

MARYLAND ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2025
HAGERSTOWN REGIONAL AIRPORT, 18450 SHOWALTER ROAD, HAGERSTOWN, MD 21742

OPEN SESSION

MARYLAND ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY COUNCIL (The Council)

John Porcari, Chair (former Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation and former Secretary, Maryland Department of Transportation)

Shannetta Griffin, Maryland Aviation Administration (*virtual*)

John Slaughter, University of Maryland

Maj. Michael Tagliaferri, Maryland State Police (*virtual*)

Dr. Yolanda Wilson, College of Southern Maryland (*virtual*)

Greg Pecoraro, City Council, Westminster, MD

Andrew Moore, Frederick Municipal Airport

Dr. Elizabeth Powell, University of Maryland (*virtual*)

Ashley Sharp, Maryland Department of Labor (*virtual*)

William Lindsey, Maryland Office of the Attorney General (*virtual*)

Colter Menke, Maryland Department of Commerce (Designee)

Darius White, Maryland Department of Planning (Designee) (*virtual*)

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (MDOT)

MARYLAND AVIATION ADMINISTRATION (MAA)

Ashish Solanki

Staci Gorden (*virtual*)

Keiva Rodrigues (*virtual*)

Robert Sager (*virtual*)

OTHER EMPLOYEES OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND

None

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Anthony Tezla, AECOM

Regan Beck, AECOM

Suzanne Murtha, AECOM

Mike Romanowski, Electra

Tom Carto, Electra (*virtual*)

Sergio Menchaca, Sierra Nevada Corporation

Bruce Poole, R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center (Board of Visitors)

Craig Hunter, Maryland National Guard (*virtual*)

Ryan Higgins, Maryland Department of Natural Resources (*virtual*)

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The meeting was called to order at 1:06 p.m.

WELCOME – John Porcari

Mr. Porcari called the meeting to order. He commented on the wonderful meeting venue at the Hagerstown Regional Airport / Aviation Museum and shared brief welcome remarks. John Barr, President of Washington County’s Board of County Commissioners and Tom Riford, Board Member of the Hagerstown Aviation Museum also made welcome remarks.

INDUSTRY PRESENTATION #1 – Mike Romanowski, Electra

Mr. Romanowski’s presentation focused on how Electra is preparing to develop and certify an ultra-short airplane designed to make regional air mobility more accessible. He highlighted the capabilities of a hybrid, 9-passenger aircraft called the EL9 that could be used for passengers and/or cargo.

Direct aviation is a cost-effective way to move people and goods and offers a solution to ground congestion. Potential benefits include:

- offering novel access points
- maximizing airports
- feeding large airport hubs
- improving access
- improving convenience
- time savings
- improved safety

EL9’s attributes:

- safe & affordable
- delivers substantial public benefits
 - access and air mobility for both small communities & large cities
 - low noise and emissions
 - opportunities for economic growth
- infrastructure ready – uses existing fuels and distribution network
- able to operate safely in today’s and tomorrow’s systems:
 - airspace
 - airports, helipads, and vertiports
 - new integrated facilities concepts

Electra is currently working with the FAA on certification and is targeting 2029 for the aircraft to be certified.

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Council members asked follow-up questions regarding end users, measuring aircraft noise, community acceptance of the aircraft, workforce development needs for production and maintenance, and Electra's business model.

INDUSTRY PRESENTATION #2 – Sergio Menchaca, Sierra Nevada Corporation

Mr. Menchaca's presentation focused the capabilities of Sierra Nevada Corporation (SNC), an aerospace defense, electronics, engineering and manufacturing company that specializes in aircraft modification, integration and other space technologies. The company has contracts with the U.S. Department Defense, NASA, and other private spaceflight companies. SNC is headquartered in Sparks, NV and has multiple locations throughout the U.S., including a Hagerstown, MD campus.

Overview of SNC's Hagerstown campus:

- Located at the crossroads of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia
- 9% drop in workforce from 2020-2023
- ATHENA-S contract with the U.S. Army has enabled workforce growth in 2024
- HADES contract with the U.S. Army is adding approx. 50 employees at the Hagerstown campus

The type of work performed at SNC's Hagerstown campus:

- Specializing in modifications to commercial aircraft focused on Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) missions.
- Highly skilled technical workforce with complex integrations
- Previous work includes:
 - 155+ aircraft modification and integration programs since 2014
 - 29 multi-role enforcement aircraft
 - 23 EMARSS aircraft since 2014
 - 2 King Air 350s modified
 - Fabrication of components for other SNC facilities

SNC's work with advanced air mobility includes working with the U.S. Navy and Military Sea Lift Command to develop and demonstrate shore-to-ship and ship-to-ship drone delivery (PMA-263 Military Sealift Command). SNC is also developing heavy fuel engines and designing a vision-based landing system and a detect and avoid system.

Council members asked questions about possible civilian applications for these technologies as well as cybersecurity systems.

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FINAL REPORT and RECOMMENDATIONS – Anthony Tezla

MAA has contracted with the infrastructure consulting firm AECOM to help draft the report that will be submitted to the Governor's Office.

Progress Update

- Working Group Sessions Completed
 - Public Informational Campaign Discussion 07-29-25
 - Public Informational Campaign Discussion 08-05-25
 - Presentation from Councilmember John Slaughter 08-12-25
 - A Roadmap to UAS Integration in Maryland (*presentation uploaded to the SharePoint*)
 - Presentation from Lisa Peterson with Aura Network Systems 08-12-25
 - Communications and airspace awareness technology (*presentation uploaded to the SharePoint*)
 - Aura has an integration lab at Frederick Airport
 - <https://auranetworksystems.com/>
 - Presentation from Glenn Ponas with Aerium and John Eberhardt 08-19-25
 - Nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the pipeline between students, educators, and the aerospace industry
 - <https://aerium.org>
 - Workforce Development Discussion 08-26-25
 - Presentation from Anthony Christiani with C-STARS 09-02-25
 - Presentation from Councilmember Elizabeth Powell 09-02-25
 - Workforce Development and Aeromedical Use Case Discussion 09-09-25
 - Workforce Development and Aeromedical Use Case Discussion 09-16-25
 - Aeromedical Use Case Discussion 09-23-25
 - Aeromedical Use Case and RAM Discussion 09-30-25
- Meetings with Industry Completed
 - Meetings with United Therapeutics 08-26-25 and 09-18-25

Report Status

During this portion of the meeting, AECOM facilitated discussion on the workforce development recommendations/section and regional air mobility recommendations/section in the report.

Workforce Development Recommendations

Draft Recommendations:



1. Create a working group on workforce development (involve MHEC and MDOL, possibly electing them as co-leaders).



2. Identify core/fundamental competencies required and what skill sets are needed.



3. Diagram/map out existing pathways to determine the best way to implement AAM curriculum and certifications.



4. Conduct a gap analysis to identify what competencies and skill sets are missing.



5. Collaborate regionally with other states such as Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.



6. Create partnerships with industry to create internships and apprenticeships.



7. Choose priorities in workforce development strategy that need to be considered for funding.



Regional Air Mobility (RAM) Related Recommendations

Draft Recommendations:



The full list of draft recommendations and the draft report are available for review. It has been distributed via email to Council members and was also uploaded on the AAM Sharepoint site.

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Next Steps

- Weekly Working Group Sessions: Tuesdays at 10 AM
 - Continue aeromedical discussion
 - Discuss draft recommendations and report
- Meeting with the Maryland Shock Trauma Board 10-07-25
- Report Updates
 - Aeromedical applications
 - Military applications (Army National Guard)
 - Infrastructure Development
- Final AAM Council Meeting: 10-27-25

NEXT STEPS – John Porcari

A meeting with the Maryland Shock Trauma Board will be held:

- **October 7 @ 8 a.m. – Hybrid Meeting @ Maryland Shock Trauma Center**

The final AAM Council meeting will be held:

- **October 27 @ 1 p.m. – Hybrid Meeting @ Maryland Shock Trauma Center**

Mr. Porcari encouraged Councilmembers to provide comments or feedback on the draft report and the draft recommendations over the next two weeks.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mr. Bruce Poole (Board Chair, University of Maryland Shock Trauma Center) spoke about how he has seen the Hagerstown Regional Airport go through many tough years. He is grateful to everyone who played a role in revitalizing the airport and turning things around. Regarding workforce development strategies for AAM, he recommended targeting former federal employees who may now be looking for work.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 2:17 p.m.

Following the meeting, Council members and staff participated in a tour of both the Hagerstown Aviation Museum and the Sierra Nevada Corporation's hangar.