Tech Center News

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Chevrolet Announces the Return of the Blazer Crossover

The Chevrolet Blazer is back.

Chevrolet is raising the bar on crossover design with the introduction of the 2019 Blazer as the newest member of the industry's broadest, freshest crossover and SUV lineup since 2015, said Alan Batey, president of GM North America and head of Global Chevrolet.

The new contemporary midsize SUV is rooted in attention-grabbing design with seamlessly integrated, customer-focused technologies and superb functionality, said Batey.

"Chevrolet has been at the forefront of each of the major automotive industry trends by anticipating consumer demand and delivering

innovative products like Bolt EV, Colorado and Trax," said Batey.

"The introduction of the all-new Blazer builds on that momentum and further strengthens the most comprehensive lineup of crossovers and SUVs on the market today.

Slotting between the Equinox and Traverse, the 2019 Blazer will offer unique design elements on each model, appealing to customers seeking distinctive styling and outstanding utility, Batey said. Highlights include:

- Styling that features a strong grille and muscular proportions.
- Driver-centric interior and distinctive looks on all models.

- Model range includes sporty RS and up-level Premier models.
- Five-passenger seating with up to 64.2 cubic feet of cargo space with second-row seats folded flat.
- Adjustable sliding rear seat. Standard 2.5L I-4 and available 3.6L V6 engines, each backed by a nine-speed automatic transmission.
- Advanced twin-clutch AWD system available.
- 4,500 pounds estimated max trailering with the available 3.6L V6.
- Available Hitch View feature

Study (IQS) was just released and

the 2018 Buick Envision was tops

in the Compact SUV category,

While 2018 Chevrolet Silverado

finished first in the Large Light

Duty Pickup Truck Category and the 2018 Chevy Silverado HD

finished first in the Large Heavy

Monte Doran said that Chevrolet

designers and engineers take a

Chevrolet truck spokesman

Duty Pickup Truck category.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 3 2019 Chevy Blazer slots between Equinox and Traverse.



The 2018 Buick Envision was No. 1 in its category, says J.D. Power.

GM Vehicles Score Well in J.D.Power Study The results are in and the news great deal of pride in the idea

is pretty good for General Mothat the Silverado is the most dependable and toughest pickup truck in the market. The J.D. Power Initial Quality

"To see such a reputable organization such as J.D. Power confirm this notion is heartwarming," Doran said.

When reviewing the 2018 Silverado HD, J.D. Power editors wrote that in "addition to the stiff frame, heavy-duty front and rear suspension systems provide incredible strength on 4-wheeldrive models. Now rated at 6,000 pounds, all 4-wheel-drive front

suspension systems can easily support a snow plow when properly equipped. The 2500 utilizes 2-stage leaf springs in the rear, while the 3500 makes use of three-stage springs.²

Editors also liked the Silverado HD's 360-horsepower engine and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Proposed Tariffs Could Affect Auto Industry

by TOM KRISHER AP Auto Writer

Ford Buys Train Station to Build the Future

tors.

by Jim Stickford

Detroit is coming back and Ford wants to be a leader in that movement.

That was the message presented by Bill Ford, executive chairman of the board at Ford, and Ford CEO Jim Hackett at the June 19 announcement that Ford Motor Co. has purchased the abandoned Michigan Central train station in Corktown.

Ford said the building and surrounding land will be refurbished to create a facility that Ford will use to develop the latest in Autonomous Vehicle (AV) technology.

Ford put on a pair of sunglasses when he began his speech. He said that with his Irish blood he needed them to see in the sun. but also it was a page from his mother Martha's book because she was always photographed wearing sunglasses. "Michigan Central Station is a place that in many ways tells the story of Detroit over the past century," said Ford. "We at Ford want to help write the next chapter, working together in Corktown with the best startups, the smartest talent, and the thinkers, engineers, and problem-solvers who see things differently – all to shape the future of mobility and transportation." Ford said the train station tells the story of Detroit. "This train station absolutely, in many ways, tells the story of this city," Ford said. "It opened in 1913. That year, Ford built 200,000 automobiles. By the end of the decade, Ford was building 1,000,000 cars a year. The train

place where people came to Detroit. It was where we sent men off to war and welcomed them back. I remember coming here as a little boy and seeing how beautiful it was.'

And when the last train left the station, it seemed like hope left Detroit, Ford said. Now it's time for that to change.

'We will remake the station into a place of possibility," Ford said. "This is not just a symbolic gesture. We have plans for the station and we have plans for Corktown. People measure the greatness of a city in different ways, but what matters is the scope of people and their dreams. That's how you measure a city.'

tinuing with its Dearborn Campus Transformation plan that started in 2016. This summer the 150,000-square-foot Wagner Place development in West Dearborn is on track to open, as is a new driving dynamics lab located on Ford's Product Development Campus, Ford said. The 10-year Dearborn plan will also continue to bring key work groups closer together, including the company's product development teams to one campus.

As cities cope with booming populations, aging infrastructure and new technology, the way people move is changing rapidly. Rather than simply integrating new technology into an aging transportation system, Ford's vision includes a fresh approach for how the overall transportation system can benefit from new ideas that help people lead better and more productive lives.

The future of transportation requires more than new vehicles - or even self-driving vehicles. It requires smart vehicles that can

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

DETROIT (AP) - Every workday, about 7,400 trucks mostly loaded with automotive parts rumble across the Ambassador Bridge connecting Detroit and

Canada, at times snarling traffic along the busy corridor. But if President Donald Trump delivers on threats to slap 25 percent tariffs on imported vehicles and components, there will be far fewer big rigs heading to factories that are now humming close to capacity on both sides of the border.

The tariff threat could be a negotiating ploy to restart stalled talks on the North American Free Trade Agreement. But it also could be real, since the administration already has imposed duties on \$50 billion worth of Chinese imports, as well as steel and aluminum from China. the

At the same time, Ford is con-



station was our Ellis Island, a Ford spoke of the company's plans to revitalize Corktown, starting by refurbishing the old train station.

European Union, Canada and Mexico.

Tariffs against China include some autos and parts but if those spread to Canada and Mexico, the impact will be far larger because auto manufacturing has been integrated between the three countries for nearly a quarter-century.

The Commerce Department said in a statement last week that it "has just launched its investigation into whether imports of auto and auto parts threaten to impair the national security. That investigation, which has only just begun, will inform recommendations to the president for action or inaction.'

If the wider auto tariffs are imposed, industry experts say they will disrupt a decades-old symbiotic parts supply chain, raise vehicle

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

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GM Breaks Ground on a New Parts Processing Facility

Tech Center News®

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Contact us: Info@TechCenterNews.com

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Volvo Opens New South Carolina Assembly Plant

RIDGEVILLE, S.C. (AP) - Volvo Cars, the first major automaker to abandon cars powered solely by internal combustion engines, is officially opening its first plant in the United States.

The Swedish carmaker aims to make 130,000 hybrid or all-electric vehicles a year at the South Carolina factory, once it reaches peak capacity.

Volvo officially opened the brand new plant on June 20 in Ridgeville, S.C.

The first redesigned S60 sedans should roll off the assembly line this fall.

Volvo is making hybrid vehicles at all of its plants now and promises all its cars will have an electric component by the end of next year.

Company officials say 1,500 people should be working there by year's end and 4,000 by the end of 2021.

That is the year when the plant is scheduled to also begin the manufacturing of Volvo's new XC90 SUV.

Burton, Mich., just got a boost, thanks to GM's newest building, now under construction.

General Motors Customer Care and Aftersales (CCA) broke ground on a new \$65 million ACDelco and Genuine GM Parts processing center on a vacant 141-acre lot near the intersection of Genesee and Davison roads in the City of Burton, a suburb of Flint.

The June 20 ceremony celebrated the company's largest single investment in a warehousing and logistics facility in the United States in nearly 40 years, said GM spokesman Jim Cain.

Key collaborators in the project included Burton Mayor Paula Zelenko; Scott Henry, representing UAW Local 651; and Chad Meyer, president of North-Point Development.

Tim Turvey, GM global vice president, Customer Care and Aftersales, discussed the project at the ceremonial event.

"GM is executing a focused and disciplined strategy to improve our core business and position the company for the future, guided by our vision of a world with zero crashes, zero emissions and zero congestion," Turvey said.

"Our new facility in Burton will help us deliver that future. And projects like this only become a reality when you have great teamwork and true collaboration, like we have with the City of Burton, the UAW and NorthPoint Development."

When the facility opens in early 2019, it will be the company's main induction point in the United States for ACDelco and Genuine GM service parts that need to be unitized and packaged for sale, Cain said.

Ultimately, these parts are

used to maintain every Chevrolet, Buick, GMC and Cadillac sold in the United States, and hundreds of competitive vehicles as well.

With 1.1 million square feet of floor space, the facility will be more than twice the size of the company's existing parts processing center, which is located about five miles away.

It will have 84 shipping and receiving docks, up from 35 that are in use today. Close to 700 hourly and salaried employees will staff the facility.

"The current Davison Road facility is landfill-free - one of more than 140 in GM's global network," said Turvey, "and we will be working toward the same status for the new facility.

"It will be built with energy-efficient LED light, and a sophisticated energy management sys-



Turvey spoke at the groundbreaking of GM's latest facility.

tem to reduce power consumption and improve comfort.'

After the new facility opens, General Motors will close its existing processing center on Davison Road in Burton, and those

employees will transfer to the new parts processing facility.

NorthPoint Development will build the new facility and lease it to General Motors for an initial term of 12.5 years.

GM is Betting on Future with New Sedans

DETROIT (AP) - General Motors is getting rid of three Cadillac sedans and replacing them with two new ones over the next three-and-a-half years.

The company says it's sinking \$175 million into a Lansing, Mich., factory to make replacements for the ATS compact, CTS midsize and XTS full-size cars.

Automakers are starting to dump sedan models in the U.S. as buyers continue to flock to SUVs and trucks.

Fiat Chrysler cut U.S.-made compact and midsize cars in 2016, while Ford announced earlier this year that it would stop selling all cars but the Mustang over the next several years.

This year, trucks and SUVs accounted for more than two-thirds of U.S. auto sales, with cars at about one-third. Just five years ago, it was about half for each.

The ATS won't be replaced, but Cadillac hopes to cover its market with the introduction of new vehicles.

The ATS was designed to compete with the BMW 3 Series but never really caught on.

The XTS was based on a Chevrolet Impala but also never sold well. It also overlapped with Cadillac's CT6 flagship large sedan.

Last year, ATS sales fell 39 percent, while CTS sales dropped 35 percent and XTS sales were off 27 percent The ATS recovered a bit this

year but is still far behind competitors. Spokesman Donny Nordlicht

said that the new cars will debut by the end of 2021, and that further details would be released later. The changes will not change the Lansing Grand River factory's workforce of about 2,000 people.

The Cadillac brand is emphasizing SUVs to match market demand, according to GM. Cadillac has promised to put out seven new vehicles by the end of 2021, with only two of them being sedans.

Macomb Inspecting Sewers The Macomb County Public Creek, which runs southwest to Works Office will conduct an inspection of the Lake Boulevard storm drain in St. Clair Shores, utilizing a state SAW grant.

The grant – for Storm water, Asset management and Wastewater (SAW) projects - will cover about \$430,000 of the cost of the project, with the MCPWO covering \$43,000, said Macomb County spokesman John Cwikla.

The storm drain, which runs under Lake Boulevard with multiple lateral connections between 12 and 13 Mile Roads, was constructed in the late 1950s/early 1960s and has never had a major inspection, Cwikla said.

The inspections are part of a larger effort by Macomb County to make sure that these drain systems are operating properly, Cwikla said.

In 2017, the MCPWO conducted similar inspections on three other storm drains in the city the Stephens Relief, 111/2 Mile Relief and the Hetchler drain systems.

Those reviews found no catastrophic issues, but did find a number of items that are now scheduled for maintenance, Cwikla said. "These inspections are part of our comprehensive asset management program," said Macomb County Public Works Commissioner Candice S. Miller. "We are conducting similar inspections around the county. If we find a problem early, we can address it. If we find no problems, we know better how we can focus our resources.' Under the asset management program, the MCPWO has already inspected eight drains under major roads in Sterling Heights and three in Warren, Cwikla said. The Sterling Heights inspections found no major issues, though a maintenance program has now been developed by the appropriate Macomb County offices, Cwikla said. The inspections in Warren are still underway and include the Schoenherr Relief Drain, under Schoenherr Road; the Bear

northeast throughout the city; and the Sharkey Relief Drain, which runs under Frazho Road in the west half of the city.

"We have been working very closely with Commissioner Miller on a number of issues that directly impact Lake St. Clair and are therefore of critical importance to our residents. We appreciate having her as a partner," said St. Clair Shores Mayor Kip Walby.

In addition to checking the integrity of the pipes and surrounding soils, the inspections are also looking for signs of illicit connections - places where sanitary sewer enters the storm drains.

The storm drains are designed to carry rain and snow melt only and all eventually drain out into Lake St. Clair.

The Lake Boulevard Drain is more than 30 feet deep in most of St. Clair Shores and in places as much as 12 feet in diameter. It connects directly to Lake St. Clair.

To conduct the inspection of the drain, a bulkhead will be placed in the drain to allow lake water to be pumped out of the drain, allowing an inspection team to safely enter and examine the interior of the pipe, Cwikla said The work will begin with a records review of the drain, ensuring that all maps, legal descriptions and other old documents relating to the drain are up to date, accurate and complete, Cwikla said. In the past, out-of-date records have caused problems during inspection processes and the county wishes to avoid similar troubles. "We will continue to aggressively pursue grants and other possible sources of funding to ensure Macomb County has the infrastructure it needs to protect the quality of life for our residents and to allow the continued economic growth of our community," Miller said. "Our underground infrastructure may be unseen, but it cannot be forgotten."



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Tech Center News.

JUNE 25, 2018

COVERS THE TECH CENTER AND THE IMMEDIATE AREA

PAGE 3



The 2019 Blazer "has attitude," said Chevy Design's John Cafaro.

MCC Students Are Honored

Macomb Community College received several honors at the recent annual convention of Phi Theta Kappa, the world's largest honor society for two-year college students.

The college's Phi Theta Kappa chapter, Beta Lambda Kappa, recognizes students for their academic achievements and leadership skills, said MCC spokeswoman Tish Wirth.

Beta Lambda Kappa received the Distinguished Chapter Officer Team Award and was named one of the top 100 chapters.

Students who comprised the officer team are:

- Nicole Clarke, Lauren Lampar and Anna Schroeder, all of Clinton Township;
- Muhammed Elgammal, of Shelby Township;

- Krystal Hahn, of Macomb; Sarah Loutzenhiser, of Mt.
- Clemens; • Maureen Paul, of St. Clair Shores.

Macomb alumna Ashley Lowell, of Roseville, received the Alumni Award of Appreciation for her continued support of Macomb's chapter and the national organization, Wirth said.

Phi Theta Kappa is a national honor society created for students enrolled in an accredited educational institution that offers an associate degree program.

Membership in Phi Theta Happa is by invitation only, and students must have completed 12 hours of coursework and earned a 3.5 or higher grade point average, Wirth said.

Blazer to Come Back in Year 2019

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

that helps the driver align the hitch with the trailer.

Batey said the 2019 Blazer is the boldest, most progressive expression of the Chevrolet crossover design theme. A wide stance, tight proportions, a high beltline and dramatic sculpting give it a toned, athletic appearance from all angles, he said.

"The Blazer has attitude," said John Cafaro, executive director, Global Chevrolet Design. "It looks commanding on the road, while fulfilling the promise of versatility at the heart of every Chevy crossover and SUV."

Each model in the lineup offers a unique look with distinct styling to suit different customers' tastes, including unique grille appearances, additional bright chrome on the Premier trim and a more sinister-looking, blacked-out appearance for the Blazer RS.

Cafaro said a powerful front end featuring a strong grille, athletic hood lines and low-placed HID headlamps distinguish all models. The design also features a distinctive lighting execution that separates the headlamps and LED daytime running lamps.

Long, lean and sculpted body sides lead to a rear end highlighted by LED-illuminated Chevy-signature dual-element taillamps, dual exhaust outlets and an integrated tailgate spoiler.

The Blazer's cabin echoes the bold exterior theme with sporty

good looks, Cafaro said. The design emphasizes space, craftsmanship and customer personalization, with a wide range of interior styling choices for the different models, achieved through several color and trim choices. Sporty details include a padded knee area, round air vents and grab handles on the doors. The 2019 Blazer is designed to offer occupants seamless connectivity, intuitive controls and a host of convenience features that help make the drive more comfortable, Batey said.

"The Chevrolet Blazer is more than just good looks," said Waqar Hashim, Blazer chief engineer. "Both the Ecotec 2.5L four-cylinder engine and 3.6L V6 engine are paired to Chevrolet's nine-speed automatic transmission, providing drivers a great balance between performance and efficiency."

The Blazer will arrive at U.S. dealerships in early 2019. It will be assembled in Ramos, Mexico.









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GM Vehicles Score Well in J.D. Power Study

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

380 lb.-ft. of torque that is capable of towing up to 23,000 pounds, which is one of the reasons one buys a heavy-duty pick-up truck.

Editors also had nice things to say about the Silverado 1500. They wrote, "the Silverado is available in several different configurations to suit every need. Produced in 2-wheel- or 4-wheeldrive form, in regular cab, double cab or crew cab, short box or long, there's a Silverado for every buyer.

They also wrote that cabins "are stronger and quieter too, thanks to high-strength steel construction and shear-style body mounts to help tune out noise

Inc.'s Board of Directors ap-

proved a share repurchase pro-

gram authorizing the company

to repurchase, in the aggregate,

up to \$150 million of its outstand-

gram, approved by the compa-

nv's board of directors on June

14, is effective as of Nov. 6, 2018,

and replaces the previous \$125

million authorization to repur-

chase shares approved in March

Of the \$45.3 million remaining

from the previous authorization

as of Dec. 31, 2017, the company

utilized \$43.5 million during the

second quarter of 2018 through

open market and accelerated

Under the new program au-

thorized by the Board of Direc-

tors, repurchases may be made

on the open market, through pri-

vate transactions, accelerated

share repurchases, round lot or

share repurchases, Wenzl said.

spokeswoman Sharon Wenzl.

Cooper-Standard

The share repurchase pro-

Cooper-Standard

ing common stock.

2016, said

Cooper-Standard Buys Back Shares

change

ments.

said.

world.

Holdings

and vibration. Double cabs and crew cabs utilize hydraulic body mounts to further isolate the cabs.

"Beneath the cabin, the Silverado features electric power steering and a tuned suspension with wide wheels, for better handling and a more comfortable ride. Four-wheel disc brakes with Duralife rotors greatly improve brake feel and increased brake life."

Editors liked the Envision's safety features. They wrote, "Buick has paid particular attention to the safety features available on the Envision. Beyond the expected airbags, anti-lock brakes, traction control and stability control, the Envision offers a strong set of safety enhance-

block transactions on the New

York Stock Exchange or other-

wise, as determined by the com-

pany's management and in ac-

cordance with prevailing market

conditions and Securities and Ex-

The company expects to fund all repurchases from cash on

hand and future cash flows from

operations and is not obligated

to acquire a particular number of

shares and the program may be

discontinued at any time at the

company's discretion, Wenzl

Cooper Standard, headquar-

tered in Novi, is a global supplier

of systems and components for the automotive industry. Prod-

ucts include rubber and plastic

sealing, fuel and brake lines, fluid

transfer hoses and anti-vibration

svstems, Wenzl said. Cooper

Standard employs more than

32,000 people globally and oper-

ates in 20 countries around the

SAVE 24% from everyday low price

Commission require-

ments across the range. Lane keep assist, blind spot warning, a rear cross-traffic alert system, a rearview camera and what Buick is calling a 'Safety Alert Seat,' which will pulse to alert the driver of a possible crash, are all standard. The Buick Envision is also available with a surround vision system that uses various cameras mounted around the vehicle to give the driver an unobstructed view of their surroundings."

"Quality is always an important measure for Buick and IQS is one of a number of indicators we use to measure our performance as we bring the freshest lineup in the industry to market. It's great to see Envision owners reporting such positive experiences with their vehicles," wrote Buick spokeswoman Jennifer Korail in an email statement.

Honolulu Seeks Ban on Peak Driving Fees

HONOLULU (AP) – Honolulu's mayor has vetoed a bill aimed at setting limits for what ride-hailing services such as Uber can charge during peak demand.

Mayor Kirk Caldwell said June 19 he wants to see new technology blend with old.

The bill sought to prevent "surge pricing" rates getting higher than the maximum fare set by the city. Taxi companies say Uber and Lyft face fewer restrictions. Those who oppose the bill say ride-hailing app users know prices up front and can choose whether to accept them.

Caldwell directed city attorneys to draft a bill that would allow transportation companies flexibility as long as there's disclosure about pricing.

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brands for the second consecu-

company's initial quality improvement has outpaced the in-

dustry average for three straight

"We have continued to im-

prove and we have more work to

do. We are highly focused on

satisfying our customers by con-

tinuing to bring new technolo-

gies and products to market,

with improved quality and relia-

Two FCA US vehicles placed in

the top three of their respective

segments for initial quality with

the Dodge Grand Caravan ranked

highest among Minivans and the

Chrysler 300 third among Large

automakers are doing a great job

of listening to consumers and

are producing vehicle quality of

the highest caliber," said Dave

Sargent, vice president of Global

ers are still finding problems. As vehicles become more com-

plex and automated, it is critical

that consumers have complete

ability to deliver fault-free vehi-

IQS is based on responses

from more than 75,000 pur-

chasers and lessees of new 2018

model-year vehicles surveyed af-

The study asks customers to

ter 90 days of ownership.

automakers'

"That said, some vehicle own-

Automotive at J.D. Power.

confidence in

"There's no question that most

head of Quality, FCA.

said Scott Garberding,

"We are pleased to see that the

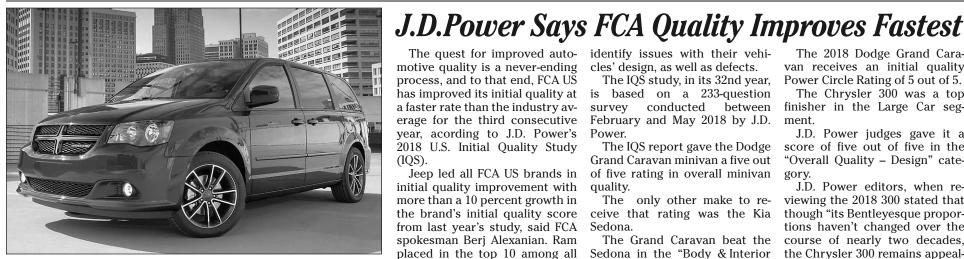
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J.D. Power calls 2018 Dodge Grand Caravan tops in improving quality.

What Arrest of Audi Official **Means in VW Diesel Scandal**

BERLIN (AP) - The arrest of the CEO of Volkswagen's Audi division is another milestone in the German automaker's three-year scandal over diesel emissions cheating.

Rupert Stadler, who was detained in Germany on June 18, is the highest-level executive at Volkswagen to have been arrested since the scandal erupted in 2015. While he has not been charged with wrongdoing, prosecutors said there was a risk he might try to flee and should be held until the probe into emissions manipulation is complete.

His detention stems from one of several investigations into Europe's largest automaker, whose scandal has reshaped public perception of diesel engines.

The investigations started in September 2015. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said Volkswagen had installed software on more than 475,000 cars that enabled them to cheat on emissions tests.

emissions of nitrogen oxide which can hurt people's health when the cars were placed on a test machine but allowed higher emissions and improved engine performance during normal driving

few days later, Volkswagen A said about 11 million diesel vehicles worldwide were fitted with the deceptive software. CEO Martin Winterkorn resigned, saying he took responsibility but insisted he personally did nothing wrong.

The U.S. investigation meant that VW has paid some \$20 billion in fines and civil settlements.

It has also pleaded guilty to criminal charges in the United States and nine managers, including Winterkorn, were charged there. Two are serving prison terms; Winterkorn and the others remained in Germany and are unlikely to be extradited. U.S. authorities said in May that they were still investigating the case.

Volkswagen sales have held

The case also put a spotlight on European emissions standards, which are less stringent about nitrogen oxide and tougher on emissions of carbon dioxide, which is said to lead to global warming.

The heightened scrutiny on emissions revealed that other companies also sold cars that polluted far more during regular driving than during testing, although not necessarily using the same illegal methods that Volkswagen did.

Prosecutors in Braunschweig, Germany, investigated Volkswagen's use of the cheating software on two specific diesel They fined Volksengines. wagen \$1.2 billion two weeks ago.

The probe will be closed as soon as Volkswagen pays the fine, as it has said it will do. But prosecutors' criminal investigation of Winterkorn and 48 others continues.

Prosecutors in another Ger-The software reduced the many city, Munich, are handling the criminal case against Audi, which is based in nearby Ingolstadt.

Twenty people are under suspicion in the Audi probe, which focuses on cars sold in Europe.

identify issues with their vehi-The quest for improved autocles' design, as well as defects.

motive quality is a never-ending process, and to that end, FCA US The IQS study, in its 32nd year, has improved its initial quality at is based on a 233-question survey conducted between a faster rate than the industry av-February and May 2018 by J.D. erage for the third consecutive year, acording to J.D. Power's Power. 2018 U.S. Initial Quality Study

The IQS report gave the Dodge Grand Caravan minivan a five out of five rating in overall minivan quality.

The only other make to receive that rating was the Kia Sedona.

The Grand Caravan beat the Sedona in the "Body & Interior Ouality - Mechanical" category, as well as the "Overall Quality Design" and "Body & Interior Quality - Design" and "Features & Accessories Quality - Design" categories.

J.D. Power reviewers wrote of the Grand Caravan that it started as an "original family hauler dating back to the '80s, the current 2018 Dodge Grand Caravan offers economy, space for 7-8 passengers and folding Stow'n Go seating in four value trims. New for 2018 is a fun color: IndiGo Blue.

"All 2018 Grand Caravans include backup camera and infotainment system with 6.5-in. touchscreen. A Blacktop appearance package, captain's chair configuration, Bluetooth connectivity and aluminum wheels are added options."

The 2018 Dodge Grand Caravan receives an initial quality Power Circle Rating of 5 out of 5.

The Chrysler 300 was a top finisher in the Large Car segment.

J.D. Power judges gave it a score of five out of five in the "Overall Quality - Design" category.

J.D. Power editors, when reviewing the 2018 300 stated that though "its Bentleyesque proportions haven't changed over the course of nearly two decades, the Chrysler 300 remains appealing, especially to people seeking an upscale appearance at a discount.

"Despite the car's ubiquity, there is a custom look to the car thanks to its long hood, chopped roofline, exaggerated wheel arches, and oversized wheels. In the 300S trim, with black paint, blacked-out appearance details, and dark-finish 20-in. rims, this Chrysler looks especially menacing.

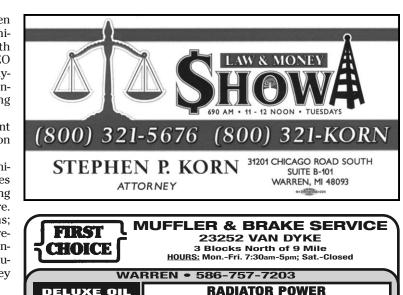
"For 2018, it is worth noting that the new Touring trim level is offered with a Sport Appearance package that adds the 300S trim's wheels and blacked-out exterior trim, giving the base car the same look at a much lower price.

"Bargain hunters seeking an upscale look at an impressive value will want to consider this version of the 300."



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up, in part thanks to an economic upswing in key markets. Last year, its sales hit a record of 10.74 million vehicles.

But public perception has turned against diesel engines, with Germany giving cities the right to ban them and major European countries setting targets to phase out the use of combustion engines.

Several investigations were launched, mainly in Germany, Volkswagen's home country.



BASF Examines Current Cultures to Find Future Colors

ues to blur the lines between reality and artificiality is the driving force behind the BASF's 2018-19 Automotive Color Trends theme – Keep it Real, said Paul Czornij, head of design for Southfield-based BASF North America Coatings, Color and Design.

As innovations such as artificial intelligence, autonomous driving and robotic industrialization take hold, the return to the human element – people's needs and emotions - becomes increasingly important, Czornij said. The designers at BASF's Coatings division translated these observations into a collection of 65 colors for automotive surfaces.

Dark colors, blue hues and complex effects represent the omnipresence of technology, Czornij said. Advancements in digitalization make technology become less visible and more intertwined with reality. Augmented reality applications and smart gadgets that simplify everyday life merge the real with the digital world. People seem to spend more time on online platforms, striving for perfection on social media, than in the real world. This omnipresence of technology is reflected in the Automotive Color Trends.

Shades of gray and blue are the focal point of the collection. Achromatic colors are combined with complex effects that add colorful and natural accents and represent the merging of reality and the virtual world. Blue hues – mirroring the color of screens and digital light - appear as strong saturated colors, Czornij said. Natural textures and color effects symbolize the search for human qualities in a virtual world.

Car sharing concepts, ride hail-

The need to stay authentic in a ing services and autonomous Grays and pastels reflect the urworld where technology contin- driving shift a car's function from a personally-owned object to a more public mode of transportation. For cars that are designed for sharing, color pallets with a universal appeal will play a significant role, Czornij said. The trend collection shows how elaborate textures and intricate effects can make each color truly unique.

In addition, BASF addresses future mobility with the development of functional colors. Select colors of the collection feature a coatings system that mitigates heat buildup on the vehicle surface. Further innovations include colors with state-of-the-art functionality, increasing reflectivity for enhanced LiDAR detectability, without compromising their aesthetic appeal.

In North America, the dismantling of public heroes makes room for new idols, Czornij said. Flaws are accepted as part of being human and diversity is celebrated. A new enthusiasm for science and especially space travel draws attention to far away worlds.

The connection of the real and virtual world as well as the relationship of earth and space is captured in the BASF's key color, Atomium Sky, predicted to influence 2022 vehicle models in North America, Czornij said.

This is the second consecutive year that BASF selected a blue as its key color, demonstrating its growing prominence in this region. Atomium Sky is a deeply saturated blue with a medium coarseness that transitions to a softer, semi-opaque hue, exuding playfulness while demonstrating futuristic and forward-thinking.

"This is one of the most diverse color collections BASF has ever introduced," said Czornij. 'There's a juxtaposition between achromatic and strong colors. ban look with essential, neutral spaces, whereas bright, chromatic colors that are optimistic, luxurious and playful point to advances in technology.'

The diversity is driven by economic and purchasing trends, and the evolving mobility landscape. Highlights of the North America colors include:

- Metal's Mettle: a medium to dark grey with a coarseness and a dynamic sparkle demonstrates the cool rawness and minimalism of urbanism.
- · Centripetal Blue: a blueblack color with a medium coarse sparkle enhances detectability and performance for autonomous vehicles.
- Kleur: a bright, vibrant red inspires a feeling of connectedness with a high saturation that makes it more visible, an important characteristic for self-driving vehicles.

"Self-driving technology was a crucial component of this year's conversation, both in terms of the psychology of public perception and acceptance of future mobility, and the functionality of the coating," said Czornij. "Some of the colors include

our innovative, industry-leading pigmentation to increase reflectivity for LiDAR equipment, which is one of the ways self-driving cars can detect objects in their surroundings.'

In Asia Pacific, the quest for quality in the real life is key.

People in the Asia Pacific region have an ambivalent relationship with technology. They freely give their personal data to companies that make everyday life more convenient and embrace emotional bonds to machines with artificial intelligence,



Czornij said psychology helps determine new automobile colors.

Czornij said. At the same time a desire for human and real-life contacts and experiences reshapes public spaces in the cities.

Gray Ambivalence, a glaring metallic gray, stands for the integration of high-performance technology in everyday life. It is balanced by a solid flop that connects to the real world.

In Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA), life in urban spaces are the focus.

In the EMEA region, the use of public space is changing, with real places taking on new value. They invite people to take a break from the digital world. Gray nuances build on this trend. With their associations with con-

crete, they stand for urbanity and - combined with haptic effects - allude to the significance of what can be experienced for real. Czornij said.

Extraordinary effects symbolize the desire for attention. The metallic anthracite "The Urbanist" stands for the urban, globally networked cosmopolite. At the same time, it represents the blending of humans and technology

In South America, the transformation of classic color spaces offers a visual connection to the diversity of the region. Two of the most popular color spaces in the automotive market - black and white – are transformed into eclectic coatings for cars.



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Tesla Accuses Ex-Employee

DETROIT (AP) - A former employee hacked into computers at Tesla's Nevada battery factory, stole confidential information and combined it with falsehoods in leaks to the media, the electric car maker alleged in a federal lawsuit.

The suit was filed June 20, three days after CEO Elon Musk warned employees of sabotage from within the company.

Martin Tripp of Sparks, Nev., admitted to Tesla investigators that he wrote software that transferred several gigabytes of data outside the company, including dozens of photographs and a video, according to the lawsuit filed June 20.

Hacking software from Tripp also was running on three computer systems of other employees "so that the data would be exported even after he left the company and so that those individuals would be falsely implicated," the lawsuit alleged.

A man who answered a call June 20 at a number believed to be Tripp's said he did not know Tripp. An email message was not answered.

Tripp made false claims about the information he stole, including claims that Tesla used punctured battery cells in the Model 3 electric car, and claims about the amount and value of scrap material generated by Tesla in the manufacturing process, the lawsuit alleged. Some of the claims made it into media stories about the company, but media organizations are not identified in the lawsuit.

The company also alleges that Tripp sent photographs and data to unspecified third parties including financial information and battery manufacturing details. Data was combined with false information given to the media, the lawsuit said.

The company says Tesla's name was damaged and the company lost business and profits due to the disclosures.

On June 17, Musk emailed employees telling them of "extensive and damaging sabotage" to the company's manufacturing operating system done under false user names. He wrote that the person's motivation was that he wanted a promotion that he did not receive. Musk wrote that there's a long list of organizations that "want Tesla to die," including Wall Street stock shortsellers and oil and gas companies

The company was investigating whether the former employee acted alone, Musk wrote.

Tesla wants monetary damages and an order to prevent Tripp from obtaining or disclosing information. It also seeks a court order to inspect his computers, electronic storage devices, email accounts and external storage accounts.

Tesla would not comment on the lawsuit June 20.

It was unclear if the company reported the alleged thefts to law enforcement.

Sparks police officer Ken Gallop said there was no record of an investigation involving Martin Tripp. Storey County Sheriff Gerald Antinoro did not immediately respond to email and telephone messages from The Associated Press. Sandra Breault, spokeswoman for the FBI in Nevada, said she was checking into the matter

Tripp joined the company in October of 2017 at the battery factory as a process technician, and had electronically signed a non-disclosure agreement, the lawsuit said.

Within a few months of his hiring, managers identified problems with his job performance, including at times being disruptive and combative with colleagues, according to the document. He was reassigned on May 17, 2018, and retaliated against the company by stealing the information, the lawsuit alleged.









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July 4 Travel to be Heavy

A record-breaking 46.9 million Americans will travel 50 miles or more away from home this Independence Day holiday, an increase of more than 5 percent compared with last year and the highest number since AAA started tracking 18 years ago.

For the 39.7 million Americans planning a Fourth of July road trip, INRIX, a global transportation analytics company, predicts travel times in the most congested cities in the U.S. could be twice as long as the normal trip, with Tuesday, July 3, being the busiest day, said AAA spokes-woman Julie Hall.

be one for the record books, as more Americans take to the nation's roads, skies, rails and waterways than ever before," said Bill Sutherland, senior vice president, AAA Travel and Publishing. "Confident consumers with additional disposable income will look to spend on travel this holiday, building on an already busy summer travel season." In addition to strong economic variables, the expected increase in travelers this year is helped by Independence Day falling on a Wednesday, giving travelers more flexibility to schedule a trip the weekend before or after the holiday.

by air, a 7.9 percent increase and the ninth year of consecutive air travel volume increases.

Trains, Buses and Cruise Ships – Travel across these sectors will increase by 5.8 percent to a total of 3.5 million passengers.

Hall said drivers should beware of "Terrible Tuesday" and the peak traffic times. For the Detroit area, AAA calculates peak driving will take place between 3:30 and 5:30 p.m.

Drivers should expect trips to take 1.6 times longer than nor-"This Independence Day will mal. INRIX, in collaboration with AAA, predicts drivers will experience the worst congestion over the holiday week on Tuesday, July 3, in the late afternoon – as commuters leave work early and mix with holiday travelers. 'With a record-level number of travelers hitting the road this holiday, drivers must be prepared for delays around major metros," says Scott Sedlik, general manager and vice president public sector, INRIX. "Although travel times are expected to nominally increase throughout the week, Tuesday afternoon will hands down be the worst time to be on the road. Our advice to drivers is to avoid peak commuting hours altogether or consider alternative routes." Gas prices are starting to stabilize heading into Independence Day, Hall said. Gas prices have slowly but steadily started to fall since the 2018 high of \$2.97 set over Memorial Day weekend. Since then, the national gas price has dropped nine cents to \$2.88 (as of June 20), which is 59 cents more than one year ago.

3.8 million people will travel



The Independence Day holiday period is defined by AAA as Tuesday, July 3, to Sunday, July 8. Hall said.

Here's the 2018 Independence Day Holiday Travel Forecast:

- Automobiles The vast majority of travelers – 39.7 million – will hit the road this Independence Day, 5.1 percent more than last year.
- Planes A record-breaking



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Tariffs Could Affect U.S. Auto Industry

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

prices, cut new-vehicle sales, cost jobs in the U.S., Canada and Mexico, and even slow related sectors of the economy.

"It seems like it is going to be so devastating that I can't imagine that they're actually going to do it," said Kristen Dziczek, vice president of labor and economics at the Center for Automotive Research, an industry think tank.

Trump, who was sniping on Twitter at Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau after a contentious economic summit of the Group of Seven earlier this month. told the Commerce Department to look at national security reasons to justify tariffs with hopes of bringing factory jobs to the U.S.

He tweeted that the administration would "look at tariffs on automobiles flooding the U.S. Market!"

But experts predict the tariffs likely would do the opposite, slowing the economy as other countries retaliate.

Here's what they say is likely to happen:

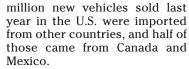
The tariffs would be charged on parts and assembled autos. Canada, Mexico and others would likely retaliate with duties, and automakers won't be able to absorb all of the increases.

"So they will have to raise prices.

"Imported parts, which all cars and trucks have, will cost more, further raising costs.

"We're all going to pay a lot more for vehicles," said Tim Galbraith, sales manager of Cavalier tool and manufacturing in Windsor, Ontario, near Detroit, maker of steel molds used to produce plastic auto parts.

About 44 percent of the 17.2



All have parts from outside the U.S., sometimes as much as 40 percent.

Based on the 24-year-old NAFTA, automakers and suppliers constantly ship fully assembled vehicles as well as engines, transmissions and thousands of small widgets across both U.S. borders.

Parts also come from China and other countries.

It's difficult to determine how large any price increases would be.

"It seems like it is going to be so devastating that I can't imagine that they're actually going to do it." - Kristen Dziczek, Center for Automotive Research

back-of-the-

But

of it.

price.

a statement.

some

envelope calculations show that

a Chevrolet Equinox small SUV

made in Canada would cost

about \$5,250 more in the U.S. if

General Motors doesn't eat part

That's based on an average

price of \$30,000 in the U.S. for

the hot-selling Equinox, made

Tariffs are charged on the

manufacturing cost, which is

about 70 percent of the sales

Toyota's RAV4, a main Equi-

nox competitor and the top-sell-

ing vehicle in the U.S. that's not

a pickup truck, also is made in Canada and would face the same

duties. "An import tariff would

hurt consumers the most since

it would increase the costs of ve-

hicles and parts," Toyota said in

SUV, is made in Ohio and would

be exempt from the tariff on as-

sembled vehicles, so it would

But about one-quarter of its

parts come from other coun-

tries. That would force Honda to raise its price too, said Dziczek.

have a price advantage.

Honda's CR-V, another small

primarily in Ingersoll, Ontario.

ple will either keep current vehicles or buy used ones. Jeff Schuster, senior vice pres-

ident LMC Automotive, expects U.S. new-vehicle sales would fall 1 million to 2 million per year if tariffs are imposed.

With higher prices, many peo-

Since U.S. auto factories making popular models are running near capacity, automakers couldn't do much in the short run to build more vehicles in the U.S. and avoid the tariff, Schuster said.

As sales fall, auto and parts makers would need to cut costs by laying off workers. Mexico and Canada would be hit first, but since they import parts from the U.S., component makers domestically also would have to cut.

For instance, the RAV4's engines are made in Alabama and transmissions in West Virginia.

If sales drop, those factories wouldn't need as many workers

On the assembly line at the Ontario Equinox factory, the 2,400 workers are worried about the escalating dispute, said Joe Graves, the union president.

"I don't really see how one individual can change everything that was put in place over decades,' Graves said of Trump. "It does cause a lot of uncertainty and instability with our members."

As sales slump, dealers who sell imported cars would lay off workers, too.

The pro-free trade Peterson Institute predicted that if other countries impose tariffs, U.S. auto production would fall percent, costing 624,000 4 U.S. jobs in about one-to-three years.

Other sectors of the economy would also be hit because autos touch nearly all manufacturing, said Dan Ujczo, a trade lawyer in Columbus, Ohio.

Tariffs would "be a shock wave through the economy. And that will be a red line for Congress to step in and do something," he predicted.

Retaliatory tariffs from other countries would likely hit U.S. agriculture and other businesses, curtailing exports and also costing jobs, said Dziczek.

Companies with price advantages due to the tariffs may increase U.S. production, and that could bring more jobs.

But Schuster and others expect they would raise production with the existing workforce.

Ford Sponsors Fireworks

The countdown has begun for than 10,000 pyrotechnic effects the Ford Fireworks. Celebrating 60 years, this year's display is scheduled to take place on Monday, June 25, at 9:55 p.m. Produced by The Parade Company, the Ford Fireworks is also hailed as one of the largest tributes to America's independence, drawing hundreds of thousands of people for a night of stunning riverfront views and family excitement, said Ford Fireworks spokeswoman Heather George. The theme for this year's show is "Come Alive in the D!" "The Parade Company is proud to produce a summertime tradition in Detroit that brings together our community and showcases the beauty of our magnificent skyline," said Tony Michaels, president & CEO, The Parade Company. "With Ford Motor Company's incredible support, the show grows bigger and more vibrant each year. It's hands down one of the best shows in the country." In its role as the show's producer, The Parade Company curates the musical arrangement and works exclusively with Zambelli Fireworks to stage more

visible for miles along the Detroit River. The 2018 display will be choreographed again by worldrenowned Patrick Brault, whose

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experience designing pyrotechnic displays includes past Olympic celebrations.

"We are proud to partner with The Parade Company to support one of our city's most thrilling family traditions," said Jim Vella, president, Ford Motor Company Fund, the philanthropic arm of Ford Motor Company. "Building stronger communities is core to our mission. Whether you're on Belle Isle, in Hart Plaza or along the riverfront, the Ford Fireworks bring people together."

The event, sponsored by Ford Motor Company since 2013, is also one of The Parade Company's largest and most popular annual fundraisers.

This year, guests will experience live music from Your Generation in Concert on the main stage, with food by Andiamo.

To learn more, visit www.theparade.org or call 313-923-7400.

All proceeds benefit the Michigan Thanksgiving Parade Foundation.

Tesla Fires Result in Offer by GM to Actress

The Associated Press has reported that the National Transportation Safety Board is sending an investigator to look into a Tesla battery fire in Southern California.

The specialist will observe Tesla's examination of the Model S that caught fire June 15 on a street in West Hollywood. The agency says the trip will allow it to learn about fires in all batterypowered vehicles.

Mary McCormack Actor shared video of her husband's Tesla car shooting flames near the front wheels. AP reported that she said in a tweet that there was no accident and the incident was "out of the blue." McCormack is married to director Michael Morris.

Tesla called the incident "an extraordinarily unusual occurrence" and says it's investigating. No one was hurt in the fire.

But that is not the end of the story. Ray Wert, team leader for GM's Advanced Technology Communications, contacted McCormack through Twitter and offered the use of a Bolt EV.

Wert said that offer of a loan was not part of a larger effort to replace damaged Tesla with Bolts. Rather, the GM Advanced Tech Comms team are just fans of her show "The West Wing" and not any other reason than that.

"This is just us seeing someone we know and wondering if we can help them," Wert said.

Wert said McCormack has a Michigan connection through her sister who is Bridget Mary McCormack, who serves as a iustince on the Michigan Supreme Court.



GM CEO Mary Barra and a Bolt like the one offered to Mary McCormack.

GM Honors Those Who Risk Lives to Help

It's a way of saying thanks.

Chevrolet, Buick, GMC and On-Star have launched a new program designed to recognize the bravery, dedication and resolve of America's first responders, said GM spokeswoman Lauren Langille.

"Millions of men and women serve their neighbors as police officers, firefighters, emergency medical service professionals and 911 dispatchers," said Steve Hill, GM vice president of United States Sales, Service and Marketing

"Not long after the hurricanes of 2017, we started thinking about ways to recognize first responders in a really meaningful officers in the U.S., as well as 1.13

said first responders deserve the same new vehicle discount we offer members of the military because every single person in uniform helps protect us."

Paid and volunteer police, firefighters, EMTs/paramedics and 911 dispatchers now qualify for a special discount below the manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP) on new vehicles at participating dealers.

The discount is compatible with most other available offers, Langille said.

According to The American Security Council Foundation, there are an estimated 800,000 police

way. The team came back and million firefighters and 891,000 emergency medical service professionals.

First responders can also receive an offer of 15 percent off OnStar Safety & Security and select Connected Services plans. For 21 years, OnStar has worked closely with its network of first responders every day to help save lives.

In 2017, OnStar responded to nearly 46,000 Automatic Crash Response notifications in the U.S. in partnership with first responders.

Program details are available www.gmfirstresponderdisat count.com and www.onstar.com/ heroes, Langille said.



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Head of Audi is Arrested

BERLIN (AP) – German authorities on June 18 detained the chief executive of Volkswagen's Audi division, Rupert Stadler, as part of a probe into manipulation of emissions controls.

The move follows a search last week of Stadler's private residence, ordered by Munich prosecutors investigating the manager on suspicion of fraud and indirect improprieties with documents.

"Audi CEO Rupert Stadler was provisionally arrested this morning," the company said in a statement.

It said shortly afterward that a judge had ordered him kept in custodv pending possible charges at prosecutors' request.

The company said that it couldn't comment further due to the ongoing investigation, but stressed that "the presumption be extradited.

of innocence remains in place for Mr. Stadler."

German news agency dpa reported that prosecutors decided to seek Stadler's arrest due to fears he might try to evade justice. A former head of Audi's engine development unit is already in investigative detention.

A total of 20 people are under suspicion in the Audi probe, which focuses on cars sold in Europe that were believed to be equipped with software that turned emissions controls off during regular driving.

Volkswagen has pleaded guilty to criminal charges in the United States and nine managers, including former CEO Martin Winterkorn, were charged there. Two are serving prison terms; Winterkorn and the others remained in Germany and are unlikely to

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Ford Bets on Corktown to Create the Future

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

communicate with an increasingly smart and connected world, Ford said. That's why Ford is developing a Transportation Mobility Cloud – an open platform that manages information flow and transactions between different services - to help cities optimize their various modes of transit.

The company, Ford said, is also committed to ensuring vehicles can communicate with techenabled surroundings to reduce CO2, lower congestion, and improve safety.

"In Corktown, Ford's efforts can come together in an urban environment, proving-out technology in the same environment where new ideas must be applied," Ford said. "This campus has the potential to help return Detroit to being the 'mobility capital of the world' - shaping the future of transportation for the better.'

The acquisition of Michigan Central Station comes alongside the company's purchase of the former Detroit Public Schools Book Depository, two acres of vacant land, the site of an old brass factory and the recent purchase of a refurbished former factory in Corktown, now home to Ford's electric vehicle and autonomous vehicle business teams.

Hackett pointed out that the Corktown development will not take away from the company's Dearborn campus.

Ford plans to have at least 1.2 million square feet of space in Corktown, three-quarters of which will be split between the company and its partners. Approximately 2,500 Ford employees, most from the mobility team, will call Corktown their work home by 2022 – with space to accommodate 2,500 additional employees of partners and other businesses.

"The remaining 300,000 square feet will serve as a mix of community and retail space, and residential housing," Hackett said. "This project is supported by our strong partnership with state and local government officials."

Development of Michigan Central Station and other Corktown locations is critical to Ford's future, Ford said.

Being in the heart of America's comeback city, said Ford, will help attract talent, startups and engineers that want to address these issues with Ford.

Hackett said the company wants the project to be an anchor that will lift the entire region.

"What Rouge was to Ford in the industrial age, Corktown can be for Ford in the information age," said Hackett.

"It will be the proving ground where Ford and our partners design and test the services and solutions for the way people are going to live and get around tomorrow, creating a Southeast Michigan mobility corridor that spans west from Dearborn to Ann Arbor, and east to Detroit."

New developments in Dearborn and in Corktown, said Hackett, will give the company the greatest home field advantage ever.

"This place will become a cathedral of knowledge, where new ideas are birthed," Hackett said.



This display shows Ford's efforts to create a new "auto" corridor.

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2018 Ford Super Duty

Ford's Efforts to Improve Vehicle Quality is Noticed

well together. At least according to the 2018 J.D. Power Initial Quality Study (IQS)

The Lincoln MKC, the Lincoln Continental, the Ford Mustang, the Ford Super Duty Pickup and the Ford Expedition all took honors in their IQS vehicle categories.

The 2018 Lincoln MKC receives an Initial Quality Power Circle Rating of 5 out of 5 and receives a quality award in the Compact Premium SUV segment from J.D. Power editors.

They wrote, "based on the Ford Escape, the Lincoln MKC has its own styling and an exclusive engine upgrade. A tur-bocharged 2.0-liter 4-cylinder is standard, paired with frontwheel or all-wheel drive. Upgrade from base Premiere to Select or Reserve trim, and a turbocharged 2.3-liter 4-cylinder engine is available with AWD. Lincoln also offers the MKC with plush Black Label trim."

Editors noted that, according to their consumer surveys, the five most appealing attributes of the Lincoln MKC are (in descending order) exterior styling, interior design, driving dynamics, engine/transmission, and seats and safety/visibility in a tie.

J.D. Power reviewer Liz Kim wrote of the 2018 Expedition, "Whether you need its hauling and towing capability or its interior size for cargo or passengers, the new 2018 Ford Expedition shines in almost every aspect. With this redesign, it sets the standards for the segment."

She also had nice things to say about the Expedition's handling, writing, "where the Expedition is at home is on the highway. It is remarkably easy to blast down the freeway, the SUV swallowing up bumps and harshness thanks in part to its independent rear suspension. Then you look down tomers," said VanSlambrouck.

Ouality and Ford vehicles go at the speedometer and realize that you've been going faster than is legally prudent.

"No matter the situation, the Expedition's steering is remarkably direct, and the brakes are easy to modulate. It's easy to see why the Expedition's driving dynamics are among owner's favorite features, and this new Expedition should make them even happier."

J.D. Power reviewers also called the Ford Super Duty pickup "hands down" the most capable large light-duty truck. The reviewer also liked how comfortable the front seats were and the vehicle's heating and cooling systems.

"Customers want a vehicle that keeps them connected whether they're going places or just out enjoying a drive," said Jim VanSlambrouck, Ford's Director of Quality for The Americas. "Our improving quality scores show we are delivering smart vehicles for a smart world that are also easy to use."

Ford also showed improvements in exterior, seating, the drive experience, feature control displays, the interior and air conditioning categories. As a result, Ford Motor Company earned more vehicle segment awards than any other automaker, VanSlambrouck said.

The Ford brand improves for the fifth year in a row and at a rate faster than the industry, showing 81 problems per 100 vehicles, down from 86 in 2017, VanSlambrouck said. Lincoln improves to a third-place ranking among premium brands, with 83 problems per 100 vehicles, down from 92 in 2017.

"While we're pleased with our results, we know quality is a race that never ends - and we'll keep pushing to deliver even higherquality vehicles for our cus-

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kswagen AG and Ford or Company last week anced they have signed a orandum of Understanding are exploring a strategic ale designed to strengthen company's competitiveness better serve customers glob-

VW, Ford Start Joint Project

e companies are exploring potential projects across a number of areas – including developing a range of commercial vehicles together to better serve the evolving needs of customers, said Ford spokeswoman Jennifer Flake. The potential alliance would not involve equity arrangements, including cross ownership stakes.

"Ford is committed to improving our fitness as a business and leveraging adaptive business models – which include working with partners to improve our effectiveness and efficiency," said Jim Farley, Ford's president of Global Markets. "This potential alliance with the Volkswagen

Group is another example of how we can become more fit as a business, while creating a winning global product portfolio and extending our capabilities.

"We look forward to exploring with the Volkswagen team in the days ahead how we might work together to better serve the evolving needs of commercial vehicle customers.'

"Markets and customer demand are changing at an incredible speed. Both companies have strong and complementary positions in different commercial vehicle segments already," said Dr. Thomas Sedran, head of Volkswagen Group Strategy.

"To adapt to the challenging environment, it is of utmost importance to gain flexibility through alliances. This is a core element of our Volkswagen Group Strategy 2025. The potential industrial cooperation with Ford is seen as an opportunity to improve competitiveness of both companies globally."



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