

## EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

*Local Governments and Citizens Working Together*

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### EXECUTIVE BOARD

#### Regular Meeting

Thursday, March 28, 2024

3:30 P.M.

The Meeting was held In-Person and/or using GoToMeeting by Video and/or Teleconference from the Main Conference Room at the YMPO Offices at 230 West Morrison Street, Yuma, Arizona 85364

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1. Call to Order and the Pledge of Allegiance

The Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization (YMPO) Chair, Vice-Mayor Cecilia McCollough, called the YMPO Executive Board (the Board) meeting to order at 3:32 p.m. and asked the Board to join her in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call Attendance

The YMPO Accountant II/Executive Assistant, Blenda Dale, called the roll as follows:

YMPO Executive Board Members Present:

Chair	Cecilia McCollough, Vice-Mayor, Town of Wellton ^
Vice-Chair	Maria Cecilia Cruz, Councilmember, City of San Luis ^
Secretary/Treasurer	Wynnie Ortega, Councilmember, Cocopah Indian Tribe ~
Member	Lynne Pancrazi, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County ^
Member	Martin Porchas, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County ~
Member	Gary Knight, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^
Member	Bruce Fenske, Southwest District Administrator, ADOT ^
Member	Luis Galindo, Vice-Mayor, City of Somerton ^

^ Attended in person.

~ Participated by teleconference.

As all member agencies were present, the quorum requirement was met.

YMPO Executive Board Members Absent

Member	Michael Shelton, Councilmember, City of Yuma #
Member	Art Morales, Councilmember, City of Yuma #

# Not present but was represented by proxy by another member.

\* Not present, and not represented by proxy by another member.

YMPO Staff Present:

Crystal Figueroa	Executive Director
Blenda Dale	Accountant II/ Executive Assistant
Jesus R. Aguilar, Jr.	Mobility Manager
Jeff Heinrichs	IT Manager/ Associate Planner
Fernando Villegas	Senior Transportation Planner

Declaration of Votes

Councilmember Gary Knight declared he would exercise a proxy vote for Councilmember Shelton for three votes and Councilmember Morales for two, for a total of five votes for the City of Yuma.

3. Title VI Declaration and Call to the Public

YMPO Mobility Manager Jesus R. Aguilar, Jr. read Title VI obligations. No members of the public addressed the Board.

4. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of the February 29, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes
- B. YMPO Income/Expenditure Report for February 2024

MOTION: Councilmember Gary Knight motioned to approve the consent agenda as presented. Councilmember Maria Cruz seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

5. FY 2026-2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update

Project Manager Vamshi Yellisetty from Kittleson and Associates updated the Board on the progress of the LRTP project. He reviewed the project process and work plan, Highway Safety Improvement Plan (HSIP) applications, and the next steps in the LRTP project.

He said the LRTP was a federally mandated process that the YMPO must complete every four years, as the region is in an air quality non-attainment area. In addition, the 2020 Census information, the effects of COVID, and changing transportation needs made the update necessary. The regional priority project list needed to be reviewed to determine if those projects were already included in the LRTP, and if so, if they needed any adjustments. Lastly, there were not as many transportation funding opportunities available during the last LRTP Update as there were now since the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA) and the additional Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) monies that YMPO was in line to receive.

Mr. Yellisetty outlined the four phases the LRTP project would go through. Phase One was understanding the needs of the region and member agencies. Phase



Two would evaluate potential improvements. Phase Three would be developing a draft prioritized action plan, and Phase Four would be the acceptance and implementation of the LRTP Update.

He said the Kittelson project management team and YMPO staff meet monthly to ensure deadlines are met and are making progress. Kittelson also provides monthly updates to the YMPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and has created a Technical Working Group (TWG) within the technical staff members from each YMPO member agency. Meetings would be held at key milestones within the project.

A key deliverable that would result from this work plan was a Public Outreach Plan. To avoid duplication of efforts and confusion, the City of Yuma's Transportation Master Plan public outreach and YMPO's LRTP public outreach would coordinate with one another.

He then reviewed the tasks in the work plan: Task One refined the Scope of Work. This was done in conjunction with YMPO and member agency staff to confirm the project's expectations and goals, refine the staffing plan, determine the schedule of deliverables, and the quality control process. Task Two would review the current transportation funding opportunities that weren't available in the last LRTP and create a compliance checklist for the funding opportunities. Task Three would update the regional travel demand model. This model is one of the key tools used to identify what is needed for roadway improvements now and in the future. Task four would involve collecting and reviewing existing conditions in the region. This would involve looking at all the regional roadways and travel modes. A revenue and expenditure analysis would be done to determine past success in improving the region's roadways. The goals and objectives of the previous plan would be reviewed to ensure they are still relevant or if modifications would be needed. This information would be analyzed in Working Paper One: Existing Conditions Summary. Task Five was the Public Involvement Plan. This would include three phases: Phase one would present the goals, objectives, and state of the current system to the general public and ask the public for input, Phase Two would seek input from the public for the draft of the LRTP, and in Phase Three the final LRTP paper is provided.

It was at this time (3:48 p.m.) that Supervisor Lynne Pancrazi arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Yellisetty continued with his presentation explaining that Task Six would look at roadway system alternatives by creating a comprehensive list of projects, sorting those projects into various scenarios, and determining which set of combined improvements would provide the best results for the region. These projects would

be sorted into short-, mid-, and long-term phases of the implementation plan. The TWG would be included in this process.

Task Seven would take the information from Task Six and create a draft of the LRTP Prioritized Projects and when each project should be completed. Task Eight included the preparation of the final draft of the LRTP, completion of the Air Quality Conformity analysis, and ensuring the projects that are being recommended do not adversely affect the air quality of the region. An executive summary would then be prepared for the YMPO Executive Board and the public, outlining the LRTP.

Mr. Yellisetty provided a chart showing the schedule to complete the various phases of the LRTP and the HSIP applications. He then asked for input from the member agencies regarding what projects, issues, and challenges they would like addressed within the LRTP.

Supervisor Lynne Pancrazi, Vice Mayor of Somerton Luis Galindo, Chairwoman McCollough, Councilmember Gary Knight, Councilmember Maria Cecilia Cruz, and Supervisor Martin Porchas mentioned street widening, stop lights, crossing lights, bus pullouts, and multiuse pathways at specific locations within the region. Vice Mayor McCollough mentioned a freight development project just outside the Town of Wellton that may need to be considered when developing the LRTP.

Ms. Figueroa added that YCIPTA was looking at bus pullouts. YMPO will be carrying out a Complete Streets Study in the future, which will also address bus pullouts. She added that she had attended the City of San Luis' meeting where multimodal and multiuse pathways were discussed.

Mr. Yellisetty stated there was something called a mobility hub that has been widely used. This hub would provide a location where users can change their mode of transportation from one mode to another and this would be looked at within the LRTP.

He concluded the presentation by advising the Executive Board that they would be kept informed at key milestones during the planning process, as well as stakeholders, focus groups, and public meetings. He advised they were currently working on the transportation model, existing conditions analysis, and public engagement plan.

6. FY 2022-2045 YMPO Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) – Amendment #1 and Air Quality Conformity Status Update

YMPO Senior Transportation Planner Fernando Villegas said YMPO Staff and member agencies worked with consultant Kittleson & Associates to accommodate



project changes and complete Amendment #1 and Air Quality Conformity to meet state and federal standards.

The 30-day public review period ended on March 18, and YMPO received no comments. The amendment was necessary to accommodate changes to the project limits of three transportation projects and/or advance their project horizons.

At this time, the meeting platform froze, and we disconnected. YMPO IT Manager Jeff Heinrichs was able to reconnect; however, Supervisor Porchas did not return to the meeting virtually.

Upon the reconnect, Mr. Kevin Adams, Regional Transportation Advocacy Council (RTAC) representative, started to give his report; however, he was asked to refrain and allow the meeting to complete the current agenda item number six first.

Mr. Villegas concluded his presentation by stating the amendment was recommended for approval by the TAC at their March monthly meeting and was being presented to the Board for possible approval.

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi motioned to approve FY2022-2045 YMPO LRTP Amendment #1 and Air Quality Conformity Update. Councilmember Maria Cecilia Cruz seconded the motion was unanimously approved.

At this time, Councilmember Knight suggested allowing the Rural Transportation Advocacy Council Liaison, Mr. Kevin Adams, to continue his report. This information is located under item number 12.

7. FY 2022-26 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #13

Mr. Villegas said that since the FY 2022-2045 YMPO Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) – Amendment #1 had been approved, an amendment was needed for projects in the TIP table, contingent upon FHWA transportation conformity determination.

The projects included:

- 40<sup>th</sup> Street widening and extension of Avenue 6E to Fortuna Road
- 40<sup>th</sup> Street from 6 ¾ E to 7 ½ E, roadway construction
- Right-of-way acquisition for the Avenue E/Avenue D Extension: County 23<sup>rd</sup> Street to County 16<sup>th</sup> Street,
- Construction of the Avenue E/Avenue D Extension: County 23<sup>rd</sup> Street to County 16<sup>th</sup> Street project.
- Changed the project name from Avenue E/D Extension from County 23<sup>rd</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> to Avenue E/D Extension from County 23<sup>rd</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>.

MOTION: Councilmember Knight moved to approve the FY 2022-2026 YMPO TIP

Amendment #13 contingent upon FHWA transportation conformity determination. Councilmember Cruz seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

8. 2024-2025 CO2 Emission Targets

Mr. Villegas stated that this item was presented during a previous Executive Board meeting. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) was requiring ADOT to set a declining emission target for CO2 Emissions of the national highway system. ADOT had established a state target of -0.1% reduction in CO2 emissions. The YMPO can either adopt ADOT's state target or create its own.

ADOT was requesting a letter within 180 days of this notification indicating whether YMPO supports ADOT's 2024 CO2 target or would be identifying its own CO2 emission target for the YMPO region. YMPO staff and the TAC recommended that the YMPO Executive Board adopt ADOT's 2024 CO2 emission target amount of -0.1%, which is the lowest target amount available.

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi moved to adopt ADOT's 2024 CO2 emission target. Councilmember Knight seconded and the motion unanimously carried.

9. Consider Application for Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant

Ms. Figueroa said that during the January 25, 2024, Board meeting, staff presented to the Board a collaborative partnership with the City of Yuma and the rest of the region for inclusion in the City's Safety Action Plan awarded through an FY 23 SS4A. However, during the City of Yuma's project kick-off meeting, the city was informed by their grant FHWA program manager that they could not be able to expand the scope to include the whole of the Yuma Region. For that reason, she conferred with three consultants for grant writing costs to prepare a planning and demonstration grant for a Regional Safety Action Plan. The cost estimates came back under \$10,000, with the lowest bid at \$6,500 from Greenlight Traffic Engineering.

She explained that the purpose of SS4A grants was to improve roadway safety by significantly reducing or eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries through safety action plan development, refinement, and implementation. The program would provide funding to develop tools to help strengthen a community's approach to roadway safety and saving lives. On a recent SS4A webinar, the Department of Transportation presenter said that planning funding was awarded to most applicants.

The Board had approved the FY 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program, which contains a Grant Transportation Equity line item of local funds to carry out discretionary grant opportunities such as an SS4A Grant that benefits the region. The Board had previously authorized the Executive Director to allocate up to



\$15,000 for individual consultant contracts to pursue grants as they become available. Supervisor Pancrazi asked if funds were still available in the Grant Transportation Equity line and Ms. Figueroa confirmed that the equity line still had a fair amount of funds to complete this grant application.

MOTION: Councilmember Knight moved to (1) authorize YMPO to apply for a Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant and (2) authorize the Executive Director to enter into a contract for an SS4A Grant application for the development of a Regional Safety Action Plan with the lowest bidder. Supervisor Pancrazi seconded, and the motion unanimously carried.

10. Complete Streets Concept Study

Ms. Figueroa said the YMPO was working on a scope of work to develop a Complete Streets Concept Study Request for proposal for road improvements and to design cross-sections for roadways in the YMPO region. This study was listed as part of the two-year 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program.

The goal of the study was to explain what complete streets are, what the concept of complete streets means to planning and programming roadway improvements in the YMPO region, show some roadways that need to be improved, and explore how to prioritize and fund those improvements.

The Complete Streets Project was currently budgeted at \$112,000, however, she believed this amount would need to be increased due to inflation. The increase would be taken from other planned studies and projects using federal funds. One such project was the GIS Traffic Map, which will be completed as part of the LRTP. She then provided a timeline to complete the project.

11. FY 2025 Congressional Directed Spending (CDS) Appropriations

Ms. Figueroa stated that in early March, the offices of Senator Kelly and Sinema released a Congressional Directed Spending request opportunity inviting Arizonans and organizations to apply for projects that could be funded through the CDS process. These include requests for specific projects or activities within Arizona, called Congressionally Directed Spending requests. Previously, the Board identified the US 95 widening project as a regional priority, and as such, in collaboration with ADOT, YMPO had taken a proactive approach to seeking funding opportunities. She asked the Board to approve an application request for CDS earmarking of \$2-3M to supplement possible construction.

The available funding would allow the breakout of three intersections as three smaller projects for FY25 construction. The intersection of Martinez Lake Rd and US 95 was one of the three intersections. The request for direct congressional

spending, if approved, would be used to construct the Martinez Lake Road intersection.

Mr. Bruce Fenske, Southwest District Administrator with ADOT added that this project currently had about \$30M in State funding set aside towards its estimated \$76M construction cost. He explained that construction costs had significantly increased due to inflation. At this time, there was enough funds to do three intersections of US 95, barring any clawbacks from the State Legislature. The Grant funds would help alleviate any increased costs due to inflation and perhaps leave some funds to be applied toward the next section of US 95.

Ms. Figueroa explained that the CDS application would be completed by ADOT and YMPO staff. A consulting firm would not be needed.

She then asked the Board to refer back to agenda item number nine. She said she failed to mention that the SS4A grant required a twenty-percent match of funds. She planned to ask for \$480,000 in grant funds, with a match of \$120,000 for a project total of \$600,000. Ms. Figueroa mentioned that there is the possibility of MPOs becoming eligible applicants as part of HB2813 Az SMART Fund reform, this would allow the MPO to pursue an Az SMART fund to match 50% of the matching funds, or \$60,000.

Mr. Kevin Adams, RTAC Liaison suggested the possibility of having one of the YMPO agency members apply for the Az SMART fund on YMPO's behalf.

MOTION: Councilmember Knight moved to approve a Congressionally Directed Spending request by YMPO for US 95. Supervisor Pancrazi seconded and the motion unanimously carried.

12. Summary of Current Events/Board Member Reports/Executive Director's Report & Comments by Other Participants

Mr. Adams reported that there was currently a state deficit, which could affect additional transportation project funding. He was not optimistic that our priority project legislation or any other measure that would involve state funds from the general fund would be successful. He said the council believed that they had successfully communicated the unmet transportation needs and their impact. There was not much of a desire to take from transportation funds to balance the budget. The governor had noticed \$420M in clawbacks that were previously earmarked for projects that had not yet been obligated and to use those funds now to help balance the budget. Once the projects were ready to move forward in the future, perhaps funding could be restored. He stressed there would be no guarantees that future legislators would restore the funds. RTAC took the position



that if the clawback was going to complicate or delay project delivery, the RTAC opposed doing so. Although there wouldn't be any new funds added to transportation he believed that most legislators would not be willing to take existing funds away from transportation.

There was a bill to reform the Arizona State Match Advantage for Rural Transportation (Az SMART) fund, such as expanding eligibility to broaden eligibility to rural organizations such as Tribes, Council of Governments, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and rural regional transit organizations. The bill would allow ADOT flexibility in distributing funds to ensure smaller communities would still have funding available without resulting in unused balances, which the legislature could target for other uses. The bill passed through the House with 57 to 1 in favor and has gone through the preliminary steps in the Senate. He said the bill should be ready for its final vote.

The biggest transportation issue that had evolved over the last few months was the review and audit of the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). This was a routine process. Both the House and Senate put through the Continuation of ADOT Bills. The House Bills would allow an eight-year continuation of ADOT without any mandates. The Senate Bill asked for a five to eight-year Continuation of ADOT with restrictions and mandates.

He said the next step would be to have the Auditor General do a review of the completed ADOT audit next February. The review would look at the progress ADOT has made in complying with the audit's recommended restrictions and mandates as well as how many years ADOT may continue. Arizona has relied heavily on Federal funding for our state highway system. If Arizona wishes to continue using federal funds, it would need to adhere to the federal requirements and guidelines. This could make it difficult for ADOT to continue to receive federal funding. RTAC would prefer the continuation Bill to allow for an eight-year continuation, clear of prohibitions and mandates. The Bills need to be passed before the expiration of ADOT's current contract, which was in three months. He urged Board members to reach out to their legislators in favor of the eight-year Continuation Bill.

Mr. Adams concluded his presentation by saying he was unsure if the Senate Speaker was in favor of the eight-year continuation bill. The Senate Transportation Committee was chaired by David Farnsworth. Senator Hoffman and Senator Kern were on this committee. The prohibitions stated in the current Senate Continuation Bill mirror several bills that Senator Hoffman and Senator Kern had crafted during this year's session. He believes they are the catalyst for creating the Senate Continuation Bill. Leadership and the Governor would need to resolve this issue.

Ms. Figueroa said as stated.

13. Possible Future Agenda Items

- A. Title VI Plan
- B. DCIP Grant
- C. Complete Streets Study

Ms. Figueroa stated the DCIP Grant's Notice Of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) was released that day and the YMPO would be reporting on the grant application process in future meetings.

14. Progress Reports

- a. Feb 29 – Grants Training for Local Public Agencies (CF, JH, FV)
- b. Feb 29 – FTA Bus Procurement Best Practices Update (JR)
- c. Feb 29 – Yuma TMPO Kick-Off Meeting (CF)
- d. Feb 29 – YMPO Executive Board Meeting (CF, BD, LL, JH, FV)
- e. Mar 1 – Payroll Law Seminar Fred Pryor Learning (LL)
- f. Mar 5 – How to use QuickBooks Fred Pryor Learning (LL)
- g. Mar 5 – Yuma MPO LRTP Update – PMT Meetings (JH, CF, FV)
- h. Mar 5 – YMPO/YCIPTA Meeting (JR, CF, FV)
- i. Mar 6 – YMPO US-95/YPG DCIP Grant Kick-Off Meeting (JH, CF, FV)
- j. Mar 6 – YMPO and Via Transportation (FV, CF)
- k. Mar 6 - Excel Training – Formulas & Turning Data Into Information (JH)
- l. Mar 7 – Safe Streets and Roads for All (CF, FV)
- m. Mar 7 – YC HR Training – New Hire Workplace Harassment Class (LL)
- n. Mar 8 – Safe Streets and Roads for All Demonstration (CF, FV)
- o. Mar 11 – Staff Meeting (CF, BD, LL, JR, JH, FV, RA)
- p. Mar 11 – Project Management Workshop Fred Pryor (LL)
- q. Mar 11 – YMPO-Regional Mobility Manager Committee (5310) (JR)
- r. Mar 12 – Excel Training – Formulas & Turning Data into Information Pt1 (CF, JH, LL, BD, JR, FV)
- s. Mar 13 – Creating a Culture of Accountability (CF)
- t. Mar 14 – TAC Meeting (CF, LL, BD, JH, FV)
- u. Mar 14 – YMPO Monthly Update (JR)
- v. Mar 14 – YRBC Board Meeting (CF, JH, JR)
- w. Mar 14 – ASRS SVC Verification, Refund, Retirement, and Working after Retirement training (BD)
- x. Mar 15 – State Transportation Meeting (CF)
- y. Mar 18 – RTAC Advisory Committee Meeting (CF, FV)
- z. Mar 18 – ADOT/YMPO Monthly Coordination Meeting (CF, FV, JH)
- aa. Mar 19 – Yuma PM10 SIP Update Meeting (CF, FV)
- bb. Mar 21 – 9 Deadly Sins of Communication Part 1 (BD)



- cc. Mar 25 – RTAC Board Meeting (CF, FV, JH)
- dd. Mar 26 – YMPO/Saguaro Coordination Meeting (CF, JR)
- ee. Mar 27 – City of San Luis Thriving Communities (CF, FV, JH)
- ff. Mar 28 – Executive Board Meeting (CF, FV, JH, JR, LL, BD)

Ms. Figueroa said as presented.

15. Adjournment

Having no further business to discuss, Chairwoman McCollough adjourned the meeting at 4:43 p.m.

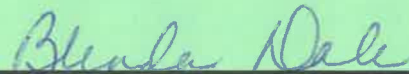
*Notice: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, YMPO does not discriminate on the basis of disability, in the admission of, or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs, activities, or services. If you have any questions regarding YMPO programs, activities, or services, please contact Crystal Figueroa at 928-783-8911.*

Anticipated Future 2024 Meeting Locations.

All future meetings will continue to be held at the YMPO office at 230 West Morrison Street, Yuma, Arizona 85364. Members may participate in person, OR they may participate electronically by computer, and/or telephone (or both), using the GoToMeeting portal. The next two meetings will occur on Thursday, April 25, 2024, and Thursday, May 30, 2024

Preparation and Approval of Minutes:

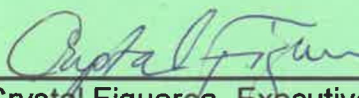
Minutes prepared by:



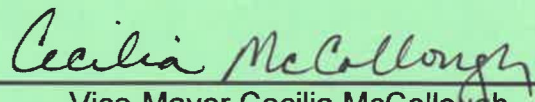
Blenda Dale, Accountant II/  
Executive Assistant

Minutes reviewed to form by:

Minutes approved in regular session on  
April 25, 2024



Crystal Figueroa, Executive Director,  
Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization



Vice-Mayor Cecilia McCollough,  
Chairwoman, YMPO Executive Board