

Honda self-driving concept offers on and off modes

December 23 2019, by Nancy Cohen



Credit: Honda

Nervous about the self driving future? You are not alone. The [AAA](#) newsroom in March reported on the AAA's annual automated vehicle survey which found that 71 percent of people were afraid to ride in fully self-driving vehicles.

OK, people did not need to sign up for emotional support groups when

personal computers with their own carry cases changed desktop office work forever but we're talking cars and we're talking about a future of self-driving machines. Make no mistake. As *RoadShow* said flatly, "The thought of giving up control in the car, frankly, scares people."

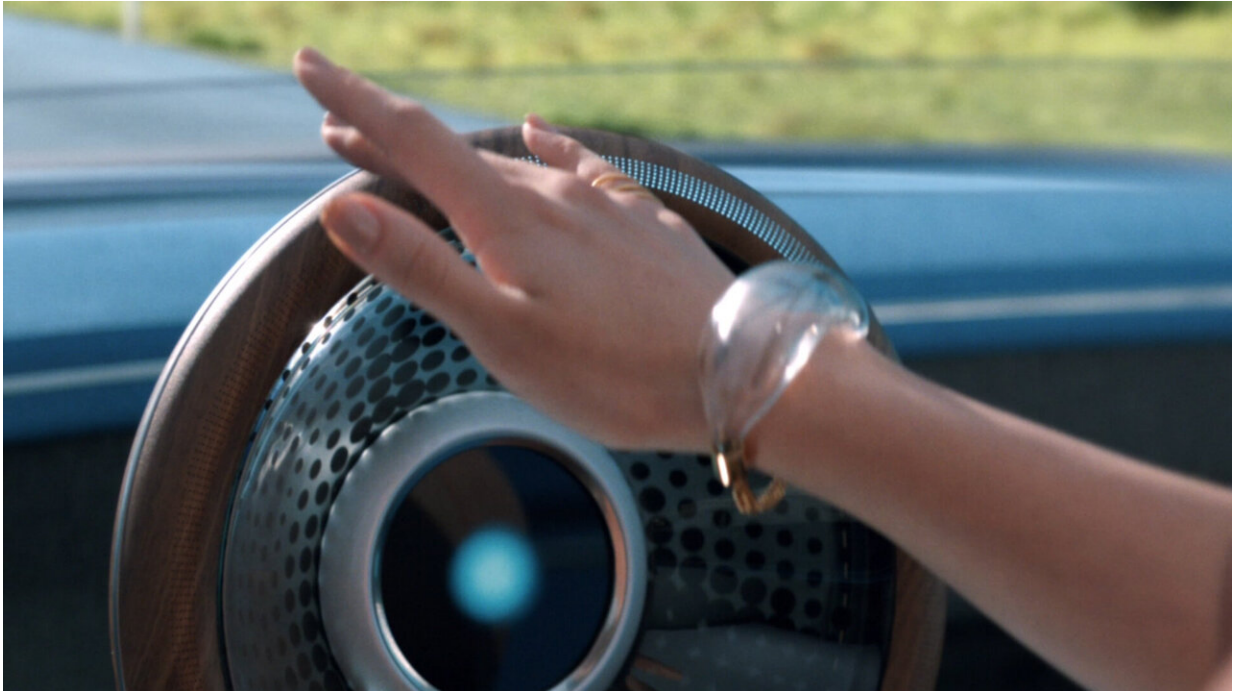
Well Honda has such concerns in mind with a [concept](#) that will be on show at the upcoming CES in Las Vegas. "Does the idea of a car that takes care of driving during the boring bits, but leaves you in control for the fun stuff, interest you?" asked Kyle Patrick in [AutoGuide.com](#).

"In the autonomous future, [Honda](#) believes that customers will be able to enjoy mobility in new ways when freed from the responsibility of driving. At the same time, customers may still want to experience the emotion and thrill of driving," Honda said.

Honda's new concept car can easily switch between self- and manual-driving. You can enjoy a seamless drive with both hands on the [wheel](#) on a scenic ride by the shore. What is interesting is Honda's reason for working out the concept—allowing drivers to still "experience the emotion and thrill of driving" when they want to.

Sean Szymkowski, [Roadshow](#): "It's honestly not a poor way to approach things. Few enjoy driving when it entails stop and go traffic or a mundane commute. More people like driving when it's fun and creates an enjoyable experience."

(Loz Blain in *New Atlas* raised the point of generations and differences therein. "The [transition](#) to autonomous driving will progress differently in different generations. Youngsters who never learned to drive will probably take to driverless cars like ducks to water.")



Credit: Honda

Honda felt the pain, nonetheless, and considered this "augmented" driving experience as calming nerves.

Honda is referring to this as the Augmented Driving Concept. Going from manual to self-driving, "If you feel the need to take a photo at a second's notice, the car will automatically take over driving responsibilities," said Derek Fung in [CarAdvice](#). The Honda Augmented Driving Concept will be on display at the automaker's stand at CES 2020

Motor1.com thought about the concept news: The [author](#) found the company's choice of describing the concept as "augment driving" as, well, confusing.

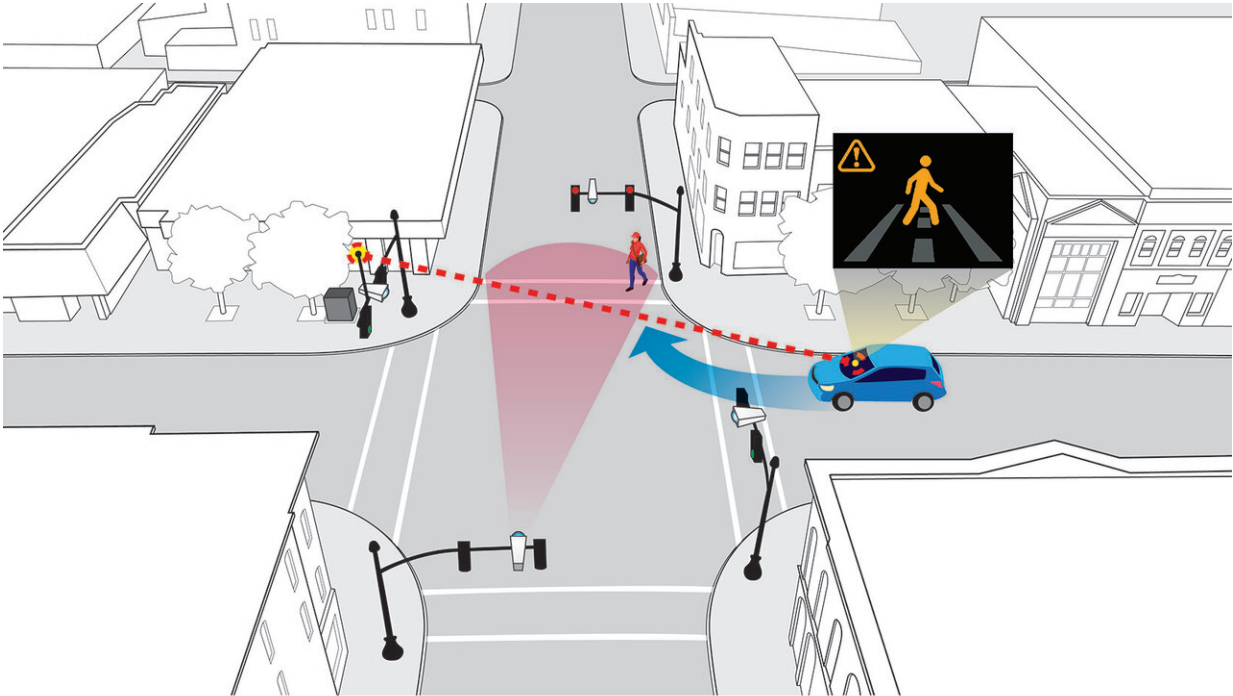
After all, argued Christopher Smith, augment driving "conjures images

of fancy screens and big displays presenting the driver with augmented views of the vehicle's surroundings." Smith, like many others on Thursday, discovered that Honda had another idea altogether in its concept.

Smith, however, recognized that Honda is, actually, on to something good in the future of autonomous cars.

Smith referred to its "different submodes for semi-autonomous operation, and we do get it." And Smith did get it: "Instead of a fully autonomous car with no controls and a set, pre-programmed destination, the Augmented Reality Concept allows passengers to easily interrupt those commands without necessarily going to full manual control."

In this concept, Honda is featuring more than eight modes between fully autonomous and semi-autonomous. How? This is where it gets interesting. "Various sensors in the vehicle continuously read the user's intention to smoothly shift between these modes, creating an instinctive driving experience," said the company.



The system visually detects pedestrians that have entered a crosswalk area. A connected vehicle can warn the driver of a pedestrian crossing, even when they are not directly within line of sight.

Credit: Honda

What is behind those different modes?

Loz Blain had a useful explanation in *New Atlas* about all those modes between fully autonomous and semi-autonomous operation. What does it all mean?

Blain said it means that "whatever you're doing behind the wheel, it's taking your input suggestions and running them by the computer before deciding if it'll do whatever you've asked it to do. There's a switch if you want to engage full autonomy, but the car won't wait for you to make the call if it feels like driving itself. It's always watching you in case you fall asleep, or start taking photos out the window...and it'll take the wheel

without judgement the second it thinks you're compromised."

Joel Stocksdales in [autoblog](#) similarly attempted to pin down what Honda is after: "According to Honda, there are eight levels of autonomous driving from primarily human-controlled to fully automated...The driver can switch between human-controlled and computer-controlled on demand."

The new concept car has another feature that will turn heads at CES. The new concept is all about the steering wheel design. The steering wheel will perform as both accelerator and brake.

The driver pulls the wheel to slow down, and pushes the wheel to accelerate. Not only that— The car starts up when the steering wheel is given two pats, said Fung.

CES attendees can experience a simulated demonstration of the Augmented Driving Concept, said the company.

Commented Blain: "Visitors to CES 2020 can take a simulated ride in the Augmented Driving Concept and feel the emotion and thrill of driving for themselves, before getting in their cars and experiencing the emotion and thrill of driving back to their hotels in Vegas traffic."

More information: [hondanews.com/en-US/honda-corp... services-at-ces-2020](https://hondanews.com/en-US/honda-corp...services-at-ces-2020)

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