



Santa Maria Takes Flight: American Airlines Launches Nonstop Service to Phoenix

Santa Maria, CA — The Santa Maria Public Airport (SMX) is elevating regional connectivity and economic growth with **twice-daily nonstop flights to Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX)**. This new service is more than convenience—it's a strategic investment in the vitality of the Santa Maria Valley and the Central Coast.

SMX has been an integral part of the Santa Maria area and Central Coast for decades, being a catalyst for economic development and improving the quality of life of the region. Our new American Airlines service to Phoenix will be a major boost to the entire region economically, allowing local businesses easier access to the national transportation system. With full flights at other Central Coast airports in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara, the largest share of Santa Maria Valley's passengers are forced to drive all the way to LAX, a drive that can take more than four hours and adds significant expense to local businesses and families alike. No one really wants to start or end their trip with a long drive to another airport, deal with the hassles of those overcrowded airports and paid parking. The number one request over the past decade was to return legacy airline service to SMX. The airport and the Chamber after years of efforts were successful. Now it's time for the community to step up and make it a success.

With the new American Airlines service to Phoenix, passengers from the Santa Maria Valley area can now enjoy the same legacy airline service that San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara have, allowing seamless, easy connections on American Airlines to hundreds of destinations worldwide, all with a short drive to SMX with Free Parking and Local Convenience. No longer do you need to start your trip with a one (or four) hour drive to another airport only to pay \$30 or more per day for parking, deal with 30-minute security lines and overcrowded terminals. SMX's free parking is just steps from our spacious terminal with short security lines and hometown convenience that we have been waiting on for years.

Every one of our businesses deal with the expense of employees having to drive to San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara or LAX. This adds additional costs directly to every single trip. From mileage reimbursement for employees (\$40 for San Luis Obispo, \$97 for Santa Barbara and \$231 for LAX), to parking (starting at \$20 per day) to the lost time on the road. American Airlines' service from SMX can save your business both time and money by choosing to fly local.

From a visitor standpoint, we see the service on American Airlines being a catalyst for bringing new visitors to our region and spending more at our Santa Maria Valley businesses. Economic development studies show that visitors who fly typically spend 3x more on their trips than those that arrive by car. American Airlines' service to Phoenix will bring thousands of new visitors into the Central Coast and millions in new economic development with it.

It is critical that everyone in the community steps up and uses the service that we have been asking to bring back for years. Full flights at SMX will undoubtedly lead to more flights, more destinations and even additional airlines. American Airlines took a chance on service from SMX, an airport that had been without legacy airline service for nearly a decade. We as a community need to step up and show them that we can support this service and more! Fly SMX. Free Parking. Local Convenience.

Why This Matters

SMX's new Phoenix connection links our businesses to a major hub with **25.6 million annual enplanements** and hundreds of global destinations.

Twice-daily American Airlines flights from SMX to Phoenix mean:

- Faster business trips and family travel
 - Direct access to national and global markets
 - Connections to 100+ destinations worldwide
 - Competitive advantage for local businesses
 - Increased tourism and hospitality revenue
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The Power of Filling These Flights

Every seat filled on the Phoenix flights strengthens SMX's financial health, secures long-term air service, and injects millions into the local economy. Here's why:

- **Airline Retention & Expansion:** High load factors make the route profitable for American Airlines, reducing risk of service cuts and encouraging future destinations.
- **Revenue Growth:** More passengers = higher landing fees, fuel flowage, and passenger facility charges.
- **Economic Ripple Effect:** Increased visitor spending on hotels, restaurants, and attractions boosts local tax revenue and supports jobs.

Regional Competitiveness: Reliable air service positions Santa Maria as a connected, business-friendly community, attracting investment and talent.

Why Fly SMX Instead driving to other airports?

- **Convenience:** SMX is just 5 miles from downtown Santa Maria, compared to 27 miles to SLO and 69 miles to SBA
- **Free Parking:** Save hundreds annually with free parking at SMX

Time Savings: Skip traffic and long security lines—SMX offers a streamlined, stress-free experience

Santa Maria Airport (SMX) makes starting your journey simple and stress-free. Skip the long drives, heavy traffic, and crowded terminals at larger airports — with **FREE parking**, quick check-ins, and short security lines, SMX keeps travel easy from the start.

Call to Action

Local Convenience. Global Connections. Fly SMX.

Every ticket purchased out of SMX helps keep air service viable, supports local jobs, and attracts more routes. Encourage your teams, clients, and partners to **fly SMX** for business and leisure.

Book now at [aa.com](https://www.aa.com)

Together, we can make Santa Maria a hub for opportunity.