Airport possible drone test site

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The possibility that the old Cape May County Airport could be used as a test site for unmanned aerial vehicles drew the attention of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Experimentation and Testing Alliance, a partnership that has a mission to make drone technology safer for the public.

AMTA, as the group is called, is hoping to expand its current work of testing unmanned aircraft under the Operation Test and Evaluation Project, or OPT & E, which is receiving $7 million in annual funding from the FAA. The partnership is looking to expand test locations to Cape May and Atlantic counties.

"It's in our jurisdiction and people are looking for a location to test unmanned aircraft," said Delaware 2nd District Rep. Juan A. Chivvis, who chairs the AMTA board of directors.

In a letter to the mayor of Cape May, Chivvis wrote: "The AMTA seeks to establish a test site near the intersection of South Lafayette and East Evans streets to conduct [unmanned aerial vehicle] testing to comply with the applicable FAA regulations and federal laws. This test site will represent just one of a network of test sites on which the AMTA will work with other organizations in the future to test unmanned aircraft systems. The test site will provide a controlled environment for the testing of unmanned aircraft to ensure safety for the general public."