

MONTHLY UPDATE

FEBRUARY 2021



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Despite this month being the year's shortest, IPI was tremendously productive.

Led by Research Associate Gabe Osterhout, an IPI team submitted a proposal to Idaho Transportation Department to evaluate the state's Departments of Motor Vehicles. I submitted a National Science Foundation (NSF) planning grant aimed at addressing transportation issues through community engagement and data aggregation with Boise State's Energy Policy Institute, RAND Corporation, Shared Use Mobility Center, and National League of Cities as collaborators. I was also Co-PI on a proposal to NSF led by Dr. Brittany Brand, director at Boise State's Hazard and Climate Resilience Institute. The projects' multidisciplinary researchers and community partners across sectors plan to work together to address the societal and economic conditions that drive inequity and compromise community resilience.

Dr. Cheong Kim, IPI Senior Research Associate, and SPS Associate Faculty, Dr. Sanghee Park, published a paper in the International Journal of Public Administration. McAllister Hall, IPI Research Associate and resident education expert, led a webinar with IPI client Bluum to teach charter school leaders across the state how to better utilize student data. Lantz McGinnis-Brown, IPI Research Associate and data science expert, began a series of R workshops in which he is teaching IPI colleagues how to use R for statistical computing and graphics.

As we near the one year anniversary of working remotely, I continue to be impressed by the tenacity, creativity, and dedication of my IPI colleagues. This has resulted in increased proposals, sponsored projects, reports, and publications since this time last year. We highlight many of these achievements in this update.

Thank you for your continued support of IPI!

BEST,

DR. VANESSA CROSSGROVE FRY

PROJECT LIST

PROPOSAL STAGE

- Advancement of Idaho Women Attorneys (sponsor, Idaho Women Lawyers)
- Guardian Ad Litem Program Evaluation (sponsor, Idaho Supreme Court)
- Idaho Outdoor Recreation Survey (sponsor, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation)
- Statewide Housing Needs Assessment (multiple sponsors)
- Statewide Permanent Supportive Housing Assessment (sponsor, Idaho Housing and Finance)
- The compounding impacts of rapid population growth and COVID-19 on vulnerable populations in Idaho's Treasure Valley (sponsor, Osher Institute)

PENDING

- Democratizing Innovation: Leveraging Integrated Data Infrastructures for Community-Based Problem Solving in Idaho's Treasure Valley (sponsor, National Science Foundation)
- Modeling resilience through a community lens: Discovering data, creating tools, and connecting people who make resilience possible (sponsor, National Science Foundation)
- Prevalence and Probability of Youth Homelessness (sponsor, U.S. Housing and Urban Development)

ONGOING SPONSORED

- A Foundation for Research into Webcams as Tools in Informal STEM Learning (sponsor, National Science Foundation)
- Communities of Excellence Charter School Program Evaluation (sponsor, Bluum)
- Lincoln County Community Health EMS Cost Benefit Analysis (sponsor, Idaho Health and Welfare)
- Master of Environmental Management Needs Assessment (multiple sponsors)
- New Path Community Housing Evaluation (sponsor, City of Boise)
- Out of School Youth (sponsor, Idaho Workforce Development Council)
- Public Opinion Survey (sponsor, Ada County Highway District)
- SAMHSA Treatment and Transitions Evaluation (sponsor, Idaho Health and Welfare)
- Streamflow Data and Climate Vulnerability Survey (sponsor, Northwest Climate Adaptation Science Center)
- West Central Mountains Regional Creative District (sponsor, Idaho Commission of the Arts)

ONGOING UNSPONSORED

- 2020 Statewide Eviction Study
- Annual Treasure Valley Survey
- Annual Statewide Survey
- Boise State's COVID-19 Dashboard
- City Go Annual Awareness Survey
- Industry Cluster Needs Assessment
- State of Local Governments Brief

ENDING

- COVID-19 Data Analysis
- Literacy Intervention Program Evaluation (sponsor, Idaho State Board of Education)

MPA CAPSTONE

- Affordable Housing in Garden City's Live-Work-Crete District (client, Surel's Place)
- An Examination of Democracy in the 21st Century (client, Frank Church Institute)
- Source Water Protection - Program Guide (client, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality)
- Source Water Protection - Use of Grant Funds (client, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality)
- Southern Idaho Forest Fund (client, National Forest Foundation)



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

THE STATE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS SURVEY

Team: Cheong Kim, Matthew May, Vanessa Fry

The IPI team conducted a survey of local governments to learn more about the ways city and town governments approach issues such as administrative practices, government structure, service delivery, and government response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The survey was conducted October 20 – December 8, 2020 via the Qualtrics platform and invited 1,867 municipalities in 11 western states to participate (Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming). A total 220 municipalities completed the survey, for a response rate of 12%.

The team produced a policy brief that reported top-line findings associated with government responses to the pandemic.

Major findings include:

- 72% of the responding municipalities declared a state of emergency, which occurred typically in March or April 2020.
- Popular policy measures taken by municipalities included holding city/town council meetings online-only (172 municipalities, or 80%), gathering information and sharing it with residents (164, 77%), and deferring collection of delinquent taxes, user fees, or service charges owed by residents (118, 55%). Note that multiple choices were allowed.
- 74% self-evaluated the implementation of their policy measures as overall timely.
- 56% viewed their measures as effective overall.

A key implication is that obtaining the support from residents is important to achieve greater policy effectiveness. Another implication is that there was increased effectiveness in creating coronavirus policies when residents, municipalities or states collaborated to build trust and overcome differing political views.

A complete version of the policy brief will be made available soon.



PROJECT UPDATES

2020 IDAHO EVICTION STUDY

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

IPI is conducting the second annual statewide eviction study to learn about the extent of formal evictions across Idaho. Data for all eviction filings in 2020 were obtained through the Idaho Supreme Court. This year's study is particularly relevant due to the pandemic's impact on renters' ability to pay. The study's findings will be released in March.

CITY GO ANNUAL AWARENESS SURVEY

Team: Matthew May, Emily Pape

IPI continues its work with City Go, previously the Downtown Mobility Collective, to investigate the modes of urban mobility currently at play in the Treasure Valley. After receiving feedback from project partners, the IPI team finalized a survey that will be distributed to commuters in the Treasure Valley. The revised survey should be in the field by mid-March.

COVID-19 DATA FOR GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Team: Vanessa Fry, McAllister Hall, Ben Larsen, Emily Pape

IPI completed its work with the Governor's office on clarifying the discrepancies between different outlets reporting COVID-19 counts and rates. After extensive review of outlets' COVID-19 reporting, the team prepared an infographic outlining the different timelines, sources, and methodologies used.

MASTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

Team: Mackenzie Moss, Matthew May

IPI currently has two surveys in the field for the Master of Environmental Management (MEM) Workforce Analysis project. In the first survey, regional employers are asked for their input on the market needs for individuals with environmental management skill sets. In the second survey, regional PhD programs in a related field are asked to help identify how an MEM could best prepare students to pursue a doctorate in their own programs. Analysis of these survey results will begin in the next few weeks.

WEST CENTRAL MOUNTAINS REGIONAL CREATIVE DISTRICT PILOT

Team: Gabe Osterhout, Lantz McGinnis-Brown, Emily Pape

IPI continues to work with the Idaho Commission on the Arts to develop a pilot creative district in the West Central Mountains. The team conducted a survey of the West Central Mountains creative community with the intent to gain a more focused understanding of their desires, required needs for future growth, and impact in the region. At the end of the month, the team met with a focus group to review and discuss the results.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

MPA CAPSTONE STUDENTS WORKING WITH IDAHO DEQ

This semester, MPA Capstone students are working on two projects with Idaho Department of Environmental Quality. This month we highlight the work being conducted by one team of students, Travis Armstrong and Kinsey Garn.

Travis and Kinsey are conducting research to provide local governments with not only the information, but also the inspiration they need to develop a source water protection program through development of a source water protection guide. To accomplish this, they are examining existing data and communicating with source water programs in other states. Ultimately the resulting guide will outline potential funding methods, highlight innovative and effective projects from communities across the state and country, and communicate the benefits surrounding source water protection efforts.

TEAM SPOTLIGHT

IPI is fortunate to have four amazing students on our team.

Melanie Hernandez, a work-study student, is an undergraduate working towards her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Illustration who would love to use her skills to illustrate children's' books. She is IPI's in-house graphic design expert and supports the team's ability to communicate our research. She also is the person behind each of these monthly reports!

Sophie Croome is interning with IPI this semester and pursuing her Master of Science degree in Economics. In her short time on the team Sophie has already engaged in a number of research projects including one with Idaho Workforce Development Council which seeks to better understand the needs of Idaho's Out of School Youth in order to inform the state's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program. Mackenzie Moss will be graduating from the MPA program this semester.

As a Graduate Research Assistant 'Mack' has contributed to a number of projects ranging from examining the feasibility of a Master's in Environmental Management to her current work on rural industry clusters in the state. After graduation Mack will be working with the Office of Performance Evaluation at the Idaho Statehouse.

D'Andre Matthews is finishing up his coursework in the Public Policy and Administration PhD program. In his role as a Graduate Research Assistant he has both supported teaching undergraduate and graduate courses and been part of a number of research teams. D'Andre's research interests are in urban and rural policy, corporate governance, and policy surrounding college athletics.



MONTH IN REVIEW

IPI SENIOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATE PUBLISHED IN THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Cheong Kim, IPI Senior Research Associate, published a paper, “When push comes to shove: the effect of economic crisis on the spending of government savings,” with Dr. Sanghee Park in the International Journal of Public Administration. The analysis of data from 254 California cities during 1996–2009 suggests that government savings have unique values for political actors and their pursuit of spending of the resources could be temporarily weakened by an economic crisis. This paper then discusses creating rainy day funds as a strategy to protect the resources even after the end of the crisis. A copy of the paper is available [here](#).

“SERVING STUDENT SUBGROUPS: PUT YOUR IRI DATA TO WORK!” WEBINAR

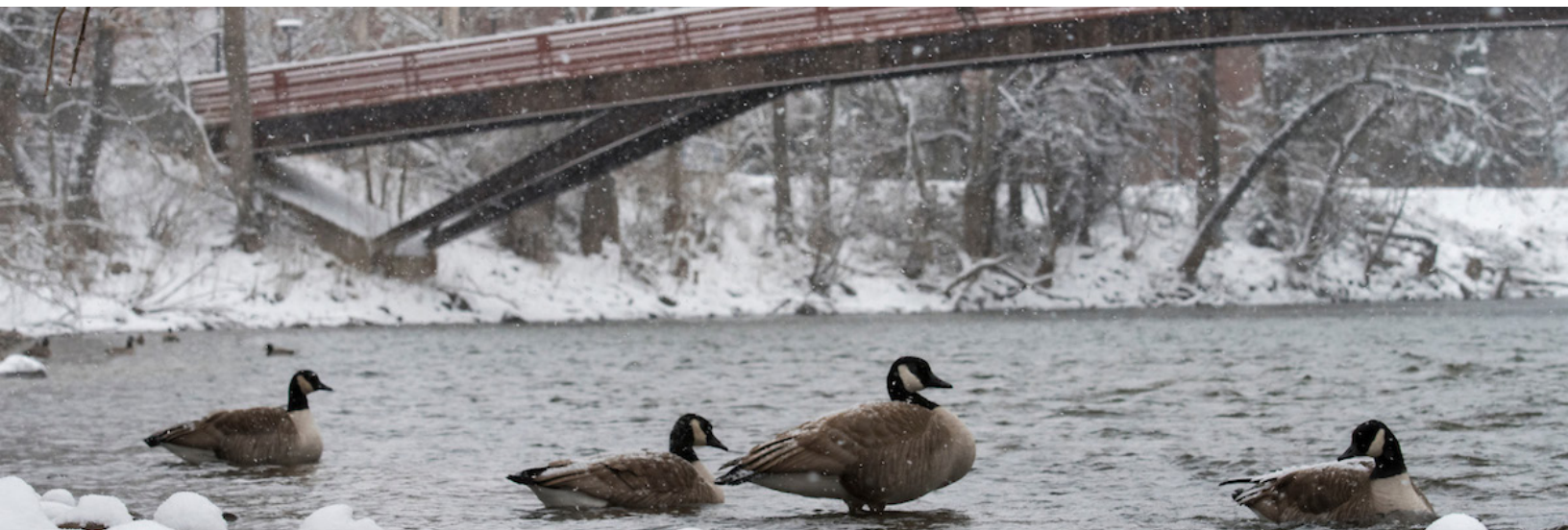
Research Associate McAllister Hall recently partnered with IPI client Bluum to conduct a webinar with charter school leaders across the state. School leaders were taught efficient ways to identify student subgroups in their schools needing more support using data from the Idaho Reading Indicator. McAllister also introduced Tableau in the webinar. Tableau is a free resource used frequently by IPI to create high-quality data visuals.

NEWS

[“Dr. Cheong Kim and Dr. Sanghee Park Publish in the International Journal of Public Administration”](#)

Idaho Policy Institute News, February 17, 2021

[“IPI Director Participates in National COVID Conversations Panel”](#) Idaho Policy Institute News, March 4, 2021



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