

Funding Subcommittee Meeting Summary

Texas Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) Advisory Committee

Virtual Meeting // March 6, 2024, 10:00 am – 12:00 noon (Meeting No.: 2)

Chair: Ernest Huffman

Committee Attendance: Angel Newhart, Brent Klavon, Ernest Huffman, George Kivork, Jeff Bilyeu

Summary:

The meeting agenda included opening remarks, subcommittee summaries, a discussion of new potential funding sources, and closing remarks. The subcommittee focused on various funding mechanisms based on topics from the first meetings of each subcommittee.

The subcommittee members discussed various avenues of obtaining funds, including public awareness campaigns led by state and local economic development corporations, MPOs, and industry stakeholders. The FAA FAAS Team was highlighted as a valuable resource for such campaigns. Additionally, it was noted that NASA is already funding a communication toolkit with the goal of building a platform that can accept inputs and display various assessments related to routing, economic impact, and safety. Self-funded airshow demonstrations were also acknowledged.

The subcommittee suggested considering the aviation workforce development grant to fund the education and workforce development piece of the Economic Impact subcommittee. Leveraging revenue from high visibility displays and utilizing regional workforce solution branches were proposed for workforce development. Economic impact studies conducted by other states like Ohio, North Dakota, and New York were brought up in the discussion about how they have secured funding, focusing on public good and ROI.

For the Infrastructure and Safety and Public Good Use-Cases subcommittees, the Funding subcommittee suggested devising a plan to go after general revenue funding by emphasizing how this growing industry will provide jobs and have a significant economic impact. While discussing the new potential funding sources for the AAM industry, the subcommittee recommended that the state focuses on identifying the regions across Texas that can be utilized for AAM, noting that private industry and real estate investors would be the primary investors.

The subcommittee expressed interest in hearing from the El Paso representative on how they secured funding for drone-related infrastructure and how they are planning on scaling that elsewhere in the Metroplex. They also suggested exploring more about the general revenue fund for their funding approach.

Next Meeting: April 3, 2024, 10:00 am – 12:00 noon (Virtual)