

Greater Wellington's

TRAVEL PLAN PROGRAMME



Choosing
sustainable
transport

October 2008

Introduction

This guide has been developed to assist travel plan coordinators develop an appropriate Communication Plan for their organisation as part of Greater Wellington's Travel Plan Programme.

Greater Wellington Regional Council gratefully acknowledges the Auckland Regional Transport Authority (ARTA) for their assistance in the development of Greater Wellington's Travel Plan Programme processes and guidelines.

The communication guide is designed to help:

- Clarify the role of communications within the project
- Give you tips and ideas of strategies, tools, and tactics
- Give you ideas as to how to communicate through the different phases of the project
- Your Communication Plan does not need to be shared with Greater Wellington however it is strongly recommended that a Communication Plan is prepared at the beginning of your travel plan process. You may choose to follow this guide or use communication guidelines from your organisation.

Ping Sim
Sustainable Transport Planner
Transport Strategy Implementation

Version 1.4

© Greater Wellington Regional Council
March 2007
Last updated October 2008

For more information contact Ping Sim on:

Ph: (04) 382 7959
Email: ping.sim@gw.govt.nz

Contents

Introduction	i
Overview	1
How to communicate	1
Develop key messages	3
Communications tools	4
Generic Communication Plan	5
Implementation and on-going evaluation	8

1. Overview

Increasing awareness and understanding of the Travel Plan process, its goal and objectives will:

- Increase overall involvement and goodwill
- Improve and expand ownership of the Travel Plan
- Increase enthusiasm, acceptance and a will to change.

There are three key communication elements that will assist you to get the best out of your travel plan:

1. Begin communication as early as possible. Communication takes place throughout the entire project, from when the project is initiated through to when implementation is complete and the project is in the continuous improvement phase.
2. Develop a clear framework for communication. It is essential that people involved in or affected by the Travel Plan process understand the benefits and feel fully engaged, listened to and able to influence the outcomes.
3. Communication needs to be owned and managed by the organisation. It is important that the key messages and methods of communication support the culture within your organisation and meet the needs of your stakeholders. If your organisation has staff responsible for communication or marketing it is important to get them involved from the start – bring them onto the project team.

2. How to communicate

Below is an outline of the steps required to form a Communication Plan:

1. Identify your goal.

What do you want to do? The general goal of all Travel Plans is to achieve a voluntary reduction in car use. It is good practice to set a specific target (eg. reduce single occupant car commuting by 10%). Your organisation may also have its own goals (eg. carpark management, corporate sustainability)

2. Determine your objective.

For example, if the goal is to achieve a voluntary reduction in car use, the specific communications objectives can be broken down as follows:

- Influence: Stakeholders are more aware of the impact of their travel choice, and the benefits of reducing car use.
- Question: Some stakeholders begin to question their underlying assumptions about car use.
- Intention: On average, stakeholders feel more positive about sustainable transport choices, and less positive about car use.

- Behaviour Change: Some staff and management (eg. 10%) have stopped driving to work and chosen another way to travel.

3. Identify your audiences.

You need to know who you're trying to communicate with.

There are usually two key audiences: your primary stakeholders: (the people who are directly affected by the Travel Plan), and the secondary stakeholders (the people who are indirectly affected by the Travel Plan).

Below is an overview of the audiences, which can if necessary be broken down further:.

Primary stakeholders:

- Senior management
- Staff
- Human Resources/ Recruitment/ Relocation teams
- Fleet Management
- Internal and External Communications teams
- Facilities/ Property Management
- Environmental Management/ Corporate (Social) Responsibility teams
- Tertiary students (Tertiary Travel Plans)
- Hospital outpatients (Hospital Travel Plans).

Secondary stakeholders:

- Suppliers
- Visitors
- Customers/Clients
- Regional and Local Councils
- Neighbouring organisations
- Local residents
- Known Local advocacy groups

3. Develop key messages

What do people need to know and understand? What you communicate to people - and how you say it - will influence behaviour. Below are some ideas, which can be adapted to suit your Travel Plan audiences.

Key message ideas for primary stakeholders

- Driving is expensive
- Benefits to you of driving less often are:
 - less stress
 - can save money on carparking and travel costs
 - increased activity levels
 - improve the environment
- Our organisation is undertaking a travel plan project to look at transport issues. This will create benefits to you including:
 - [xxx] incentives (if the organisation is considering these)
 - more transport choices and more transport flexibility
 - a forum for addressing problems related to transport
- Benefits to the organisation
 - Helps [organisation xx] to meet corporate environmental and social responsibility goals
 - Helps [organisation xx] to provide a better working environment and better travel choices for you
- Your input into our travel plan project is essential.

Key message ideas for secondary stakeholders

- [organisation xx] is trying to improve traffic congestion around the site.
- This plan will allow [organisation xx] to be environmentally responsible and a constructive member of the community
- This plan will make it easier to travel to and around [organisation x] business and sites
- It will also allow [organisation xx] to provide a better service

4. Communications tools

What is the best way to get your messages across to the intended audiences? This varies and depends on a variety of things including:

- Level of understanding
- Project phase
- Importance of timeliness
- Degree of motivation and goodwill
- The specific goals of your Travel Plan
- Budget
- Availability/ access to audiences.

When audiences are less accessible/ can't divert time from their own schedules (e.g. students, hospital visitors and outpatients) indirect tools are better so they can access the information in their own time.

Below is an overview of various communications tools:

Tool	What it's good for	Description
Phone calls/ one on one meetings	Direct targeted communication. Conveying complex messages discussing involvement, highlighting issues to be addressed /solving disputes,	N/A
Group emails	Direct targeted communication. Almost instant for communication, good to ensure everyone is contacted.	Can also include mini-newsletters, promotions and competitions. Can be done quickly and communicate urgent items
Focus meetings/ presentations	Direct targeted communication. Allows key messages to be conveyed, complex ideas and gives an opportunity for discussion	Can be held in small targeted groups or large company-wide events depending on outcome desired
Newsletters, posters and leaflets	Indirect communication, longer lasting for communication which is not particularly time dependent	Paper-based promotional material is accessible by those without e-mail Intranet access. Regular features within existing staff publications and e – newsletters can be established at no cost.
Letters	Direct targeted communication. Good to ensure everyone contacted	N/A
Intranet	Targeted communication. Good for on-going communications offering an easy central reference point for staff. Also good for keeping a historic log of staff communications	A dedicated <u>travel page</u> within the organisation's site, or simply adding to an existing page. Include travel information specific to the workplace location. It is also an ideal place to set up links to www.metlink.org.nz , the public transport route and schedule information site.

Internet	General communication.	Establishing similar links to the Internet will also assist in promoting travel options to customers, visitors and stakeholders.
External media (press/TV/radio)	General communication. Good for boosting morale and reputation.	Involving outside media can be of great use in promoting both to staff, stakeholders and the public. Press articles, radio and TV coverage often carry far more weight than material produced in-house
Presentations	Direct targeted communication. Good to convey complex messages when there is little understanding, much interest and questions are expected	Prepare a presentation pack, featuring overhead slides and guidance notes, for colleagues to use when addressing team meetings or staff induction courses or promoting its successes to external stakeholders.
Promotional events	Targeted communication. Good for boosting interest, and involvement.	Travel shows, Open Days, Launches can be an effective promotional tool. Participation in corporate challenges can generate both staff and media interest.
Incentives and competition prizes	Targeted communication. Good for boosting interest, and involvement.	Competitions are great for getting people involved and raising promotions. Using incentives for the survey improves staff participation and leads to a higher return rate.

5. Communications Plan

Your Communication Plan should outline communications strategies and tactics i.e. what you communicate, to whom, when and how. The plan will vary depending on the audience, timings and project outcomes.

Below is a very generic plan that can be adapted to fit your organisation's needs.

Generic Travel Plan Communication Plan:

Aim	Strategy	Audience	Tactics	Example
Set-up				
<p>Get management commitment</p> <p>Get staff interested and understanding the potential project</p>	<p>Introduce concept of travel plan and potential project ahead</p> <p>Encourage staff to participate</p>	<p>Primary Stakeholders: Staff, Tertiary Students, Hospital Outpatients.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present context issues – why a travel plan is needed • Present Greater Wellington' s Travel Plan programme • Establish a Question and Answer channel 	<p>Talk at staff and management meetings about the travel plan.</p> <p>Write up answers to frequently asked questions and publish these on the intranet.</p>
Research				
<p>Get staff involved, maintain momentum and increase support</p>	<p>Get staff involved in all aspects of the research process, especially the survey.</p> <p>Consult with key stakeholder groups to identify barriers and solutions</p> <p>Convey current travel behaviour and compare against targets</p>	<p>All primary stakeholders</p> <p>Representatives of secondary stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing campaign building up to the launch of the survey. • Promote incentives for participation • Consultation with external user groups • Present results at staff seminar • Communicate results to stakeholders. 	<p>Leverage existing channels to promote participation in the research. Incentives are a good idea to raise participation levels.</p> <p>Consultation techniques should be tailored to the specific group.</p>
Planning				
<p>Address any misconceptions and attitudes highlighted from the research.</p> <p>Continue to hold staff interest and enthusiasm</p>	<p>Develop key messages to change perception/attitudes</p> <p>Communicate progress and timeframes for future stages</p> <p>Engage staff through creative communication – keep it fun</p>	<p>Primary Stakeholders:</p> <p>Primary and Secondary Stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing updates • Creative communications such as internet home page messages and tips. Email contests. • Poster Campaigns. 	<p>Use of existing internal and external communication channels are good for this – intranet, newsletters, list serves, bulletin boards, staff meetings.</p> <p>Creative email campaigns with incentives are a good idea eg. a prize for the best pic of yourself traveling to work.</p>
<p>Publish and promote the</p>	<p>Develop a user friendly version of the Travel Plan action plan</p>	<p>Primary Stakeholders</p> <p>Secondary Stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication of decision and actions 	<p>Use of existing internal and external communication channels. Electronic or print materials outlining the key</p>

Travel Plan			• Distribution of information materials	actions can be distributed to stakeholders.
Implementation				
Launch Travel Plan and communicate new policy and programmes.	<p>Launch Travel Plan</p> <p>Promote new policy changes, new initiatives and actions.</p> <p>Help users understand how to use and access new programmes, incentives and activities.</p> <p>Help users understand what they need to do</p>	Primary Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special events • High profile launch of the plan, involving the media. • A 'travel to work' fair. • Special events such as car-free days within your organisation. • Open Days with information displays • Travel to Work contests • Information packs on travel plan policies and programmes • Staff conversation with customers, stakeholders. 	Launch events can include stalls and displays with partner merchants offering discounts on relevant products.
Gain widespread support and credit for doing your part in mitigating environmental and congestion issues	<p>Staff discuss initiatives with clients and stakeholders</p> <p>Gain broad-based support for Travel Plan and get credit for doing your part to improving the environment, congestion etc</p>	Secondary Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use your partnership with Greater Wellington to differentiate your organisation from competitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media Campaign • Public meeting • Newsletters • Intranet • Publicity material
Completion and Continuous Improvement				
Maintain staff interest and enthusiasm Promote evaluation and monitoring	<p>Ongoing internal communication / marketing programme</p> <p>Regular (eg. annual) surveys of travel behaviour.</p>	Primary Stakeholders: Staff		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display boards • Induction packs • Introduce new measures • Success stories • Competitions • Report on progress, issues

6. Implementation and on-going evaluation

When implementing the Communication Plan a simple table like the one below can be used to ensure the right messages reach the right people at the right time from the right person in the right way.

Once the communication has happened, the outcome should be evaluated. This can be done by word of mouth/ feedback sheets, reviewing response rates or a Question and Answer sheet. Evaluation will help pick up any trends i.e. where people's understanding is good/ bad and highlight what the more effective communication tools are.

Implementation Plan					
Audiences	Specific Messages	Tactics/ Channels	Timing	Responsibility	Evaluation

General tips for good communications:

- Be clear what you are communicating, who to, and why
- Listen to what people's concerns are and address them early i.e. deal with risks before they become issues
- Keep the communication regular and the messages consistent
- Be honest, don't over promise
- Make it fun so people want to be involved.