

Remarks at the opening of Beta Technologies' production facilities

Oct. 2, 2023

Transcribed by the Vertical Flight Society

Speakers (in order):

- Founder and CEO of Beta Technologies, Kyle Clark
 - Former VT Senator [Patrick Leahy](#)
 - VT Governor [Phil Scott](#)
 - VT Senator [Bernie Saunders](#)
 - VT Senator [Peter Welch](#)
 - Burlington Mayor [Miro Weinberger](#)
 - South Burlington Council Chair [Helen Riehle](#)
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Kyle Clark:

Thank you so much everybody for coming today. It's really special to have people here and joining us on this special day.

Before we get started, I just want to take a moment to recognize Rory Gibbs who was a PPC construction worker, a veteran, a father and a husband, who unfortunately died tragically while working towards our collective mission.

Then I'm going to move on to describing where we're standing. What you guys are in is the first scale production facility for electric aircraft. It's really special for everybody on the team and it is fitting for this community. Before we get into all the details of it, let me describe what we're standing in.

This is highly engineered facility on multiple fronts. From how we're building aircraft to how it energizes itself, to the people, flow, and the community around it. On the third floor you see workers up there? There are clean rooms for building aerospace grade-electric motors, inverters, and avionics harnesses. The manufacturing, engineering and the supply chain and airworthiness engineering is on the second floor. Inventory, incoming inspection... all types of flow for the products to come out these sidewalls and enter the production floor to build the aircraft. On the other side, there are motor balancing, motor final assembly and batteries, exactly intersecting the line and the places necessary to build the aircraft.

It's a highly engineered facility. If you're in this room, you probably contributed to this in some way, shape or form. I'm looking at you, Russ [Scully, Founder and CEO of Hula]. That's you. [You] contributed to this business, contributed to the vision, to the clarity of our thinking. And this is obviously a big day for us.

Six years ago, Martine [Rothblatt, CEO of United Therapeutics and initial Beta Investor,] and I met, and we contrived this crazy scheme to change the world and turn the corner on climate change with something that we care about, which is aviation.

And that materialized from an R&D think-tank company into a product development company, into a flight test company, into a manufacturing engineering company. And today we're making another change into a production company. And that is not the last step of this company, but it's the important next step that we're going to execute on.

On a little background, we've developed this aircraft in another version — two commercially viable electric aircraft that have gone through many generations of motors, inverters, control systems, structure, aerodynamics, and it keeps getting better. About two years ago, Martine and I... she was the first customer to come and fly Alia with us. And we flew the aircraft with performance that was, “meh” — it was okay.

And on Saturday... and we flew over this place right here and looked down upon a brown field — a place for storage material at the airport — a place that was used as a quarry. On Saturday, we went flying again and went from 200 feet a minute [1 m/s] to 1,500 feet per minute [7.6 m/s] climb rate. So we improved our L/D [lift-to-drag ratio]. We did four approaches in the area. We were just out flying in the beautiful Vermont fall. And it was special to come back, look to the left, and be able to see this facility. To date, we've flown — and this is kind of neat — I was looking at 26,000 miles [42,000 km] in this aircraft, his brother, which is kind of neat because that's all the way around the world, and then just a little bit more, which is about across the United States.

So a couple things that I think are important to know. As we built this company, we tried to do it incredibly thoughtfully and in a science- and data-driven way, with a clear, clear mission at hand, which was: help turn the corner on climate change. We have data scientists here collecting every bit of data off the aircraft in every flight, on every dyno, in the scale models, in every structural test. And, and that's what allows us to move forward with the confidence to build the facility like this that will produce 300 aircraft per year.

And this is only phase one. Phase two is on the other side of that wall there. Our motors, our batteries, our inverters, our control systems are constantly improving. And we're doing it, not in the vacuum. We're doing it with the collaboration of a whole lot of customers, from military to civil customers, suppliers, and doing it in a way that [co-founder of Boston Scientific, Beta board member and philanthropist] John Abele would be proud. It is in a collaborative, thoughtful way. And, and that's how this business has grown from just eight people five years ago, a year after we started, to almost 600 people now, with 400 of them in Vermont.

So about two years ago, we sat down as a company, and we started looking at how are we going to move to our next step? How are we going to build this business to a production company? And (I apologize, I keep coming back to you, Martine), we sat down and we said, here are the 11 sites we're

considering. And as we discussed the reasons that we were going to evaluate each site from labor rates to incentives, what we kept coming back to is that the people are most important. And having the people who've developed the aircraft close to that sensitive period of transitioning again, into a production facility, was the core thing that was going to make us successful.

So we worked with the airport to execute a 75-year lease, and then designed the facility. I mean... a quarter acre [0.1 hA] of skylights and, and like color changing lights [to enable natural light throughout the facility], solar on the roof... you guys are all standing on glass that's recycled [structural sub-base supports concrete foundations and is made by a glass aggregate of 99% recycled glass and 1% binder], which is kind of fascinating.... We are [avoiding 100,000 ft³ (2,800 m³) of Styrofoam insulation] because they're thoughtful about the way that Gregor [Masefield] and Joel [Page] and Jake [Burnham] architected the building, in a fascinating way that people want to work here.

And I announced... I was at the White House actually about a year ago, [and] I said, we're going to make manufacturing sexy again. What do you guys think? Did we make it? Yeah.

So what's happening next? So we're just finishing up this building right now. And that wing jig, which is the first major tool of structures, accompanied by another one next week. And then weeks after, we build that structure right here — and over the next quarter, this facility starts to fill out as we enter production. And again, it is really meaningful for us to be doing this in Vermont.

It's funny, back in high school, I used to drive a car down here and watch the airplanes take off and land, which was kind of fun. And, and this whole place is where my dad had a machine shop... where we went to school — my first physics class was a couple miles away. And in doing it in Vermont is not just a personal thing, it's a strategic thing. We have an incredibly strong base of technological thinkers, of people who care about the environment that are attached to the mission of our business and the mission of our state.

And as we grew the business here and were clear about our intents and why we were here, we found that flywheel just perpetuated itself. And folks that maybe [originally] didn't find a job here came back to Vermont. We have a lot of folks that have done that and went to school here, or were born here, took off, came back and they found resonance at this company. You know the city of course set that tone. I think [Burlington Mayor] Miro [Weinberger helped make Burlington in] 2014 the first 100%-renewably powered city [in the US] — we're just falling into your footsteps. So thank you for setting the tone here. And the pragmatism of this company is echoed by the entire state.

I don't think I have to justify to people why we're here at Vermont. There's some national press here, and you should hear that Vermont not only has the best delegation, we have the best people. And I think that we're the most thoughtful about the way we step into things.

And before we move on to somebody who has actually spoken to more people than this [before] — many times, unlike me — I just want to say a couple “thank yous.” First of all, I do want to again say

thank you [to] Martine for believing in this team [and] providing a clear vision and direction. John Abele, who hopefully is watching online right now, he stepped into our business, came to every one of our design reviews and said: I want to bet on this company — and I'm not just betting on it in a financial sense, I'm going to get involved and I'm going to provide a true clear North [Star] to this business through coaching... and he's been a mentor to me, a mentor to our company, and a mentor to our board. It's really special.

Mr. Chuck Davis over here. He's the chairman [of the Board] of this company [and founder of Stone Point Capital]. He has been a friend and a mentor to me. He's somebody who cares deeply — not only about this company, but also about this city and the state. And, he's provided guidance that I don't think we could get anywhere else in the world. So, thank you Chuck.

Russ [Scully], right here. I called him out before him and his cohorts of Tim Stotts and Rob Lair, who leaned in and believed in our company very early and got us into a system where we were able to move from an R&D company into a real bona fide aircraft company.

And of course, our delegation here: Congresswoman Becca [Balint]'s down working hard in Washington. But Senators Sanders, Peter Welch, thank you guys. It's really special to be here with people who share our values and work so hard for us down in Washington.

And Mayor Weinberger, and Councilor Member [Helen] Riehle ... she has just really unblocked our ability to do this here. It made sense to us and it required pragmatism and leadership in the city council to get it done. Thank you very much.

And Governor... I mean, we have the highest rated governor in the states for a good reason. He has made magic here at the airport. He's given us guidance and he's a humble, pragmatic governor — and that's what we endeavor to do as a business, and as individuals within the business. So thank you for making everything happen.

And of course, we're going to give the loudest round of applause to Mr. Matt Cook, the CEO of PC Construction, who took the time — him and his team — to absorb the values of Beta and then incorporate them in everything that was done here. When we had visitors here, they felt welcome. They were proud to be [in a facility] that was operated within the values of Beta. And him and his team have adopted that on every front, because in construction and creating a place like this, not everything is defined. And, and the ability to work together through all of those unknowns was really, really valuable. Thank you, Matt.

Every day that we came over here, there were the PC team, and then there were hundreds of subcontractors. They drove our vision to incorporate, to the extent possible, local contractors here who shared our mission and were a part of what we were doing. And of course, I just saw Greg or, Joel, and Jake out here, the architects who incorporated — where are these guys? — who incorporated the

'people first' philosophy into the business. The flow of people onto the floor, into engineering, [and] into supply chain was done very thoughtfully. And as you guys come back — and you're all welcome back — as we spin this place up, you'll feel the energy of the people.

So I just want to finish by — he doesn't need an introduction — but telling a quick story about Senator Leahy. I have two voicemails that I've saved on my phone. One of them is from my daughter, Ruby, whose 10th birthday is today. Where is she? Hi, Ruby. Yay.

And the other one... and by the way, not to him, but my other daughters, they recorded my voicemail. So the other one's from Senator Leahy. And unfortunately, I wasn't at the phone when he called 'cause we live in a place where there wasn't cell service. But he left a message that said, "I'm working hard in Washington. I share your vision and here's what we're doing for you." And I'm like, this guy's calling me to tell me what he's doing for us at Beta. It was really special and amazing. I would [have thought to] flip that in my mind before hearing that voicemail. And I've saved it to this day 'cause it was special, it was meaningful, and I felt like we had leadership in Washington that really cared about us. So, Senator Leahy.

Senator Patrick Leahy:

Thank you. Governor. Kyle, thank you for that. You know, as I walk around here, you were kind enough to have Marcelle [Pomerleau, Sen. Leahy's wife] and I join the both of you for lunch and John Tracy and JP Dow, from my office. And that was one of the most exciting lunches I've ever had. I'd just ask you, "Well, how did you get here? How'd you get there?" And you would tell me in layman's language that I could understand — one of the reasons we invited friends of ours, Judge Richard Landon [and] his wife Patty to be here. He's on the Federal Court of Appeals... federal circuit, but: he's an engineer.

So we're on breakfast. We were getting pretty excited. Just talk about what you do. You know, you and Katie [Clark], the entire Beta team, you have so much reason to be proud and happy birthday young woman. You know, we're going to remember this day as the day Beta opened their production. It was exciting when Marcelle and I walked in here. I mean, this is amazing. It is all done here. I talked with the governor, Governor Scott, as we came in and Mayor Weinberger. I said, "These are the kind of jobs we need in Vermont." Look at this. How what you did, your team, a small band of brothers [and sisters], backed by my team. It was so good to see you here. You didn't just open these first doors, you busted through them. You busted through them at full speed, after you incorporated in 2017.

You push boundaries: rapid prototyping, elegant design, and a company ethos that everyone should both invent and fly. Every single time I come out here, I say, man, you couldn't do more than you've done. Next time I would come by, he'd said, "Well, you might want to see our latest." And I was just blown away. And I know how much the entire Vermont delegation's been excited to have you when I was still in the Senate. I talked with Bernie Sanders and Peter Welch, both senators, about what you were doing. We wanted to help you. I think of those first meetings we had, and General, seeing you here

makes me think of this. We met with the Air Force Agility Prime program. They wanted to tell us these wonderful things they're doing. I said, well, we got somebody several years ahead of you.

Let me tell you about up here. And it was very nice to get calls from the head of the Air Force and others to say, "Man, that is special." Then we moved up funding a few years ahead of time and got a strong bipartisan vote for that funding because of what you were doing. Remember the days we used to have bipartisan votes in the [Congress]? But you showed what could be done, what could be done with the aviation community. Look at the footprint we have here. You can hear some of it now, both with the private sector or corporate sector, and the Air National Guard here, our National Guard, Air Guard and Army Guard has been so important to Vermont. So, I think now when you see Vermont recognized [as] an aerospace hub, I think Kyle, he's shown, you punch way above your weight.

Both Marcelle and I decided, after I retired from the Senate, I wanted to stay in touch with you, because as a lifelong Vermonter, I am so proud of what you've done. And I think one of the most meaningful provisions that I was able to write as Chair of the Appropriations Committee, Mr. Mayor, was to direct a \$9M grant to the Burlington School System to train and educate students in aerospace manufacturing, opening the door for opportunities for a lifetime. But you inspired that, you inspired me to do that, and I can get money, but you're the ones [that] have to get the people. And I want to see a whole new generation doing this, but Beta will be leading that. So we can all say a great deal. I'll just close with this: This Vermonter is so proud of the men and women who work here. So proud of the people who developed this, so proud of those of you who bring out the absolute best in our wonderful state of Vermont. Thank you very much.

Kyle Clark:

And again, our next speaker doesn't need an introduction, but I'm going to introduce him anyway. Governor Scott has inspired a lot of people around the state. And I'll tell you how he personally inspired me, and it reminds me of something Chuck Davis would do, which is: We were giving the commencement speech down at the Community College of Vermont this year. And two students ran up to him and said, "Hey, can you take a picture?" And he took the phone from them and took a picture of the students. The humility embedded in there was fascinating to me. So it reminded me of the humanity and the thoughtfulness and just the fact that... that he's a good dude. So, Governor Scott.

Governor Phil Scott:

Good morning. And, thank you Kyle. It's great to see you, and it's great to be here to celebrate this milestone for Beta Technologies and for Vermont.

I met Kyle...<laugh> thank you.

We work well together... <laugh>, I could use somebody <laugh>

Now, I met Kyle on a motorcycle while on the FreshTracks [Capital, based in Vermont] road pitch, [an] interesting concept where we get to ride around on a motorcycle for a few days listening to ideas that come up in Vermont. And it was interesting to do that.

So I stole that idea a bit and started my own Vermont economy pitch, when I was lieutenant governor. So I met Kyle again in Middlebury. I knew then when he presented, and it wasn't about this idea, I think it was about crowdsourcing, crowdfunding, but he was going to do something big. And I remember then thinking about 'I hope he does it and I hope he does it here in Vermont.' And he did both.

I'd say that's become common to many others [here] as well. And I'm very glad to be here today with all of you to see how far he and the entire team, all of you at Beta technologies have come. And this truly, truly is a big deal for Vermont. As I've said many times before, I believe [what] Beta is building... well, what they're doing, will change aviation in the future. But it's more than that. Most know how important it is to move away from fossil fuels. So the technology they're developing is going to have an impact that extends well beyond electric aircraft. It's this kind of creativity and ingenuity that gives me confidence that addressing climate change will also benefit the economy and will continue to accelerate, making it easier, more affordable, and more reliable as we move away from carbon emitting fuels. As I often brag to my fellow governors across the country, it's great having this kind of innovation happening right here in our state, right here in Vermont. And that's exactly why I believe Beta will be as important to Vermont in the coming years — mark my words — as IBM was for decades.

They have the potential to become one of our largest employers, creating literally hundreds of new jobs over the next couple of years. And one of our biggest draws for skilled workers and innovators to locate here with their families, which we so desperately need. And as they continue to expand, it'll open up so many doors for our kids and for our tech centers. And I'm a product of a tech center. I went to vocational school every afternoon for two years as a machinist. I didn't realize your dad had a machine shop. But I did that and I wanted to become a teacher after that, but then I went into business instead. But this will attract more students to our tech centers as well as our universities, which will attract more students. Now I know it hasn't been an easy path to get here today, but that's what makes this celebration even more important. It makes Beta's commitment to Vermont even more clear. So I want to thank Kyle, Katie, Martine, Chuck, and [the] many, many contractors on this project, PC in particular, and all you Beta employees who made this possible and are putting us on the map for electrifying aviation across the country. So congratulations and we look forward to many more years of success for you, not only here in Vermont, but across the globe. And with that, I'll turn it over to Senator Sanders.

Kyle Clark:

I'm just going to introduce you super quick.

Thank you Governor. And on that road pitch, by the way, where we met riding motorcycles, I pitched Beta numerous times, including up at the North Hero Town Hall, of all things, in Vermont. And so those

were special days of pitching [to] everybody that would listen. And it was a little different then, but it's, it's materialized [into] something much more clear.

Up next: we've seen [him] on national TV, winning every debate, in my opinion. And I noticed as we were standing up here in the ever pragmatic and thoughtful Bernie Sanders, he's got his own notes, he's writing down his own notes. He knows what he wants to say. And I don't know if you guys remember when he was in debates and the camera trying to see what he was writing. I just checked out what you were writing and it's good.

So Senator Sanders has resonated with our company due to his passion for healthcare, his deep, deep care about the state and the inclusion of everybody. And with that — no introduction (of course) needed, but: Senator Sanders...

Senator Bernie Saunders:

Well, thank you Kyle and Katie, and let me thank every man and woman in this room, because what we are celebrating today is not just a great day for Vermont. It is an important day for the country and in fact, for the world. We are living in difficult times. And Peter and I have just come back from Washington, DC, and we're living in dysfunctional times. And in terms of climate change: all over the world, young people are wondering what kind of planet they and their kids will be living in.

And I don't have to tell anybody here, because the governor and Peter and I are working on this every day: about the terrible floods that we had here in July, or the terrible fires in Hawaii, [or] the heat waves in China and India. All over this world, we are struggling to determine whether or not this planet in fact will survive. And one of the significant emitters of carbon is aviation, air travel. So what is taking place right here? Who would've believed it in our small state? Because of all of your collective activities, we are leading the world in helping to transform our energy system away from fossil fuel and save the planet. That's no small thing. So I thank all of you, I thank all of you, and I do believe the world is looking at what you are doing here today. And then at a time when so many of our people in Vermont and in America are living paycheck to paycheck — wondering how they're going to feed their kids, they get the healthcare they need — you are creating good paying jobs in the state of Vermont. Thank you for that.

And there's something else: it what's all that you were doing, leading the world in transforming our energy system, creating good paying jobs. That's a good day's work. But you're doing something different, which appeals to me personally, that's to do — kind of — with my politics. And that is you are creating a different type of workplace, aren't you? This is not a hierarchical workplace. This is a collective workplace where good ideas are welcome, no matter where they come from. I was told — we were just here the other day — that an 18-year-old kid developed a robot, 18-year-old kid. And I think this is an informal kind of workplace climate where people work together for a collective end, and that's the way it should be. That's the right way to do it, and it's good business.

And lastly, as Senator Leahy had said — and I thank him for all of his wonderful work on this — the governor mentioned: we want to get our young people into meaningful, important and good paying jobs. And together we are working with Senator Welch and Congresswoman Balint on apprentice programs, which get kids excited about aviation and the skills they'll need to help move this company forward. So this has been an extraordinary effort on the part of so many people. It's a great day for Vermont and an important day for the country. Thank you all very much for what you've done.

Kyle Clark:

Senator Sanders, thank you so much for your words. And as Dave Churchill — a fellow board member and our CTO — pointed out a few years ago — he said, “I think we should try to make this business remembered, not by the airplanes that we built, but by the way we built our business.” And it was a thoughtful and provocative thought.

And you'll see every one of us has a fire retardant work shirt on, as a business. My interpretation of a flat organization is every single person here is willing to do every single job to move the ball forward to our collective mission. And that's a difference that I think is unique to our business in this particular space. So thank you for recognizing that it's really special, that you left with that message with your visits.

So next I just want to introduce Senator Peter Welch. Peter Welch has invested a lot of time and effort understanding our business. We've become friends and talked about a lot of things. A couple things that really resonated with me: we've talked about workforce development, we've talked about people, we've talked about diversity and how these things don't need to contradict each other. In fact, as Martine and I were just discussing: diversity, focusing on renewable energy is a strategic advantage to our business. And it's given us a unique way to be creative in our thinking and inclusive in our people that work here, and it creates a healthier, better work environment. So I've really enjoyed these conversations.

And up next is Senator Peter Welch. Thank you.

Senator Peter Welch:

Thank you. What an incredible, incredible day. You know, Bernie was talking about Washington... he and I spent a lot of time there working with some of the great minds of the 18th century. And their vision includes a denial of such a thing as climate change. And Bernie and all of us really know how wrong that is. But I gave a lot of thought to: why is it that there's so much denial about something so profoundly threatening?

And it's not because there's a denial of the reality that the weather is changing — it can't be denied. It's too much in the face of us every single day. It's fear of change. It's a lack of confidence that you can take on the challenge that's before us. It's easier to stand pat and hold on to what you have than to accept the reality that what you have threatens our future. And what is so inspiring to me about Vermonters,

by the way, and all the folks here at Beta — but this applies to our Vermont farmers, it applies to our Vermont teachers — we have the confidence to face the future. And that's what this day is about. It's about saying, “Hey, wait a minute, we can have good jobs.” All those folks with your Beta shirts, thank you. You've got good jobs and you're doing the work.

We've got solar panels out there, we've got geothermal wells out there. Every one of those had engineers behind it, it had manufacturing people working hard to get them out there, it had construction folks putting it together, it had engineers designing the plans, it had financiers who said, “Hey, let's do something that creates jobs and helps the climate instead of just flip companies.” That is the Vermont way. We work together and get things done. We face the problems of the day.

And you know, it's so exciting to me that, when I was here and the First Lady [Dr. Jill Biden] was here, and we had some kids from the tech schools and you know — I don't know how I'd have been when I was 17 or 18 and the First Lady approached me to talk. I'd be nervous. And these kids were a little nervous, but when they started talking about that project and that mechanical work they were doing. They were like the President of the United States: they were in charge.

And that's the ethic that we have here in Vermont. We don't deny the problems, we face the problems, but there's another secret sauce that we have right here at Beta and we have in Vermont. We think cooperation is better than conflict. We think working together is better than fighting all the time. And that is what makes for success. And it's not just success of the enterprise. It's fun to show up at work when the question you have is: what needs to be done and how can I help get it done? That's the Vermont way. So yes, this is going to be transformative in the aviation industry and make an extraordinary contribution to reducing carbon emissions. But it's also an extraordinary contribution to getting us back to a way of working together where we understand it's about the mission of making this state and this country the great state and great country that we know it can be.

So thank you one and all for the work you're doing, and let's celebrate this magnificent day.

Kyle Clark:

I told you we had the best delegation.

So that collaboration is, I think, unique: another unique strategic advantage. And it's something that John Abele, the founder of Boston Scientific, has taught us: collaboration and communication — and open lines of communication — are something that he has always endeavored to instill into the people here, and it's really helped us be strategically advantaged over other folks in aerospace: transparency, clarity. We do things in public, great people get to come and find us. It's really kind of a fascinating thing. Next up... you know, Vermont, when this plane charges in Vermont, it's 98% renewable energy. There's almost zero emissions... almost zero emissions, yet in the city of Burlington, at BC, it is zero emissions. So to the first mayor of a hundred percent zero emission city, so that we can charge our plane — which is different than Ohio, who has a long ways to go — is, Miro Weinberger. Thank you.

Burlington Mayor Miro Weinberger:

Well, good morning, everyone. It is really quite something to stand here and look out at the scene. You know, Kyle, I remember touring your kind of makeshift first facility over at the old warehouse that we had where you set your first operations. I remember looking at the incredible mockups you guys were creating — life-size mockups — where you were putting the wiring in, working out all the details that needed to be there to make these planes work.

I remember getting texts from excited airport staff with the very first liftoffs on sort of grainy iPhone videos and being there when you were prototyping the first charging stations. And I think in all those times, whenever it came out here, there was such a sense of anticipation and hope, as well as awareness that this is not an easy thing to do, that this is a pretty improbable thing to do here at our Leahy Burlington International Airport. We all hoped <applause> we all hoped this was a day we were going to get to. We knew it wasn't something that was inevitable in any way. And to be here looking out at your team, knowing that there are 400 Vermonters working here now, knowing that we are opening this incredible building and that it is not long before the first electric airplanes roll off an assembly line here. It is just amazing. And it's been amazing to be here throughout the journey with you. Congratulations, Kyle. <applause>

Through all that, Burlington has been proud to be a partner of Beta. We are prouder still that we were able to forge not one, not two, but three separate long-term agreements for Burlington's world-class airport to become the home Beta's headquarters, manufacturing hub, and flight training facility. As Beta writes an exciting new chapter in aviation history, the approach we tried to take throughout — the direction I tried to give as we were working all that out is that — we need to hold on to our values as an airport. We need to protect the people of Burlington. We need to protect this region. We need to make sure we get these agreements right, but within those constraints, anything we can do to support this effort, we've got to do because this is too important for the future of the city and Vermont to get wrong.

The city's been the proud steward of Vermont's International Airport for over 100 years now. But there have been moments over the last hundred years [where] it wasn't clear as [the] airport we [have] today either. When I was first elected, our airport was just one of two junk rated bond airports in the US and was courting disaster with less than one month's cash on hand. Now we are proud to say that ... the Burlington International Airport is one of the great economic engines of Vermont, serving more than 1 million passengers every year and contributing more than \$480 million to the regional economy every year, even as you guys are just getting going here. We are stronger than ever with the airport's credit rating restored, nearly two years cash and reserve, and, newly completed, more than \$20 million cash terminal integration project, and more. The point is, the airport is here to be a partner for you, for Beta, for the years ahead, wherever that takes us.

As the city has pushed forward with our ambitious vision to go beyond being the first city in the country to source 100% of our electricity for renewable sources and to achieve a net zero energy city by 2030,

Beta is showing from the ground up why electrifying everything is awesome. From the geothermal heat pumping through this manufacturing line to the acres of new rooftop solar to the Alia herself, Beta is proof-positive that the innovative spirit of Vermont and Burlington can fuel the progressive climate policy that our state and our nation must embrace to avert future climate disasters. Kyle, your vision of progress towards making electric airplanes a reality is truly remarkable, and I'm so excited and proud that you believe in Burlington, you believe in this community, and I want you to know the city of Burlington believes in you too, and will be there for you no matter what's next.

Kyle Clark:

And although we're at the Patrick Leahy Burlington International Airport, we're in the city of South Burlington and this community has adopted us. I shouldn't say adopted us. We were born here. Yeah, we were. No, we have had an amazingly positive experience with the city of South Burlington [which] shares a lot of the values with Burlington, of course, and is growing in its own way and wants to do so responsibly. So Helen Riehle has led the council here and has given us the ability to grow and foster our innovation here in Burlington. So Helen, thank you.

Helen Riehle, South Burlington Council:

Thank you. So, good morning.

I'm really privileged to be here today. I must admit, I have never been the cleanup batter for such an august group; that said, on behalf of the South Burlington City Council and the City of South Burlington, I simply wish to say, "Welcome to the neighborhood." We are so pleased that Beta Technologies chose our city in which to build their production facilities. So, thank you so much.

Kyle, you have joined a community that is strongly committed to the shared values of reducing our carbon footprint. South Burlington has adopted a responsible and aggressive climate action plan, whose goals have been integrated into our — soon to be adopted — city comprehensive plan. We stand with you in finding ways to make this city, this state, this country, and yes, this world a better place. And thank you so much for your vision.

And just a final, quick plug: right up the hill, across the street in South Burlington, the O'Brien brothers, working with Green Mountain Power are developing an all-electric — first in the nation — neighborhood, complete with its own grid. So perhaps current and future Beta employees may live close to here, ride their bikes, or walk to work from a home with a tiny carbon footprint. Again, welcome to the neighborhood.

Kyle Clark:

I think it's just radical that we see another first in the making. So, thank you everybody for your wonderful words. Thank you to the team here who's enabled this.

And we have a little special surprise. We're going to work our way out to the hangar doors and we're going to see a quiet, clean electric aircraft come down and show us what it sounds like to fly with zero carbon emissions.

So, thank you everybody for coming!