



***Matthew W. Daus, Esq.***

***President, International Association of Transportation Regulators***

<http://iatr.global/>

***Transportation Technology Chair, City University of New York,  
Transportation Research Center at The City College of New York***

<http://www.utrc2.org/>

***Partner and Chairman, Windels Marx Transportation Practice Group***

<http://windelsmarx.com>

***Contact: [mdaus@windelsmarx.com](mailto:mdaus@windelsmarx.com)***

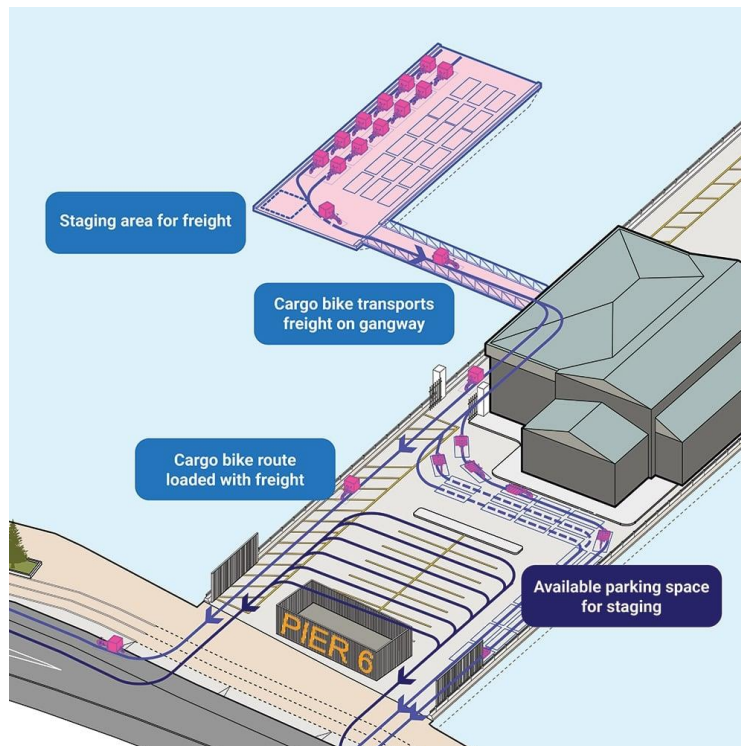
**156 West 56<sup>th</sup> Street | New York, NY 10019**

**T. 212.237.1106 | F. 212.262.1215**

# eVTOLs in the City!

## *Flying Taxis Are Coming to NYC & Beyond*

On December 9, 2024, the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) announced the new operator of the City-owned Downtown Manhattan Heliport (DMH). Following a competitive procurement process, Downtown Skyport will take over management of DMH to continue existing operations and upgrade the heliport to provide the supporting infrastructure for electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft and last-mile maritime freight delivery.<sup>1</sup>



**Illustration of a possible last-mile marine micro-distribution configuration at the DMH**

In November 2023, New York City Mayor Eric Adams and NYCEDC announced a new vision of transforming the heliport into a sustainable, multi-modal transportation and logistics hub. Under this plan, DMH will aim to become the first heliport in the world with the infrastructure to support electric flight — incorporating last-mile and maritime freight distribution and delivering major quality-of-life improvements for New Yorkers by supporting quieter helicopter alternatives.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/861-23/mayor-adams-nycedc-move-transform-downtown-manhattan-heliport-first-of-its-kind-hub-for>



The new operator, Downtown Skyport, is a joint venture between Skyports Infrastructure and Groupe ADP. Skyports is a leading provider of ground infrastructure for advanced air mobility, with experience operating one of London’s public heliports and developing eVTOL facilities worldwide. Groupe ADP, a global leader in airport design and operations, manages 26 airports, including Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris and New York Stewart International Airport.

Downtown Skyport has been awarded a concession agreement to operate DMH for five years, with an optional five-year renewal contingent on the timely construction of eVTOL charging and maritime freight infrastructure. The city also retains the discretion to grant two additional five-year renewal options.

Downtown Skyport has committed to making DMH a quieter and more sustainable facility by investing in critical infrastructure, including:

- **eVTOL Charging and Utility Upgrades:** Installing charging stations and necessary utility enhancements to support the anticipated FAA certification of eVTOLs.
- **Encouraging Quiet eVTOL Adoption:** Promoting quieter aircraft to address community noise concerns.
- **Developing Maritime Freight Infrastructure:** Constructing a marine facility for last-mile micro-distribution, supported by nearly \$1 million of a \$5 million MARAD grant.
- **M/WBE Participation and Workforce Development:** Implementing minority- and women-owned business enterprise (M/WBE) outreach with a 30% utilization goal for site development and construction. Additionally, workforce training programs will provide career pathways in aviation, maritime logistics, and transportation.
- **Terminal Improvements:** Enhancing the passenger terminal to improve the customer experience.

Downtown Skyport will take over DMH operations in early 2025, following a transition period with the current operator. The design and permitting process for new eVTOL charging and last-mile maritime infrastructure is expected to be completed by 2026.

## **State of Play in NYC**

New York City Council Members Gale Brewer and James F. Gennaro are championing a series of resolutions aimed at federal and state measures to reduce noise pollution from helicopters that plague the urban landscape. Resolution 0234-2024 strongly urges the enactment of H.R. 389, known as the Safe and Quiet Skies Act of 2021. Resolution 0233-2024 calls on the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to ban all non-essential helicopter operations, including tourist and chartered helicopter flights, traversing the skies above New York City. This resolution seeks to safeguard the tranquility of the city's neighborhoods against unnecessary noise disruptions.

At the state level, Resolution 0085-2024 urges the New York State Legislature to enact legislation (A7638-A/S7216-A) introducing a noise tax specifically targeting non-essential helicopter and seaplane flights in New York City. The proposed tax is intended to address growing community concerns about noise pollution and its impact on the quality of life. Resolution 0226-2024 urges the State Legislature to revise the Hudson River Park Trust Act to prohibit any non-essential use of the West 30th Street Heliport in Manhattan.

Council Members Amanda Farías, Keith Powers, and Lincoln Restler have introduced a set of comprehensive legislative measures aimed at significantly reducing helicopter noise across New York City, responding to growing concerns from residents about the disruptive impact of low-flying aircraft, particularly in densely populated neighborhoods impacted by helicopter traffic.

Under Int. 0569-2024, any sightseeing helicopter that does not comply with the noise level standards—categorized as stage 1, 2, or 3—set forth by the FAA's Airport Noise and Capacity Act of 1990 would be barred from using city-owned heliports (East 34<sup>th</sup> Street and the Downtown Manhattan Heliport). Int. 0379-2024 seeks to further tighten regulations by prohibiting chartered helicopters from using these facilities unless they meet stage 3 noise level requirements. Int. 0070-2024 would eliminate all non-essential helicopter operations not powered by electric engines at city-owned or operated heliports. In a similar vein, Int. 0026-2024 calls for prohibiting non-essential, non-electric helicopter operations at city-owned heliports.

Lastly, Int. 0027-2024 requires the NYC Department of Environmental Protection to identify areas affected by helicopter noise and install sound level meters on city buildings, streetlights, and private structures upon request. DEP will assess real-time noise data from these meters biannually and post updates on the Department's website.

## **AAM in the U.S.A.!**

Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) in the United States is advancing rapidly as states, cities, and federal agencies establish infrastructure, policy frameworks, and partnerships to integrate eVTOL aircraft and other emerging aerial technologies into transportation systems.

Already this year, Utah launched its Project Alta initiative, leading efforts to establish a statewide AAM system. Backed by the governor's office, the Utah Department of Transportation, and the Utah Inland Port Authority, the project aims to electrify airports in Ogden, Salt Lake City,

and Provo within the next 12–18 months. A partnership with BETA Technologies and 47G will expand electric aircraft and charging networks, with funding commitments including \$1.14 million from the Utah Legislature and an additional \$2 million proposed in the governor’s budget. The state anticipates that AAM will generate 11,000 jobs and \$8 billion in business activity by 2045, with the 2034 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics serving as a key milestone for showcasing AAM advancements. Additionally, Utah is exploring the feasibility of a state spaceport, investing \$1 million in a legislative study.<sup>2</sup>

Oklahoma is similarly investing in AAM, with the Oklahoma Department of Aerospace and Aeronautics finalizing the state’s first airspace management system and automatic detect-and-avoid solution for drone and AAM operations. In partnership with Vigilant Aerospace, Oklahoma will deploy this system at the Oklahoma Air & Space Port, one of only 14 FAA-licensed spaceports in the U.S. The project, funded by the state’s Preserving Rural Economic Prosperity (PREP) initiative, will integrate multiple air traffic surveillance radars to support remote monitoring and uncrewed traffic management (UTM).<sup>3</sup>

Maryland is positioning itself as a leader in AAM policy development. Governor Wes Moore established the Maryland Advanced Air Mobility Council in January 2025 to focus on industry growth while ensuring robust safety and privacy standards. Maryland’s significant aeronautical engineering workforce makes it a natural hub for AAM innovation.<sup>4</sup>

Orlando, Florida, is taking a leading role in urban AAM planning. In collaboration with VHB, the city is developing an AAM Transportation Plan to assess eVTOL integration, vertiport site selection, and regulatory needs. Orlando is also a key partner in NASA’s AAM research initiative and a founding member of the World Economic Forum’s AAM Cities and Regions Coalition.<sup>5</sup>

Los Angeles is preparing for AAM operations, with Archer Aviation planning to launch an air taxi network ahead of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, 2027 Super Bowl, and the 2028 Olympics.<sup>6</sup> The city’s Aerial Mobility Report outlines integration goals, and initial flights will operate under helicopter-style regulations using existing helipads and vertiports.<sup>7</sup> The North Central Texas Council of Governments is also working to identify optimal vertiport locations ahead of the 2026 World Cup, focusing on Dallas Fort Worth International Airport and other major airports as likely hubs.<sup>8</sup>

The Open Mobility Foundation (OMF), a nonprofit that develops open-source digital tools and data standards for cities and agencies, is actively working on AAM deployment through the expansion of its Mobility Data Specification (MDS), which was initially designed for managing

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sltrib.com/news/2025/01/29/air-taxi-project-send-utah/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.auvsi.org/state-oklahoma-launches-first-investment-advanced-air-mobility-infrastructure>

<sup>4</sup> <https://thebaynet.com/gov-moore-signs-three-executive-orders-to-increase-economic-development-and-modernize-state-government/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.orlando.gov/Our-Government/Orlando-plans-for-a-future-ready-city/Advanced-Air-Mobility>

<sup>6</sup> <https://techcrunch.com/2024/08/08/archer-to-set-up-air-taxi-network-in-la-by-2026-ahead-of-world-cup/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://ladot.lacity.gov/aerialmobilityreport>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.uta.edu/news/news-releases/2025/02/03/next-level-transport-could-be-coming-for-2026-world-cup>

micromobility services like e-scooters. MDS is now being explored for AAM applications, including vertiport planning, safety and compliance, and environmental considerations. Los Angeles, Orlando, San Francisco, and Chicago have all contributed to data-sharing needs for AAM integration.<sup>9</sup>

In October 2024, the FAA finalized critical training and certification rules for air taxi pilots, introducing more flexible, performance-based regulations. Key updates include allowing pilot training with a single set of flight controls instead of the previous dual-control requirement and adapting rules to accommodate battery-powered aircraft.<sup>10</sup>

NASA continues to drive AAM research through partnerships with government agencies, academia, and private industry. Notable collaborators include the City of Orlando, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, the Ohio Department of Transportation, and leading universities such as MIT, Notre Dame, and Stanford. Private sector partners include Archer, Boeing, and Joby, all of which are working to advance AAM technologies and operational frameworks.<sup>11</sup>

As AAM technology progresses, cities and states across the U.S. are laying the groundwork for a new era of aerial mobility. Significant investments in infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, and industry partnerships are shaping the future of transportation.

## **AAM Global Developments**

The global AAM industry is taking flight, with significant development globally. Europe is a hotbed of activity, particularly in Germany and France.<sup>12</sup> The Asia-Pacific region is also making significant strides, with Japan and Australia actively investing in AAM and exploring its potential for various applications.<sup>13</sup> Canada developed a federal consortium spanning industry, government, academia, and associations to collaborate on creating and operating a sustainable, equitable, and profitable AAM industry.<sup>14</sup> Beyond these key regions, countries like Brazil and India are also exploring the potential of AAM, with Brazil launching a regulatory sandbox program, establishing a testbed for innovative solutions under real-world conditions,<sup>15</sup> and India building infrastructure and guidelines with key projects like the Bangalore Airport partnership.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.openmobilityfoundation.org/advanced-air-mobility-2024/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/faa-set-finalize-pilot-training-certification-rules-air-taxis-2024-10-22/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.nasa.gov/missions/aam/aampartners/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.electrive.com/2024/12/12/germany-plans-air-taxi-test-routes-from-2026/>;

<https://aviationweek.com/aerospace/advanced-air-mobility/volocopter-performs-crewed-demo-flight-paris-vertiport>

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.compositesworld.com/news/archer-aviation-signs-evtol-aircraft-purchase-with-japan](https://www.compositesworld.com/news/archer-aviation-signs-evtol-aircraft-purchase-with-japan;);

<https://dronelife.com/2024/07/11/skyportz-welcomes-new-action-plan-for-advanced-air-mobility-in-victoria-australia/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://canadianaam.com/who-we-are/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.internationalairportreview.com/news/255266/urbanv-and-pax-aeropostos-to-develop-brazils-first-regulatory-sandbox-for-advanced-air-mobility/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/01/how-advanced-air-mobility-in-india-is-a-blueprint-for-innovation-and-growth/>

The AAM ecosystem involves a diverse range of players. Manufacturers are developing innovative eVTOL aircraft, while infrastructure developers are planning and building vertiports. Technology providers are contributing avionics solutions, and other companies are working on advancements in battery technology, flight control systems, and communication networks. Progress in regulatory frameworks, from Europe to India to Brazil, is paving the way for safe and certified eVTOL operations.

Numerous pilot programs are underway globally, showcasing the potential of AAM for passenger transport, cargo delivery, and emergency services. Significant investment is flowing into the sector, fueling research and development. However, challenges remain. Establishing certification processes, building the necessary infrastructure, and gaining public acceptance are crucial hurdles the industry must overcome to achieve global adoption.

## **AAM Trends and Use Cases**

AAM is rapidly evolving, driven by advancements in eVTOL aircraft, urban air traffic management, and infrastructure development. Governments and private companies are investing heavily in research and pilot programs. One of the most significant trends is the shift toward sustainable aviation, as eVTOLs and hybrid-electric aircraft aim to reduce emissions and noise pollution compared to traditional helicopters. Additionally, public-private partnerships are emerging as a key funding mechanism, with cities working alongside industry leaders to build vertiport networks and integrate AAM into existing transportation systems. Regulatory agencies, such as the FAA and the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), are also defining certification pathways, airspace integration strategies, and safety standards to ensure AAM can scale safely and efficiently.

The primary use cases for AAM span multiple industries, with urban air mobility (UAM) at the forefront. Air taxis and on-demand eVTOL services promise to alleviate traffic congestion in dense metropolitan areas, offering rapid point-to-point travel for business commuters and high-value travelers. Companies like Joby Aviation, Archer, and Wisk are actively testing eVTOLs designed to operate as short-haul urban shuttles, connecting key locations such as airports, business districts, and major transit hubs.<sup>17</sup>

Another growing use case is regional air mobility (RAM), which focuses on connecting underserved communities and medium-distance travel corridors. By replacing inefficient short-haul flights and lengthy car trips with eVTOL services, RAM could enhance mobility for rural and suburban populations while reducing the demand for carbon-intensive aviation.

Beyond passenger transport, AAM is also making significant strides in cargo and logistics applications. Companies like Zipline and Wing have pioneered drones for medical supply deliveries, food distribution, and e-commerce fulfillment in urban and remote areas. Larger cargo eVTOLs and unmanned aerial systems (UAS) are being developed to transport high-value goods and urgent shipments more efficiently than traditional ground-based logistics. Emergency

---

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.jobyaviation.com/news/joby-flies-quiet-electric-air-taxi-new-york-city/>

response and disaster relief are other critical applications, as eVTOLs and drones can be deployed to deliver medical aid, assess damage, or transport first responders to areas inaccessible by road.

## 100 Years of Air & Space Law at the NYC Bar Association



**Andrew Kimball, *President & CEO of the NYC Economic Development Corporation*; Matt Daus; and Amanda Farías, *Majority Leader of the NYC Council***

On Wednesday, February 12, the New York City Bar Association hosted “Hot Topics in Air & Space Law” to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of aviation law at the City Bar. The event gathered leading aviation and space law practitioners to discuss current issues and developments in air transportation. Topics addressed include advanced air mobility, drones, commercial space operations, sustainability, environmental assessments, airport operations, aviation liability, and regulatory developments. The event was sponsored by the Air & Space Law Committee, chaired by **Philip Weissman, *Partner at KMA Zuckert LLP***, and co-sponsored by the Transportation Committee, which I chair.





**Matt Daus and Philip Weissman, *Partner at KMA Zuckert LLP***

I was honored to lead two sessions that evening. The first session, the “Fireside Chat on Advanced Air Mobility,” looked at the future of AAM in New York City. **Amanda Farías, Majority Leader of the NYC Council**, and **Andrew Kimball, President & CEO of the NYC Economic Development Corporation**, joined me in discussing policy, public education, and regulatory priorities. Andrew emphasized that public education and workforce development will be critical in preparing New Yorkers for AAM adoption. According to Andrew, rather than a rapid shift, the transition to eVTOLs will be gradual, requiring collaboration between government, industry, and educational institutions to ensure local talent is ready for the job opportunities that AAM will create.

Majority Leader Farías outlined the City Council’s legislative priorities, which focus on noise regulation and environmental concerns. She highlighted ongoing efforts to phase out louder, fossil-fuel-powered helicopters, especially Stage 2 aircraft, which contribute to noise pollution. Additionally, she discussed the bills in which she is involved, addressing issues around sightseeing helicopters, electric helicopter use, and measuring helicopter noise. She underscored the importance of integrating AAM into the public transit network, ensuring it is an accessible transportation option rather than a luxury service. This discussion clarified that while AAM presents exciting possibilities, it must align with New York’s broader transportation policy goals and environmental priorities to gain public acceptance.



**Blade Helicopter**

My second session, the “Advanced Air Mobility Panel Discussion,” provided a deeper dive into operational and policy challenges, featuring insights from **Steven Spinello**, *Partnerships and Strategy at Skyports*, **James Wolff**, *Counsel and Chair of the Emerging Technologies Law Group at Warsaw Burnstein, LLP*, **Timothy Pohle**, *Of Counsel at Beveridge & Diamond*, and **Trevor Simoneau**, *Graduate Research Assistant at the Embry-Riddle/Boeing Center for Aviation & Aerospace Safety*.

Steven shared Skyports’ experience developing one of the world’s first vertiport networks in Dubai, a model that could inform future infrastructure development in New York. He also spoke about Skyports’ involvement in the Downtown Manhattan Heliport, which is expected to play a significant role in the city’s AAM network, demonstrating the need for strategically located takeoff and landing sites that balance accessibility with community concerns. James addressed the financial and regulatory hurdles to AAM expansion, emphasizing that public-private partnerships and innovative financing models will be key to overcoming the high entry costs in this emerging industry.

Tim explored the environmental challenges of AAM, noting that public concerns over noise, visual impacts, and clean energy usage will need to be proactively addressed. While eVTOLs are quieter than helicopters, noise remains a significant issue, requiring strong community engagement to build trust. Additionally, visual pollution must be considered, as low-flying eVTOLs in dense urban areas may raise concerns among residents. As AAM expands, competition for clean energy resources will also increase, making it critical to ensure sustainable power sources without diverting resources from existing green energy initiatives.

Trevor examined the complex regulatory landscape, explaining how the FAA and state and local governments must work together to create clear and enforceable rules for AAM operations. While the FAA oversees airspace safety and certification, cities increasingly introduce AAM-

specific laws and advisory committees, creating a patchwork of regulations that industry stakeholders must navigate.



**From Left: Trevor Simoneau, *Graduate Research Assistant at the Embry-Riddle/Boeing Center for Aviation & Aerospace Safety*; James Wolff, *Counsel and Chair of the Emerging Technologies Law Group at Warshaw Burnstein, LLP*; Matt Daus; Steven Spinello, *Partnerships and Strategy at Skyports*; and Timothy Pohle, *Of Counsel at Beveridge & Diamond***

AAM can potentially transform urban transportation, but several factors will determine its success. Strong public engagement and education will be crucial for widespread acceptance, and regulatory alignment between federal, state, and local agencies will be needed to address safety, noise, and other challenges. Additionally, infrastructure planning must focus on vertiport networks and integration with public transit. At the same time, environmental responsibility will be key to ensuring that AAM supports clean energy goals and minimizes negative externalities. Finally, financial sustainability, supported by public-private partnerships, will be essential for long-term viability.

### **AAM on the Horizon in NYC – Next Steps**

New York City’s approach to AAM is not just about integrating cutting-edge technology—it’s about ensuring that innovation aligns with the city’s broader goals of sustainability, equity, and quality of life. The transformation of the Downtown Manhattan Heliport into a multimodal transportation hub marks a significant step forward in making eVTOLs a practical and

environmentally responsible component of the urban mobility ecosystem. By investing in charging infrastructure, maritime logistics, and quiet eVTOL adoption, the city is setting a precedent for how dense metropolitan areas can balance technological progress with community concerns.

As policymakers continue to shape noise, emissions, and safety regulations, New York City is proving that AAM can be developed with a public-first approach. With initiatives like workforce training programs, M/WBE participation, and transparent data-sharing on helicopter noise, the city fosters an ecosystem where businesses and residents can benefit from these advancements.

Looking ahead, the future of AAM in New York City—and beyond—will depend on continued technological advancements, regulatory support, and public acceptance. In the coming years, we may see a transportation landscape where eVTOLs provide efficient connections between airports, business districts, and regional destinations, complementing existing transit systems. As infrastructure expands and costs decrease, AAM has the potential to become a mainstream mobility option, reshaping urban travel with cleaner, quieter, and more accessible air transportation solutions. By prioritizing innovation that serves the public good, New York is positioning itself as a leader in the future of sustainable urban aviation.