenue potential is parking rates. The consultant should perform a parking rate market study to assess the capacity to raise rates. If a consultant is advising the seller, such a study will help determine how the city or institution's parking rates compare with similar cities. This can be used to develop and justify a fair future parking rate schedule.



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n Parking Privatization



Directly related to an increase in parking rates is an “elasticity factor,” which is the change in demand correlated with the increase in price. A limited number of studies have been done that assess the elasticity of demand factor related to parking rate increases.

However, the best method to determine the elasticity factor for a parking system is to assess the decrease in parking demand between prior years where the parking rates were increased and no other significant changes were implemented (e.g., increase in parking inventory, changes in hours of operation, large or small population changes, etc.). This would provide a controlled example to use in determining the unique elasticity of demand factor associated to the parking system.

Another potential increase in revenue is from the implementation of enhanced revenue collection equipment. Whether for on-street or off-street parking, such equipment can improve the accounting program, provide tighter security controls and permit multiple payment options.

For an on-street parking system, the implementation of pay-and-display equipment provides revenue enhancements by increasing the on-street capacity and eliminating piggybacking (parking on the last parker’s extra time). Installation of updated revenue control equipment is advantageous to both seller and buyer.

The seller receives a lump sum payment based on the assumption that the parking system is operated with the implementation of best parking practices and enhanced revenue equipment. The buyer is able to generate extra revenue from the parking system with enhanced revenue control equipment.

Also, the installation of new revenue control equipment allows the seller to maximize the concession payment received and to inherit a parking system with upgraded revenue control technology when the lease period has expired.

Assessing the revenue potential of a parking system is only half of the equation. The parking consultant also needs to perform a conditions assessment to determine the future capital costs associated with maintaining the physical condition of the parking assets (e.g., structural, architectural, mechanical, electrical, fire protection systems, etc.).

By privatizing a parking system, a city or institution is able to avoid capital repairs to the system’s infrastructure (e.g., garages, parking lots, meters, etc.) and instead place that financial responsibility on the investment firm/private operator (buyer).

The city of Chicago, with privatization of its Grant Park/Millennium Park Garages, received \$563 million and was able to avoid capital repairs to the four garages. In addition, significant costs could be anticipated for on-going maintenance and repair of the other parking facilities, even though they had been recently constructed and/or renovated.

This would have become a significant financial burden on the city to maintain these garages. By leasing the garages, it placed the repair obligations on the private operator and freed up capital for other projects.

Privatization allows cities and institutions to get out of the parking business and have a specialized and expert private operator manage the system.

For either a city/institution or investment firm to become involved in the privatization of a parking system, it is important that each party perform due diligence to assess the system’s revenue potential, future capital expenses and necessary technology upgrades. A city or institution does not want to be later accused of selling its parking assets well under value and short-changing its residents or employees.

Understanding the full revenue potential of the parking system is necessary for a city or institution to ensure that it is being offered a fair price. As with any financial study, it should be the parking consultant’s goal to provide its client (buyer or seller) with the most accurate financial assessment, which takes into account the many issues, factors and nuances related to each individual parking system.

David Taxman, a Parking and Traffic Planner at Desman Associates, specializes in the financial analysis of parking privatization agreements. He can be contacted via e-mail at dtaxman@desman.com.

PT



Although it may look like Matt Feagins is channeling the undead in an ancient cave, this is the entry/exit helix at the FIS garage at Houston's George Bush Intercontinental Airport.

The Undead's Guide to Parking

Ponderings from Halloween Just Past

BY MATT FEAGINS

We here at PT are speechless, but felt you deserved to judge this article for yourself. We have it on good authority that Matt was clean and sober when he wrote this piece. Editor.

THERE IS ONE THEME I HAVE BEEN seeing a lot of lately at the bookstores – tomes about the Undead. The Undead have always been considered “cool,” but they are now especially popular in the world of words. This was even before the seasonal release of Halloween-themed books now on store shelves.

Whether it's a book on how to survive a zombie attack or the pathology of a zombie, the Underworld is everywhere.

That got me to thinking: What would happen if the Undead

took over the world? How would the parking consultant be affected (and hopefully not infected)? I know what you are thinking: “Huh? What kind of connection is there?”

For those who follow a philosophy of mind theory, a zombie is basically a person without a sentient consciousness. These creatures appear in folklore and popular culture typically as reanimated corpses or mindless human beings, and are mainly used for thought experiments.

So, I contemplated, zombies would be a good idea for a “thought experiment” regarding parking consulting. What if the world we live in had to coexist with a world filled with zombies? Would that change all that we love about our jobs as parking consultants, as well as what we regard as inherently compelling about the world of parking? Unfortunately, I think it would.

First of all, it would be difficult to work without being interrupted by those pesky zombies trying to break into your office and eat your brains. We all know that parking consultants are the

smartest guys in the room (despite what those Enron guys thought). As such, our grey matter would be in high demand by the gourmards of the zombie world.

For zombie clients, our level-of-service calculators would have to be totally redesigned. After all, zombies rarely, if ever, drive cars. As a matter of fact, they tend to hate cars, because those not yet infected tend to run them over.

We all tend to agree that open, airy garages make for better wayfinding. But, as those who are fans of Hollywood horror movies know, parking garages are good places in which bad things can happen.

Zombies would rather see the return of dark basement-like parking facilities with lots of hiding places, so they can jump out and attack their unknowing victims. Hidden elevators, claustrophobic ceiling heights, and flickering lights causing ever shifting shadows are all that are needed to complete the wayfinding picture.

As long as you can't find your way out of there, the zombies have it made.

Another important element in the level-of-service picture is traffic flow and ramping used. Most users prefer angle parking because it's quicker to get in and out of the spaces. Zombies don't like that. The longer we take to back out of the space, the better able they are to pull you from your "metal safe-house."

Parking consultants would love to use express ramps on most every job, if cost considerations and efficiency allowed.

The Undead don't like those steep ramps at all. We do tend to agree with them in one respect, though. For traffic calming purposes, we don't like really long parking runs. For the Undead, really long parking runs, and their attendant greater speeds, make it harder to grab passing vehicles for a quick snack on-the-go.

One last factor we use in determining the level of service is the overall geometry of the facility and its parking spaces.

ng Consulting

Of course, bay widths and parking space widths are important and tend to have an inverse relationship to each other in some regard. If we have wider spaces, we can get away with narrower parking bays and vice versa.

On the other hand, the uninfected and the Undead have a totally inverse relationship. We don't like them and they do like us (to eat).

Redesigning the level of service, of course, would be just one of the inconveniences of living in such a world. Working in AutoCAD while pedaling on a bike hooked to a generator to make electricity would also be pretty inconvenient. Let's just hope that it never comes to this.

Although, with the economy chugging along slowly as it has been recently, that time may come sooner than we like. I think I hear some shuffling feet and moaning outside. ... I hope it's just my boss and not something else.

Matt Feagins is a Principal and Senior Parking Consultant Walter P Moore. If you want to chance it, he can be reached at MFeagins@walterpmoore.com or (800) 364-7300.



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Beirut isn't Just Another Pretty Face ... Or

BY PETER GUEST

I RECENTLY WENT TO BEIRUT for the first time in seven years. It's interesting to see the city and how things are moving forward. The juxtaposition of 21st century architecture and bullet-riddled buildings is just a little surreal.

About 10 years ago, I was working there for the government and came up with a proposal to sort out the parking problems. They were not up to dealing with high-tech systems, and the coinage is wrong for parking payment. I thought that it would be a decade before they could handle technology, so I suggested a soft takeoff dealing with one problem at a time.

First, deal with obstructive parking; next, show people where they can park. Then introduce stay limits and charges using scratch cards (low-tech, easy to buy) to help make this work. While all this was happening, build some garages, funded by the parking fees, since the only modes of transport then were cars and taxis, and if you control the streets, you have to have somewhere for the cars to go if the economy isn't going to stop. By then, they would



have a knowledge base and experience and could make the transition to a modern technology-based system.

The World Bank came in with a consultant who had different ideas. My ideas went, and they decided to go straight to the technology option. Well, 10 years later (see above) and they have just got the meters up and running. In the local press, a government spokesman thinks they are great and makes extensive claims about how they are revolutionizing parking in Beirut.

Trouble is, they have no build-up of knowledge, so it rather seems that they are being installed on a "suck it and see" basis. Main streets are controlled, but the side roads remain in a state of anarchy. Schemes are put in and then changed when they don't quite work, and although the city has built no major off-street facilities, as far as I could understand they claim that the all-day worker parking has vanished. I wonder where?

Because of the limits of the coinage, they have had to use credit cards and stored-value cards, and this has allowed one innovation that I have long called for but never seen before. Drivers can pay their parking fines right at the meter.

If you get a ticket, you just go to the meter, press a few buttons, pay the fine and the job's done. This just makes so much sense for uncontested penalties that I do wonder why it doesn't happen everywhere.

I am that good

Why was I in Beirut? Well, an old friend had got me out to look at a shopping mall car park that they were having problems with. This scheme has had the gestation period of a very slow elephant, and I have looked at it and doodled on various schemes forever. It has come alive again with some new investors and a new design. But they had designed a car park and just couldn't get it to work.

Anyway, the phone rang on a Thursday; Friday morning I was on a plane to Beirut, and by Sunday afternoon, we headed off for a pizza with three viable designs on the table. I wouldn't say that any of them were finalized, but they were all viable.

One issue that concerned everyone was the information that we had about traffic flows and demand data from the investor's big-name traffic consultants. They showed me the Traffic Impact Study, and I almost fell off my chair. This is downtown Beirut, and the consultants (I can't use the word that I would prefer to describe them) had predicted the traffic and parking demand using ITE data.

There is no questioning or caveats; these data are presented as if on tablets of stone. They use a 2010 design year for a building that is unlikely to be even built before 2012, and propose traffic mitigation that would leave most junctions in the area with a Level of Service of D, before taking account of any other developments or traffic growth post-2012.



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Can Technology be 'Pushed' too Quickly?

I cannot see any way that, if the project goes ahead on the basis of the current traffic studies, it won't open to major traffic problems and run out of parking within a few years. Inevitably,

and thought he had something to do with running the car park. He duly completed his work and tried to drive out. When he finally made it, he crossed the site off the short list; it was that bad.

Trouble is, they have no build-up of knowledge, so it rather seems that they are being installed on a "suck it and see" basis.

The strange thing is that the same car park has just won the European Parking Association award for the best new car park in Europe. I spoke to one of the judges, and he murmured that perhaps it would be a good idea, in

if I am right, the traders will quickly move out to a site that can be accessed and the project will become a ghost town.

the future, if the judges drove the car parks, rather than just look at them.

Same car park, different day

I think I mentioned that, at the start of the year, I was a judge in the British Parking Association awards and did the new car parks bit. One entry was for a car park in Liverpool. A lot of effort was put in to making it look good with some fantastic architecture; the trouble is that it just doesn't work.

My fellow judge visited, and whilst he was looking round and taking a few measurements, he was besieged (the man with the clipboard) by angry drivers who couldn't find the way out

I also spoke to one of the design team, and when I told him what had happened for "the Brits," he started to explain to me why it was indeed difficult to find your way around in parts of the car park. No, wrong! Don't tell me why it's bad; design it so that it's good ... but then I would have nothing to moan about.

Peter Guest is PT's correspondent on all things European and Middle East. He can be reached at peterguestparking@hotmail.co.uk.

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House of Cars – Exhibit Opens at Nation

S PONSORED BY THE National Parking Association, a new exhibition at the National Building Museum, *House of Cars: Innovation and the Parking Garage* opened October 17. It is the first major exhibition to explore the history of this familiar structure and inspire conversations about innovative designs and parking solutions for the future.

“We are honored to be the presenting sponsor of this exciting exhibition,” said Martin L. Stein, NPA President. “Our partnership with the National Building Museum for *House of Cars* assists us in educating people outside our industry about the history, viability, and important service we provide to the success of cities all across North America.

I would also like to recognize mem-



The NPA celebrated the opening of the exhibition with a reception and presentation at the National Building Museum during its convention in October.

bers Brett Harwood, Gary Cudney of Carl Walker, Inc., Derek Kiley of WPS North America, Herb Anderson of Impark, and Scott Burr of Tech Painting, for their generous support in making this presenting sponsorship possible.

We are also honored to be able to take the exhibition ‘on the road’ and will be presenting it during our conventions in Boston in 2010, Las Vegas in 2011, and in 2012 in a location to be determined. The sponsor of the road show is Andrew Blair of Colonial Parking.”

The idea for the exhibition was brought to the Museum by Shannon Sanders McDonald, author of *The Parking Garage: Design and Evolution of a Modern Urban Form*, published by the Urban Land Institute in 2007.

The exhibition starts with photographs, drawings, and a vintage 1927 Ford Model A that examine the birth of the parking garage in the early 20th century. The section on engineering invites visitors to test out a ramp system, view architectural plans and patents, learn



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nal Building Museum

House of Cars: Innovation and the Parking Garage is divided into six galleries.

Early Car Culture examines the birth of the parking garage in the early 20th century.

How Does it Work? focuses on the engineering elements of parking garages including the ramp system, automated hoist systems, and underground garages.

The Mid-Century Garage examines the parking garage building boom in the 1950s.

How Does it Look? features innovative parking garage designs including reproductions of drawings from architects such as Paul Rudolph and Eero Saarinen.

The Future of Parking looks at how garages are being incorporated into sustainable city plans and features photographs of "green garages."

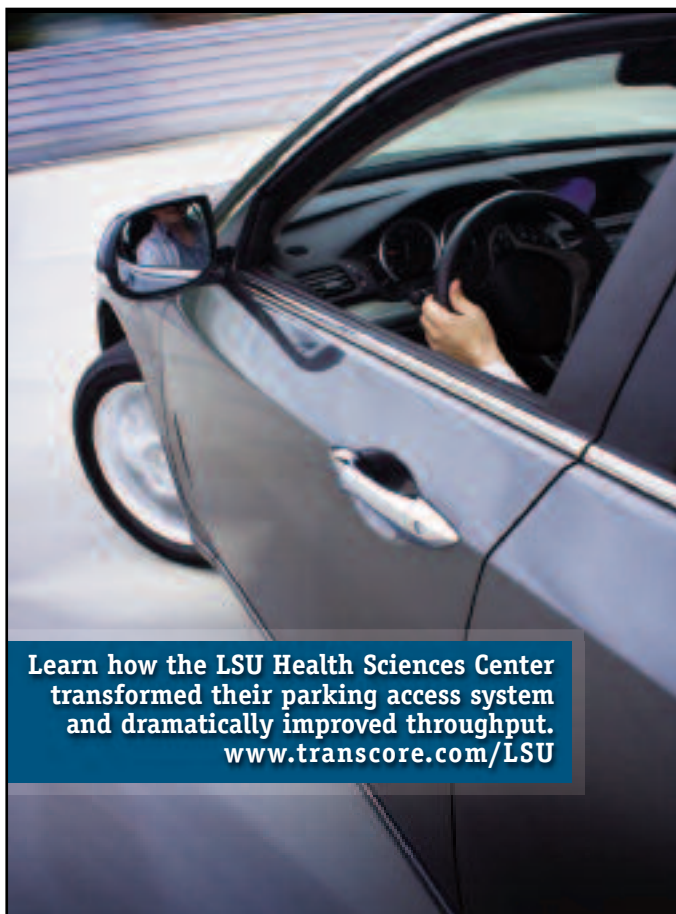
An auxiliary gallery in the exhibition **Art and the Public Imagination** looks at how the parking garage has inspired popular culture from fine art to film.

about 1950s experiments in automated hoist systems, and see examples of the first underground garages.

The exhibition features replicas of structural systems such as columns and beams as well as an early time stamp machine, parking attendant hats, and mid-century films in which parking was promoted as the key to a successful urban development. Visitors see images and artifacts from innovative garage façades, including reproductions of drawings by architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright and Eero Saarinen. The exhibition concludes with a look at the future of parking, featuring photographs, renderings, and models of "green garages" as well as new types of parking solutions.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Museum is developing a variety of education programs intended to further examine the parking garage's role in our society. A lecture series will cover topics ranging from green design and urban planning to the future of transportation and parking. The National Building Museum will also host a film series surveying the many roles played by the parking garage on screen, from extreme action and intrigue to avant-garde expression. The Museum will also offer free, docent-lead tours of the exhibition beginning November 13. The tours will be 45 minutes in length and will be offered daily at 2 pm. For details and up-to-date information on the exhibition and associated programming, please visit www.nbm.org.

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NPA Stages Conference and



The grand opening of the NPA Annual Convention – Marty Stein introduces the VIP's present: Jerry South (Towne Park), Alan Lazowski (LAZ Parking), Roy Carter (Toledo Ticket), Andrew Blair (Colonial Parking DC), Herb Anderson (Impark), Martin Stein (NPA), Jed Hatfield (Colonial Parking DE).



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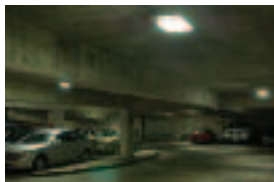
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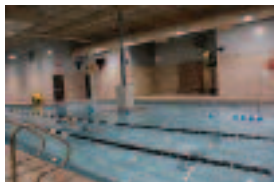
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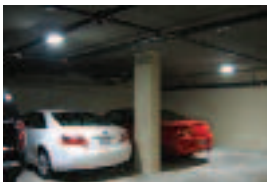
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T2 Systems announces the availability of the newest version of its T2 Flex parking management system, the industry's only solution that manages permits, citations and access and revenue control in one system. With this new version, T2 can now

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DMP OFFERS STYLE WITH DESIGNER SERIES KEYPAD COVERS



Digital Monitoring Products (DMP) has made it possible for alarm system owners to add a touch of style to their systems. The new Designer Series Keypad Covers allow them to make their keypads blend in or stand out by selecting from one of the nearly 30 easy-to-install designs. "People love to customize their cell phones and computer screens," said

Vice President of Sales Mark NeSmith. "Now we make it possible for system owners to customize their keypads, too. These keypad covers let users have some fun as they make their security system reflect their personal sense of style."

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Consultants – There to Take the Blame?

AHHH, CONSULTANTS! THE BOSS says that this is the **Parking Today** Consultants issue and asked me to comment. What does an auditor – and a dog to boot – know about consultants? Well, I can tell you what one well-renowned consultant told me: “Consultants are there to take the blame.”

OK, it was really a 20-minute conversation, and he spoke eloquently about what consultants bring to the party. They bring experience and knowledge, he said. They know what questions to ask, and can help guide the answers so horrendous mistakes are avoided. They help managers put in positions without much knowledge (know anyone like that?) down paths that will lead to success, not failure.

Then he got to the crux of the conversation.

“However, in the end, many a job has been saved and many a project rescued because in political situations – and let’s face it, any public project is a political situation – someone was there to blame when things went wrong.

“Consultants need to have broad shoulders,” he said. “We make recommendations – that often aren’t taken – and then when the project has a problem, we are there to blame, and then to fix it, if we can. Politically, we are extremely important to the process when dealing with government agencies.”

Now just a gol’ darn minute here. Are you telling me that

one of the consultant’s jobs is to be blamed even when they are blameless?

“We allow the political process to work,” he said. “These folks have little experience in the details. We bring that experience. When things go right, we are in the background and the appointed or elected official gets the credit.

“But when things go wrong, and they sometimes do, we are there to take the blame. We get pilloried, we get paid, and that’s it. We live to fight another day. If we weren’t there, the political process would collapse.”

But then how do you get another job if you get the blame for problems all the time?

“Everyone knows that this is how it works. Without us to take the fall, few politicians would survive their terms. However, it isn’t always bad. We provide a very useful service,” he said.

“Take a major airport parking project that has been ongoing for years. It has had one vendor that was deemed to have failed, another that is going to replace them, and the consulting firm involved is still there and working well.

“They were smart enough in the beginning to write a memo early on saying that failure was a possibility. It got buried, but of course they kept a copy. They were able to survive the process, assist with the changeover, and everyone was happy.

“But the management at the airport, who most likely had made the errors, were able to save face, the consulting firm was right all along, were kept in the loop, and the project will eventually succeed.

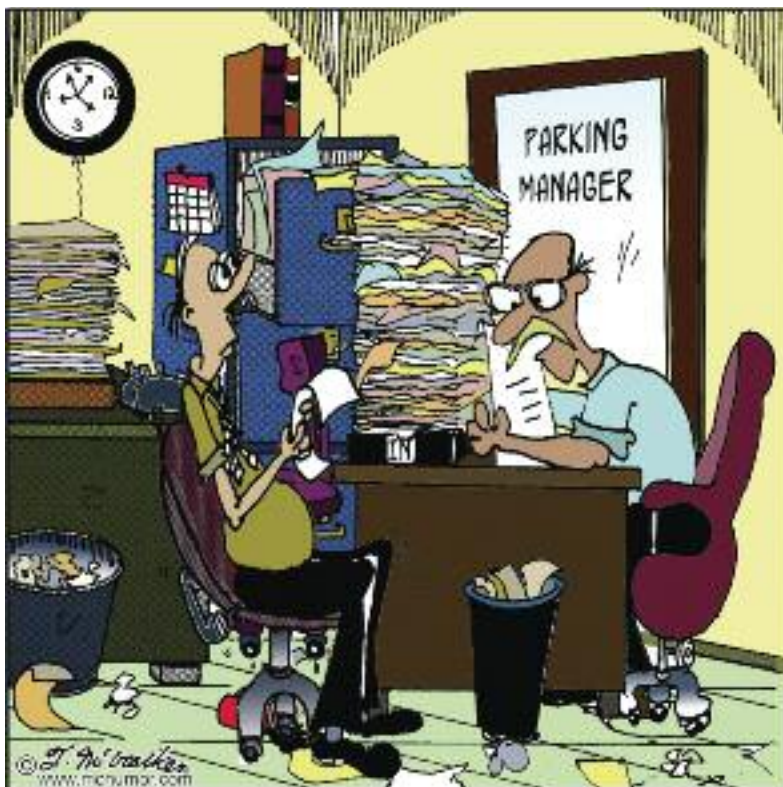
“Consultants walk a tight rope,” the consultant told me. “They have to make strong recommendations. But when those recommendations aren’t followed, they need to be sure they are there and in a position to pick up the pieces. If they do it well, they can survive the process, and the customer’s staff can survive, too.

“Consultants are political as well as technical. Why, I know a consulting firm that has been sued on a number of jobs, but the lawsuits just sort of fade away, and they are hired over and over by the same organizations.

“It’s a very intricate dance,” he said. “But one of our purposes, in addition to giving strong recommendations and technical advice, is to give the politicians a place to go when things go bad. Some of these projects are hundreds of millions of dollars and years in length. It’s impossible, with all interests involved, many political, to have it run smoothly. If we can aid in that process, then we have earned our fee, and done our job.

“In the end, the customer gets a successful project, and we help them over the political as well as the technical aspects,” he said.

I sat in a meeting the other day reviewing the bids to operate a project in a major U.S. city. It was an interesting meeting. It took nearly four hours – three of which had to do with how to approach the bids so the project owner wouldn’t be sued.



“I like the way you handle responsibility, Fingleworth, so I’m going to blame some stuff on you.”

Continued on Page 52

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Consultants – There to Take the Blame?

from Page 50

In our litigious society, if every “i” isn’t dotted and every “t” isn’t crossed, the losing bidders can cry foul and begin to take action that could cause the process to be thrown out and started over again. (Can you say Hartsfield Atlanta International Airport?)

In the private sector, this seldom happens. A private owner or operator doesn’t have to go out to bid. They simply find an operator they like, give the existing company 30 days’ notice, and that’s that.

But in the public sector, it’s different. In this case, the consulting firm that wrote the specification and reviewed the bids earned their substantial fee. They ensured not only that the substance of the bids was correct, but that the all-important “form” was right, too.

We needed to be certain that the process was exacting and fair. I learned in that room that having a consultant that knows what they are doing, and can write a specification that is clear and unambiguous, is worth the money paid.

Remember, in most cases, operators will be handling millions of dollars over a period of years. Time and money spent upfront to ensure that everyone is clear on the project and on the fine print can make all the difference.

Woof!

PT

PT BLOG

JVH comments on Parking News every day at PT Blog – log on at www.parkingtoday.com. Each month, there are at least 40 other comments like these, posted daily.

‘Nothing good to say about parking enforcement

(posted Sept. 15)

Wow, I may be involved in this.

There is an online article written by one Bob Sullivan, a reporter from MSNBC. It seems Mr. Sullivan has been aggressively researching parking and citation writing for the past few days. I was one of his sources. Of course, not one word of what I said was in his article. I guess it wasn’t negative enough.

He started off asking about the lawsuit between Duncan and ACS. I told him I knew nothing but felt that as in all such contests, each side probably had a story, and he should talk to them.

I then went on my usual trip about how parking fees can change the way people act. That if fees are set properly, there will be less cruising, less pollution, more spaces available for people who need to park in the area.

I was about to go on about how many parking tickets never get written, but then we had to stop and were to pick it up again later. Of course, he never did call back.

I was particularly struck with the part in the article about

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people who park too near corners at alleyways and driveways. To wit:

"I recently got a ticket for parking in a space on the street that I have been parking in for three years at least and never had a problem," one resident wrote recently in an Internet group devoted to parking frustrations. Said another: "We've received the unwanted attention of an overzealous meter maid. (She) recently began ticketing residents' cars for being too closely parked to our own driveways. Our 3 tickets state we have to park at least 5 feet away from a driveway ... our own driveway."

Personally, after blocking fire hydrants, I think this is one of the worst parking violations. When you park too close to a corner, the driver backing out or driving out of the alley or driveway can't see up or down the street. You are causing a great safety hazard. I note our intrepid reporter didn't ask the violators if they thought they were causing a safety problem when they parked too close to a driveway. I guess that isn't important.

He comments about New York hiring 200 more enforcement officers this year, but missed the fact that the income didn't go up in sync with the new hires. I guess finding out why wasn't on the agenda.

Readers of this blog know that I am the first to step up and say that parking should not be a revenue generator to replace lost taxes. And if it does generate a substantial amount, then that money should be plowed back into the streets and neighborhoods from whence it came.

However, I also know that balance is not the goal of most

reporters. They see the "spin" and then pile it on. There was not one single positive word in this article about parking, and not one quote from an enforcement officer, his manager or the like.

A question Mr. Sullivan might have asked is if enforcement of the law was so horrible, why isn't the law changed? Rather than blame enforcement officers (meter maids, he calls them), why not blame the people who passed the laws in the first place? If a rule is too stringent, then change it.

There is absolutely no sense to saying "Oh, there's a law, but the cops should ignore it because I don't like it." If you don't like it, get your city council to change it. Of course, when you do that, you find that there is a reason for the laws.

I just roared at this one:

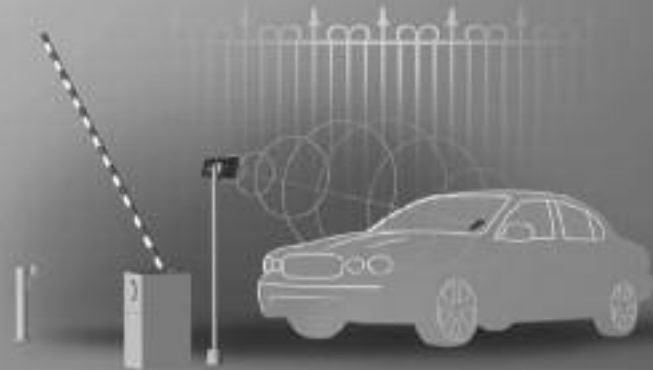
How aggressive is enforcement? (Glen) Bolofsky (founder of ticket-beating site parkingticket.com) said he's seen New York drivers get tickets for double-parking merely because they are waiting for someone to pull out of a spot on the street – a time-honored practice in the competitive world of city parking.

I have driven in the Big Apple, and one of the major problems is double-parking, particularly cross town. You can't get up and down the streets. People just stop and wait. It is a major hassle. I'll bet that if Mr. Sullivan were to interview the 20 people who had to wait while someone double-parked and ran in for a latte or waited for a parking space, he would get a different kind of ear full.

Continued on Page 56

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JUST WHEN I THOUGHT I HAD EXPERIENCED most of what the world of parking has to offer, my daughter started kindergarten earlier this fall. In one week, we celebrated her first day of school, first soccer game and first loose tooth. The tooth has no impact on the parking forecast, but parking for school and soccer is shaping up to be quite an effort.

We left our house, which is seven minutes from the school by car, at least 20 minutes before the opening bell and made good time. But when we reached the blocks closest to the school, we found that there was not a parking space to be had for more than a quarter of a mile.

We might have underestimated the parking issues, we were definitely late, and we were feeling a little heartbroken, too, but our daughter was taking it all well, and none of us had misbe-

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haved or made a terrible scene.

By the time I walked back to my car, a much longer walk than I remembered, probably because my legs just did not want to take me any farther from my little girl, we had only a couple of hours before pick-up time. My toddler and I passed the morning unproductively, feeling at loose ends and soothing our tender feelings with doughnuts and television.

Parking at pick-up was not as chaotic because the kindergarten classes were dismissed early during the first week. Still, the streets around the school were crawling with minivans and SUVs, small siblings, and school children darting every which way with their brightly colored backpacks bobbing up and down.

Now that we've done it for a few weeks, the whole thing is starting to be routine, and our emotions are settling. I stopped crying after the fourth drop-off, and when I leave, I no longer feel like I've left a body part behind in a dingo's lair. Parking is still tricky, but several strategies have reduced its impact on our days. We started carpool with another family on our street, and that makes us feel better about driving such a short distance.

At pick-up, I arrive a little early and get a comfortable spot. Drop-off is a breeze because our school offers "valet." You just pull into the loading zone, and a PTA volunteer opens the door and hands your child up to the entrance. I have to remember the kiss and hug before we load the car, because those PTA people don't waste time. The kids are out of the car in seconds, and I'm waved away emphatically.

The facility has maybe 20 parking spots – all designated for teachers and staff – so it's strictly on-street for the parents. It's a hassle to search for parking when punctuality is so important – kindergarteners (and their teachers) don't have much patience or understanding for tardy moms.

But I can only imagine the inconvenience to the neighbors, who, three times a day – counting drop-off, and then a staggered dismissal for kindergarteners and higher grades –

are overloaded with traffic and buried by the minivans lined up on their street from end to end.

That's not to mention the extracurricular events. So far I've heard not a word from any of them, and I guess they are used to the process and appreciate the home equity their proximity to the school provides. But there is a homeowner nearby known for leaving trash cans on her curb and hosing down the sidewalk and parkway in front of her house every day to block would-be school parkers. I think poorly of her for that behavior, but can understand her frustration.

I was so surprised by the parking dynamics at the school because my parents didn't drive us. When I was in kindergarten, my older brother and sister walked me, and sometime that year we moved to the outskirts of town. That meant taking the school bus that showed up more than an hour before school, carried children and teens in all grades, and often reeked of marijuana.

If we were lucky, Dena, the bus driver, would play the radio station we liked, and we might hear the best song ever, Pink Floyd's "Another Brick in the Wall." ("Hey! Teachers! Leave them kids alone!") We were dropped off right in front of the school doors and never gave the parking lot madness another thought.

For now, I'm glad my daughter is riding to school safely strapped into her booster seat in the back of my car. I'm not ready for her to experience hard rock and soft drugs just yet. I am willing to brave any kind of parking issue to keep her little just a little longer.

Melissa Bean Sterzick is PT's amateur parker and proofreader. She can be reached at Melissa@parkingtoday.com

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If the system feels cold and unforgiving, that's partly because many cities are using new technology that cuts out human interaction – and the criminal justice system – from the process. In Seattle, a pair of lawsuits are contesting the use of cameras to detect and cite speeders. Twenty area municipalities are named in the suit. In the city of Seattle, a new camera system wrote 58,000 tickets valued at \$5 million in its first three months of operation.

Because the contracts promise a minimum payment to the cities, and the manufacturer agreed to split citation collections after that, one of the lawsuits contends the system gives “the cities and the vendors an illegal incentive to issue improper tickets and to err on the side of issuing a ticket versus declining to issue the ticket.”

Meanwhile, handheld electronic ticket issuing machines are sweeping municipal-

ities, allowing meter maids to write more tickets – and more important, reduce errors that lead to dismissals. One manufacturer, DXY Solutions, says switching to handhelds increases a single officer's ticket-writing productivity by 30 percent.

Other new technology seems downright mean-spirited. Parking meters invented and sold by the French firm Technolia send text messages to local police the very instant that a meter clicks down to zero.

So now we are lumped in with speeders and red light cameras. Will it never end? Of course the technology he quotes above enables enforcement to write more tickets, but it also ensures that they are more accurate, clearer, and cut down on errors. Of course that in itself seems to be a problem for our hero. After all, if someone is caught breaking the law and can't weasel out of it, that too is a problem.

If Mr. Sullivan had called back, and he probably won't after this blog, I would have told him about how parking fees can speed traffic, lower congestion and ensure that space is available for merchants. And it can be one of the “greenest” things we know. I may not think that green is a particularly wonderful virtue, but most do, and parking fees and fines certainly are as green as it gets.

In most every case cited in his article, the people had broken the law and were upset because they had broken it before and gotten by with it but now they were nailed. It's just not fair: I parked in a red zone 10 times and didn't get a ticket, but now I got one. Those bastards. I'm not responsible for my actions and the results for them; it's the damn “meter maids,” and the money-grubbing city.

Is the problem that enforcement has been stepped up? Or is it that people are taking less responsibility for their actions?

In the “good old days,” we got a ticket and we were embarrassed and we paid it and next time we put another quarter in the meter. Today it's the fault of technology, aggressive enforcement, or whatever.

There is not one comment in Mr. Sullivan's article on the fact that these people are breaking the law. Sigh.

In this case, the same old story is not a “fight for love and glory” (posted Sept. 20)

I think some people just don't think things through. Correspondent Mark sent in a story from Jamestown, NY; here's a sampling:

“The parking meters were a major hassle,” she said. “Not only the expense, which is out of line, but having to take time away from my customers to go feed the meter just wasn't working. You can't leave customers alone in your store. It wasn't theft I was concerned with – you've got to be available to answer questions or unlock a case if someone needs it. It's not right to just up and leave.”

If you read the Post-Journal online story (“Business Owner Sick of Downtown,” posted Sept. 21), you find that there is a lot across the street where they can get monthly parking – also a structure that, although under repair, provides off-street parking. But no. This merchant sees the failure of downtown through the eyes of someone who parks on-street, runs up tickets, takes spaces from her clients, and can't figure out how to park so she doesn't have to leave her store empty to “feed the meter.”

My God, if anyone deserved to fail, this woman does.

JVH

You could have read these entries when they were originally posted at Parking Today's Blog – and commented, if you liked – by logging on to www.parkingtoday.com and clicking on “blog.” JVH updates the blog almost every day.

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Castcon Stone Wins Port Authority Transit Hub Contract

Castcon Stone has been awarded a \$500,000 contract to produce precast concrete stairs and landings for use in the new Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH) transit hub beneath the site of the World Trade Center in New York City. Owned by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, this below-grade construction project rebuilds one of the city's busiest subway stations severely damaged in the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Under terms of the contract, issued in June by Jersey Precast, Castcon will supply 105 flights of concrete stairs and 36 landings. All precast stair units will be outfitted with photo-luminescent metal nosings. Production was to begin Oct. 1, with delivery of precast stair and landing components set to begin next year. The final delivery for the project will be made in 2013.

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2009

October 27 - 30, 2009

TRAFFIC - International Road Safety and Equipment Exhibition
Location: Madrid, Spain
Contact: Marta Peraza 1 305 371 7767
Email: miamioffice@madridinternational.com

October 28 - 30, 2009

Autocomplex 2009 Car Maintenance and Parking Trade Fair
Location: Expocentr - Krasnaya Presnya Moscow, Russia
Contact: Ayfer Kurt +49 211 45 60 7768
Email: kurta@messe-duesseldorf.de

November 3 - 5, 2009

T2 Power House User Group Conference
Location: Daytona Beach, Florida
Contact: Tracy Maymon 317-524-7453
Email: tmaymon@t2systems.com

November 3 - 6, 2009

National Valet Parking Association 2009 Annual Conference and Valet Olympics
Location: W Hotel, Scottsdale, AZ
Contact: Peneli Tims
760-753-4004 ext.203
Email: peneli.tims@sunsetparking.com

November 8 - 9, 2009

Wisconsin Parking Association Fall Parking Conference
Location: The Abbey Resort - 269 Fontana Blvd, Fontana, WI
Contact: George Schulz, President
414-292-4513
Email: gschulz@bloomcos.com

November 9 - 11, 2009

Middle East Parking Symposium
Location: Abu Dhabi, UAE
Contact: Davyd Farrell
+971 50 565 2519
Email: davyd.farrell@islandmedia-me.com

November 11, 2009

Parking Association Australia Quarterly Networking Function
Location: Perth, Australia
Contact: Rebecca Turner
+61 1300 107 927
Email: paa@parking.asn.au

November 15 - 17, 2009

Parking Association of the Virginias
Location: Sheraton Waterside Hotel - Norfolk, VA
Contact: David High 757-485-5527.
Email: david@smartparcs.net

November 17 - 19, 2009

TranspoQuip Latin America 2009
Location: Sao Paulo, Brazil
Contact: Sebas van den Ende
+55 21 3717 4719
Email: sebas@real-alliance.com

November 18 - 20, 2009

California Public Parking Association Annual Conference and Trade Show
Location: Resort at Squaw Creek City - Lake Tahoe, CA
Contact: Debra Picou 619-388-6416

November 18 - 20, 2009

New Jersey Parking Institute Annual Conference
Location: Trump Marina, Atlantic City, NJ
Contact: Donna Gentile
Email: ltb donna@optonline.net

December 2 - 4, 2009

30th Annual Florida Parking Association Conference and Trade Show
Location: Hilton Resort - Clearwater, FL
Contact: Pamela Corbin
407-246-3766
Email: pcorbin@flparking.org

December 8 - 9, 2009

Univ of Wisconsin-Madison, Dept of Engrg Professional Development - Upgrading Maintaining & Repairing Parking Facilities
Location: University of Wisconsin-Madison
Contact: Bob Minberg 800-462-0876
Email: minberg@epd.engr.wisc.edu

2010

February 20 - 24, 2010

NPA Winter and Board of Directors
Location: Four Seasons Resort , Palm Beach, FL
Contact: Patricia Langfeld
Email: plangfeld@npapark.org

March 7 - 10, 2010

Parking Industry Exhibition
Location: Chicago, Illinois
Contact: Andy Van Horn
310 390 5277 Ext 1
Email: andy@parkingtoday.com

March 10 - 13, 2010

Intertraffic Amsterdam 2010
Location: Amsterdam RAI, The Netherlands
Contact: Albert de Soet
+31 (0)20 549 12 12
Email: intertraffic@rai.nl

April 1, 2010

Texas Parking Association Spring Conference
Location: Fort Worth, TX
Contact: Eve Grub

April 7 - 8, 2010

New England Parking Council Annual Conference
Location: Providence, Rhode Island
Contact: Dan Kupferman
856-234-8000
Email: dfupferman@parkeon.com

May 10 - 13, 2010

International Parking Institute Conference & Expo - IPI
Location: Las Vegas, NV
Contact: Lauri Chudoba
540-371-7535
Email: chudoba@parking.org

May 26 - 28, 2010

Intertraffic China 2010
Location: Beijing, China
Contact: Albert de Soet
+31 (0)20 549 12 12
Email: intertraffic@rai.nl

October 2 - 6, 2010

Canadian Parking Assn Annual Conference
Location: Whistler, BC
Contact: Carole Whitehome
613-727-0700
Email: carole@canadianparking.ca

November 7 - 9, 2010

Australian Parking Convention 2010
Location: Sydney, Australia
Contact: Rebecca Turner
+61 1300 107 927
Email: paa@parking.asn.au

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