



AVs and Transportation Equity

AVs have the potential to provide equitable solutions to transportation challenges, including those encountered by historically disadvantaged communities.

Increasing Access

- AVs may offer an alternative transportation solution within “transit deserts”;
- AVs may help expand the reach of public transit to those who currently do not have access;
- AVs may assist in increasing access to jobs to those who are currently unemployed or underemployed due to a lack of access to transportation;
- AVs may improve access to groceries, medicines and other essential goods in underserved neighborhood;
- AVs may increase access to goods and services for women whose transportation patterns are more complex and have been historically overlooked.

Improving Safety

- AVs can assist in improving roadway safety and reducing traffic fatalities, including pedestrian fatalities, in which ethnic and racial minorities are overrepresented

Mitigating Human Bias

- AVs may help address discrimination that occurs when a human taxi, rideshare or delivery driver with conscious or unconscious bias refuses to provide service to a person of color, an LGBTQ+ person, or a person with a disability or refuses to serve a certain neighborhood

Facilitating Transportation Equity

Meaningful steps can be taken in the near-term to help AVs facilitate transportation equity.

These steps include:

- The U.S. Department of Transportation:
 - Issuing guidance for AV service providers and transportation planners that clearly defines priority communities for purposes of transportation equity;
 - Clarifying state and local government obligations related to transportation equity for shared mobility services, including those using AVs, that are used by transportation agencies to provide services to the public;
 - Developing a consistent framework and methodology for assessing equity across transportation modes.
- The public and private sectors conducting additional research and developing best practices to support the design and development of crash avoidance systems that perform similarly with respect to the diversity of pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.



Understanding and Assessing Transportation Equity

Government and other stakeholders should work together to identify opportunities for AVs to improve transportation equity, including by:

- Investing in targeted research to better understand the equity impacts and opportunities of AVs as compared to other modes of transportation;
- Identifying underserved communities and neighborhoods that could benefit from AV deployment;
- Conducting AV-focused education and awareness efforts in underserved communities and neighborhoods;
- Implementing pilot programs that serve underserved communities and neighborhoods with AVs or that focus on improving or enhancing transportation equity through AVs; and
- Assessing how AVs impact transportation equity, including how the impact of AVs compare to other modes of transportation and how the equity impact of AVs changes over time.