

NCSL Alternative Transportation User Fees Foundation Partnership

Value of user-experience research for policy

June 04, 2023

Roshini Durand



**CDM
Smith®**

Presenter Introduction



Roshini Durand

Service Design and Innovation

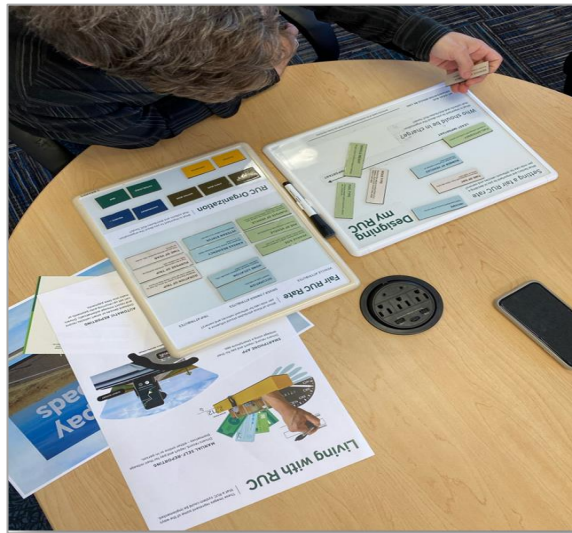
Bellevue, WA

Background

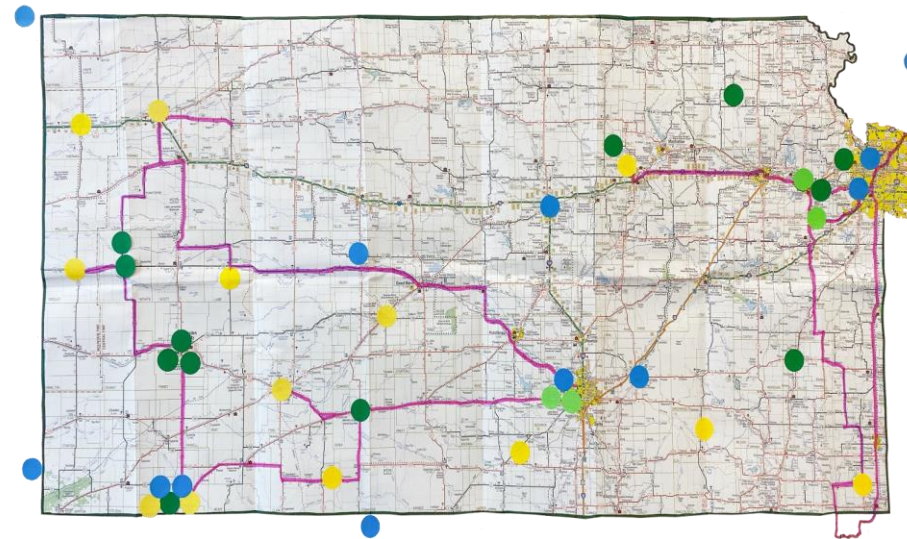
- Information systems engineering, Transportation technology, User experience strategy.
- Leading and supporting RUC Research & Implementation efforts
- California, Kansas, Hawaii, Oregon, Utah, Vermont, Washington, RUC America


User-experience research for high-impact public engagement

■ Approach



■ Findings and Impact



 Hawaii Department of Transportation
3426 Kalia Ave
Honolulu, HI 96808

We want to hear from you!
Complete a short survey at www.HIRUC.org/survey

"Do we need a new way to pay for roads? Pay for what you use and nothing more?" Jade Butay, HDOT

Hawaii's people have embraced our goal of 100% clean energy by 2045. Already, there is an abundance of more fuel-efficient vehicles on our roads, including some electric ones. Good news, but there's a downside. The per-gallon gas tax is becoming an ineffective way to fund our road and bridge upkeep and improvements, because we are using less gas.

Instead of the gas tax, might a system where you pay for how many miles you drive—a road usage charge—be a better system? Hawaii, along with other states, is taking a hard look at that. This Shoring Report below shows how a road usage charge would affect you based on the vehicle you currently had insured. Please review this information and take the short survey online to share your thoughts. Mahalo, we need your help!

Your 2014 Toyota Corolla (HGX 212)

Report number	05554	Compare estimated gas taxes paid...	to a potential road usage charge.
Period covered	Dec 20, 2018 to Mar 20, 2019		
Total miles driven	6,284	\$108 About \$12/mo.	\$157 About \$17/mo.
	Based on estimated gallons purchased over 9 months.		Based on miles driven between two pooled safety inspections over 9 months.

[View details on back](#)

HiRUC Complete a short survey at www.HIRUC.org/survey

User-experience research

Research technique focused on connecting one-on-one with constituents to make policy objectives and choices tangible.



Main difference with surveys, focus groups and pilots:

- Meets people where they are
- Builds personable and relatable experiences
- Captures nuanced insights for policy development

User-experience research in Hawaii

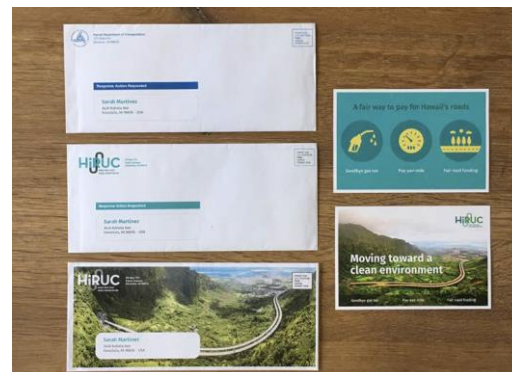
Hawaii DOT was seeking to prompt authentic responses to RUC policy from Hawaii residents and businesses through a direct mail experience.

What we explored

- How people triage their mail
- What is the best way to engage with people through direct mail
- How to best communicate RUC concept
- How to encourage people to respond to a mailed in survey



What we did



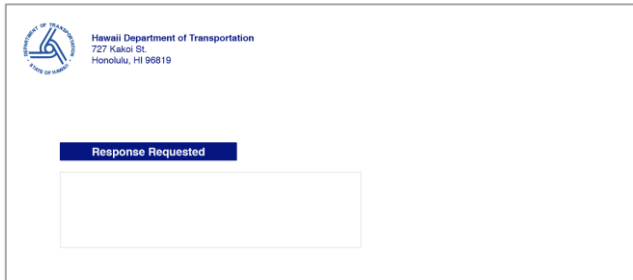
- 13 sessions
- Mail triage
- Content review
- Invoice design

Using findings in Hawaii

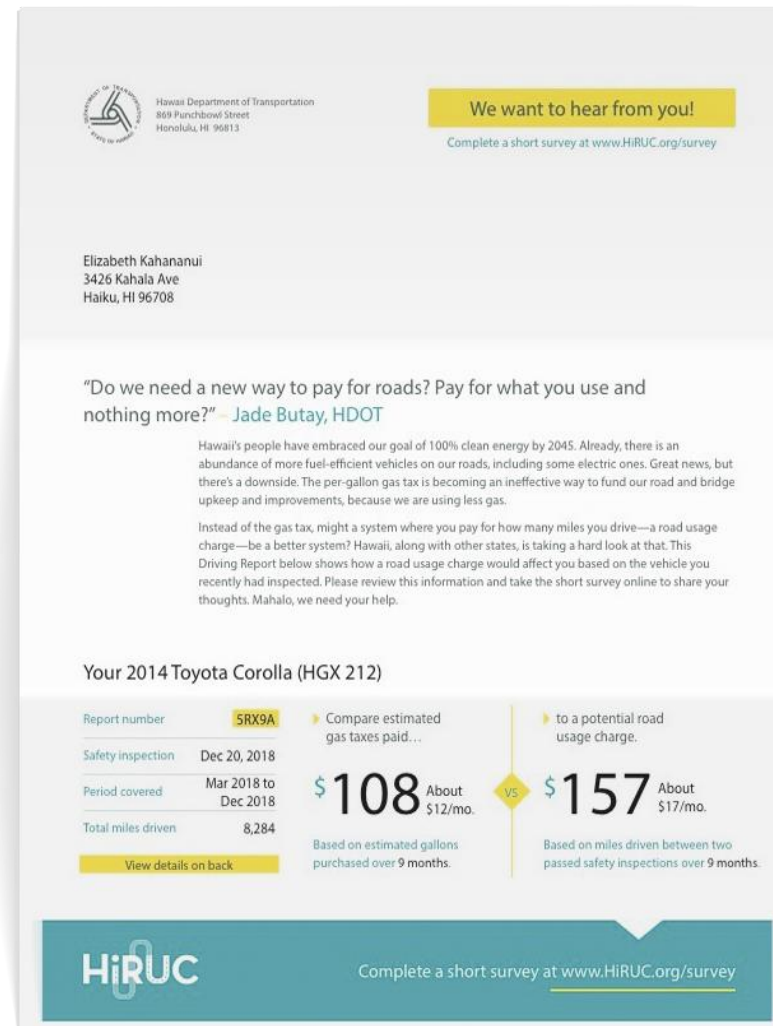
People's reactions shaped the design of the direct mail experience and mock invoice that prompted unprecedented engagement – 15% survey response rate.



How we responded



- Mail viewed as “official” made it through.



- Avoid perception that “wheels were already in motion”
- Avoid language that triggers negative reactions
- Avoid overwhelming with information
- Use relatable personal data to prompt response
- Only include relevant personal data

Research in Kansas

Kansas DOT's goal was to understand and share underrepresented rural, agricultural and trucking perspectives and bring the Midwest voice to the national conversation.

What we explored

- Comprehension and Acceptance
- Fairness and Equity
- Implementation Preference
- Trust

What we did



- 2,100 miles driven
- 42 sessions
- 90-minute conversations and design activities

- **Rural residents**
12 participants
- **Urban residents**
4 participants
- **Agricultural sector**
13 participants
- **Commercial trucking**
12 participants



Using findings in Kansas

User-pays resonates with Kansans, a robust accountable system inspires trust and feeling of fairness. They want choices to align with their priorities and flexibility, and value transparency and direct communications.

How we are responding

1. Provide clear and direct messaging that explains intent of study and problem being solved

2. Create relatable pilot experience that shows direct cost impact of new policy to participants compared to current system

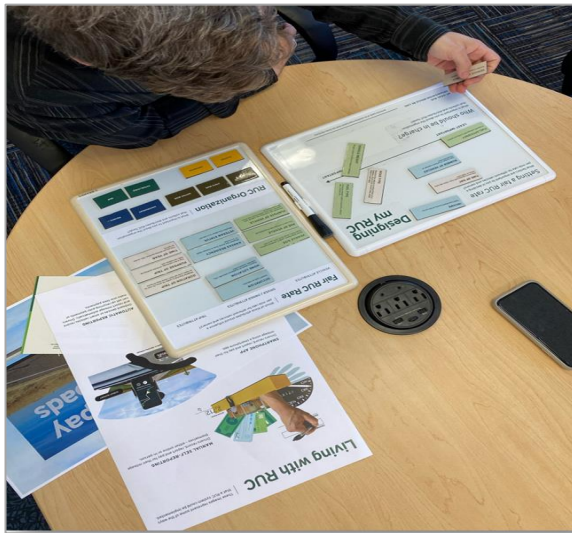
3. Be transparent about how per-mile rate is set to create sustainable revenue sources and not raise more revenue. Share rate-setting factors used.

4. Provide relevant mileage reporting and payment choices with clear, factual, transparent explanations on privacy, cost-efficiency, and system accountability

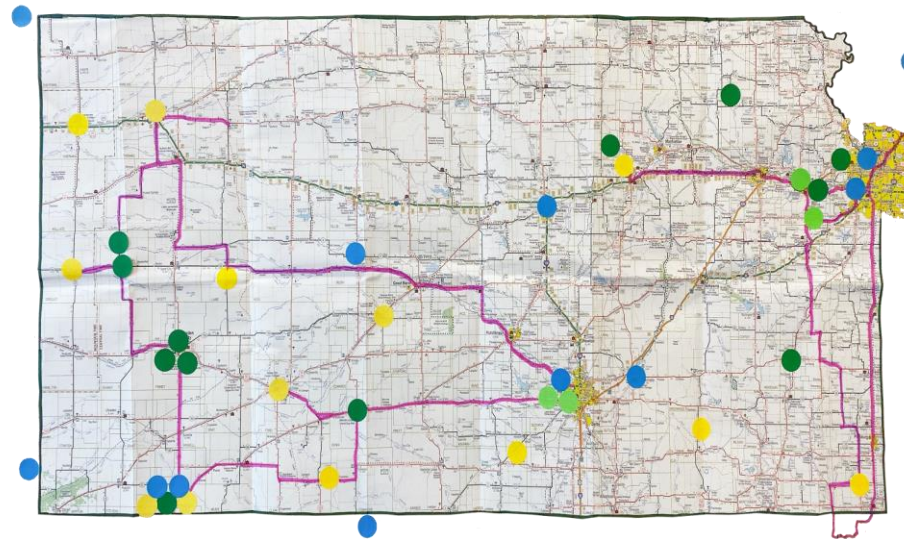
5. Measure types and levels of acceptance – Separate policy acceptance from acceptance of implementation choices proposed.

Questions

- Approach



- Findings and Impact



Hawaii Department of Transportation
Department of Transportation
Hawaii, HI 96708

We want to hear from you!
Complete a short survey at www.HIRUC.org/survey

Elizabeth Kahanani
3426 Kahala Ave
Honolulu, HI 96708

"Do we need a new way to pay for roads? Pay for what you use and nothing more?" Jade Butay, HDOT

Hawaii's people have embraced our goal of 100% clean energy by 2045. Already, there is an abundance of more fuel-efficient vehicles on our roads, including some electric ones. Good news, but there's a downside. The per-gallon gas tax is becoming an ineffective way to fund our road and bridge upkeep and improvements, because we are using less gas.

Instead of the gas tax, might a system where you pay for how many miles you drive—a road usage charge—be a better system? Hawaii, along with other states, is taking a hard look at that. This Sharing Report below shows how a road usage charge would affect you based on the vehicle you currently had registered. Please review this information and take the short survey online to share your thoughts. Mahalo, we need your help!

Your 2014 Toyota Corolla (HGX 212)

Report number	58554	Compare estimated gas taxes paid...	to a potential road usage charge.
Survey period	Dec 20, 2018		
Period covered	Mar 2018 to Dec 2018		
Total miles driven	6,284	\$108 About \$12/mo.	\$157 About \$17/mo.
	Based on estimated gallons purchased over 9 months.		Based on miles driven between two pooled surveying periods over 9 months.

[View details on back](#)

HiRUC Complete a short survey at www.HIRUC.org/survey