



AS IT IS

GM: New Batteries Cut EV Costs, Increase Driving Distance

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American car maker General Motors says it is close to creating a **battery** that could lower the cost of its electric vehicles to the same price as gas-powered ones within five years.

The technology also will increase the distance an electric vehicle (EV) can travel to as much as 450 miles when it is fully charged.

Doug Parks is the GM head of product development. He said, “We think the industry is **transforming**, and so we want to be at the **leading edge** of this.”

The company promised its small electric sports utility vehicle, or SUV, will cost less than \$30,000 and said it would make 30 battery-powered models by 2025. Now, nearly all electric vehicles cost more than \$30,000.

Sam Abuelsamid, a transportation expert with Guidehouse, noted the GM announcement is one of several changes that will allow the move to all electric cars. Ford, Fiat Chrysler, and Volkswagen are also increasing their research and spending on electric vehicles.

“There’s going to be a lot more EVs coming,” he said.

The problem for automakers has always been the balance between the size of the battery and the distance a car can drive without needing a new charge.

“What we’re seeing now is that they’re **confident** enough on their costs that they think they can offer those 300-to-400 mile **range** vehicles,” Abuelsamid said.

Changes are coming

The recent announcement shows how quickly electric vehicle technology is growing and changing.

Government pollution rules are also tightening around the world. Both Britain and the American state of California recently said they will ban gas-powered cars in 10 to 15 years.

U.S. President-elect Joe Biden is likely to restore government fuel economy rules that have been lifted by President Donald Trump. Biden has promised to spend billions of dollars on EVs and build charging stations around the U.S.

On Monday, GM chief executive Marry Barra announced that the company agrees with Biden's plan to expand electric vehicle use. And GM will not support Trump's effort to remove California's pollution rule.

GM also wants to replace Tesla as the company leading the way to the EV future. To back up its claims, GM said it will raise spending on electric vehicles from a promised \$20 billion, to more than \$27 billion through 2025.

The new battery

The new battery, being tested at a GM lab outside Detroit, uses **lithium** metal anodes. An anode is an electrode that permits the electrical current to become polarized, or separated.

Parks said the new battery can hold 100 percent more power than GM's current battery. It will cost 60 percent less than those being used in the Chevrolet Bolt electric car. It will help GM put together different sizes of batteries for different prices and models.

GM is working with LG Chem of South Korea and the new battery will also be used by Japanese car maker Honda.

I'm Bryan Lynn.

The Associated Press reported this story. Susan Shand adapted it for Learning English. Hai Do was the editor.

Words in This Story

battery - *n.* a device that is placed inside a machine (such as a clock, toy, or car) to supply it with electricity

transform - *v.* to change something completely usually in a good way

leading edge - *n.* being in the lead, out front

confident - *adj.* having a feeling or belief that you can do something well or succeed at something

range - *n.* a specified distance

lithium - *n.* a soft silver-white element that is the lightest metal known used in batteries for electronics
