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## Press Release

# MONTEREY REGIONAL AIRPORT CELEBRATES A NEW PASSENGER RECORD AND FAVORABLE RATING FOR TERMINAL REVENUE FINANCING

— *MRY to Mark 85 Years of Service,  
Welcome a New Route and More Passenger Seats in 2026* —

**Monterey, CA, February 24, 2026** — Monterey Regional Airport (MRY) commemorates its 85th year serving locals and visitors with multiple milestones to celebrate. The airport marked a new passengers-served record in 2025. Achievements in 2026 include launching a new nonstop route, adding passenger seats to existing markets, and receiving a favorable rating for short-term terminal revenue financing.

MRY served 659,867 departing and arriving passengers in 2025, which is a 6.3 percent increase over the previous year and the most travelers served annually in the airport's history. The increased passenger activity is due to more seats as airlines operated larger aircraft and additional flights in response to demand for travel to and from the Monterey Region.

The airport's previous record was 637,903 passengers served in 1978.

"Monterey Regional Airport had an incredibly successful year in 2025, marking a record for passengers served," said Executive Director Chris Morello. "The airport's strong performance is a result of airlines recognizing the Monterey Region as an economic engine and a desirable destination by investing their people, airplanes, and other resources here."

MRY expects to serve even more passengers in 2026. Long-time partner [United Airlines](#) will launch first-ever nonstop flights to Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD) on May 23. United will operate Boeing 737-800 aircraft on the route and expects to increase frequency as demand continues to build.

United will also increase passenger seats to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and Denver International Airport (DEN), both currently served routes, in April and May respectively. Upgrading to Boeing 737-800s from Embraer 175 aircraft, United will add approximately 90 more daily outbound and inbound seats on each route. This is the first time in 25 years mainline United Airlines aircraft will operate out of MRY, rather than their regional partners.

“We are happy to see the passenger growth trend will continue at MRY in 2026, with carriers scheduling larger aircraft on new and long-established routes,” Morello added.

MRY’s record passenger levels in 2025 contributed to a ‘A-/A-2’ dual rating with a stable outlook from [S&P Global Ratings](#). Monterey Peninsula Airports District (MPAD) secured a \$50 million short-term revenue loan in February 2026 to fund the MRY Metamorphosis Safety Enhancement Program (SEP), which includes a 63,000-square-foot replacement passenger terminal currently under construction. S&P highlighted in its report:

- MRY’s good base level of air travel demand given a strong origin and destination base, which is supported by the Monterey Region as a tourism destination and favorable economics, and
- The airport’s conservative budgeting practices, financial targets, and rates adjusted by ordinance that allow the airport to maintain good financial metrics.

This is the first time a public rating has been issued for MRY.

Passenger-facing SEP projects continue to progress, with the replacement terminal anticipated to open in early summer 2027. MRY was recognized by the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure for its intentional approach to sustainability for the commercial aircraft apron, which is located adjacent to the replacement terminal and was completed in fall 2025. The airport earned an Envision Verified rating for project design, planning, and construction, including:

- Diverting 99.51 percent of construction waste from the landfill
- An innovative approach to carbon capture using CO2 during the concrete curing period to minimize greenhouse gas emissions, and
- Protecting sensitive plant species during construction through an erosion control plan.

MRY will mark 85 years as a special district authority on March 22, the date when MPAD was established by Senate Bill 1300 in 1941. The milestone will be recognized by the airport throughout the year during employee and public-focused celebrations.

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## About Monterey Regional Airport

Monterey Regional Airport (MRY) is Monterey County’s only commercial airport and accommodates over 650,000 passengers each year. The airport serves nine nonstop markets with an average of 17 daily departures. MRY is committed to providing customers with superior services and a convenient, hassle-free experience in a safe, secure, professional environment. The MRY Metamorphosis, an FAA-required Safety Enhancement Program, includes a replacement terminal that will welcome passengers in June 2027, and will transform how Monterey residents and visitors travel. Be sure to visit [montereyairport.com](http://montereyairport.com) or follow @montereyairport on Facebook, Instagram, and X.