



The future of autonomous vehicles in Canada will be shaped by today's policy and planning decisions: New report

News Release

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The clock is ticking on important decisions that could help achieve the benefits of connected, autonomous, shared, and electric (CASE) vehicles, according to a new expert panel report from the Council of Canadian Academies (CCA). These vehicles have the potential to grow the economy and fundamentally change transportation, making it safer, cleaner, and more accessible. But it's also possible that without proactive urban management, they could potentially worsen air quality and traffic congestion, and increase transportation inequities.

"The long-term promise of Canada's automotive future is on-demand, convenient, accessible, and affordable transportation across the country," said Jeannette Montufar, PhD, P.Eng., FCAE, Chair of the Expert Panel. "Current planning and policy decisions related to public transit, ride sharing, and active transportation will affect how, when, and where CASE vehicles are used in Canada in the next 10 to 30 years, and beyond."

The Panel found that the potential environmental and health benefits of CASE vehicles depend more on mobility behaviours than technological advances and anticipate these vehicles will not be evenly distributed across the country, at least initially.

These vehicles will also collect and share unprecedented amounts and types of data, threatening privacy, increasing cybersecurity risks, and creating regulatory challenges around cross-border privacy and data protection. The primary threat to privacy is the steady accumulation of seemingly minor practices for data collection. However, if managed appropriately, this data could provide benefits such as increased safety, efficiency, and accessibility for the public sector and private sector.

"While the appearance of autonomous vehicles on public roads in Canada may seem inevitable, there's still uncertainty about the timing of their arrival and their widespread adoption and acceptance," said Eric M. Meslin, PhD, FRSC, FCAHS, President and CEO of the CCA. "This report identifies potential impacts arising from the development and diffusion of CASE vehicles and offers evidence to help inform future policy decisions in Canada."

Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada asked the CCA to examine the current trends affecting the evolution of connected and automated vehicle technologies and shared mobility and the impacts, opportunities, and challenges they present for Canadian industry, governments, and Canadians.



Choosing Canada's Automotive Future identifies potential impacts of CASE vehicles on industry, privacy and cybersecurity, urban planning, the environment, and the safety and well-being of people in Canada.

Visit www.cca-reports.ca to download the report.

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About the Council of Canadian Academies

The CCA is a not-for-profit organization that undertakes independent, evidence-based expert panel assessments to inform public policy development in Canada. The CCA was founded by three independent organizations that represent some of the finest minds in Canada — the Royal Society of Canada, the Canadian Academy of Engineering, and the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences. Their Fellows and senior decision-makers sit on CCA's Board of Directors and Scientific Advisory Committee, and they are a key source of membership for expert panels. The CCA's founding Academies also provide key guidance and input throughout the assessment process, including expert panel nominations and dissemination processes. For more information about the CCA or its assessments, please visit www.cca-reports.ca.

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