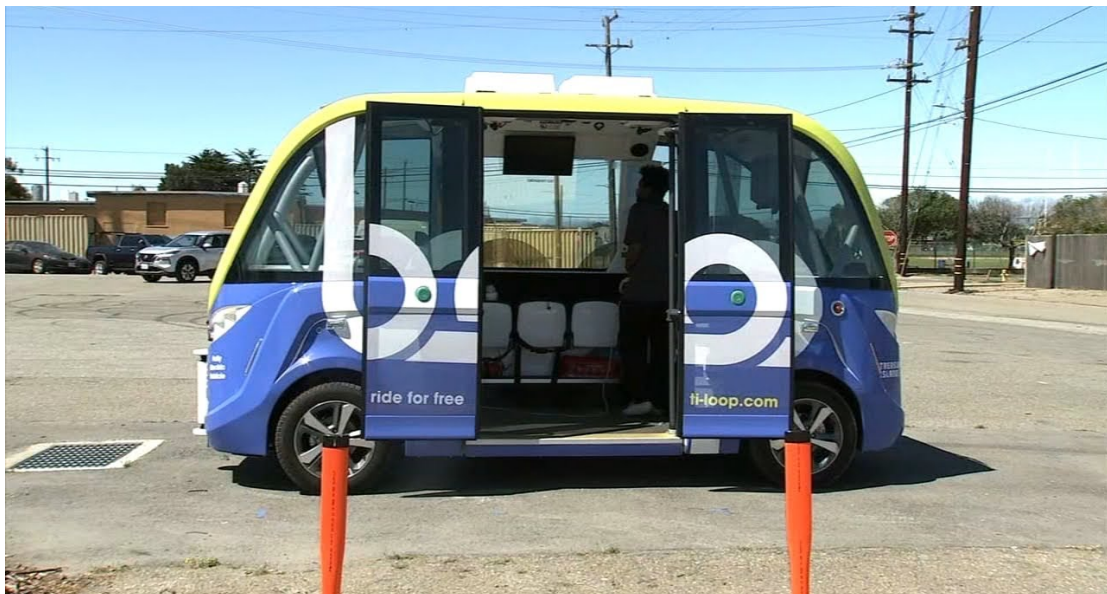


Driverless Buses: San Francisco's Innovation

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. route (noun) - A path or way for travel from one place to another, often specifying stops and destinations along the way.
Example: The bus route takes passengers from the city center to the airport.
2. reliable (adjective) - Consistently good in quality or performance; trustworthy and dependable.
Example: The new car model is known for its reliable engine and low maintenance costs.
3. collide (verb) - To crash or come into violent contact with something or someone, often unintentionally.
Example: The two cars collided at the intersection, causing significant damage.
4. autonomous (adjective) - Having the ability to operate independently or without direct human control.
Example: Autonomous drones can be programmed to complete tasks without human intervention.
5. onboard (adjective) - Situated or carried on board a vehicle, vessel, or aircraft.
Example: The spaceship's onboard computer system ensures smooth navigation through space.
6. ensure (verb) - To make certain that something will happen or be the case; to guarantee or secure.
Example: Safety measures are in place to ensure the well-being of all passengers on the cruise.



San Francisco now has driverless buses, and it happened after California granted approval for the expansion of robotaxis. These new driverless buses run every day in a place called Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay. They have an electric engine, no driver's seat or steering wheel, but there's a person on board who can drive the bus if needed.

The **route** for these buses is called the "Loop." It stops at seven places and connects where people live to stores and community centers. There are about 2,000 people living on Treasure Island. The company running these buses is called Beep, and they've done similar things in other places in the US. They say that the buses are not trying to replace regular buses, but instead, they'll be more **reliable** and faster.

They did some test rides, and the buses drove carefully while a person helped with the driving if there were problems, like something in the way. Passengers who tried it, like Dominic Lucchesi, said they felt safe. The bus can take up to 10 people, and it goes around the Loop every 20 minutes between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. The new bus service got started after the state of California said that two driverless taxi companies, Cruise and Waymo, could start driving passengers around in San Francisco.

Concerns arose after Cruise reported an incident in which one of its robotaxis **collided** with a fire truck, resulting in a passenger's hospitalization. Unlike driverless buses, **autonomous** shuttles will continue to have **onboard** attendants to **ensure** safety and address any unexpected situations for the time being.

DISCUSSION

1. How do you feel about the idea of driverless buses in your city or town? Do you think they would make public transportation more convenient?
2. Why do you think there's an attendant on board the driverless buses in San Francisco? What role do you think they play in ensuring safety?
3. If autonomous shuttles were introduced in your area, would you be willing to take a test ride? What concerns or expectations would you have?
4. How might driverless buses like those in San Francisco benefit communities? Are there any drawbacks or challenges they might face?
5. Considering the incident involving a robotaxi and a fire truck, do you think it's wise to have onboard attendants in autonomous shuttles? Why or why not?
6. In your opinion, what are the advantages of having autonomous vehicles, like buses and taxis, in urban areas? How do you envision these vehicles changing the way people get around cities?