

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Ford Airport Closes in on Three Million Passenger Mark



(Above): A young passenger arrives from Phoenix-Sky Harbor at the Ford Airport.

Grand Rapids, Mich. – The Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GFIA) now sits less than 300,000 passengers away from setting another all-time annual record for passengers served. October 2018 saw 16-percent growth year-over-year, putting the Ford Airport at over 2.7 million passengers served in 2018 with two months left.

October marks the tenth record-breaking month in a row for 2018, and the airport has seen growth in 63 of the last 70 months. October 2018 was the busiest October ever, and at this point in the year GFIA has surpassed its annual totals reached in every year except 2017.

October 2018 had 284,710 passengers come through the Ford Airport, up from 245,319 in 2017. GFIA is up 15.7-percent in annual passenger totals.



"We still have two months left in the year and these are big months for us with November and December holiday travel mixed in. We know we will hit our three million passenger mark and then some," said Gerald R. Ford International Airport Marketing & Communications Director Tara Hernandez. "We continue to work on adding more air service, working with our airline partners to serve the destinations West Michigan travelers want to visit. Our work isn't done and we only expect more big things in 2019."

Allegiant recently announced nonstop service to Sarasota-Bradenton (SRQ) which will begin in April 2019, and American Airlines kicks off new nonstop service to Miami (MIA) and Phoenix Sky-Harbor (PHX) beginning in December 2018. Frontier also started Phoenix (PHX) and Tampa (TPA) this month.

"We are proud to have airlines investing in the Ford Airport and recognizing the growth of our West Michigan community," said GFIA Board Chairman Dan Koorndyk. "We are thrilled to be on the edge of three million passengers, and we're looking forward to celebrating that milestone."

GFIA has invested in new facilities to accommodate the growing traffic by recently completing Phase One of the Gateway Transformation Project – an upgrade in space, retail, food and beverage, restrooms, finishes, amenities, and customer service offerings. The project's main feature is the consolidated passenger security checkpoint which centralized and combined security screening to one main checkpoint in the Airport. Construction also included new terrazzo flooring, lighting fixtures, pre and post security business centers, a military welcome center, kids play areas, and much more.

Phase Two of the Gateway Transformation Project began in November 2018 with construction taking place at the airline ticket counters, baggage claim area, curbside, and 'front of house' area.

For more information on construction updates and upgrades, please visit: <http://www.flyford.org/construction.php>

GFIA monthly passenger statistics are available on our website: <http://www.grr.org/history.php>
For more information or interviews, please contact Tara Hernandez.

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About GFIA

The Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GFIA) is the second busiest airport in Michigan. The Airport served over 2.8 million passengers in 2017 and over 7,000 travelers pass through GFIA each day. The Gerald R. Ford International Airport offers nonstop service to 26 major market destinations with more than 120 daily nonstop flights. The Gerald R. Ford International Airport is managed and operated by the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority. GFIA generates over \$3.1 billion in annual economic output throughout West Michigan, and employs over 2,000 people. For more information on GFIA visit: www.flyford.org or follow the airport on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram: @FlyGRFord