

PRESS RELEASE

SkyDrive Inc.
Osaka Metro Co., Ltd.

SkyDrive and Osaka Metro Unveil Plans for a Future eVTOL Network in Osaka Introducing Plans for the "Osaka Diamond Routes"

OSAKA & TOYOTA, Japan, December 17, 2024 - SkyDrive Inc. ("SkyDrive"), a leading eVTOL (*1) aircraft manufacturer based in Japan, and Osaka Metro Co., Ltd. ("Osaka Metro") today announced plans for the "Osaka Diamond Routes" at the "Osaka Roundtable" (*2). These proposed eVTOL routes connect four key destinations in Osaka: Shin-Osaka/Umeda, Morinomiya, Tennoji/Abeno, and the Osaka Bay Area. Market research has already identified these areas as critical hubs for the city's future mobility network. SkyDrive and Osaka Metro plan to launch services in the Morinomiya area by around 2028, before working to gradually expand operations through 2030 and beyond.



SkyDrive and Osaka Metro plans for the "Osaka Diamond Routes"

Concept Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dD8PA1NISg>

Background

SkyDrive is developing a lightweight, three-seater eVTOL aircraft that will play a key future role in the coming urban transport revolution. As eVTOL flights become a regular part of city life, SkyDrive seeks to lead this market transformation.

Osaka Metro operates eight subway lines and the New Tram, an automated, driverless tram system. Each day, approximately 2.4 million passengers rely on the Osaka Metro rapid transit network. The company is also advancing an urban Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) initiative called "e METRO," which integrates multiple modes of transportation—including subways, buses, and taxis—to make Osaka a more convenient and connected city.

In August 2024, SkyDrive and Osaka Metro signed an agreement (*3) to jointly explore the commercialization of eVTOL services in Osaka in the years following the Osaka World Expo 2025. To pursue this goal, Osaka Metro established an "eVTOL Promotion Office" under the direct supervision of its president in October 2024. The two companies have worked together to assess market demand, potential takeoff and landing locations, and other factors affecting the commercial feasibility of an eVTOL business. These efforts culminated in today's unveiling of the planned "Osaka Diamond Routes", which form a core part of the initial concept for future eVTOL operations.

Delivering New Value in Airborne Sightseeing and Travel

The proposed areas have been strategically selected to highlight Osaka's breathtaking cityscapes and offer convenient access to major tourist attractions. SkyDrive's eVTOL will transform intra-urban journeys into exciting and memorable experiences, giving passengers the opportunity to enjoy the city's stunning aerial views while flying in privacy and comfort.

Next Steps

SkyDrive and Osaka Metro will continue to collaborate closely with the government, Osaka Prefecture and the Osaka City authorities, as well as other relevant organizations and business partners, to bring these commercial services to market. Key areas of focus include finalizing vertiport locations and completing the further studies required to establish flight routes. SkyDrive and Osaka Metro also plan to roll out a phased expansion of these services, first into the surrounding suburbs, and then into the greater Kansai region. Together, the two companies seek to unlock the potential of air mobility and provide passengers with added value through new air transport services, developing an upgraded transport infrastructure that will enhance Osaka's reputation as a leading city for innovation and tourism.

About SkyDrive Inc.

SkyDrive is an eVTOL company aiming “to take the lead in the once-in-a-century mobility revolution”. The company began testing eVTOL prototypes in 2014 prior to official incorporation in 2018. Under its future vision for urban transportation, flying in eVTOLs will become a regular part of city life. In 2019, SkyDrive became the first company to fly a crewed eVTOL in Japan. As of 2024, SkyDrive is working with civil aviation authorities in Japan and the US to acquire certification for “SKYDRIVE”, the company’s latest eVTOL product. In April 2025, SKYDRIVE will fly at Expo 2025 in Osaka, a major international event. SkyDrive began production of “SKYDRIVE” in March 2024 at a plant owned by Suzuki Motor Corporation, SkyDrive's official production partner. SkyDrive is headquartered in Toyota, Aichi Prefecture, and led by CEO Tomohiro Fukuzawa, an engineer and entrepreneur.

For more information, please visit: <https://en.skydrive2020.com/>

About Osaka Metro Co., Ltd.

Osaka Metro is the direct legal successor to the Osaka Municipal Transportation Bureau, which operated the subway as the Osaka Municipal Subway. Osaka Metro plays a crucial role in the lives of Osaka residents and visitors alike, operating a 137.8 kilometer-long network of nine subway lines carrying passengers across central Osaka. In addition to its core social mission of providing safe, secure, and comfortable transport infrastructure that serves the community, the company is also conscious of the subway’s role in boosting the city’s energy and vitality, helping a diverse range of people to travel smoothly, meet easily, and create new value together. By further expanding and improving its services, Osaka Metro is committed to supporting the ongoing development of Osaka as a truly international city.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.osakametro.co.jp/en/>

Editor’s Note:

(*1) “eVTOL” is an abbreviation for electric Vertical Takeoff and Landing. As the name suggests, eVTOL aircraft can take off and land without a runway. eVTOLs are powered by electricity and incorporate advanced, automatic, flight control technology.

(*2) “Osaka Roundtable” is a key initiative in Japan aimed at advancing the development of Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) and urban air mobility (UAM) technologies. It brings together stakeholders, including companies, regulators, and researchers, to collaborate on integrating air mobility into urban environments. This initiative aligns with Osaka's vision of creating an ecosystem that harnesses electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) vehicles and related technologies to transform transportation.

Reference: <https://www.pref.osaka.lg.jp/documents/8418/roadmap20and20the20action20plan.pdf>

(*3) Related press release: <https://en.skydrive2020.com/archives/13429>

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