town planning services

Version	Adoption	Comment
1	6 July 2010 Council Item SC174	Final – No objections received during advertising.
1	1 July 2011 Council Item SC001	Final – Readopted under the new City of Greater Geraldton.
2	15 December 2015 Council Item DRS242	Readopted under the new LPS No. 1.

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1.0   CITATION

This is a local planning policy prepared under the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* and the City of Greater Geraldton Local Planning Scheme No. 1 ('the Scheme'). It may be cited as the *Travel Plans local planning policy*.

The local government may prepare a local planning policy in respect of any matter related to the planning and development of the Scheme area. In making a determination under the Scheme the local government must have regard to each relevant local planning policy to the extent that the policy is consistent with the Scheme.

2.0   BACKGROUND

Travel plans have been used successfully for many years, whether secured through a planning process or prepared on a voluntary basis. They are an important tool for promoting more sustainable travel (e.g. walking, cycling, public transport) and help reduce single occupancy car use.

They also encourage effective use of current transport networks and support their enhancement. Travel plans are now being used to secure the provision of more sustainable travel choices, both to new developments and to extensions to existing sites, whether their use. But there is still scope to make travel planning still more integral to the activities of the local government and developer alike.

Preparing a travel plan has several commercial benefits to the developer whilst also contributing to a company's environmental credentials and individual worker's health and wellbeing.

Early preparation of a travel plan can promote a partnership between the local government and a developer in achieving better planning outcomes. A reduction in land area committee previously to car parking, for example, can also free up land for other uses with greater commercial or public benefit.

A good travel plan has multiple benefits to the end-user and local community that can be marketed to promote a new development or change to an existing site. Travel plans are important for major new development in order to:

- Support increased choice of travel modes;
- Promote and achieve access by more sustainable modes;
- Respond to the growing concern about the environment, congestion, pollution and road safety; and
- Promote a partnership between the local government and the development in 'place making'.

3.0   OBJECTIVES

a)   To make travel planning more integral to the design of development and approval process.

b)   To encourage local residents and workers travelling to and from a development to:

- Reduce pollution especially carbon emissions (e.g. by reducing car use);
- Increase physical activity (e.g. by using alternative transport such as walking and cycling;

- Increase the use of public transport; and
- Increase the use for expensive transport infrastructure (such as car parks).

c) To encourage a long-term approach towards sustainable travel by reducing car use.

d) To encourage effective use of current transport networks and support their enhancement.

e) To provide criteria for what types of development require travel plans.

4.0   POLICY MEASURES

4.1   What is a Travel Plan?

Travel plans seek to bring about a mode shift away from single occupancy car use for the journey to and from a location, workplace or venue thus increasing the use of more sustainable alternatives such as public transport, walking, cycling and car pooling. Travel plans offer the opportunity to encourage people to think more about how they travel and provide them with the infrastructure and information they need to make more informed travel choices.

A travel plan is not a tool to correct traffic and transport impacts arising out of development although it can mitigate them. Moreover, a travel plan is a mechanism to improve overall accessibility to the site.

4.2   Benefits of a Travel Plan

While travels plans help reduce car use which brings environmental benefits there are many other reasons why you should develop and implement a travel plan including:

- Increasing the actual and perceived accessibility and marketability of your site;
- Reducing car parking required which may save you money in land purchase, development and management costs;
- Staff recruitment and retention can be improved if your site accessible by a range of transport options; and
- Encouraging and enabling walking, cycling and public transport use will increase physical activity, improving health and wellbeing of the staff/residents.

4.3   When is a Travel Plan required?

In addition to the requirements of the Scheme a travel plan may be required where your development (in the opinion of the local government) is considered to cause unacceptable traffic impacts, and therefore may be refused, then a travel plan may help mitigate these impacts.

Additionally if you want to reduce on-site parking provision, then a travel plan may help you justify reduce parking and demonstrate how parking will be managed.

4.4   Content of a Travel Plan

The following information provides an outline of the steps to be taken when developing a travel plan. You will need to decide on the extent of information you can provide the local government and this will depend on the stage of the development detail and if the occupier is known or not. The travel plan will be unique to your site and proposed development, however the following should give you a guide to what you should include and what the local government will be looking for when they review your application.

4.4.1   Background

Explain the site location, the type of premises and floor area, how staff/residents will probably (or do) travel and the transport options available. Details about the building and facilities available should also be included. When the travel plan is evaluated you will be expected to have covered:

a)   Type and size of development;

a)   Number of employees (estimated or certain);

b)   The expected date of building occupation, or the date in which the building was occupied;

c)   Details of on-site facilities including: cycle parking, showers, change rooms, pedestrian and cycle paths and parking spaces, including parking management measures;

d)   Details of off-site facilities including: public transport stops and service information, local bike paths and lanes and footpaths including crossing points;

e)   The expected mode split (how people will travel to and from the site in the absence of a travel plan);

f)   The impact (e.g. emissions) and risks (e.g. health) and if that mode split was not changed; and

g)   Information from a staff or residents survey, if the premises are occupied.

4.4.2   Objectives

You need to clearly state the objectives of your travel plan. The objectives should fit within the overall aim of the travel plan – reduce pollution, increase physical activity, reduce demand for expensive transport infrastructure – but may focus on other outcomes such as increasing bicycle use.

Your plan will be measured against the objectives that you set so you should carefully consider what is possible to achieve. For example, if you are located close to good pathway infrastructure and your workforce generally lives locally it would be appropriate to identify objectives based on increasing walking and cycling.

4.4.3   Targets

Your travel plan needs to include a set of targets against which your plan will be measures and evaluated. The target should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-based.

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4.4.4   Incentives, Initiatives and Actions

Detail on how you expect to achieve your targets is an important part of your travel plan. This section of the plan will guide you in the implementation of the travel plan. Some actions will be easier to realise that others which may take longer to achieve. You may need the help of others to implement some actions, such as improvements to a local bus stop. You will need to consider these factors in your implementation plan and when selecting the actions.

The initiatives you select should include 'carrots', 'sticks' and 'measures' to bring about a behaviour change. At a new building it will be easier if 'sticks' such as parking controls are in place from the outset. Facilities to support cycling and walking should also be in place from the day occupation commences. Other incentives ('carrots'), initiatives and actions you may consider include car pooling, information for all staff on alternatives available nearby, interest free loans for bicycles and events to promote alternatives. The list is endless. It will be easier to fund 'carrots' (such as a bike pool) if you put in place 'measures' to account for, and accrue, money saved through reduced car parking costs.

Your travel plan will also need to identify the person responsible for the implementation of the travel plan and the time they will allocate to the task. This person or Travel Plan Coordinator is important to the success of your travel plan. Management support for the travel plan is also important to the success of the plan in achieving its targets and objectives.

4.4.5   Implementation Plan

The implementation plan will identify which actions and initiatives will be put in place and who will be responsible for their implementation. It will not be possible to implement all the actions and initiatives at once and some may take a relatively long time to realise. Where the development plans are at an early stage, on-site facilities should be incorporated so they are available to the building occupants from the outset.

4.4.6   Monitoring Plan

Your travel plan needs to include a monitoring plan. This will state how and when you will revise your travel plan progress against the targets you set out initially. The monitoring plan should incorporate a data collection plan, stating when you will collect data on staff travel and local transport provision.

As part of the development approval you will be required to submit a monitoring report to the local government one year after building occupancy has commenced. The monitoring report will need to identify what activities have taken place and progress relative to your travel plan.

Specifically your monitoring report should contain:

a)   Basic information about the site including what the building use is and how many staff are employed (or residents if residential);

b)   A review of your travel plan objectives and targets;

c)   Detail on data collection undertaken since travel plan was implemented and occupancy commenced;

d)   A comparison between the targets set in the travel plan and the achievement of those targets (mode share is a key target);

e)   Details of the initiatives implemented since occupancy and an assessment of their success in the terms of meeting the travel plan objectives; and

f)   Details of the person responsible for travel plan implementation and the amount of time commit to this task.

4.5   Reference Information

4.5.1   TravelSmart Sunshine Coast – The Green Travel Plan Guide is a resource for organisations wanting to develop and implement their own Green Travel Plans. The contents take you step-by-step through the process with the primary focus on commuter travel to and from workplaces.

4.5.2   TravelSmart Australia brings together the many community and government based programs that are asking Australians to use alternatives to traveling in their private car.

TravelSmart employers pack is designed to be used by Australian employers seeking to encourage their staff to travel to, from and for work in a more sustainable fashion. It draws on the best travel behaviour change techniques from Australia and overseas and empowers workplaces to achieve real and lasting change in the way their staff travel.

5.0   DEFINITIONS

Sustainable means positively contributing to the ability of our City-region's environment, social, governance, economic, and cultural systems to maintain their health and resilience in perpetuity. As it relates to this policy, this means applying principles that reduce pollution, reduce vulnerability to rising energy prices and encourage physical activity.

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