



YMPO EXECUTIVE BOARD REGULAR MEETING

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Postponed Meeting

Thursday, October 3, 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

1. Call to Order and the Pledge of Allegiance

The Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization (YMPO) Chairwoman, Town of Wellton Vice-Mayor, Cecilia McCollough, called the YMPO Executive Board (the Board) meeting to order at 3:30 p.m., and asked the Board to join her in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. This meeting had been postponed from September 26, 2024, due to several YMPO Staff members attending the 2024 Roads and Streets Conference in Oro Valley.

2. Roll Call Attendance and Declaration of Votes

The YMPO Accountant II/Executive Assistant, Lourdes Lopez, called the roll as follows:

YMPO Executive Board Members Present:

Chairwoman	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	Art Morales, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^
Member	Luis Galindo, Vice-Mayor, City of Somerton ^

^ Attended in person.

~ Participated by teleconference.

As four of the member agencies were present, the quorum requirement was met. When Councilmember Morales arrived, approximately nine minutes into the meeting, five agencies were present.

YMPO Executive Board Members Absent

Member	Martin Porchas, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County #
Member	Michael Shelton, Councilmember, City of Yuma #
Member	Sam Elters, State Transportation Board, ADOT *

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

Not present but was represented by proxy by another member.

YMPO Staff Present:

Paul Ward	Acting Executive Director ^
Fernando Villegas	Senior Transportation Planner ^
Jeff Heinrichs	IT Manager/ Associate Planner ^
Lourdes Lopez	Accountant II/ Executive Assistant ^

Declaration of Votes:

Supervisor Lynne Pancrazi declared that she would exercise both votes for Yuma County. Councilmember

3. Title VI Declaration and Call to the Public

YMPO Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant, Nancy Curotto, read the YMPO Title VI obligations. No members of the public were present to address the Board.

4. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of the September August 22, 2024, Board Meeting Minutes.
- B. YMPO Income/Expenditure Report for August 2024.

YMPO Principal Engineer (and Acting Executive Director), Paul Ward reported a slight change to the '% of Budget' column on the August 2024 Income/Expenditure Report that was published on the website. He stated that this change had been corrected on the website, more than 24 hours prior to the meeting, and that members had received the corrected version, by e-mail, also more than 24 hours ahead of time. He further opined that if members were unhappy with how the corrected version had been notified to members, he suggested that the report could be withdrawn and re-presented at a future meeting.

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi moved to approve the consent agenda. Vice-Chair Maria Cruz seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

5. Staff Hiring Update

Mr. Ward stated that, as members are already aware, the YMPO Executive Director, Crystal Figueroa, has started her maternity leave, and displayed a picture of mother and daughter, who are both doing well. He suggested that the maternity leave is expected to last, probably, into December. He reported that he is currently filling the position of Principal Engineer, and is Acting Executive Director, in a consultant role, pending Ms. Figueroa's return.

We then formally welcomed Lourdes (Lulu) Lopez, on her promotion to the Accountant II/ Executive Assistant position and also welcomed Nancy Curotto, who

has been selected for the Bookkeeper/Administrative Assistant position, recently vacated by Ms. Lopez.

6. Safe Streets For All (SS4A) Grant Award

Senior Transportation Planner, Fernando Villegas, reported that he would provide an update to the SS4A Grant that YMPO had recently been informed that they would receive. He explained that the City of Yuma had received a similar Grant, in 2023, but that, when the City enquired regarding whether their Grant could be expanded to the region, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) had answered negatively.

In March 2024 the Board approved funding to contract with Greenlight Traffic Engineering to apply for a SS4A Grant to seek \$500,000 to develop a regional Comprehensive Safety Action Plan and demonstration activities. This second step will aid in pursuing future Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds throughout the region, similar to the over \$20 million in HSIP funded projects already received by member agencies. The application was submitted in May, 2024, and last month, YMPO was informally notified that we had been awarded \$400,000 in federal SS4A funds and this has since been confirmed. Furthermore, YMPO intends to apply for \$100,000 in AZ SMART funds to fill the local match requirement for the SS4A fund award.

Supervisor Pancrazi asked whether agencies could apply for their own project-specific grants. Mr. Villegas reported that this application by YMPO was for a Planning and Demonstration Grant which would be used to identify possible projects for HSIP or other federal safety funds. However, it was certainly possible for member agencies to also apply for SS4A funds for specific implementation projects, possibly totaling several millions of dollars, and he encouraged members to do so. He also suggested that the program might continue for several more years.

7. Railroad Crossing Elimination Program - Regional Letter of Support

Mr. Ward reported to the Board that this program was not a particularly well-understood program and that it was specifically limited to railroad crossings. He mentioned that YMPO had recently received a request from Yuma County staff to provide a regional letter of support for their submittal for a Federally funded Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program Grant. The grant will assist Yuma County in looking at alternatives to improving safety and mobility at three Union Pacific Railroad Grade Crossings at Avenue 9E, Avenue 11E (Fortuna Road), and Avenue 29E.

The request had been notified to all member agencies during the YMPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting on September 12, 2024, and received general,

verbal support. The requested deadline was by the end of September and, as the deadline was prior to the postponed October 3, 2024, Executive Board meeting, Ms. Figueroa had written and signed the requested letter of support, on her own authority and members verbally approved her actions in this regard.

Mr. Villegas gave some further information regarding the three crossings concerned and the Board discussed possible options for those three crossings. Mr. Ward summarized that any options for grade separations would likely be very expensive, and that this application would provide the funds for exploring those options.

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

Mr. Villegas presented a brief report on the status of the LRTP including Phase 1 of the Public Outreach portion of the study. He indicated that the YMPO TAC had received an update on current progress and that the consultant will provide a more detailed presentation to the Board during the scheduled October 31 meeting. He also reported that this effort was being carried out in conjunction with a similar effort occurring for the City of Yuma, the integrated multimodal transportation plan

Councilmember Morales arrived at this point and represented all five votes for the City of Yuma for the remainder of the meeting.

Members general discussed components, including City of Yuma and Yuma County developments regarding the 8 1/2 E half-diamond interchange on Interstate 8 and another subdivision north of Mesa Del Sol. Mr. Villegas mentioned that ADOT and YMPO had discussed the half-diamond interchange during a recent ADOT/YMPO coordination meeting.

9. YMPO Rebranding: Logo, Vision, and Values Statements

The YMPO IT Manager/Associate Planner, Jeff Heinrichs, introduced this item and reported that, during the May 26, 2024, meeting, the Board had approved a revised YMPO Mission statement, which was the first step in the rebranding project. Mr. Heinrichs also displayed the most recent Vision statement and a statement of Values. He continued to report that the new logo options were being presented for approval, and that he felt that the version in the top right corner with a medium brown (copper) outer ring has received the most positive feedback.

Councilmember Morales moved approval of the three statements and the logo with the darker, brown-colored ring background. Vice-Chair Cruz seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved. Members voiced thanks to Mr. Heinrichs, especially for his persistence and efforts on this topic.

10. Complete Streets Concept Study (CSCS) Kick-Off

Mr. Ward reported that YMPO had contracted with Kimley-Horn and Associates to carry out the overall study with Kittleson as a sub-contractor for street typology and analysis. The anticipated time frame to finalize the study and the report is by June 2025.

Mr. Ward suggested that the majority of Streets within the US were developed to accommodate the automobile. The Federal authorities have recognized that, if better guidance is available to States, Counties and municipalities, the design of roadways could have benefited more transportation modes than just cars and trucks. In particular, pedestrians, bicycles and public transportation (transit) would have better access to the roadway system if it had been better designed.

The primary way in which the federal transportation agencies influence the States, Counties and other municipalities in developing transportation systems, is by encouraging them with money. Specifically, amongst the several grant mechanisms available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (the BIL), the Complete Streets Concept is mentioned several times. Often, especially when the funding source is alternative modes based, the idea that projects have been recommended because they are part of a regionwide Complete Streets Concept is listed several times.

Mr. Villegas reported that the consultant is reviewing best practices in other agencies similar to YMPO and is identifying peer organizations that have already completed these types of studies in recent years. He summarized that the consultant would provide a formal presentation to the Board by the end of the year.

11. Possible Future Studies for YMPO.

Mr. Ward announced that YMPO has started to develop the next two-year Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Annual Budget, and that staff expect to have a Draft version of the FY 2026-28 YMPO UPWP for the Executive Board's consideration by early next year. After estimating the needs for staffing and considering the scope, schedule and budget for any ongoing studies that are already in progress, one of the first steps is to review the different types of studies that YMPO might want to consider. As a result, the YMPO TAC were recently requested to review, and comment on, a limited list of studies put forward by staff, and were asked to possibly suggest others.

Mr. Ward reminded members about the ongoing Complete Streets Study and Long-Range Transportation Plan, but also called out the Roads of Regional Significance (RORS) Study, which is already included in the current UPWP and is expected to start in the next few months.

He then called out some of the tentative studies that are under consideration for possible inclusion in the next UPWP. He mentioned that the Safe Streets For All program would be used to fund a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan Update, and that it was time to consider a cyclical Short-Range Transit Plan, in conjunction with the Yuma County Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority (YCIPTA). He indicated that a proposed Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Study was being pursued by the City of Yuma, so anything the region might propose would be substantially duplicative.

Mr. Ward then introduced four more possible subjects, a possible study of Daily Border Crossers who work in the Yuma region; the development of a regional map of all bicycle, pedestrian and multi-use facilities in the region; A study to review how and when the region might attain Transportation Management Area status and what the ramifications might be and the a Study on the need for a regional sales tax, specifically for transportation purposes.

He mentioned that the City of Yuma staff had suggested a possible connection to Interstate 8 in the northwest part of the region but suggested that this would be included in the already programmed RORS Study. Mr. Villegas reported on some other possibilities that he had taken from the LRTP, including a possible region Origin-Destination Study.

Members asked several questions regarding the proposed studies including the possible timing of the study of border-crossers due to the expansion of the Port of Entry 1. There was also some discussion regarding developments in the County which did not have an appropriate level of infrastructure. Mr. Ward understood the issue, but suggested that YMPO, as an agency, is substantially limited to transportation matters, unless and until the Board decides otherwise.

Mr. Ward summarized that YMPO staff are preparing Outlines for each study, which would contain a brief explanation of the need for each study, a limited scope of work, an individual budget for each and a tentative schedule. These outlines would be shared with the Board and TAC at a future meeting, prior to possible inclusion in the UPWP.

12. Arizona Rural Transportation Summit (AZRTS).

Mr. Ward introduced the next item, regarding the AZRTS, which is scheduled to take place at the Prescott Resort and Conference Center on Wednesday, October 16 and Thursday, October 17, with a breakfast with the State Transportation Board scheduled for October 18, followed by a formal meeting of the AZSTB at 9:00 a.m.

Several members of the YMPO Executive Board will be participating and all of the YMPO staff will be present. The YMPO Bookkeeper and Administrative Assistant, Nancy Curotto, gave some details of the reservations and requested members to contact her to confirm whether they need YMPO to provide transportation. Members looked forward to the conference and Mr. Ward confirmed that he was still confirming details for a Yuma region dinner to be held at the Prescott Resort on the Wednesday evening. Mr. Ward reported that YMPO would be happy to assist with renting vehicles as we are able to use the State contract, under substantial discounts, but that YMPO would reimburse mileage if members needed to take their own cars. He requested members to contact himself, or YMPO staff if they are uncertain about their plans.

13. FY 2024-25 YMPO Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment #7.

The YMPO Accountant II/Executive Assistant, Lourdes (Lulu) Lopez, reported that this proposed Amendment should probably be put on hold, due to the federal government only extending the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) Appropriations for Transportation for FFY 2025 until December 20, instead of for a full year. She said that the original intent was to update the carry-forward balances from FFY 2024 to 2025, and then add the new funds for FFY 2025. However, although carry-forward balances are available, that due to the short-term extension, we would only be using projections of future funding, and then would have to come back with another Amendment when the federal governments completed the full-year appropriation.

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

This agenda item is an opportunity for members and staff to update the Board regarding recent occurrences, as shown below. If written information is available, it will be included in an attached Information Summary.

- A. Staff Reports - Future Meetings
- B. TAC Minutes
- C. Conference Updates (AZRTS, and Roads and Streets)
- D. MPO/COG Director/Planner Meetings
- E. Rural Transportation Advocacy Council activities
- F. Projects - Economic Development and Transportation
- G. Status Report on AZ Smart Fund

Mr. Ward had no further information to add to what had already been listed.

15. Possible Future Agenda Items.

The following items will be heard at a future meeting. Members are encouraged to suggest topics for discussion at a future Board meeting:

- 1. Complete Streets Study
- 2. ADOT Southwest District Yuma Region Presentation

3. TA Program
4. YMPO Accounting Manual, Employee Manual, and Procurement Updates
5. Roads of Regional Significance Study

There were no more suggestions for future agenda items.

16. Progress Reports.

Mr. Ward reported that the progress reports were as stated in the agenda.

17. Adjournment.

Having no further business to discuss, Chairwoman McCullogh adjourned the meeting at 5:13 p.m.

Notice: In accordance with the American 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, October 31, 2024, and the combined November/December meeting on Thursday December 12, 2024.

Signatures for these minutes are shown on the next page.

Preparation and Approval of Minutes:

Minutes prepared by:



Lourdes Lopez, Accountant II/
Executive Assistant

Minutes reviewed to form by:

Minutes approved in regular session on
October 31, 2024



Paul D. Ward, Acting Executive Director,
Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization



Vice-Mayor Cecilia McCollough,
Chairwoman, YMPO Executive Board