

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY PRIORITIES ON AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES TO BE INCLUDED IN THE CITY'S UPDATED LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

PREPARED BY: Hernan Molina, Governmental Affairs Liaison
Community & Legislative Affairs Division

STATEMENT OF THE SUBJECT:

The Transportation and Mobility Commission will receive information related to policy proposals on autonomous vehicles and will discuss and develop policy priorities on the topic.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Receive relevant information on policy proposals considered by the California Legislature during its 2023-2024 regular session related to regulation of autonomous vehicles.
2. Provide feedback on the information received, which includes recommendations of policy priorities, which will eventually be included in the City's legislative priorities to be presented to the City Council in early 2025.

BACKGROUND:

The City of West Hollywood's Community and Legislative Affairs (CLA) division is charged with monitoring legislative activity in the State's Capitol and Congress, engaging with legislators and their staff to propose amendments to bills, making recommendations to the City Council related to bills considered by the California Legislature and Congress, and communicating the City's position on different bills, among other activities.

In 2018, the Council approved the Advocacy & Lobbying plan, which prescribes a detailed pathway for CLA to assess the impact of different pieces of legislation on the City and determine the City's position on such policy proposals. Staff's determination of a City position is guided by the Council-approved legislative priorities, which were updated and approved by the City Council in 2024. The current legislative priorities do not include policy stances related to autonomous vehicles. Thus, the Transportation and Mobility

Commission (T&MC) is hereby presented with a summary of policy proposals on the topic of autonomous vehicles (AVs) considered by the California Legislature and the California League of Cities' (CalCities) Transportation, Communications & Public Works (TCPW) policy committee. The T&MC is also presented with draft policy priorities on AVs, developed by CLA and Engineering Division staff. Once the T&MC discusses and approves the proposed policy priorities, staff will incorporate them into the draft version of the updated legislative priorities, which will be presented to the City Council for its consideration in early 2025.

Autonomous Vehicles-Related Bills

During the 2023-2024 regular session of the California Legislature, legislators considered the following policy proposals:

Bill #	Author	Title	Content/Objective	Status
SB 915	Cortese	Autonomous Vehicles: Local Control and Increased Public Safety	This measure would require an autonomous vehicle (AV) service to obtain approval for local service by the adoption of a local ordinance or resolution. It would also require the establishment of an override system accessible by local law enforcement and first responders in case of an emergency.	Dead
AB 1777	Ting	Autonomous vehicles	Allows local peace officers to issue a "notice of noncompliance" to AV manufacturers which would then have to report that info to DMV within 72 hours. Requires an AV to be equipped with an override system to be used by first responders in the event of an emergency.	Signed by the Governor
AB 2286	Aguiar-Curry	Autonomous Vehicles.	This measure would prohibit the operation of an autonomous vehicle with a gross vehicle weight of 10,001 pounds or more without a human safety operator physically present in the autonomous vehicle at the	Vetoed

			time of operation. This bill was sponsored by CalCities.	
AB 3061	Haney	Vehicles: autonomous vehicle incident reporting	Requires an AV manufacturer to report to the DMV a vehicle collision or disengagement that occurs when a vehicle is operating in autonomous mode whether the vehicle is in testing or deployment mode. DMV would then be required to share this info with local and state transportation agencies upon request and make them publicly available on DMV website	Vetoed

Policy Priorities

The legislative priorities, which are hereby presented in Exhibit A, were first assembled almost twenty years ago and have been regularly updated so that they remain relevant and keep up with new trends and emerging issues, such as the topic of AVs. The legislative priorities were assembled with the goal of summarizing the City’s position on a large number of issues and policies. The policy priorities were developed in consonance with the City’s core values:

- Respect and Support for People
- Responsiveness to the Public
- Idealism, Creativity and Innovation
- Quality of Residential Life
- Promote Economic Development
- Public Safety
- Responsibility for the Environment

A very important principle also guides staff’s recommendation of a position on a given bill: the protection of local control and self-determination. As a general law city, the City of West Hollywood follows the laws of the State of California. At times, bills being considered in the California Legislature chip away at local control by preempting local regulations, as with recently approved legislation limiting the scope of the City’s Zoning Ordinance.

CalCities Policy Priorities on AVs

The following are the policy priorities the TCPW discussed and recommended the CalCities Board of Directors adopt and include in their legislative platform.

- Cal Cities supports legislation that authorizes the testing or conducting of pilot projects for autonomous vehicles in a safe manner.
- Cal Cities supports policies that require local decision making in the authorization and oversight of autonomous vehicle operations.
- Cal Cities supports policies that allow cities and ticketing authorities to ticket/cite autonomous vehicles.
- Cal Cities supports policies that promote safer environments for the operation of autonomous vehicles and allow first responders and local law enforcement the ability to interrupt and redirect wayward autonomous vehicles.

Draft Recommendations for T&MC Consideration

City staff has reviewed the above recommendations from CalCities and recommends including those priorities into the City's legislative priorities. In addition, City staff recommends adding the following:

- Support legislative initiatives that allow for local control/input/review of pilot testing programs of AVs.
- Support legislative initiatives requiring AV fleet deployments to advance transportation equity. Without intervention, AV fleets could exacerbate transportation inequities by increasing congestion and vehicle miles traveled, encouraging single-occupancy vehicle travel rather than taking transit, walking, or biking, and charging rates not affordable to low-income households.
- Support legislative initiatives that require AVs to reduce congestion and advance sustainability goals.

EXHIBIT:

Exhibit A: Current Legislative Priorities