

6. PUBLIC PRESENTATION ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY (AAM) INITIATIVE FOR THE GREATER HOUSTON AREA

BACKGROUND

Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) is a new concept of air transportation using piloted and autonomous electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft, to sustainably move people and cargo between places not currently or easily served by surface transportation or existing aviation modes. These aircraft are all-electric, low noise and will be safety approved by the FAA. Approval for passenger carrying operations is expected in 2025/26 for the piloted version and 2028/29 for autonomous operations. The Greater Houston Area stands to greatly benefit from these technologies to support its mobility and economic growth, contribute to the region's energy transition, and continue its US Aerospace leadership.

CURRENT SITUATION

A group of world-leading industry players in the sector have partnered and formed the “Houston AAM Industry Council” in order to engage with local stakeholders and collaborate on a roadmap to operationalize AAM services in the region. This council is composed of Wisk (a subsidiary of Boeing), Bristow, Crown Castle, CenterPoint, Ferrovial, RTX Collins, and Evolve Houston.

AAM is happening now, with the FAA shepherding efforts (Innovate 28, Office of Next Gen), and the USDOT leading an interagency working group to foster its deployment. TxDOT is continuing its AAM planning efforts thanks to Rep. Cook’ and Sen. Parker’s 2023 legislation (HB 2678/SB2144). The most advanced regions have already taken steps to include AAM and vertiports in their transportation planning (e.g Miami, Orlando, Ohio). The Houston AAM Industry Council and its members wish to help the Houston Region lead the US in this nascent aerospace industry and contribute to raising the profile of the region as an attractive and sustainable destination.

ACTION

For discussion only.