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Travel Demand Management and Road User Pricing

Success, Failure and Feasibility

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AND
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Travel Demand Management and Road User Pricing: Success, Failure and Feasibility

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Traffic congestion and associated problems have become a major worry for transport planners, politicians and the public. These transport-related problems require immediate attention, particularly as many past policies have failed to deal with them adequately. The traditional approach of 'predict and provide' for dealing with traffic congestion is no longer viable. That is, it is no longer feasible that the forecasts of vehicle usage are accommodated by building more roads; it is widely accepted that unrestrained demand for travel by car cannot be sustained. Measures taken to address the problems have therefore shifted to 'predict and manage' or travel demand management (TDM).

TDM measures are sets of policies with the primary objective of influencing the travel behaviour of individuals through voluntary reduction or restriction on private vehicle use and ownership and the provision of travel alternatives. TDM measures are often referred to as 'push and pull' measures and can include regulatory, pricing, planning or persuasive policies. These policies attempt to modify the temporal and spatial dimensions of travel, mode choice and perhaps even the decision to travel. The objective of such measures is to encourage individuals to either make their trips outside peak times, by a different mode or to find another way of carrying out the trip purpose. Applying such measures can result in a more efficient transport system, improved environmental conditions and improvements in safety as well as revenue generation, which may be earmarked for investment in the transport system. TDM can generate positive effects on health and in the long term can also effect a change in spatial development of land use.

TDM can broadly be categorized as fiscal and non-fiscal measures. Non-fiscal measures that can be adopted by planners and policy makers include traffic calming and access controls and restrictions, parking management and control, public transport improvements, road space reductions, urban traffic management and control systems, traffic bans/restrictions, and travel awareness campaigns. Fiscal measures can include parking charges, workplace parking levies, fuel taxes, vehicle excise duty, car ownership permits, public transport subsidies, priority measures for walking and cycling and road-user charging.

During the 2005 symposium pricing measures, in particular road user pricing, dominated the research agenda. This is not unexpected since there is a growing interest in pricing measures, which gained a lot of popularity and support over