

DOORWAY BRIEF: SHOULD OUR COMMUNITY BE PAYING ATTENTION?

Why You Might Be Here

You may be an elected official, planner, airport sponsor, economic development professional, transportation professional, or public agency staff member who has heard about Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) and is trying to determine whether it is relevant to your community.

Not every community needs to become an early adopter. Not every community needs a vertiport, drone facility, or new aviation infrastructure project. In some cases, the appropriate response may be to monitor developments and revisit the topic later.

This doorway is intended to help communities determine whether AAM warrants additional attention and which sections of the toolkit may be most relevant.

Start with the Community Need

Communities often begin by asking what aircraft are available or what infrastructure could be built. A more productive starting point is identifying the problem, opportunity, or community need that aviation may help address.

Examples may include:

- Limited access to medical services.
- Long travel times between communities.
- Transportation challenges created by geography.
- Logistics or freight constraints.
- Infrastructure inspection needs.
- Emergency response requirements.
- Economic development opportunities.
- Airport modernization efforts.
- Workforce development goals.

AAM should be viewed as a potential tool in achieving a goal, rather than a goal in itself.

Communities May Be at Different Stages

Some communities already have airports, heliports, aviation businesses, emergency medical aviation services, or active economic development initiatives tied to aviation. Others may have little existing aviation activity beyond private general aviation aircraft operations.

Both situations are normal.

Communities with existing aviation infrastructure may find that many of the foundational pieces already exist. Communities without aviation infrastructure may determine that other transportation investments should remain a higher priority.

The objective is not to force every community toward the same outcome. The objective is to understand whether aviation may play a meaningful role in addressing local needs.

Indicators That AAM May Be Relevant

Communities may wish to explore AAM further if they:

- Have an existing airport, heliport, or aviation facility.
- Are experiencing transportation or accessibility challenges.
- Have significant tourism, recreation, or seasonal travel demand.
- Have medical transportation or healthcare access challenges.
- Support industries that depend on logistics, inspection, or remote operations.
- Have received interest from operators, manufacturers, developers, or investors.
- Are already evaluating infrastructure modernization projects.
- Have emergency management, wildfire, or public safety applications that could benefit from aviation.

The presence of one or more of these indicators may indicate that additional evaluation is warranted.

Indicators That a Community May Choose to Monitor Rather Than Act

Some communities may conclude that immediate action is unnecessary.

Possible reasons include:

- No identified transportation or service gap.
- Limited community interest.
- No aviation infrastructure.
- Lack of operator interest (existing demand).
- Competing infrastructure priorities.
- Insufficient staffing or organizational capacity.
- Regulatory or land-use constraints that make implementation unlikely in the near term.

Choosing to monitor developments rather than pursue immediate action can be a reasonable outcome.

Recommended Next Steps

If your community is trying to determine whether AAM is relevant, consider reviewing:

Transportation and Accessibility

To understand where aviation may improve access, connectivity, or travel options.

Use Cases

To explore how different communities are using aviation to support transportation, logistics, medical services, emergency response, and economic development.

Economic Development and Readiness

To understand the difference between opportunity, readiness, and implementation capacity.

Existing Aviation Infrastructure

If your community already has an airport, heliport, or aviation facility.

Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Guide

If emergency response, disaster resilience, or medical transportation are primary drivers.

Questions to Consider

- What transportation, logistics, or accessibility challenges exist today?
- What community needs are not currently being met?
- What aviation assets already exist?
- Have operators, developers, or manufacturers expressed interest?
- Are there emergency response or medical applications worth exploring?
- Does the community have the organizational capacity to pursue additional evaluation?
- Is this a near-term opportunity or something that should be monitored over time?
- Which sections of the toolkit are most relevant to our situation?

A successful outcome is not necessarily a new project. A successful outcome is a community making informed decisions based on its own needs, opportunities, and priorities.