1 **Empowering Every Traveler**

Accessibility Initiatives at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport

2026 IHD Evidence for Success Disability Conference – June 2026

2 **PHX ADA TEAM**

Ira McCullough – ADA/Title VI Program Manager

Jackelyn Ramirez – Small Business & Accessibility Assistant

3 **FOLLOW ME ON LINKEDIN**

4 **WHERE WE ARE AT**

Why accessibility matters in air travel

PHX's commitment to ADA compliance and inclusive services

5 **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Identify the comprehensive accessibility features available at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, including ADA-compliant facilities, wheelchair assistance, tactile wayfinding, and service animal relief areas
2. Explain how innovative programs, such as the Compassion Cacti lanyard, support travelers with hidden disabilities and enhance their overall travel experience.

6 **AGENDA**

State of Accessible Air Travel
PHX at a Glance
PHX Accessibility Amenities
Role of Regulatory Agencies
Emerging Topics

7 **STATE OF ACCESSIBLE AIR TRAVEL**

8 **TOP OBSTACLES AT AIRPORTS**

9 **PASSENGER EXPECTATIONS (1 OF 2)**

- Barrier-free access
- Friendly, knowledgeable, and efficient customer service
- Accessible programs and facilities

10 **PASSENGER EXPECTATIONS (2 OF 2)**

Ready access to sources of information

- Multiple accessible modalities
- Wayfinding

- Airline and passenger assistance

11 **BARRIERS TO TRAVEL**

- 70% forgo air travel in prior three years due to accessibility concerns
- 52% would spend more than $1000/year if airlines increased their focus on accessible infrastructure

12 **BARRIERS TO TRAVEL**
(1 OF 2)

Adults with disabilities have the spending power of $511 billion

- But 65% felt their purchasing choices were limited by barriers

13 **BARRIERS TO TRAVEL**
(2 OF 2)

- COVID aftermath/uncertainty
- Lack of accessible options
- Political / Regulatory impacts
- Handling of mobility devices and durable medical equipment
- No or inadequate staff training

14 **PHX AT A GLANCE**

15 **OUR GOAL: MOST ACCESSIBLE LARGE-HUB AIRPORT IN THE US**

16 **ECONOMIC IMPACT**

$44.3 Billion in annual economic impact to Arizona
$14.8 billion annual payroll
$13.3 billion in direct output of aviation services
47,000 + jobs at PHX

17 **ONE DAY AT PHX**

1327 aircraft arrive and depart
926 tons of cargo handled
142,965 passengers arrive and depart

18 **ONE DAY AT PHX – ECONOMIC IMPACT**

4,547 rental car contracts
$19.3 million daily visitor spending
$77.9 million in daily direct impact - making the Phoenix airport system the largest economic engine in the state

19 **Phoenix Deer Valley**

20 **In 2025, we celebrated 95 years**

From "The Farm" to one of the busiest airports in the US

21 **PHX IN THE PAST – 1930S**

22 **PHX IN THE PAST -1950S**

23 **WHAT'S AHEAD FOR PHX**

Taxiway U
Bridge north & south airfields on west end of airport
Projected to be completed mid-2027

24 **TAXIWAY U**

25 **WHAT'S AHEAD FOR PHX (T3N2)**

Terminal 3, North 2 Concourse
Additional gates, concessions
Projected to be completed 2027

26 **WHAT'S AHEAD FOR PHX**

New West Terminal
Located on footprint of old Terminals 1 and 2
Potential opening in 2033
First new terminal since 1990 (Terminal 4)

27 **PHX ACCESSIBILITY AMENITIES**

28 **WHAT DOES ACCESSIBILITY LOOK LIKE?**

29 **GENERAL ASSISTANCE**

PHX Navigators
Guest Services Representatives
Passenger Assistance

30 **PASSENGER EXPERIENCE**

PHX Navigator Buddies – Therapy Dog Program

Summer Teen Volunteer Program

31 **COMPASSION CACTI**

Compassion Cacti Program
Compassion Cacti Lanyard

32 **COMPASSION CACTI INFORMATION**

33 **WAYFINDING**

Aira

- Visual Interpreting Service

ReBokeh

- AI augmented solution

Interactive Maps

34 ☐ **CHECKPOINT ASSISTANCE**

TSA Cares

- Travel assistance for persons with disabilities or medical conditions
- 1-855-787-2227
- tsa.gov

35 ☐ **FACILITIES**

Compassion Corner
Sensory Room
Accessible Family Restrooms
Service Animal Relief Areas

36 ☐ **COMMUNICATIONS**

Passenger Paging
Information Desks
Information Kiosks / Tablets
Hearing Loops

37 ☐ **ROLE OF REGULATORY AGENCIES**

38 ☐ **FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION**

Local Public Transit Service to/from Airport

- Ride Share
- Valley Metro Light Rail
- Valley Metro Bus Service

39 ☐ **US DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

Pre-Security and On Plane

- Airline Reservations
- Flight/Curbside Check-In
- Ground Transportation Services
- Flight Accommodations
- Wheelchair Assistance
- Onboard Plane

40 ☐ **FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION (FAA)**

At Airport

- On-Airport Parking
- Ground Transportation Service (taxi, shuttle, bus)
- Check-In to Security

- Security to Departure Gate
- Concessions, Restaurants, & Lounges
- Gate Area / Hold Room Accommodations
- On-site Hotels
- On-site Rental Car Providers

41 **TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (TSA)**

Security Screening

42 **CUSTOMS & BORDER PROTECTION (CBP)**

Customs for International Flights
Passport Control

43 **CURRENT INITIATIVES**

44 **DEMENTIA INITIATIVES**

- Dementia Friendly Air Travel Workshops
- Dementia-Friendly Airport designation
- Specialized training (TSA)

45 **DEMENTIA WORKSHOP**

- Wednesday, July 17, 2026
- 9:00 am to 1:00 pm
- Aviation Headquarters
  - 2485 East Buckeye Road
  - Free parking
- Optional PHX tour
- Register at skyharbor@phoenix.gov

46 **AUTISM INITIATIVES**

- Ongoing citywide effort for Autism Friendly City designation
- Wings for Autism®
- Autism focused tours

47 **CITYWIDE ADA TRANSITION PLAN (1 OF 2)**

Multi-departmental efforts to identify and prioritize barrier removal for City facilities, programs, & services

48 **CITYWIDE ADA TRANSITION PLAN (2 OF 2)**

Public outreach and community feedback coming up

49 **ACCESSIBILITY IN AVIATION AWARDEE**

50 **EMERGING TOPICS IN AVIATION ACCESSIBILITY**

51 **EMERGING TOPICS - PHX**

- Hardstand / Remote Operations

- New terminal design
- Adaptive Technology
  - Leveraging personal devices
- Adding low-tech solutions

52 ☐ **EMERGING TOPICS - AVIATION**

- Intersectionality of limited English proficiency (LEP) and disability
- Navigating uncertainty in regulations & compliance

53 ☐ **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU**

- Feedback on your travel experience to/from PHX
- Volunteers for emergency management exercises
- What technology worked for you at other airports?
- How can we step up our game?

54 ☐ **CITYWIDE ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES**

55 ☐ **PHX ACCESSIBILITY & ASSISTANCE**

56 ☐ **QUESTIONS**

57 ☐ **CONTACT US**

PHX Civil Rights: 602-273-2722
TTY 7-1-1 Friendly
PHXCivilRights@phoenix.gov