

The Central Coast—Built to Prove What's Next in Autonomous Systems and Advanced Air Mobility

California's Central Coast is one of the world's most dynamic and mature hubs for Autonomous Systems and Advanced Aircraft innovation and production. Spanning six counties from Santa Cruz to Ventura, the region is home to market-leading electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) and uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) firms, world-class dual-use research assets, versatile testing environments, and deep engineering and precision manufacturing expertise.

Advanced Aircraft technologies—including eVTOL vehicles, hydrogen-fueled aircraft, and drones—are poised to transform transportation, logistics, defense, emergency response, and wildfire abatement. As adoption accelerates, the Central Coast is uniquely positioned to shape the emerging low-altitude economy.

The Uplift Central Coast Coalition, led by the Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, REACH, and the Economic Development Collaborative, unites the six-county region to grow the Autonomous Systems and Advanced Aircraft sectors.

UPLIFT COALITION IS A COLLABORATION OF:

REACH
Ideas • Action for a Thriving Central Coast

MB Monterey Bay
ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP

EDC ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
COLLABORATIVE



KEY DIFFERENTIATORS

A CONCENTRATION OF EVTOL AND UAS LEADERS

Home to three of the four leading U.S. eVTOL companies—Archer Aviation, Joby Aviation, and Wisk Aero—alongside a deep concentration of UAS innovators, counter-UAS leaders, and Advanced Aircraft supply chain manufacturers.

COMPLEMENTING AUTONOMOUS SYSTEMS LEADERSHIP AND UNCREWED UNDERWATER VEHICLES (UUV)

The region's Advanced Aircraft ecosystem extends to autonomous water vehicles, with Naval Base Ventura County's Point Mugu Sea Range serving as a hub for UUV testing, R&D, and commercialization alongside its UAS mission.

A DUAL-USE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ENGINE

Federal defense assets—including the Naval Postgraduate School, Naval Base Ventura County, two NavalX Tech Bridge locations, and the JIFX program—alongside UC Santa Cruz, Cal Poly SLO, and UC Santa Barbara anchor a dynamic culture of innovation.

EXTENSIVE TESTING ASSETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Uncongested airspace, diverse terrain, military facilities including Point Mugu Sea Range, Camp Roberts, and Fort Hunter Liggett, and the CAAMCI FAA-aligned multi-airport network make this one of the most versatile Advanced Aircraft testing environments in the country.

A DEEP AND SPECIALIZED TALENT PIPELINE

Seven decades of aerospace and precision manufacturing, combined with university engineering programs throughout California, has produced deep talent in advanced engineering, production, and aviation systems—sustained through apprenticeships, community college training, and high school STEM programs.

A REGION MOBILIZED FOR GROWTH

Business, government, civic leaders, military agencies, and K-16 institutions share a long-term strategy focused on talent, business attraction, testing access, infrastructure, and state incentives that strengthen the region's competitive position.

Join a region harnessing the power of **convergence**: where innovation meets opportunity, collaboration meets scale, and momentum meets its moment. There's no place like this.

FOR THE FULL REGIONAL PROSPECTUS AND DETAILED MARKET DATA, VISIT: UPLIFTCENTRALCOAST.ORG

Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (MBEP)

MBEP is the economic engine of the Monterey Bay tri-county region, connecting the dots between innovation, workforce, and opportunity for the communities of Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz. As a regional convenor, MBEP translates emerging industries into real economic mobility: jobs people can build careers on, businesses that root themselves locally, and a region that works for everyone.

WHERE INNOVATION BECOMES OPPORTUNITY FOR THE CENTRAL COAST

The Monterey Bay tri-county region is doing something rare: turning cutting-edge aerospace innovation into tangible economic opportunity for local residents. As the only region to receive a Regional Investment Initiative grant for Advanced Air Mobility from the Governor's Office, the region is building the infrastructure, jobs, and institutions that will define the next generation of the regional economy, from advanced manufacturing careers to STEM pipelines in local schools.

Flight testing is already underway. The jobs and community benefits are coming with it. Deep alignment across public, private, and educational partners enables the region to rapidly translate collaboration into action, advancing innovation, strengthening workforce pipelines, and generating high-quality jobs.

CALIFORNIA ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY CORRIDORS INITIATIVE (CAAMCI)

CAAMCI, led by MBEP, is positioned to establish California's first FAA-compliant, multi-airport flight corridor network, connecting the rural public airports of Watsonville, Marina, Salinas, Hollister, and other regional airports. For the Central Coast, this isn't just an aviation story; it's an economic development story. CAAMCI is designed to create durable, high-quality jobs across the region's rural communities, connect underserved areas to emerging industries, and build a workforce pipeline that keeps talent local.

This integrated corridor will support the testing, certification, and commercialization of clean-energy aircraft for passenger, cargo, defense, and next-generation drone operations. By combining advanced infrastructure with workforce training and innovation pipelines, CAAMCI will position the Central Coast as a statewide and national leader in advanced air mobility, defense, and aerospace technologies.

The Central Coast's moment in advanced air mobility is here. MBEP is making sure the region's residents, workers, and communities are at the center of it. Learn more and connect with us at [MBEP.BIZ](https://mbep.biz)



THE MONTEREY BAY TECH HUB (MBTH)

The Monterey Bay Tech Hub (MBTH) is where the region's aerospace ambitions become workforce reality. Co-founded by:

- MBEP
- DART
- University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC)

BUILDING THE REGION'S ADVANCED AIR ECONOMY

These companies aren't just headquartered here. They're hiring here, partnering with local institutions, and helping build the workforce of the future.

- Archer
- Joby
- Wisk Aero
- Parallel Flight
- Elroy Air
- Guardian Agriculture
- Odys
- Reliable Robotics

MAJOR UNIVERSITIES & COLLEGES:

- Naval Postgraduate School (NPS)
- University of California, Santa Cruz (UCSC)
- California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB)
- Cabrillo College
- Hartnell College
- Monterey Peninsula College (MPC)
- Gavilan College (Hollister Campus)

LEARN MORE

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