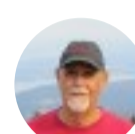




NEWS

Musk's Boring machine makes an appearance at SpaceX



By Steve Hanley [Twitter](#)
Posted on April 28, 2017

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An employee at SpaceX snapped a photo at work yesterday and posted it on Instagram. The photo has since been removed, but not before it was captured by [Business Insider](#). It shows three large round pieces about the size of a tunnel boring machine. One of those pieces has the words "The Boring Company" painted on it.

Elon Musk announced suddenly in February that traffic in Los Angeles was driving him nuts and that he was going to start boring tunnels underground as a way of relieving congestion. Shortly thereafter, the beginning of [a tunnel from SpaceX](#) appeared in the parking lot outside of Musk's space company.



Musk has let it be known that he can imagine tunnels [30 levels deep](#) in some areas as a way of getting traffic moving again in the world's most congested cities. The photo from SpaceX, demonstrates that the tunnel boring idea is being pursued even while Musk and Tesla are working overtime to keep production of the Model 3 on track.

Musk told *Bloomberg* back in February that he already has a boring machine. It's a 2015 model nicknamed Nannie that is 400 feet long and weighs 1,200 tons. Musk says his people are going to take it apart, figure out how it works, and build a new machine that can dig up to 10 times faster. "To make it a little better should be easy," he says. "To make it five times better is not crazy hard. To make it 10 times better is hard, but nobody will need to win a Nobel Prize. We don't have to change the standard model of physics."

The Trump administration is proposing a \$1 trillion infrastructure program that would include new high speed rail corridors. At a town hall meeting in Washington, DC in early April, Musk told Trump economic adviser, "OK, I can solve the problem. I can tunnel the whole way."

The Boring Company is Musk's idea on how to solve urban congestion. [Uber has a different idea – flying cars](#), an idea that Musk thinks is ridiculous. "Obviously, I like flying things," he tells Bloomberg. "But it's difficult to imagine the flying car becoming a scalable solution." It's all a matter of physics. To offset gravity, flying cars will need to generate a lot of downforce and that means noise and debris flying around. "If somebody doesn't maintain their flying car, it could drop a hubcap and guillotine you," he says. "Your anxiety level will not decrease as a result of things that weigh a lot buzzing around your head."

The problem with urban transportation is that everyone wants to move around at the same time and other transportation systems are not scalable enough to handle the demand peaks. "We have skyscrapers with all these levels, and we have a flat, two-dimensional road system," he says. "When everyone decides to go into these structures and then exits them at the same time, you're going to get jammed." Tunnels are a three dimensional solution that can solve the problem of transporting large numbers of people in real time.

They also could accommodate Musk's other idea for fast, affordable transportation, the Hyperloop. Whether the government ever decides to make a major investment in infrastructure, Musk intends to keep moving forward with his plans to tunnel beneath America.

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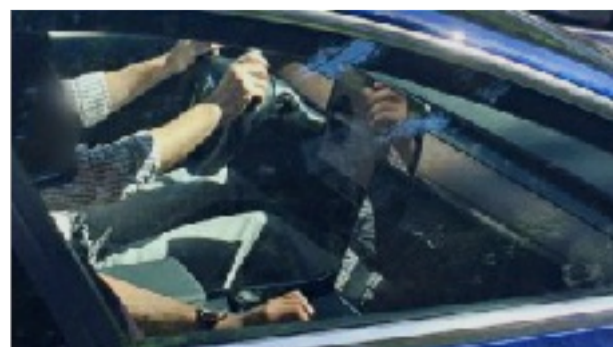
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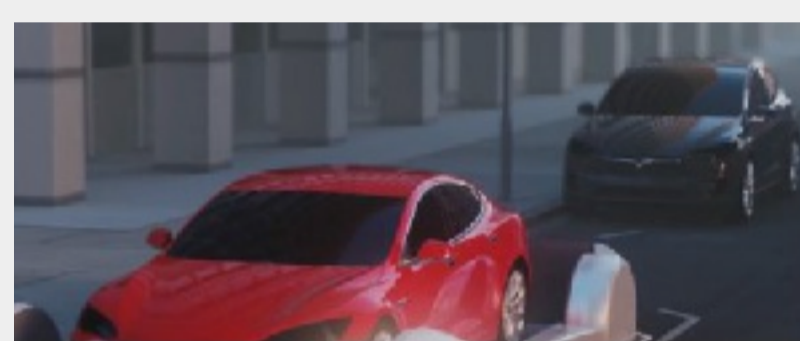
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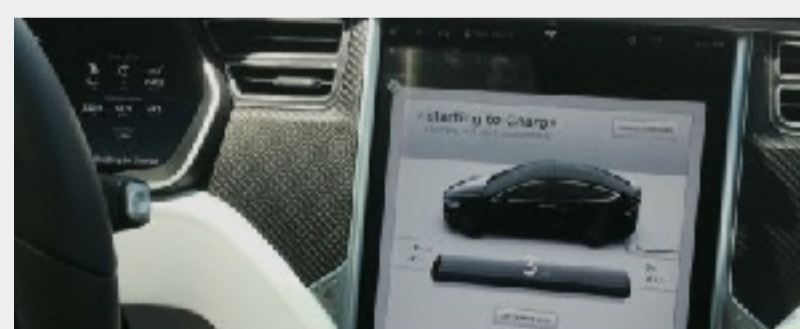
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