

CAR CORNER

Cars Drive The Presidential Election

(NAPSA)—What will voters elect to drive over the next four years?

It's a question that's come increasingly to light as the presidential nominees have voiced strong opinions on the auto industry—and on their personal choices for vehicles.

Obama, for example, says he'll give Detroit money to stop building SUVs and start building 35-mpg cars, while McCain's been a champion of higher-fuel-economy laws and wants \$300 million for a new generation of electric cars. But what about what the candidates drive?

"Obama's definitely a 'green' guy who drives a Ford Escape Hybrid. But it's hard to forget that stylish Chrysler 300C he had until his media handlers took charge," explains Bengt Halvorson, an editor at TheCarConnection.com. "As for McCain, look for Toyota's popular Prius to get a bigger slice of the market if he takes the election."

Here are Halvorson's predictions for vehicles most likely to be a hit under the next president of the United States:

Barack Obama

- Big pickups aren't going away, they're just going diesel. Obama has been a vocal supporter of biodiesel, and each of the Detroit carmakers is planning diesel for their big trucks.

- Volkswagen might lead in diesel cars for now, but Halvorson says just wait until the segment-killing Honda Accord gets in on the action. Its new Accord turbo-



The next president could help determine which cars will become popular in the coming years.

diesel gets an estimated 50 mpg on the highway.

- Halvorson says Ford's new subcompact Ford Fiesta, slated for a 2010 release, is just the ticket for an Obama administration. "They could make a hybrid or diesel version with real 50-mpg capability," he explains.

John McCain

- McCain's spoken out for more compressed natural-gas vehicles such as the ones many cities use in their bus systems. The Honda Civic GX, which uses compressed natural gas, can be refilled right at home from a CNG tank called "Phill." Plus you can get natural gas from domestic sources.

- GM has been working overtime on the gas-electric Chevrolet Volt, the plug-in hybrid it hopes to launch by late 2009. The automaker can expect McCain to be an ally, Halvorson says: "McCain's in favor of tax credits for zero-carbon-emission cars."

- With his \$300 million plan to fund a new generation of electric-car batteries, McCain might be giving a lift to the Nissan EV, which could debut as early as 2012.