

Objectives



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Why is it important to set objectives?

Cities are increasingly developing their transport strategies to reflect a wider range of policy objectives. Road user charging is increasingly being considered as an element in such strategies.

Road user charging (RUC) is a controversial policy instrument, and it is therefore important to demonstrate the purposes for which it is being introduced. Moreover, road user charging can serve a range of objectives, including congestion relief, environmental enhancement and revenue generation, each of which may be best served by a different type of road user charging scheme. For both these reasons it is important for a city considering road user charging to be clear as to its objectives.

When those objectives have been specified, they can be used as an input to scheme design as the basis for predicting the impact of and appraising alternative design options and evaluating the performance of implemented schemes. The objectives are thus a priority in the scheme's conception and have different functions, as shown in the figure on the next page.

What objectives are usually set?

The key objectives considered are to do with:

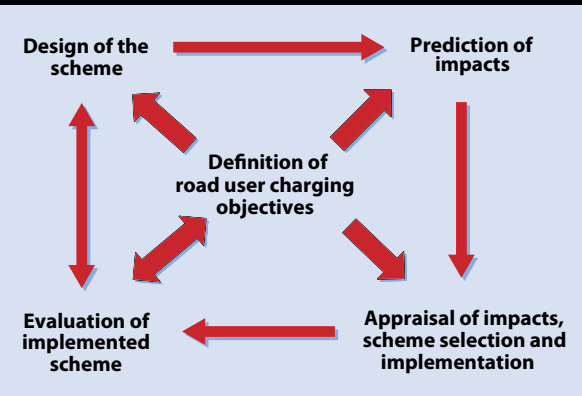
- Congestion Relief
- Environmental Protection
- Revenue Growth

The emerging objectives for RUC are as follows

- Economic growth
- Health
- Liveability
- Safety
- Equity/Social Inclusion
- Future Generations

Road user charging is not a panacea for transport problems and works best when part of a package of complementary and reinforcing measures that combine to achieve the objectives of the policy. Road user charging is increasingly being seen as part of an integrated strategy, in which individual policy instruments complement one another, or overcome the barriers to the implementation

Role of Objectives in Scheme Development



of other instruments. Research has suggested that road user charging can best be reinforced, in an integrated strategy, by measures which:

- increase its effectiveness;
- improve its practical feasibility;
- compensate those who would otherwise be adversely affected; and
- make effective use of the revenues generated, and hence increase acceptability.

However, the best combination of these policy instruments will depend critically on the city context in which they are being applied.

What further research is needed?

There is a case for continuing to monitor the objectives of concern to cities and their relative importance, so that any emerging objectives are effectively addressed in the guidance given. However, the principal requirement is to obtain additional evidence on the problems associated with some of the less frequently addressed objectives such as health and the economy.

Further research is needed into the performance of integrated strategies and the way in which effective combinations of strategy elements can be determined.

What can we conclude at present?

The following DOs and DON'Ts should help to increase the likelihood of a successful road user charging implementation.

DOs

Define the problem and set objectives before consider using URUC as a tool to meet the problems

Specify one or two principal objectives for URUC; treat the others as constraints on the design

Use the objectives to formulate a transport strategy which includes road user charging as a tool complemented by others

Use the objectives consistently through the design process, including prediction, appraisal and evaluation

DON'Ts

Do not change your objectives mid way through the process

Do not specify objectives that are inherently difficult to measure

Do not look at URUC in isolation - URUC must be part of a wider strategy and package of measures

