GM Press Release: November 6, 1997: CERV-I -- An Automotive Benchmark

General Motors Media Press Release

FOR RELEASE: November 6, 1997
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CERV-I -- An Automotive Benchmark

LAS VEGAS — Chevrolet rolls out the legendary CERV-I (Chevrolet Engineering Research Vehicle) — at the 1997 SEMA show. The 1960 CERV-I is the first of four high performance research vehicles produced by Chevrolet over a 35 year period.

Zora Arkus-Duntov developed it as a platform for engineers to develop and refine Chevrolet body, chassis and suspension systems. Its impressive performance on the test track drove him to have higher aspirations — the checkered flag at Indy. Regretfully, due to a ban on racing by Chevrolet at the time, Duntov was unable to compete — he settled for a few demo laps at the U.S. Grand Prix in 1960.

Originally, the CERV-I was equipped with a 283 cu. in. small block V8 engine that delivered 350 horsepower while weighing only 350 lbs. — an impressive

power-to-weight ratio rarely achieved in even high performance aircraft of its time. This lightweight status was due to an intensive use of aluminum and magnesium engine components — saving over 175 lbs. Duntov employed a Corvette-type 4-speed transmission to harness this power.

Complementing its lightweight powerplant, designer, Larry Shinoda constructed CERV-I's body structure out of fiberglass-reinforced plastic — weighing in at only 80 lbs. This body structure was attached to a very rigid 125 lb. chrome-molybdenum tube constructed frame. Combining these lightweight components helped the CERV-I weigh in at a lean 1,600 lbs.

CERV-I's chassis system also features a four-wheel independent suspension with a unique rear multilink system that's very similar to systems used in modern automobiles. The brake system — also ahead of its time — employs an innovative two-piston master cylinder that eliminates the chance of complete brake failure.

Over time, with his eye on even greater performance, Duntov refitted the CERV-I with its current 377 cu. in. aluminum small block, an advanced Rochester fuel injection system and Indy-style tires and wheels. To match this mechanical updating, Shinoda redesigned its streamlined body structure for greater aerodynamics. Today the CERV-I appears in this second-generation form. It's owned by Mike Yager, President of Mid America Designs, and is part of the Mid America Designs car collection.

1960 CERV-I Spec Chart

Engine	377 cu. in. aluminum V8
Transmission	Fully synchronized 4-speed manual
Driveline Configuration	Rear engine, rear-wheel drive
Fuel Delivery System	Rochester fuel injection
Fuel Tank	Two rubber bladder fuel cells with 20 gallon total capacity

Frame	Body-on-frame construction from tubular chrome-moly steel
Suspension	Four-wheel independent
	Front — Independent, variable rate springs with shock absorbers and front stabilizer bar
	Rear — Independent multilink, variable rate springs with “double-acting” shock absorbers
Brakes	Front disc/rear drum (similar system to the HD type available on 1960 Corvette), two piston master cylinder
Steering	Recirculating ball type steering gear with 12:1 ratio
Wheels	Cast magnesium alloy
Wheelbase	96 inches
Weight	1,600 lbs.
Maximum Speed	206 mph

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