

MONTHLY UPDATE



IDAHO POLICY INSTITUTE, JULY 2020

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The end of July always signifies that summer is wrapping up and the beginning of the semester is upon us. For IPI this means within the next month we'll be welcoming our student staff back to the Institute and working with a new group of students. Since 2016, IPI has worked with dozens of undergraduate, masters and PhD students and postdocs. Our interns, undergraduate researchers, work-study students, graduate students (both master's and PhD) and postdocs have gone on to enter into prestigious graduate programs, become Fulbright scholars, and obtain excellent job placements. IPI also works with students in the classroom.

Through the MPA Capstone class, IPI enables students to apply the theories and skills they've learned throughout the program through their engagement with a client-based experiential learning project. The new Vertically Integrated Program I've co-developed with SPS colleague Krista Paulsen will allow students from across campus, from undergraduates to post docs, an opportunity to use research to address one of the largest issues in the Boise metro region, access to affordable housing.

IPI is driven to continue to make engagement with students a key aspect of our commitment at Boise State. We feel privileged to be a part of the university's effort to empower the next generation of scholars and practitioners and look forward to the coming academic year.

BEST,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vanessa Crossgrove Fry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "V" at the beginning.

DR. VANESSA CROSSGROVE FRY

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

IDAHO'S TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE: MOVING IDAHO FORWARD

Team: Lantz McGinnis-Brown, Gabe Osterhout, Emily Pape, and Vanessa Fry

A diverse group of transportation stakeholders enlisted IPI to conduct an independent analysis of Idaho's infrastructure needs and identify funding and financing alternatives to improve the state and local transportation system. Initial findings of the report, titled *Idaho's Transportation Infrastructure: Moving Idaho Forward*, were published in an infographic and presented at the Idaho Association of Commerce and Industry's July 24 meeting in Post Falls.

The report estimates an additional \$236.5 million per year in revenue is needed to meet preservation and restoration goals across the state, as well as \$5.3 million per year to maintain existing transit equipment and infrastructure. IPI's researchers note that unmet needs and deferred maintenance create a compounding effect, making the funding requirement significantly larger in the future. *Moving Idaho Forward* offers decision makers a range of alternatives to reduce the funding gap, including modifying current user fees, establishing new user fees, adjusting statewide and local funding, exploring financing opportunities, and expanding transportation modes.

Overall, the report concludes not only that Idaho's transportation system (beyond just roads and bridges to include transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure) is essential to a vibrant economy, but also that revenue instability hinders the ability of the state to keep systems in good repair and prevents any expansion efforts or significant operational changes. Beyond the written report, IPI is creating a dynamic financial model and an interactive map of policy alternatives used in all 50 states. The full study will be released in August and posted to our website.

Find the infographic on our website now: boisestate.edu/sps-ipi/idahos-transportation-infrastructure-moving-idaho-forward-report



PROJECT UPDATES

IDaho Public Television Attitudinal Awareness Survey

Team: Matthew May, Ben Larsen, and Vanessa Fry

This month IPI prepared to field a survey regarding public perception of Idaho Public Television (IPTV) and its programming. The survey was developed in consultation with IPTV stakeholders regarding content and is designed to provide feedback on what viewers want and what they perceive the role of IPTV programming to be. Once Institutional Review Board approval is obtained, the survey will be ready for distribution to a statewide sample of the general public. Results of this survey will allow IPTV to better understand statewide public perceptions of their services.

MASTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

Team: Matthew May, Mackenzie Moss, Vanessa Fry, and Tasha Smagula

This month IPI built a survey to measure the need for a Master of Environmental Management (MEM) degree at Boise State. Questions for the survey were determined after assessing the needed information from faculty stakeholders, and then reviewing similar programs at peer institutions. Once faculty and Institutional Review Board approval are received, the survey will be distributed to a sample of potential employers of program graduates. The results of this survey will be combined with interviews and document analysis to understand the needs for a MEM degree at Boise State.

CITY OF BOISE PEER CITIES ANALYSIS

Team: Benjamin Larsen, McAllister Hall, Lantz McGinnis-Brown, Mackenzie Moss, and Vanessa Fry

In the spring IPI worked with the City of Boise to identify a list of cities across the country that are most similar to Boise based on demographic and geographic characteristics. City employees will be able to use this list of cities to compare programs and identify potential improvements. The City has requested IPI create an automation process for selecting peer cities in the future as growth changes the characteristics of Boise. This month, IPI began designing the automation process and corresponding instructions. This process allows IPI's work to remain useful to the City despite changes over time.

NEWS

Vanessa Fry presentation: "[Vanessa Fry presents to Idaho Walk Bike Alliance](#)". Boise State News. July 9, 2020.

Vanessa Fry interviewed: "[Red Cross blood donations critical as COVID-19 cancels drives](#)". Idaho News. July 28, 2020.

Transportation project mention: "[Transportation study: Idaho can't avoid raising new revenue](#)". Idaho Business Review. July 29, 2020.

MONTH IN REVIEW

GRANT WRITING

This month IPI has worked to complete three proposals for large federal grants from The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the National Science Foundation (NSF). Funds from the HUD grant would enable IPI to create processes for enumerating and predicting the propensity of youth homelessness in Idaho. Both NSF grants are part of the foundation's Civic Innovation Challenge (CIVIC). CIVIC, within NSF's Smart and Connected Communities domain, is designed to strengthen researchers' ability to engage in community-driven research. One proposal, in conjunction with Boise State's Hazard and Climate Resilience Institute, seeks to develop a resilience modeling tool for Treasure Valley communities. The other proposal, in partnership with the City of Caldwell, RAND Corporation, National League of Cities, and the Shared Use Mobility Center, seeks to advance independence for residents of Caldwell (and the Treasure Valley) by enabling equitable access to housing, job opportunities, health care, and education through a user-innovator collaborative.

The process of writing these grants has allowed IPI to build and strengthen relationships with university colleagues and community stakeholders across the public and private sectors.

TEAM SPOTLIGHT

CHEONG KIM

Cheong Kim, PhD, is a senior research associate and supports the team with his expertise in state and local government research. Before joining Boise State, Cheong worked as a research associate for the Bedrosian Center on Governance at the University of Southern California.

Cheong always knew he wanted to pursue his PhD and after studying at Korea University (Bachelor of Public Administration) and Seoul National University (MPA), received his PhD degree in Policy, Planning, and Development from the University of Southern California with specialization in public management.

From an early age, Cheong also knew he wanted to produce meaningful work and conduct research and enjoys his work at the Idaho Policy Institute. He has led several projects, including a study that conducted an analysis of the current housing inventory in Idaho Falls and Bonneville County. This project produced estimates of housing units necessary over the period of 2018-2023 and helped the City of Idaho Falls prepare for and accommodate the number of households expected to reside in the county.

In his spare time, Cheong has been learning to play the piano and catching up on his personal research. He also enjoys travelling (when he can), tasting a variety of tea produced from different regions, and has finally decided that he likes to tend to his lawn.



PROJECTS IN PROPOSAL STAGE

- A Foundation for Research into Webcams as Tools in Informal STEM Learning (sponsor, National Science Foundation)
- Prevalence and Probability of Youth Homelessness (sponsor, U.S. Housing and Urban Development)
- Modeling resilience through a community lens: Discovering data, creating tools, and connecting people who make resilience possible (sponsor, National Science Foundation)
- Accessing Independence by Leveraging Partnerships to Catalyze a Smart and Connected Region – Caldwell, Idaho (sponsor, National Science Foundation)
- Juvenile Detention Program Evaluation (sponsor, Ada County)
- West Central Mountains Regional Creative District (sponsor, Idaho Commission on the Arts)

ONGOING SPONSORED PROJECTS

- Literacy Intervention Program Evaluation (sponsor, Idaho State Board of Education)
- Idaho Educational Policy Review (sponsor, yes. every kid.)
- Charter School Program Evaluation (sponsor, Bluum)
- SAMHSA Treatment and Transitions Evaluation (sponsor, Idaho Health and Welfare)
- New Path Community Housing Evaluation (sponsor, City of Boise)
- Streamflow Data Survey (Northwest Climate Adaptation Science Center)
- Masters of Environmental Management Needs Assessment (multiple sponsors)
- Idaho Public Television Attitudinal Awareness Survey (sponsor, Idaho Public Television)

ONGOING UNSPONSORED PROJECTS

- US Census Complete Count Committee
- MPA Employer Needs Assessment
- Statewide Eviction Study
- State of Local Governments Survey
- Relationships Between Municipal Governments and Tribal Governments
- Annual Treasure Valley Survey
- Annual Statewide Survey

PROJECTS ENDING

- Idaho's Transportation Infrastructure Funding (multiple supporters)



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