

WHEELS

Toyota enter SUV race with 2001 Sequoia

Toyota will offer a full-size SUV called the Sequoia that shares the same platform and drivetrain as the Tundra pickup truck.

Toyota has entered the red-hot sport utility vehicle with the Sequoia that is scheduled to go on sale in late 2000 as a 2001 model.

It will be built alongside the Toyota Tundra pickup at

Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Indiana, and will share the full-size pickup's platform and V8 powertrain.

Significantly larger and roomier than the 4Runner, Sequoia will complement Toyota's SUV lineup with the size, features, performance and pricing that are currently in such high demand with recreationally active families.

Sequoia features the same 4.7-litre 1-Force V8 engine that powers Tundra. The engine will produce 240 hp and 315 lb/ft of torque, and will be the first

Toyota truck engine to be certified as ULEV, or ultra-low-emission.

Sequoia's overall length, width, height and wheelbase — as well as its interior volume dimensions — will be larger than those of Chevrolet Tahoe and nearly identical to those of Expedition.

Sequoia will transport eight passengers in three rows of seating in a cabin designed for roominess, comfort and safety. Sequoia will be the first Toyota truck to feature curtain-shield side air bags. And it will feature three-way seat belts at all eight passenger positions.

The 4-door, 4-wheel drive Sequoia will be offered with Vehicle Stability Control (VSC).



Japan tests swipe and drive cars

Twenty electric mini-cars have been put into service on Yokohama, Japan, to test whether city-dwellers, commuters, shoppers and tourists can be tempted to rent pollution-free vehicles on a "swipe and drive" basis.

The cars are two-seater Nissan Hyperminis. They are being offered in much the same way that some European cities offer bicycles that can be rented or borrowed for a trip, then parked at the nearest base station for use by the next customer.

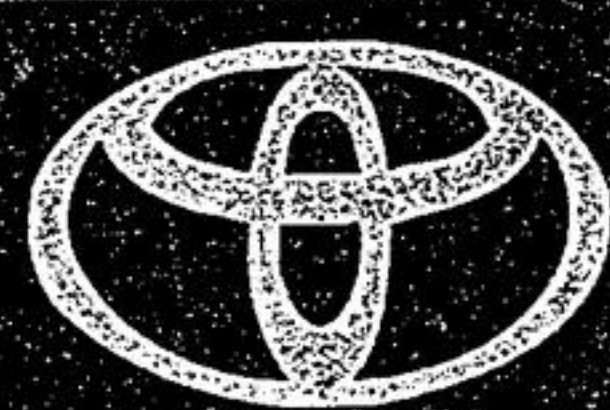
In Yokohama, the electric cars are available unmanned charger and rental stations in Yokohama's Minato Mirai 21 district. This is a newly developed neighborhood with a high concentration of office towers, shopping areas, cultural and tourist attractions. Parking is at a premium.

Promoters of the Hypermini project believe the multi-use rental cars may ease pollution, congestion and a shortage of parking space. They see businesses renting such cars for office errands, while tourists will find them convenient for shopping and sight-seeing trips.

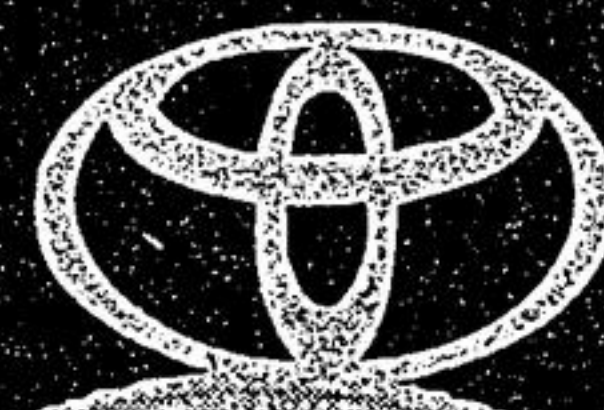
Other uses that have been suggested include daily commutes to and from the local transit station, grocery shopping, hospital visits and so on.

Nissan will also begin selling or leasing Hyperminis to various national and local government agencies, starting in February.

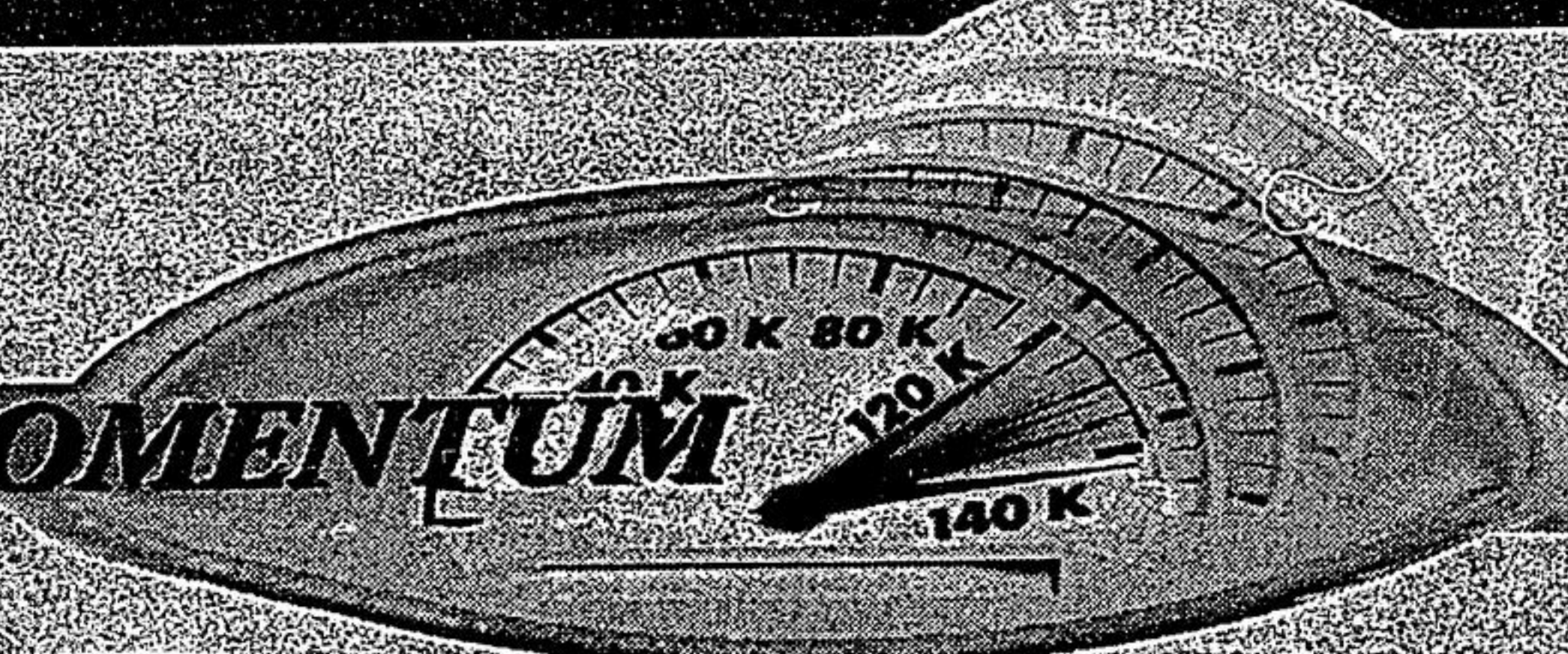
The Yokohama project is backed by the Japan Electric Vehicle Association as well as two federal agencies. One of them (JSK) is affiliated with Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI).



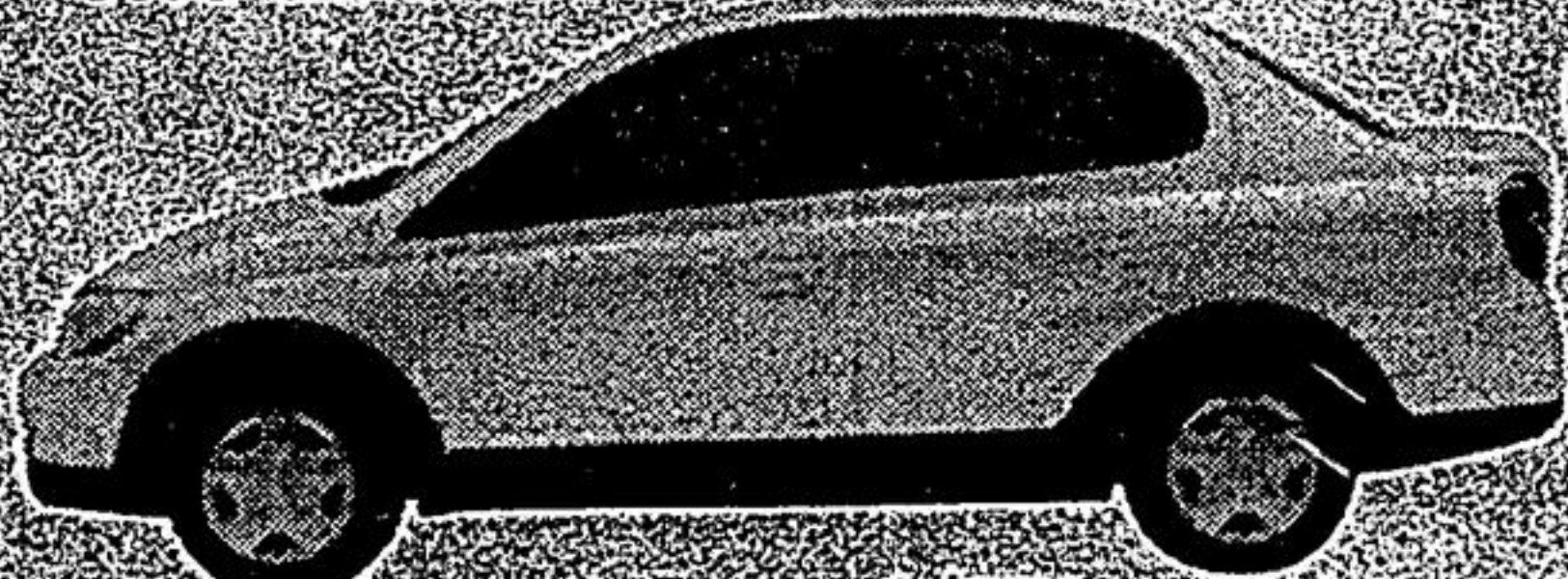
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MARKVILLE TOYOTA
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Future Motorcycle insurance

Motorcycle industry groups have been lobbying for a different system for insuring motorcycles for a number of years.

A major issue has been the perceived inability of the insurance industry to properly identify and classify the various types of motorcycles. As a response to interests from some member companies and insurance regulators, VICC (Vehicle Information Centre of Canada) undertook a project to develop motorcycle rate groups. With the assistance of the motorcycle industry, a comprehensive database of motorcycle characteristics for all models available in Canada since 1983 was developed.

Using the existing rate programs of several large Canadian motorcycle insurers, an average industry rate program was then created.

A product is now available as an initial motorcycle rate group table. The evolution of this table will lead to experience-based rating, to the extent possible, as insurance claims data is collected by model across Canada and analyzed by the various motorcycle characteristics.