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SPORTS, 1B

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Several of the goals set out in Tesla CEO Elon Musk's pay package are written in vague language that could provide him with hefty payouts without significantly boosting profit, according to experts. ODD ANDERSEN/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES FILE

Musk could be paid billions without hitting Tesla goals

'Mars-shot milestones' built into CEO's historic pay package

Chris Kirkham, Rachael Levy and Abhirup Roy
REUTERS

LOS ANGELES – When Tesla directors offered Elon Musk the biggest executive pay package in corporate history in September, it reassured investors that he would have to achieve the equivalent of “Mars-shot milestones” to earn \$878 billion in Tesla stock over 10 years.

The board's proposal said Musk would have to “completely transform Tesla and society as we know it” in robotics and autonomous driving as well as stock value and profits. Conversely, Musk would get “zero” unless he meets those “incredibly ambitious” goals.

Yet Musk could reap tens of billions of dollars without meeting most of those targets, according to a Reuters analysis of his performance goals and more than a dozen experts in executive pay, company valuations, robotics and automotive trends including autonomous driving.

He could collect more than \$50 billion by hitting a handful of the board's easier goals that won't necessarily revolutionize Tesla's products or business, the Reuters review found.

Even hitting just two of the easiest targets, along with modest stock growth, would net Musk \$26 billion, more than the lifetime pay of the next eight best-paid CEOs combined, a group that includes Meta Platforms' Mark Zuckerberg, Oracle co-founder Larry Ellison, Apple's Tim Cook, and Nvidia's Jensen Huang, according to an analysis for Reuters by research firm Equilar.

Musk's vehicle sales goals are exceptionally easy to achieve, according to four automotive experts. If Musk sells 1.2 million cars a year over the next decade, on average, he earns \$8.2 billion in stock if Tesla's market value grows from



Tesla's EV business, which accounts for almost all its revenue, is deteriorating, with aging models facing fierce competition. Its only newer model, the Cybertruck, has flopped. JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES FILE

Musk said last month on his social media platform X that the package is “not about ‘compensation,’ but about me having enough influence over Tesla to ensure safety if we build millions of robots.”

\$1.4 trillion today to \$2 trillion in 2035, well under long-term market-average growth. That's a half-million fewer cars per year than Tesla sold in 2024.

Three other product-development goals are written in vague language that could provide Musk hefty payouts without significantly boosting profit, according to six robotics or autonomous-driving industry experts who reviewed Musk's goals for Reuters.

Tesla and Musk did not respond to

requests for comment.

In a statement, a spokesperson for the Tesla board said: “The proposed pay package is actually worth zero to our CEO unless and until the shareholders see the value of the company nearly double and an operational milestone is met.”

The board's pay proposal requires Musk to remain a Tesla executive for at least seven and a half years to collect any stock compensation. Musk, however, would get the voting rights associated with the share awards as soon as he earns them.

Musk said last month on his social media platform X that the package is “not about ‘compensation,’ but about me having enough influence over Tesla to ensure safety if we build millions of robots.”

In its proposal, the board said Musk is “motivated by more than just conventional forms of compensation.”

See MUK, Page 3A

Council picking up desal Nov. 18

Kirsten Crow
Corpus Christi Caller Times
USA TODAY NETWORK – TEXAS

Two months after a divided Corpus Christi City Council ended a design contract for the Inner Harbor desalination plant, talks are expected to resume – this time, under a new proposal.

The proposal, brought forth under a recommendation by city staff, would open the door for negotiations with the company that had ranked second in the original contract award process.

The upcoming talks, if like the previous, may be contentious.

Some council members have expressed openness to alternative options that would again pick up pursuit of the plant.

Others have remained steadfast in objection against the project and are critical of its return to the council floor.

In a Nov. 12 message to the Caller-Times, Mayor Paulette Guajardo suggested the newly proposed plan “represents a significant step toward unity and progress on desalination for Corpus Christi.”

She had been in support of continuing design of the plant in the 6-3 vote in September.

“(The plan) provides a thoughtful, structured path forward, one that allows the Council to move together

See COUNCIL, Page 3A

Plans made for low-ranked schools

Olivia Garrett
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USA TODAY NETWORK – TEXAS

Several low-performing Corpus Christi ISD schools have adopted turnaround and targeted improvement plans.

These plans are required for campuses that are rated poorly in the Texas school accountability system. But because school improvement is a multi-year process, some of the Corpus Christi Independent School District campuses included are doing better than the designation might imply.

Take Yeager Elementary School, a campus that earned a low F rating from the Texas Education Agency in the 2023-24 school year but made significant gains last year.

The CCISD Board of Trustees approved a targeted improvement plan on Nov. 10 for Yeager, which is designated as a Comprehensive Support and Improvement Progressing school.

The “comprehensive support”

See SCHOOLS, Page 2A

