

Waymo expands Arizona driverless vehicle programs, forms commercial trucking partnership with Uber Freight

Waymo launched the next phase of their Waymo One autonomous ride hailing service on August 30, expanding to offer members of their Trusted Tester program in downtown Phoenix trips in rider-only mode—with no safety driver in the driver's seat—for the first time.

The Waymo One Trusted Tester program is a research-focused initiative allowing some members of the public to help the company shape its plans for autonomous ride-hailing, as early customers. Highly interactive, the program uses a Waymo One app to hail autonomous rides for everyday mobility needs and to provide customer feedback during and after their rides.

Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego went first, sharing a video on Twitter and Instagram and posting, "I had the opportunity to take my first rider-only trip with the Waymo Driver, Waymo's fully autonomous driving technology. Phoenicians, I can't wait for you to experience it for yourselves!"

With this deployment, Waymo is now offering trips in the following areas in the following operating modes:

DOWNTOWN PHOENIX: paid rider-only trips (with no safety driver) for Waymo employees and Trusted Testers.

PHOENIX SKY HARBOR AIRPORT: trips from downtown Phoenix to the airport for Waymo employees, *with* an autonomous specialist in the driver's seat.

EAST VALLEY: rider-only trips offered to members of the public.

Waymo now boasts that they are the only company to offer members of the public trips in rider-only mode in multiple different cities, counting both East Valley and downtown Phoenix.

(In San Francisco, they are currently testing rider-only trips for Waymo employees, not the public, and paid trips for Trusted Testers with an autonomous specialist in the driver's seat.)

Rides are available in Waymo's latest Jaguar I-PACE EVs equipped with the fifth-generation Waymo Driver. Waymo will start in a smaller portion of their planned service area (see map) and will expand over time.

Trusted Testers can use the Waymo One app to hail rides wherever they want to go in the initial Downtown service area. Download the Waymo One app, open an account and express interest in joining Waymo's Trusted Tester program.

Waymo and Uber Freight

Waymo also has news on the autonomous commercial trucking side, as Waymo Via partners with Uber Freight to accelerate the future of logistics. Through a long-term, strategic agreement, Waymo Driver technology will connect with the Uber Freight platform to deploy autonomous trucks at scale across its network.

The program will begin with Waymo Via's R&D test fleet, going long-term in the future as carriers that operate trucks equipped with Waymo Driver, if they opt in, will be able to seamlessly deploy their autonomous assets to transport loads via the

Uber Freight network, allowing them to maximize utilization and scale their businesses.

Deep integration between the two operations' products will include developing a joint product roadmap to build tools and infrastructure specific to deployment, to allow carriers to seamlessly freight match and execute loads with Waymo Driver-enabled trucks on the Uber Freight network.

The partnership also encompasses a capacity commitment where Waymo Via intends to reserve billions of miles of its goods-only capacity for the Uber Freight network, promising to impact the industry in the near- and long-term. ■

