City of St. Petersburg
Advanced Air Mobility Task Force
August 25 2025 – 5:00 PM
City Hall, Conference Room 100

Task Force Members: Ed Montanari (Chair), Tristan Brockwell (Vice Chair), Alison Barlow, Ryan Barnett, Whit Blanton, Brian Deeb, Walt Driggers, Max Glazer, Janika Polk, Jay Rogers, Mike Swesey, and Dr. Yu Zhang

1. Call to Order — Chair

2. Approval of the Agenda — Chair

3. Approval of the August 4, 2025 Meeting Minutes — Chair

4. Public Comment[1] — Chair

5. New Business
   - Electric Vertical Takeoff & Landing (eVTOL) Manufacturers - **Akaash TK, Research Associate, Autonomous Technology & Robotics - Ark Invest**
     Attachments
     1. Akaash TK Bio
     2. PowerPoint Presentation

6. Old Business — Chair

7. Next Meeting – September 15, 2025, 5:00 PM - City Hall, Room 100 — Chair

8. Meeting Adjournment — Chair

Supplemental Attachments (Information Only)

- *AAM Task Force Meeting Schedule (As Amended June 30, 2025)*
- *AAM Task Force List of Previous and Upcoming Tentative Agenda Topics*
- *AAM Task Force Scope One-Page Infographic*

[1] NOTE: No more than 3 minutes per speaker, not to exceed 30 minutes total.

City of St. Petersburg
Advanced Air Mobility Task Force
August 4, 2025 Meeting Minutes
City Hall, Room 100

Task Force Members Present: Ed Montanari (Chair), Alison Barlow, Ryan Barnett, Whit Blanton, Brian Deeb, Walt Driggers, Max Glazer, Janika Polk, Jay Rogers, and Mike Swesey

Task Force Members Absent: Tristan Brockwell (Vice Chair) and Dr. Yu (April) Zhang

Also Present: Doug DiCarlo (Environmental Science Associates), Assistant City Attorney Brett Pettigrew, Managing Director for City Development Administration Brian Caper, Airport Manager Rich Lesniak, and City Council Administrative Officer Jayne Ohlman.

1. **Call to Order** – 5:15 PM
2. **Approval of Agenda** – Task Force Member Barlow motioned for approval. Task Force Member Blanton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
3. **Approval of July 14, 2025 Minutes –** Task Force Member Deeb motioned for approval. Task Force Member Swesey seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
4. **New Business – August 4, 2025**

Albert Whitted Airport Vertiport Considerations & Standalone Vertiports - ***Doug DiCarlo, Aviation Program Manager at Environmental Science Associates (ESA)***

Task Force Chair Montanari introduced Doug DiCarlo, Aviation Program Manager at Environmental Science Associates (ESA). Chair Montanari noted that Mr. DiCarlo was brought on to assist the Task Force with the development of its recommendations for Advanced Air Mobility (AAM).

Mr. DiCarlo began with an outline of the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) criteria for vertiports, the potential for establishing a facility at Albert Whitted Airport (AWA), and considerations for standalone sites elsewhere in the City.

Next, Mr. DiCarlo provided an overview of initial use cases for AAM, including air taxi services, middle-mile cargo, and public service operations. Mr. DiCarlo noted that electric vertical takeoff and landing aircraft (eVTOL) may operate from existing runways, modified heliports, or newly developed vertiports.[1] Mr. DiCarlo highlighted the key infrastructure elements to support vertiport operations, including takeoff and landing areas, parking positions, charging stations, passenger facilities, fire protection, and communication systems. Mr. DiCarlo emphasized that while there are a few ownership and operation models for vertiports, the FAA will only protect the approach and departure airspace for public-use vertiports, unless there is an established instrument approach procedure.[2]

Next, Mr. DiCarlo outlined the following considerations for establishing a vertiport at AWA: the size and location of a vertiport, potential modifications to existing airport facilities (i.e., hangars), impact on existing airport uses, and future development plans. Mr. DiCarlo detailed the minimum vertiport size requirements and the respective takeoff and landing area dimensions. The touchdown and liftoff area (TLOF) is 50 feet, and the final approach and takeoff area (FATO) is 100 feet, with a safety area of 125

[1] Note that vertistops and vertihubs are the same as vertiports for the purposes of design requirements. See FAA Engineering Brief No. 105A, Vertiport Design.
[2] Ownership and operation models include: publicly owned - public use, publicly owned - private use, privately owned - public use, and privately owned - private use.

feet. Mr. DiCarlo explained that these numbers are based on FAA reference aircraft, as eVTOL aircraft are still working toward certification.

Mr. DiCarlo explained that the FAA's vertiport airspace requirements call for an 8:1 approach slope with two paths at least 135 degrees apart. FAA criteria also require 500 feet of separation from runway centerlines, though at least 700 feet is recommended for independent visual flight rules (VFR) operations. For both runways 7-25 and 18-36 at AWA, this distance is 500 feet from the centerline. Mr. DiCarlo noted that these requirements present a challenge for an on-airport vertiport due to capacity, traffic flow, and future development. However, AWA may serve as the most practical starting point for AAM activity, given its established aviation infrastructure, regulatory framework, and existing use. Locating initial AAM operations at an airport may also promote community acceptance.

Next, Mr. DiCarlo outlined the following planning considerations for potential standalone vertiport sites: facility size, anticipated activity, proximity to emergency services, compatible land use/zoning, proximity to existing aviation infrastructure, approach and departure paths, and multimodal connections. Operational challenges include proximity to other airports, community acceptance, and communication with air traffic control. Mr. DiCarlo explained that the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has been actively involved in planning for vertiports, including participating in the Naples Airport's vertiport compatibility study, where they explored considerations for off-airport vertiports. The report identified siting concerns such as compatibility with traffic patterns, instrument approach procedures, tall structures, and even proximity to landfills. Mr. DiCarlo noted that there are other less obvious considerations for standalone vertiports, including downwash/outwash caution areas, which are zones where wind velocity from eVTOL operations can be greater than or equal to 34.5 mph, and include taxiing, hover taxiing, and parking areas.

Task Force Member Barlow asked how helicopters currently land and take off at AWA. Airport Manager Rich Lesniak responded that while there is no formal helipad, helicopters use a designated ramp area. Task Force Member Barlow asked that the Task Force be provided with a list of existing heliports and helipads in the city limits, as well as information on how these are currently defined and regulated in the City Code.[3]

Task Force Member Glazer inquired about using existing structures like parking garages for potential vertiport sites. Mr. DiCarlo responded that while the idea is interesting, it would require significant investigation into the design and stability since it is unlikely that a parking garage was designed with a vertiport in mind. Task Force Member Glazer inquired how the nearby water reclamation site would affect potential AAM operations at AWA.[4] Mr. Lesniak explained that the City is currently engaged in a project to construct new wet weather storage and equalization tanks at Lift Station 85. Mr. Lesniak explained that the tanks will be on the south side of the property, while the north side of the property will remain an option for future airport development.

Task Force Members collectively emphasized the importance of balancing the use of existing airport infrastructure with long-term planning for standalone vertiport sites. Task Force Members also underscored the need for coordination with the City's comprehensive plan and compatibility with surrounding communities.

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[3] Per City Code 16.10.020.1, Heliports are considered an Accessory Use and are defined as an "area providing for the take-off and landing of helicopters and related fuel facilities (whether fixed or mobile) and appurtenant areas for parking, maintenance, and repair of helicopters."

[4] The former Albert Whitted Water Reclamation Facility was decommissioned in 2015 after Lift Station 85 came online to redirect sewage flows to the City's Southwest Water Reclamation Facility. List Station 85 serves downtown St. Petersburg.

Task Force Review and Approval: Progress Report #1 Presentation to City Council

Chair Montanari requested feedback from Task Force Members on the Progress Report #1 presentation in advance of the presentation to the City Council on August 7, 2025. Chair Montanari noted that the presentation will be a high-level overview to provide the City Council with an update on the Task Force's progress and plans going forward. Task Force Member Blanton moved approval, and Task Force Member Driggers seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.

Chair Montanari adjourned the meeting at 6:34 PM.

Akaash TK,
Research Associate
Autonomous Technology & Robotics

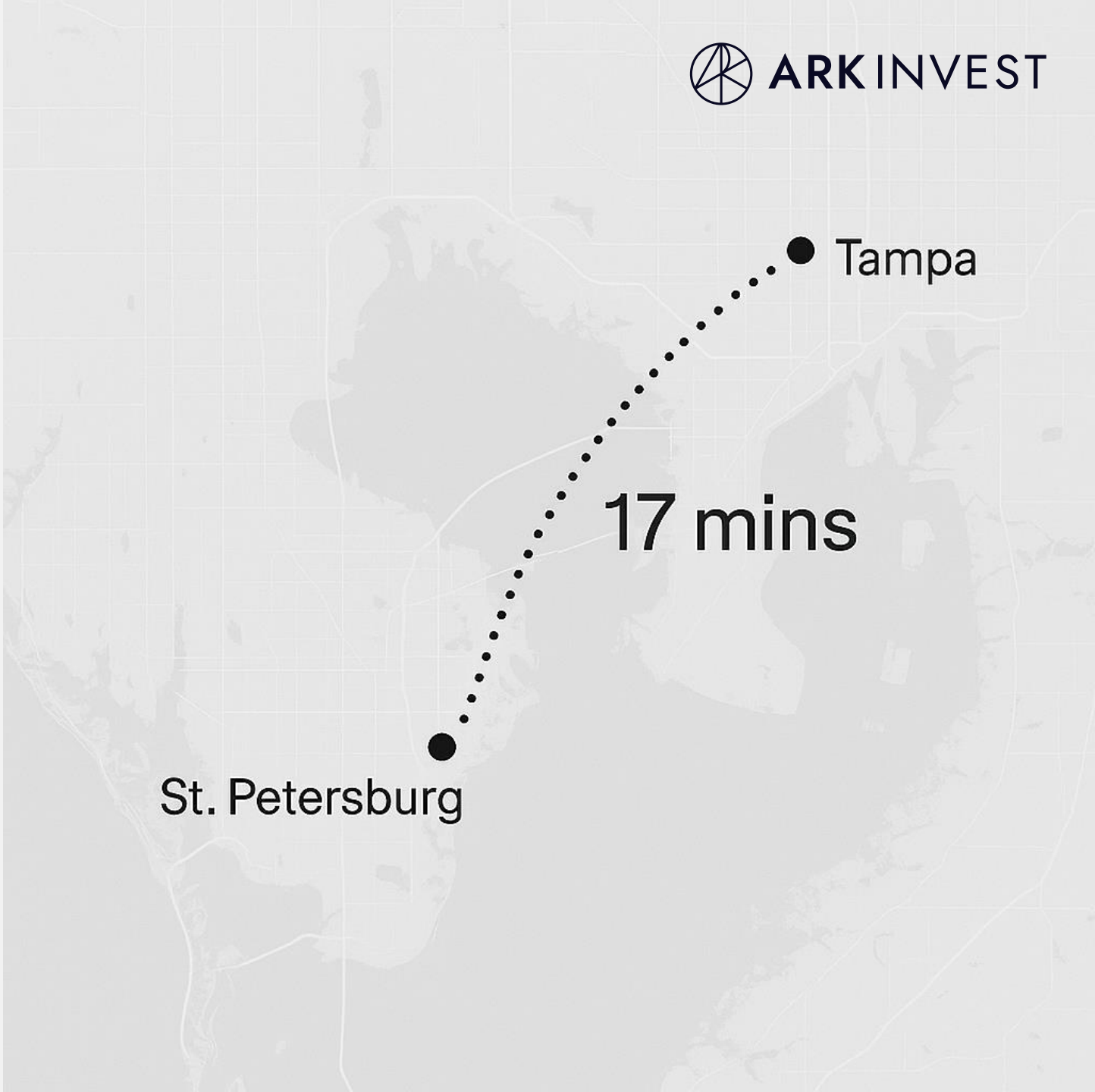
Akaash TK joined ARK in July 2024. As an Investment Research Associate, he is responsible for aiding investment decisions by analyzing and evaluating opportunities in the Robotics and Autonomous Technology sector, focusing on innovations that drive significant market impact and value growth.

Prior to ARK, Akaash pursued a management degree at New York University, where he specialized in financial modeling and valuation analysis, assessing the impact of new technologies on company valuations. During his undergraduate studies in India, he worked with a space startup to build the world’s first fully 3D printed rocket engine and led several additive manufacturing projects.

Akaash holds a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from VIT University, and a Master's degree in Management of Technology from New York University.

Advanced Air Mobility Primer

Innovate St. Pete



Agenda

- The Potential
- Companies in the space
- Our Take
- Q&A

Air Taxis Redefine Commuting

Congestion-free

Commute Time Reduced to Minutes From an Hour

Sustainability

30-60% Lower Emissions

Cost convergence

Potential to Match Uber Fares at Scale

New markets

Emergency Medical Transport
New Routes & Tourism

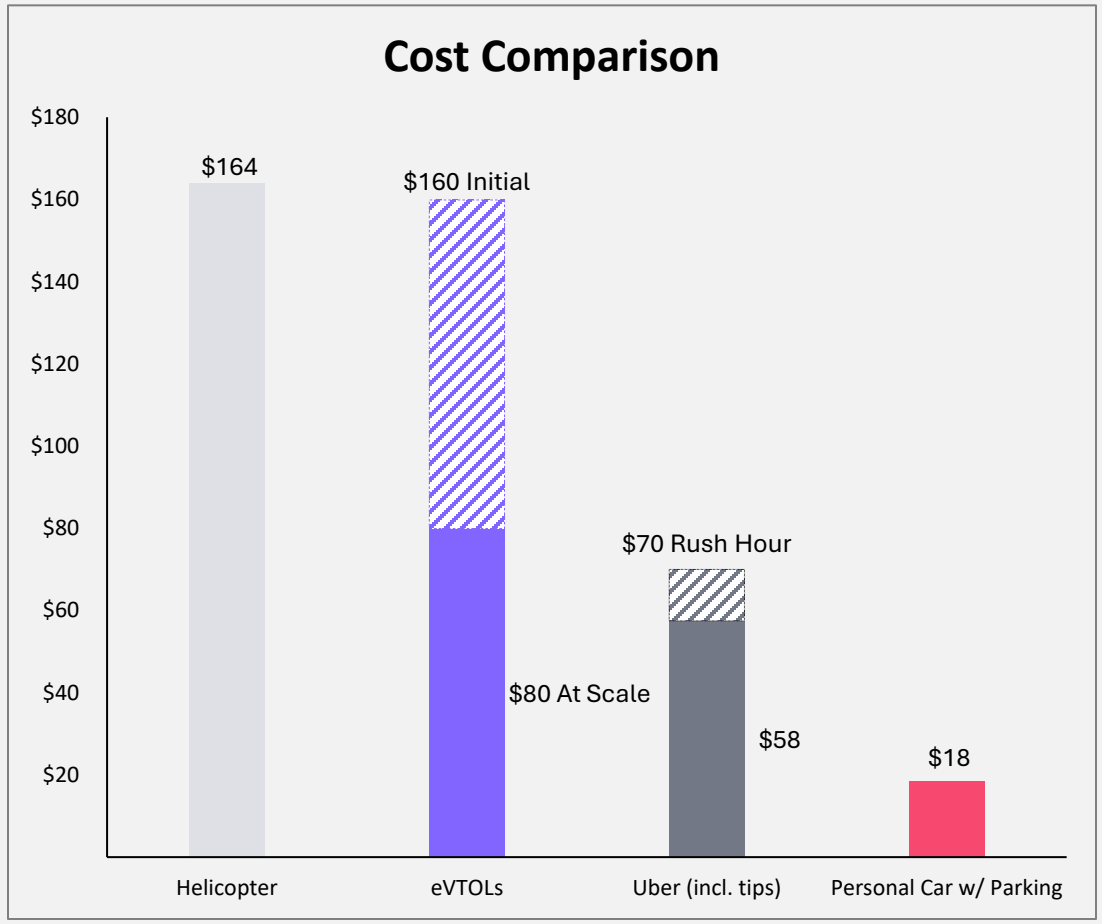
Roughly $10 Billion Forecasted Airport Transfer Market for eVTOLS in US

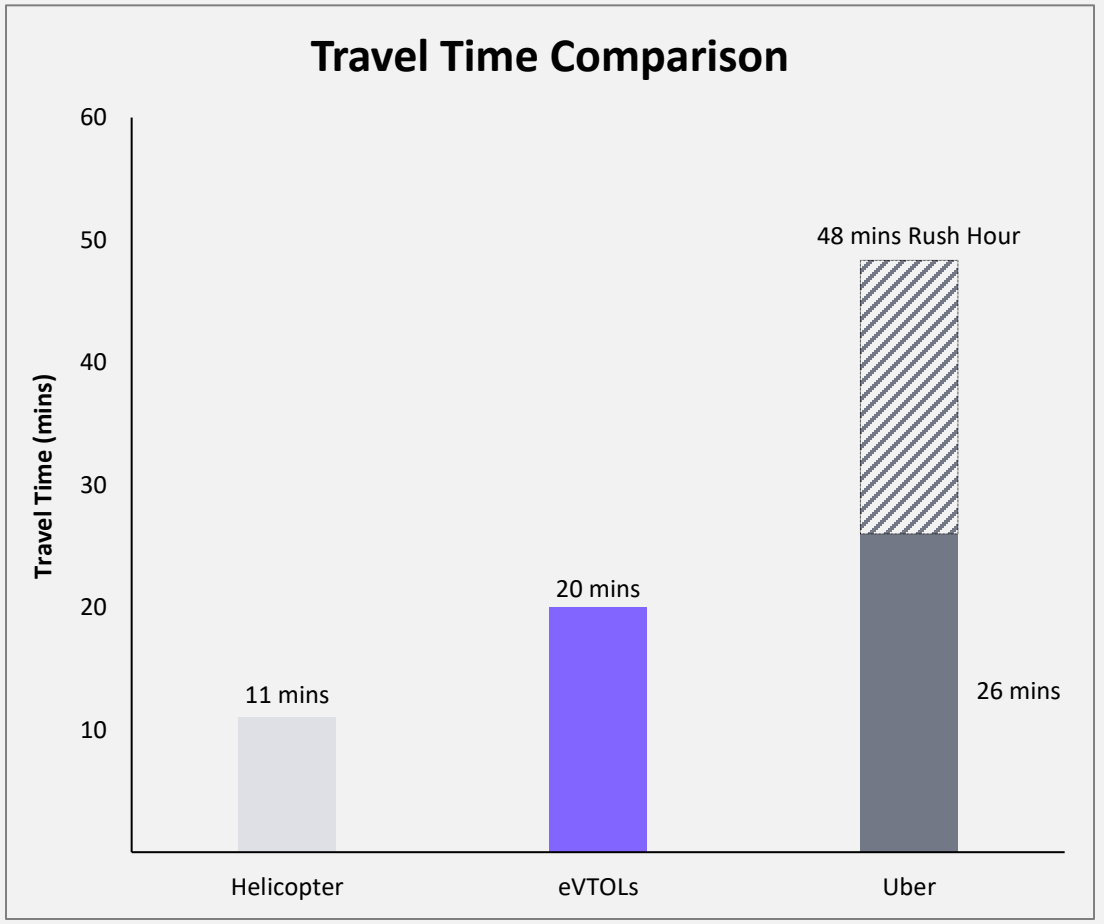
Urban Air Mobility Could Reshape Transportation

	Conversion Rate			
Attributable Airports		Helicopter *0.04%*	Ride-Hail *30%*	Personal Car *68%*
	Top 5	$30M	$2B	$3B
	Top 25	$90M	$6B	$10B
	All	$150M	$10B	$16.5B

Note: Base market value totals are from airport traffic reports and industry sources; conversion rates reflect industry benchmarks; airport rankings (Top 5, Top 25) are by U.S. passenger traffic.

Analysis of St. Pete to Tampa Airport Commute





Companies Making the Future a Reality

Archer Aviation

Founded: 2018, California
Market Capitalization: $6 Billion
Number of Passengers: 4
Range: 20-50 miles
Max speed: 150 mph

FAA Progress
Type Certification – In progress
Operator Certification – Complete
Production Certificate – In progress

Notable Partners
Stellantis
Etihad Airways
United Airlines
Southwest Airlines

Anduril

Joby Aviation

Founded: 2009, California
Market Capitalization: $14.6 Billion
Number of Passengers: 4
Range: 100 miles
Max Speed: 200 mph

FAA Progress
Type Certification – In progress
Operator Certification – Complete
Production Certificate – Awaiting TC

Notable Partners
Toyota
Delta Airlines
Virgin Airways
ANA Japan
L3 Harris

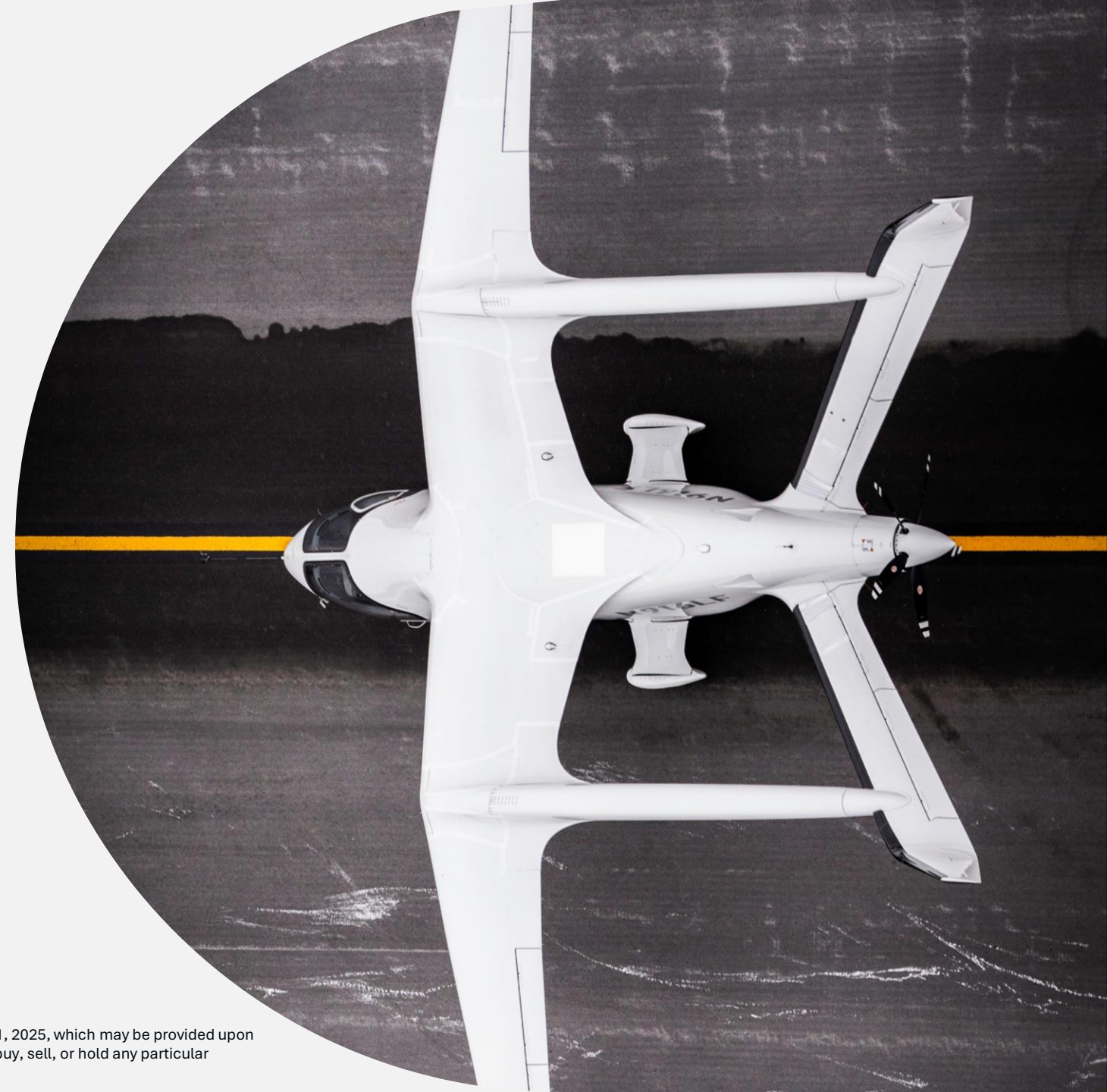
BETA Technologies

Founded: 2017, Vermont
Private Company
Number of Passengers: 4
Range: 287-386 miles
Max Speed: 176 mph

FAA Progress
Type Certification – In progress (CTOL 2025, VTOL 2026)
Operator Certification – Not Pursued yet
Production Certificate – Awaiting TC

Notable Partners
Republic Airways
UPS
United therapeutics

USAF



EHang

Founded in 2014, China
Market Capitalization: ~$1.2B
Number of Passengers: 2 (autonomous)
Range: 18 miles
Max Speed: 80 mph

CAAC Progress
Type Certification – Complete
Operator Certification – Complete
Production Certificate – Complete

Currently does commercial passenger rides in China

Eve Air Mobility

Spun out of Embraer in 2020, Brazil
Market Capitalization: $1.8B

Number of Passengers: 4 (6 in autonomous config)
Range: 60 miles
Max Speed: 115mph

Flight testing to start by end of 2025

Regulatory Progress
Operator Certificate – aims for 2026
Type Certification – In progress (early stage)
Production Certificate – To follow TC

Vertical Aerospace

Founded: 2016, UK
Market Capitalization: $522M
Number of Passengers: 4
Range: 100 miles
Max Speed: 115mph

FAA Progress
Type Certification – In progress (2028)
Operator Certification – Not Pursued yet
Production Certificate – Awaiting TC

Notable Partners
American Airlines
Japan Airlines
Virgin Atlantic

Wisk Aero

Spun out of Boeing in 2019, California

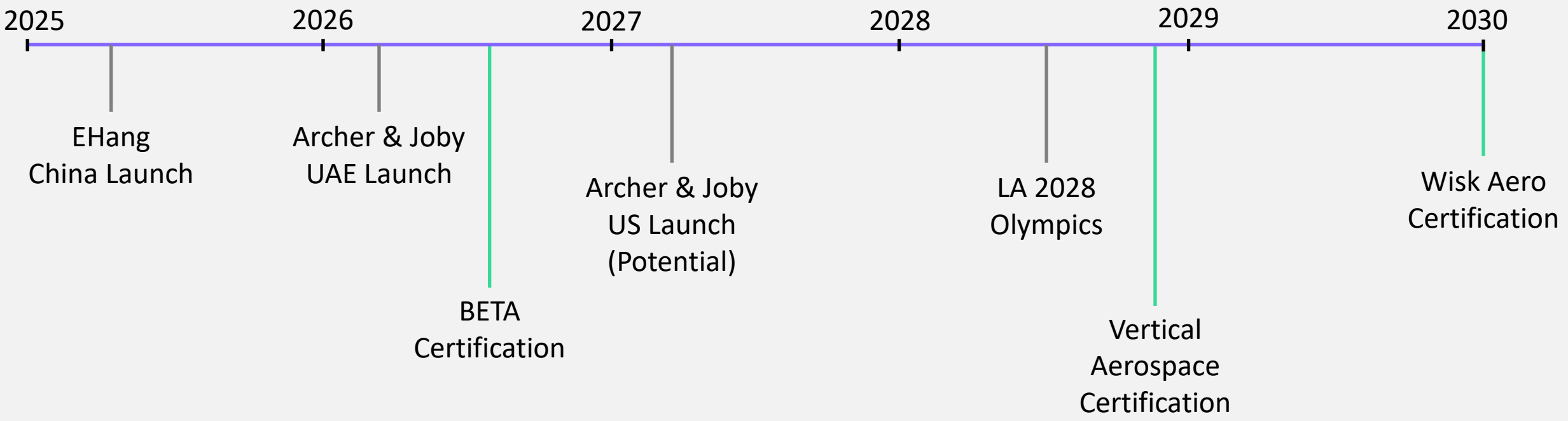
Number of Passengers: 4 (autonomous)
Range: 90 miles
Max Speed: 138mph

Gen 6 currently under construction

FAA Progress
Operator Certificate – End of the Decade
Type Certification – In progress
Production Certificate – To follow TC

Our Take

Potential Timeline of Events



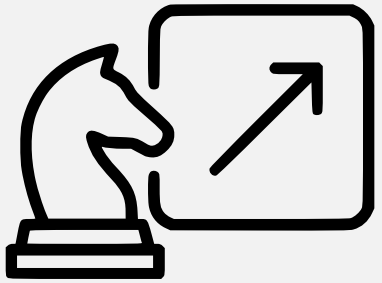
The Market is Still Early

Large Cities

Early Adoption in Premium Travel Cities

Market Maturation

Await Market Maturity



Strategic Entry

Support Demonstration and Exhibition Flights

Q & A

Important Information

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ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY TASK FORCE MEETING SCHEDULE – APPROVED AS AMENDED 6/30/2025

AAM TASK FORCE MILESTONES	DATE
*AAM TASK FORCE SCHEDULED MEETINGS	May 12; Jun 9; Jun 30; Jul 14; Aug 4; Aug 25 Sep 15; Oct 6; Oct 27 Nov 17; Dec 8; Dec 29 Jan 12 (2026)
CITY COUNCIL MEETING - PRESENT REPORT #1	August 7, 2025
CITY COUNCIL MEETING - PRESENT REPORT #2	November 13, 2025
ADOPT FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS - SECOND TO LAST AAM MEETING	December 29, 2025
CITY COUNCIL MEETING - PRESENTATION OF FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS	January 22, 2026

MAY (2025)

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

JUNE

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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

JULY

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

AUGUST

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
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SEPTEMBER

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29	30					

OCTOBER

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NOVEMBER

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DECEMBER

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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
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JANUARY (2026)

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

*Meetings at City Hall in Conference Room 100 from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. unless otherwise noted

Updated: June 30, 2025

AAM Task Force – List of Previous and Upcoming Tentative Agenda Topics

April 23, 2025 – 10:00 AM	Intro to Advanced Air Mobility (AAM)	Rich Lesniak, Albert Whitted Airport Manager
May 12, 2025 – 5:15 PM	AAM Overview & Perspective FDOT Local Government Presentation	Jeff Brandes, Former State Senator Rich Lesniak, Albert Whitted Airport Manager
Jun. 9, 2025 – 5:15 PM	AAM Vertiport & Airspace Integration	Mike Thompson, American Infrastructure Development
Jun. 30, 2025 – 5:00 PM	AAM Integration & HCAA Vertiport Planning	Brett Fay, VP, General Aviation HCAA
Jul. 14, 2025 – 5:15 PM	Electricity & Power Issues Fire Department Coordination	Jeff Kupko, Michael Baker International Tom Lawery, Senior Consultant, Duke Energy Jonathan Fair, SPFR District Chief, Fire Suppression
Aug. 4, 2025 – 5:15 PM	Albert Whitted Airport Vertiport Considerations & Stand-Alone Vertiports	Doug DiCarlo, Aviation Program Manager, ESA
Aug. 7, 2025 – 9:00 AM	**CITY COUNCIL MEETING – PRESENT PROGRESS REPORT #1**	
Aug. 25, 2025 – 5:00 PM	Electric Vertical Takeoff & Landing (eVTOL) Manufacturers	Akaash TK, Research Associate, Ark Invest
Sept. 15, 2025 – 5:00 PM[1]	Zoning & Land Use Planning	City Planning & Development Services
Oct. 6, 2025 – 5:00 PM	Regulatory Framework Legislative Update Albert Whitted Water Reclamation Facility Considerations	City Legal City Government Affairs City Engineering
Oct. 27, 2025 – 5:00 PM	Local and Regional Integration Funding Strategies	Multiple City Staff
Nov. 13, 2025 – 1:30 PM	**CITY COUNCIL MEETING – PRESENT PROGRESS REPORT #2**	
Nov. 17, 2025 – 5:00 PM	Recommendations Review: Compatibility Planning, Zoning and Land Use Planning	
Dec. 8, 2025 – 5:00 PM	Recommendations Review: Regulatory Framework, Funding Strategies, and Future Considerations	
Dec. 29, 2025 – 5:00 PM	Final Report Review & Adoption	
Jan. 12, 2026 – 5:00 PM	Final Report Review & Adoption (continued from Dec. 29, if needed)	
Jan. 22, 2026 – 1:30 PM	**CITY COUNCIL MEETING – PRESENTATION OF FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS**	

[1] Task Force to begin discussing and proposing recommendations

Updated: 8/19/2025

CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG

ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY TASK FORCE

THE TASK FORCE SHALL EVALUATE AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE SHORT AND LONG TERM OUTLOOK FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AAM WITHIN THE CITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING:

COMPATIBILITY PLANNING

Evaluate role of Albert Whitted Airport in accommodating AAM, including:

- The potential size and location of AAM facilities at the airport, including dual-use structures
- Changes to airport facilities necessary to accommodate AAM
- The impact of AAM on existing airport uses.

ZONING AND LAND USE PLANNING

Evaluate the need for standalone vertiports within the City to provide AAM, including:

- Potential locations and the nature of those locations, including joint-use facilities
- Changes to infrastructure needed to support those locations
- Neighborhood compatibility; and public accessibility.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- Identify laws, regulations, and other requirements at the federal, state, and local levels that may impact the development of AAM within the City.
- Recommend any changes to laws and regulations of the City that are necessary or appropriate to facilitate the continued development of AAM within the City, including those related to zoning and land use.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

- Evaluate the potential for integrating AAM into local government transportation plans in the Tampa Bay region.
- Document the extent to which governments and agencies are currently studying or planning to incorporate AAM into those plans.

FUNDING STRATEGIES

- Evaluate potential funding models for the development of AAM within the City.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

- Evaluate and make recommendations with respect to any other matter that is related to the development of AAM within the City and that the Task Force determines is appropriate for City government to consider.