

# Last Week In Innovative Mobility

December 15 - 21, 2025



Volkswagen

## AUTOMATED VEHICLES

**Volkswagen has begun testing an automated vehicle without a steering wheel or pedals.** The vehicle, called Gen.Urban, is being tested along a fixed route in Wolfsburg, Germany. It features multiple sensors and cameras, including camera-based systems in place of traditional side mirrors, as well as rear-hinged doors for the back seats.

## AUTOMATED VEHICLES

**Tesla has begun operating driverless robotaxis in Austin, Texas.** In addition, CEO Elon Musk has announced plans to expand the robotaxi fleet in the city to approximately 60 vehicles. Since June 2025, Tesla robotaxis are estimated to have been involved in at least seven incidents.



Getty Images

## ELECTRIC VEHICLES

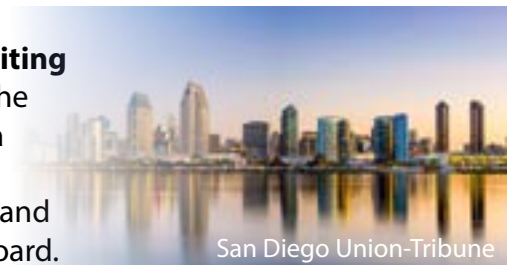
**Research from the Tokyo University of Science shows that sodium-ion batteries can charge faster than lithium-ion batteries.** The findings strengthen the case for sodium-ion technology as a promising, low-cost, high-power alternative for electric vehicles. In addition, sodium is far more abundant than lithium and can achieve comparable energy density in battery applications.



Zhihao/Getty Images

## TNCs/RIDEHAILING

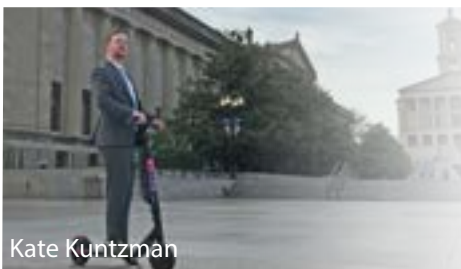
**The San Diego–Coronado Ferry operator, Flagship Cruises & Events, is soliciting bids to replace two diesel-powered ferries with electric-powered vessels.** The company plans to invest \$21 million in the replacements and expects to select a vendor in February 2026, with the new ferries entering service in Fall 2026. The electric ferries are expected to improve air quality in neighboring communities and are partially funded by a \$15.3 million grant from the California Air Resources Board.



San Diego Union-Tribune

## TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

**A recent study by the League of American Bicyclists and Lime finds increased use of shared bikes and scooters along corridors with newly installed bike lanes.** Data from Baltimore, Maryland; Nashville, Tennessee; and Phoenix, Arizona also show a 19% reduction in reported safety incidents involving micromobility devices on these corridors. In addition, the study highlights several key findings on how shared micromobility supports connections to public transit.



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Innovative Mobility Research (IMR) focuses on the future of mobility and is based at the Transportation Sustainability Research Center at the University of California, Berkeley

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