

**Author:** Rae-Anne Kurucz, Sustainable Transport Leader Auckland Regional Transport Authority

**Co Author:** Brent Bielby, Waitakere Central Travel Plan Champion, Waitakere City Council

**Presenters:** Rae-Anne Kurucz and Brent Bielby

**Title:** The TravelWise- Workplaces Process- *a programme for implementing workplace travel plans in the Auckland Region.*

Auckland Regional Transport Authority, 21 Pitt Street, Private Bag 92 236, Auckland, NZ

Telephone: +64 9 379 4422 extn 9038 Fax: +64 9 379 4423

E-Mails: [Rae-Anne.Kurucz@arta.co.nz](mailto:Rae-Anne.Kurucz@arta.co.nz); [Brent.Bielby@waitakere.govt.nz](mailto:Brent.Bielby@waitakere.govt.nz)

## Abstract

*Auckland Regional Transport Authority (ARTA) sets up partnerships with Auckland-based workplaces to implement travel plans. ARTA offers workplaces a standard, quality assured "how to" guide" (the TravelWise-workplaces process) and in return for following this process, organisations gain access to a suite of high-value travel plan tools such as travel surveys, rideshare software, personal journey planning services etc. ARTA is capturing transport data through the process and ensuring that travel plans in the Region meet their quality expectations and deliver results ie reduce solo car driving.*

*The high value tools make travel plans more affordable to workplaces, and the process (and associated training) is closing the skills gap, making travel plans more accessible. The Auckland region Sustainable Transport Plan sets the scene for a co-ordinated, controlled roll out of travel plans across the Auckland region.*

*Waitakere City Council is a TravelWise organisation. The council joined the ARTA TravelWise programme in November 2005. The Waitakere Central Travel Plan (located in Henderson) is the first workplace travel plan in Waitakere and aims to be an example for other workplaces in the Henderson area. Through the travel plan the council is now implementing high value initiatives such as Public Transport subsidies for staff, car pooling, car park management, cycle facilities and ongoing staff communications. This paper is about ARTA's TravelWise-workplaces programme and a case study of its implementation with Waitakere City Council.*

## Introduction

The Auckland region is the most populated and fastest growing region in New Zealand; it covers 6,546 square kilometres, houses over 1.3 million people, provides 600,000 jobs and is home to over 650,000 cars (one of the highest levels of car ownership in the world). This combined with dispersed land use patterns, a rapid growth and chronic under-investment in the transport network is causing traffic and congestion problems at an estimated cost of \$1 billion per annum.

A key conclusion of Auckland's Regional Land Transport Strategy, and of transport strategies and studies worldwide, is that "building roads cannot, on its own, reduce traffic congestion or deliver a transport system that meets wider environmental and social goals."<sup>1</sup> (ARTA, 2006)

### **Auckland Regional Transport Authority**

Auckland Regional Transport Authority (ARTA) was established in 2004 with a specific task to:

*"Plan, fund, develop and operate an integrated regional land transport system that contributes to an integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable transport solution for the Auckland region"*<sup>2</sup> (ARTA, 2006)

To help carry out this task, ARTA has developed a Sustainable Transport Plan, which comprises a range of travel demand management programmes including the *workplace travel plans*.

*Workplace travel plans* target the commuter journey. They aim to increase the use of buses, trains, ferries, bicycles and other sustainable transport options, reduce the dependency on the car and eliminate unnecessary commuter journeys. Workplace travel plans can address all transport-related activities for an organisation therefore improving the management of commuter and business travel, supply and deliver movements and the corporate fleet.

The ten-year target for the ARTA workplace travel plan programme is to:

*“Achieve a reduction of 3,500 cars from the morning peak, by working with organisations totalling 90,000 employees.”*<sup>3</sup>(ARTA 2006)

To achieve this target is ARTA’s has a key role in facilitating the uptake of workplace travel plans across the Auckland region. In its Sustainable Transport Plan ARTA states that it *“aims to complete 30 workplace travel plans [in the Auckland region] per year for the next 10 years.”*<sup>4</sup>(ARTA, 2006).

In 2006, ARTA developed a comprehensive “how to” package to provide workplaces with the guidance and tools they need to design and implement a workplace travel plan.

## **The TravelWise Workplace programme**

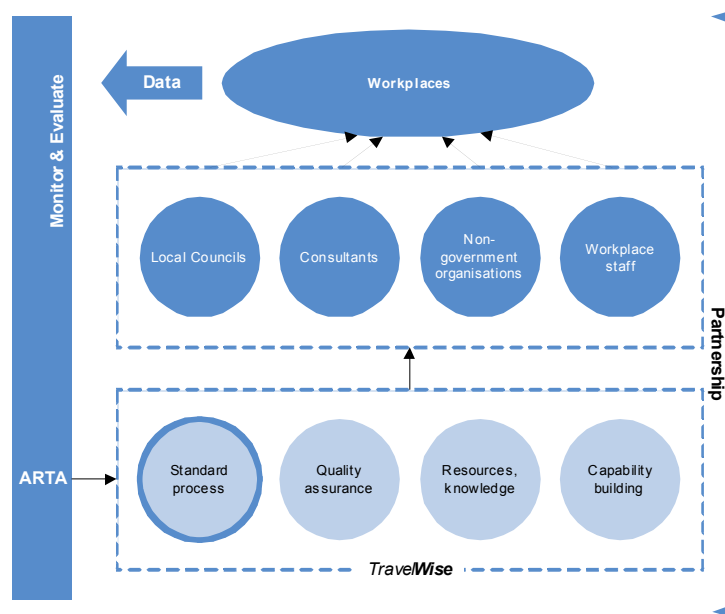
An international review of the literature identified numerous best practice guides, case studies and research papers, but a detailed “how to” quality-assured process for designing and delivering a travel plan was missing. In addition, ARTA recognised that there was a significant skills gap in New Zealand in designing and implementing travel plans.

ARTA saw an opportunity to encourage workplaces to implement travel plans by providing them with the “know how” and reducing the cost of delivering travel plans. In 2006, ARTA developed a comprehensive package to guide workplaces in designing and implementing a workplace travel plan. The package includes a standard process, planning guidance and tools and the provision of high value “travel plan products” such as a business case calculator, online surveys (and analysis), personal journey plan campaign, public transport clinics, and a rideshare programme. The package aims to make travel plans cheaper to deliver and ensure travel plans are of a certain quality.

To ensure sustainability for the programme, ARTA needs to capture consistent transport data from participating workplaces that travel plans. To do this, the *TravelWise-workplace* programme includes a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation component.

### **The TravelWise Partnership**

*TravelWise* begins with the establishment of a voluntary partnership. ARTA forms partnerships with organisations, consultants and territorial local authorities that plan to deliver travel plans in line with the *TravelWise workplace* process. These partnerships embrace the principles of simplicity, integrity, delivering public good and affordability. ARTA’s role in travel planning is shown in **Figure 1**.



**Figure 1:** ARTA's delivery model for travel planning in the Auckland Region.

ARTA's commitment to the partnership is to provide, free of charge, a standard planning process, guidance, advice and a suite of tools to aid in implementation. ARTA aims to make travel plans accessible, affordable and provide the quality assurance that will enhance success.

For ARTA this commitment involves:

- Facilitating learning and growing the skills base
- Increasing the uptake of workplace travel plans across the region
- Becoming a centre of excellence for workplace travel planning
- Making the design and deliver of travel plans more accessible
- Ensuring travel plans are embedded into business practice across the region

For the organisation, the commitment to the partnership involves:

- Appointing a project manager
- Designing and implementing the travel plan in line with the *TravelWise-workplace* process
- Implementing and funding travel plan actions
- Agreeing to monitor and evaluate the performance of their travel plan
- Putting in place a process to continuously improve the plan over time

## TravelWise workplace Process

The *TravelWise workplace* process combines Project Management Institute (PMI) methodology with travel plan practice. The application of the *TravelWise workplace* process is consistent from travel plan to travel plan, but its flexibility ensures that the unique needs of the organisation are reflected in individual travel plans.

The process is divided into five phases: set-up; research; plan; implement and complete, after which the travel plan enters a continuous improvement cycle. At the end of each phase, ARTA performs a quality review on the outputs to establish whether the travel plan is on track. When the quality criteria are met, the organisation is provided with the tools to help deliver the next phase. **Figure 2** describes briefly the tasks within each phase and the quality criteria for each phase.

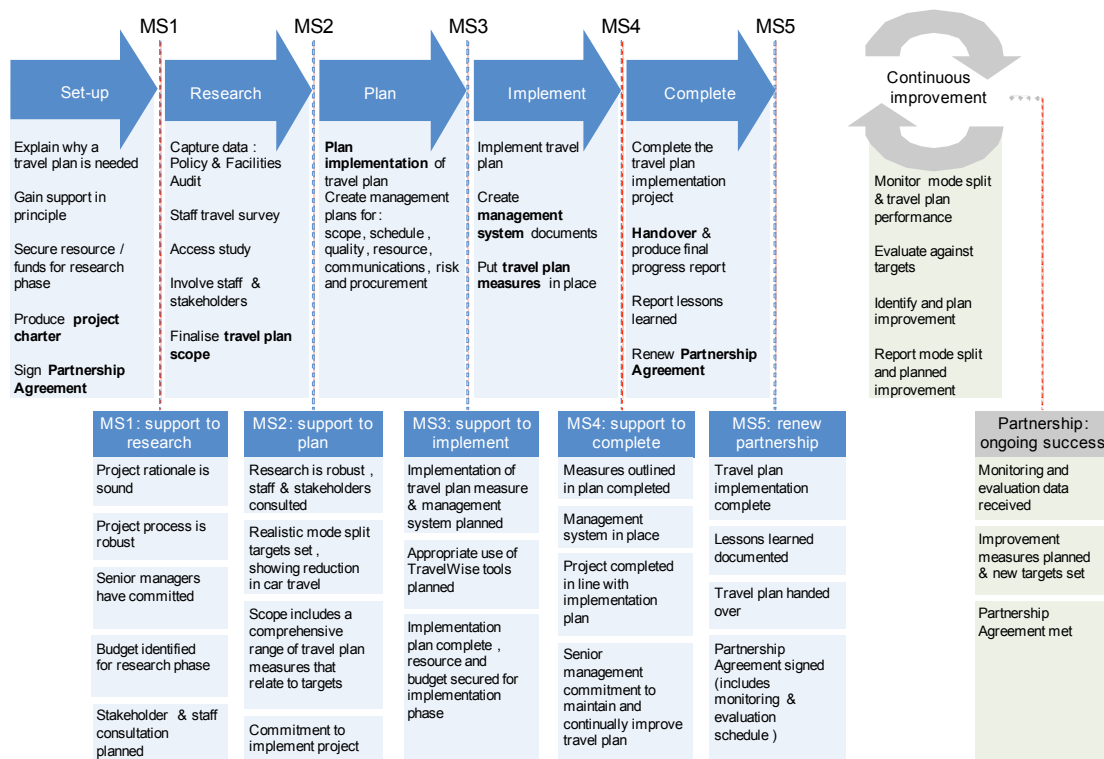


Figure 3 Overview of the TravelWise-workplaces process, with descriptions of each phase and milestone

## Theory in action - Waitakere City Council TravelWise Plan: A case study

The Waitakere Central travel plan is the first workplace travel plan in Waitakere. The project was designed and implemented over an eight-month period and is one of the first travel plans to be completed in line with the TravelWise process.

### Set up

Stakeholders were consulted and their input used to create a project charter that outlined what the travel plan project aimed to achieve and described the sorts of measures it would contain. An internal project sponsor was identified along with an internal travel plan champion, and a travel plan steering group was established.

## Milestone 1: Support to Research

The project charter and a plan for the research phase were submitted to ARTA for review in November 2005. ARTA approved the project charter and research phase plan provided the TravelWise survey tools free of charge.

## Research

The research phase began in April 2006 and consisted of the following initiatives:

### Facilities and Policies Review

This review identified the current facilities (e.g. cycle storage, showers, numbers of car parks on site) and policies (employment contracts). The review provided recommendations on the facilities at the new building, pool bikes, and to address the inclusion of parking in remuneration contracts.

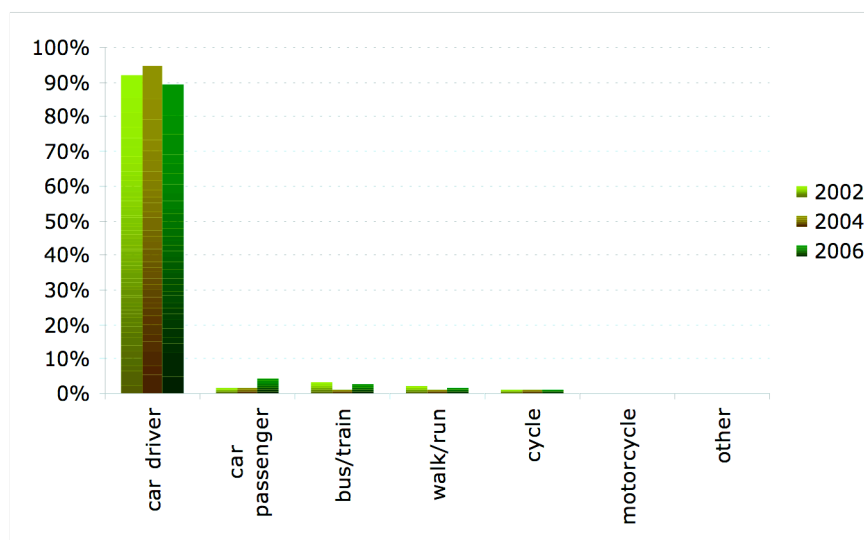
### Sustainable Transport Access Review

The sustainable transport access review analysed the ability of the existing sustainable transport network to support staff commuting to Waitakere Central. The results of this review indicated that 48.4% of staff had fair access to sustainable transport. Broken down this identified that:

- 4.4% live within walking distance - 2km
- 2% live within 400m of an off-road cycleway and less than 4 km cycle
- 7% have access to rail (live within 800m of a rail station)
- 35% have access to buses (live within 500m of a bus stop with a direct service - maximum 30-minute journey time)

### Staff Travel Survey

The travel survey captured mode split for each day of the week and asked staff why they chose to travel the way they do and what would encourage them to use sustainable modes. The survey was promoted to each staff by a personalised email from the CEO, and ten \$25 Warehouse vouchers were offered as a random draw prize. Over 70% of staff completed the survey. Since the Council had conducted similar surveys in previous years the travel patterns were able to be compared.



Staff travel survey results 2002 – 2006

## Staff Focus Groups

Following completion of the access review and travel survey, staff members were invited to attend a focus group to put forward ideas about sustainable transport and to vote on how staff parking should be managed. A total of 119 staff attended, representing nearly 20% of staff. Staff appreciated the opportunity to be involved in the decisions and contributed new and unique ideas for the travel plan.

## Setting Targets

The results of the research were used to set mode split targets for the travel plan. Waitakere City Council is aiming to reduce single occupancy car driving from 87% to 75% in the first year of operation at Waitakere Central.

## Scoping the Travel Plan

After targets had been set, a workshop was held to agree the scope of the travel plan and the budget required to deliver the travel plan. The steering group agreed on a range of measures including: walking and cycle maps of the local area, bicycles in the fleet management system, showers and lockers for cyclists and walkers, support to help people car pool, subsidy for staff using passenger transport, allocated a car parks for mobility card holders, and a car park management system with preference given to car pool groups and then to space sharers.

## Milestone 2: Support to plan

At milestone 2, the results of the research and the travel plan scope were reported to ARTA. ARTA reviewed the research and scope, and supported the project moving to the planning phase.

## Plan

A project plan was created to set out how the scope, schedule, cost, quality, staff, marketing and communications, risk and procurement would be managed on the project. This detailed document was used in the implementation phase to keep the project on track.

## Milestone 3: Support to implement

At milestone 3, the project plan was reviewed by ARTA and the project moved into the implementation phase.

## Implementation

The measures outlined in the scope were put in place. Staff were kept informed of initiative in the travel plan with a range of communications. In addition to the measures outlined below, staff asked for management for support to leave on time to catch buses and the train and to meet car pool arrangements.

### Communication measures

- Staff Intranet

A new travel plan section was set up on the econet and is regularly promoted and kept up-to-date with any new developments in the travel plan and staff can send feedback to the travel plan team via the econet.

- Global emails

Staff were informed about travel plan progress, key dates and important issues with global emails. These were used throughout implementation to promote the launch of the travel plan



section on the staff econet, and inform staff about event dates and to advise staff of when to apply for car parks.

- Desk drop

The travel plan was launched to staff via a desk drop, which provided an overview of the travel plan and directed staff to the econet for further information.

- The travel plan champion

The workplace travel champion is available to speak with staff and respond to enquiries for regarding the travel plan. Having an accessible and friendly person in the role of workplace travel plan champion proved invaluable.

- Staff induction

All staff members moving to Waitakere Central attend an induction by the travel plan champion workshop to familiarise themselves with the new building and options for transport.

#### Sustainable transport measures

- Walkers

The staff desk drop and the econet include maps of the local area and umbrellas were made available for staff to borrow at various exit points in the building. Plans are in place to work with “Safe Waitakere” on initiatives to assist in the perception of safety in the area.

- Cyclists

For cyclists, a secure, sheltered room for bike storage (accommodating 20 bicycles) is located next to a staff entrance. Changing facilities, shower and lockers for clothes storage and four showers are in both changing rooms.

The fleet booking system now includes pool bikes, which staff can book for business trips and for cycling at lunchtime. The econet includes a number of tips on cycle maintenance and discounts available for staff at a local bike shop.

- Passenger transport

The Council provides a 50 percent subsidy for staff travelling to and from work by passenger transport. This subsidy is available as a short-term transitional measure to encourage and support a behaviour change to more sustainable modes of transport.

Bus and rail providers provided some free travel initiatives for staff who had not used the bus or train in the past and wished to try their hand at commuting by passenger transport.

Public Transport Clinics were held at the site with ARTA’s Maxx team to promote and information staff on public transport options.

In addition, pre-paid passenger transport tickets are available from a central location for staff to use to travel to business meetings.

- Carpool groups

A large map of the Auckland region was put up in the Civic Centre prior to the move. Staff interested in car pooling put stickers on the map to show where they lived. Contact details were provided so that other staff members interested in car pooling could contact them. A ‘car pool section’ was also added to the staff econet.

Priority for car pooling and space sharing was deemed to be the fairest and most practical option to implement, and reflects the principles of the eco city. Car pool groups were awarded points for the number of people in the group and the number of days they were car pooling. As an incentive to try to car-pool, all successful car-pool groups were awarded a parking space for the entire week (ie even if they only car-pooled one day a week, they would be able to share that space between them for the rest of the week). This meant that people were encouraged to car pool even if it was just a couple of days a week.

An emergency ride home scheme also operates to ensure that staff in an official car pool group have an alternative way home to ensure they are not stranded at work if an emergency occurs.

- Car park management

The staff parking spaces on-site are all numbered and allocated to car-pool and space-share groups. This process is essentially self monitoring - administration staff will only be notified (by a permit holder) when a vehicle is illegally parked an allocated parking space. Staff are encouraged to offer their space to colleagues when it is not required.

***The actual cost of car parks***

*Car parks have an approximate cost of \$3,500 – \$4,500 per parking space. Waitakere City Council reduced car parking by 83 car park spaces from what was originally required under the district plan. This was justified in part due to the location of the new building to passenger transport services and also the commitment by Council to implement a workplace travel plan (this became a resource consent requirement). This resulted in a total saving to the Council of \$290,000 - \$374,000 (approximate cost only). Additional savings associated with the reduced parking include ongoing maintenance costs and the less tangible costs associated with lost land development potential.*

**Milestone 4: Support to complete**

At milestone 4, the completed travel plan was handed over to the Travel Champion who has the role of managing the ongoing lifecycle of the travel plan as part of overall job responsibilities. Progress reports outlining implementation were provided to ARTA alongside a report on the lessons learned.

## Continuous improvement

**Milestone 5 Renew Partnership**

The next step for the Waitakere Central Travel Plan is to enhance its agreement with the TravelWise process to agree a monitoring and evaluation schedule.

Success of the travel plan will be monitored against the targets through an evaluation survey. The mode split (i.e. number of staff travelling by each mode of transport), and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions relating to staff commuting will be reported each year in the annual report. The Council intends to continually improving the travel plan over time.

The Waitakere Central travel plan is an organic plan. New ideas and initiatives will be implemented each year. Several initiatives are already proposed for the future, including investigating teleworking opportunities, the possibility of an online car park management system and a marketing campaign at the completion of the Henderson section of rail double tracking.



## Conclusion and Next steps for TravelWise workplaces

The TravelWise workplace programme is less than a year old but it is anticipated that the benefits of the programme (modal shift and a reduction in vehicle kilometres) will begin to be demonstrated within the next year. However, indicative benefits are demonstrated by the results of ARTA's first *pilot travel plan* developed in partnership with Vodafone.

### **The *icommute* project**

The success of the plan is shown by the numbers of Vodafone staff who drive alone to work, which has reduced from 52% to 45.5%. 20% of staff now arrive at work by passenger transport, up from 13% in 2004.

The Travel Plan has saved car parking costs and provided benefits for employees, but the major benefits are to the wider community. This fits perfectly with Vodafone's corporate culture of "passion for the world around us".

The community benefits realised by the Vodafone travel plan are valued at \$130,000 per year<sup>1</sup>, made up of:

- Reduced congestion which saves other road users \$64,000 per year
- Reduced road crashes due to reduced car use valued at \$21,000 per year
- Environmental and health benefits from reduced car use valued at \$45,000 per year

The next step for *TravelWise- workplaces* is to make effective use of the comprehensive data that is collected by individual travel plans and evaluate the effectiveness of the programme. ARTA has developed the evaluation and monitoring components of the process but the effects of travel plans – travel behaviour change - take place over time and results are not immediate.

Over twenty organisations are currently TravelWise partners delivering workplace travel plans in the Auckland region. The organisations vary in size and nature. As the TravelWise programme is voluntary, these organisations have recognised the need for their own organisation to mitigate their transport impact and make it easier for staff (and visitors) to get to their location. Like Waitakere Central these travel plan organisations developing their travel plans have demonstrated the value added by the TravelWise programme.

## References

1. Sustainable Transport Plan, 2006, Auckland Regional Transport Authority, p 5
2. [www.arta.co.nz](http://www.arta.co.nz), Auckland Regional Transport Authority, August 2006
3. Sustainable Transport Plan, 2006, Auckland Regional Transport Authority, p 38
4. Sustainable Transport Plan, 2006, Auckland Regional Transport Authority, p 38