

CASE STUDY: ACTIVE LIVING

Optus relocation



How do 6500 people commute to and from work at Australia's largest corporate campus when the site has only 2002 employee car parking spaces?

Optus Sustainable Transport Strategy

The Optus Sustainable Transport Strategy (OSTS) is an example of a Workplace Travel Plan (WTP) developed to help manage staff travel when Optus employees from nine sites across Sydney were relocated to one newly built campus (Optus City Centre - OCS) Macquarie Park.

A Workplace Travel Plan (WTP) is a business management tool developed by an organisation to make travel to and from the workplace easier for employees, and to reduce dependence on private vehicles and parking space.

The OSTS was developed in-house by Optus with assistance from external consultants to address specific design issues. Detailed strategic planning commenced in 2005, two years before the Optus relocation.

Site Specific Challenges

Detailed development of the transport strategy was shaped by the following site specific factors:

- limitations on the amount of on-site parking (via compulsory Development Approval travel mode share targets) & restricted public parking options
- relatively limited public transport commuting options to Macquarie Park at the time of the relocation
- the high level of familiarity amongst employees (prior to the move) of commuting by public transport, walking and cycling
- concern from employees about their new commute
- local traffic congestion issues
- Optus' vision for a campus with a minimal environmental footprint.

The transport strategy was therefore designed to increase travel choices for employees to commute to OCS, with an emphasis on improving access by sustainable modes of transport.

Conceptual Framework (3 themes)

Three strategic themes make up the transport strategy, each designed to work with and compliment the other:

1. **reduce the need to travel;**
2. **improve non-car travel methods; and**
3. **ensure the most efficient use of car parking spaces.**

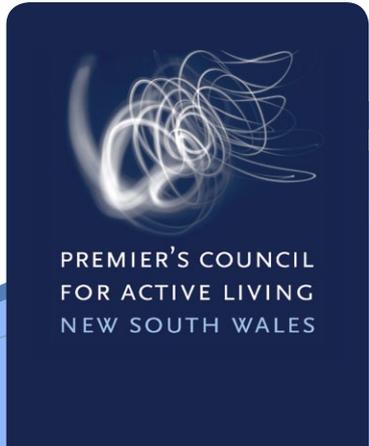
Continued over...



- Comprehensive parking policies
- Allocation by pricing
- Ride sharing
- Advanced car parking systems

- Remote access
- Home mobile and broadband package
- Flexible work guidelines
- Core meeting hours

- Express buses
- Annual travelpass loan scheme
- Public transport promotion
- Active transport events
- Cycling facilities
- Pedestrian audits



Optus relocation *(continued)*

Key Initiatives

A selection of individual measures provide the tools for achieving each theme, including:

1. Reduce the Need to Travel

- location of a childcare centre, gym and a convenience store on site
- broadband and mobile phone discounts for employees to facilitate remote working and support flexible work practices including core hours.

2. Improve Non-car Travel Methods

Cycling:

- additional on-site infrastructure
- establishment of a Bicycle Consultation Group
- involvement in local and state-wide cycling events
- 'Cycle Update' newsletter
- end-of-trip facilities (secure bicycle storage, lockers and showers)

Walking:

- commissioning expert pedestrian audit of local streets
- production of local walking map
- new pedestrian infrastructure (eg: end-of-trip facilities)

Communication and Information:

- online personalised journey planner
- pocket travel guide
- employee travel clinics prior to relocation

Public transport:

- reimbursement of public transport costs
- public transport services tailored to meet employee needs

3. Ensure the most efficient use of car parking spaces

- levy to allocate parking according to need
- car share scheme
- car-share car (provided by GoGet) for all employees to use

As staff progressively relocated onto the site, transport strategy measures continued to be enhanced and new initiatives developed in response to employee preferences and transport infrastructure changes.

The transport strategy is now self-funding, using revenue raised through charging for car parking spaces.

Evaluation

Monitoring data shows that the strategy has resulted in a high proportion of commute trips by active travel (walking, cycling and/or public transport) modes, particularly relative to journey to work patterns of other people working in Macquarie Park: *approximately 45% of Optus employees now commute by public transport, walking or cycling compared to 10% of all other employees in the local area (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006).*

Key Learnings

Critical success factors for the transport strategy include:

- in-depth understanding of the 'problem' (based on detailed data analysis)
- clear objectives for the strategy to guide design of the transport strategy and selection of intervention measures
- the unique combination of measures tailored to the specific needs of Optus including disincentives for single occupancy car use (eg. differentiated car parking charges based upon the number of commuters within each car) to encourage the use of more sustainable methods of commuting
- continuous employee engagement
- management and budget commitment
- dedicated staff resources
- hard targets (compulsory Development Application travel mode share targets)

→ Where to for More Information

For the full version of this case study and more, visit the PCAL website at www.pcal.nsw.gov.au/case_studies/optus



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