

## EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

*Local Governments and Citizens Working Together*

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### EXECUTIVE BOARD

#### Regular Meeting

Thursday, September 28, 2023  
1:30 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, Councilmember Gary Knight, called the YMPO Executive Board (the Board) meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and asked the Board to join him in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### 2. Roll Call Attendance and Declaration of Votes

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

##### YMPO Executive Board Members Present:

Chair	Gary Knight, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^
Vice-Chair	Cecilia McCollough, Vice Mayor, Town of Wellton ~
Secretary/Treasurer	Maria Cruz, Councilmember, City of San Luis ^
Member	Lynne Pancrazi, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County ^
Member	Martin Porchas, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County ^
Member	Michael Shelton, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^
Member	Art Morales, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^
Member	Wynnie Ortega, Councilmember, Cocopah Indian Tribe ^

^ Attended in person.

~ Participated by teleconference.

As five of the seven constituent member agencies were present, the quorum requirement was met.

##### YMPO Executive Board Members Absent

Member	Bruce Fenske, Southwest District Administrator, ADOT *
Member	Miguel Villalpando, Councilmember, City of Somerton

# 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
Norma Chavez	Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper
Jesus R Aguilar, Jr.	Mobility Manager
Jeff Heinrichs	IT Manager/ Associate Planner
Fernando Villegas	Senior Transportation Planner

Additional Attendees:

Kevin Adam                      RTAC Liaison ~

3. Title VI Declaration and Call to the Public

YMPO Mobility Manager, Jesus R Aguilar, Jr., read a brief message reminding members of our Title VI obligations. In addition, this item provided an opportunity for comments by the public on subjects *not* on the agenda. Individuals wishing to address the Board need not request permission in advance and are limited to three (3) minutes. Any members of the Public attending by teleconference are requested to contact YMPO staff with any questions they may have prior to the meeting. No individuals wishing to address the Board were in attendance.

4. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of the August 24, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes
- B. YMPO Income/Expenditure Report for August 2023

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi moved to approve the consent agenda for both items A and B. Supervisor Porchas seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

5. FY 2024-28 YMPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Amendment #2

YMPO Senior Transportation Planner, Fernando Villegas explained the FY 2024-28 YMPO TIP was originally approved on June 29, 2023, and was amended on August 24, 2023. Various requests were submitted by member agencies and recommended by the TAC for approval.

The City of Yuma requested an adjustment to the FY2024 local funds contribution amount and TIP number for the “A” Canal Avenue 7E at 40<sup>th</sup> Street project. The new local fund contribution is \$2,364,972, and the correct TIP ID should be YU-23-11C.

YMPO has included two Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) projects for the City of Yuma and one for Yuma County. These projects include bus pull-outs at Avenue A at 16<sup>th</sup> Street, and a shared-use pathway at East Wetland Park for the City of Yuma, and a shared path at West Main Canal, Avenue B to C for Yuma County.

It was recommended by the TAC to change the TIP ID number for the project SL-24-01 HSIP, US95-County 20 ½ to County 22<sup>nd</sup> in the City of San Luis, since the same TIP ID was already being used for the Cesar Chavez Boulevard project. The new TIP ID for the US95-County 20 ½ to County 22<sup>nd</sup> will be SL-24-02.

The funding type for the design of two existing ADOT projects had changed. The design of US Highway 95 from Wellton-Mohawk Canal to Aberdeen Road funding was replaced with AZ SMART funding and the RAISE Grant.

Lastly, the removal of duplicate projects for YCIPTA in FY2027 and 2028 as these projects were accidentally listed twice. Mr. Fernandez asked the Board to approve the FY 2024-28 YMPO TIP Amendment #2 as presented.

MOTION: Supervisor Porchas moved to approve FY 2024-28 YMPO TIP Amendment #2. Councilmember Morales seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

6. FY 2026-2049/50 Long-Range Transportation Plan Update

Mr. Villegas said that Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are required to develop and publish a Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) every four to five years. The time frame for the current FY 2022-2045 YMPO LRTP ends on June 30, 2025, so YMPO needs to have a new LRTP in place by then. The entire process should take about a year and a half to complete this twenty-year plan. YMPO staff have been developing the RFP and Scope of Work for review by the TAC next month so that a consultant may be recommended to the Executive Board by the TAC before the end of the year.

7. YMPO Legal Counsel Services Status

YMPO Executive Director, Crystal Figueroa said that last year, the YMPO Executive Board made the decision to continue legal services with Benesch, Shadle, & White, PLC for one year via an amendment to the existing contract, after the announcement of YMPO's long-term attorney Wayne C. Benesch's retirement. The amendment term ends on December 31, 2023.

The last time YMPO advertised for Legal Services was in 2017 at which time only one proposal was received. Byrne and Benesch, P.C. was contracted for a three-year term that ended on December 31, 2020. The contract was then renewed for an additional two-year term that ended on December 31, 2022. Although our procurement policy does not require YMPO to regularly advertise a Request for Proposal for legal services, our legal counsel has advised it would be best practice to do so. Our legal counsel does intend to submit a proposal to continue as legal

counsel to YMPO. The RFP process usually takes no more than three months to complete.

Councilmember Knight expressed he would be happy to continue using the existing legal firm, since they have all YMPO's legal paperwork and understand our organization. He suggested the contract should be for a five-year term.

Ms. Figueroa explained that the last contract for legal services was for a three-year term with the option to extend it an additional two years. The current legal consultants have been with us for the past six years.

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi moved to authorize YMPO Executive Director to advertise for Legal Services with a contract term of three years with the option to extend for another two years thereafter. Councilmember Morales seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

8. FY 2024-2025 YMPO Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) & Annual Budget.

Ms. Dale said the FY 2024-2025 YMPO UPWP was approved by the Executive Board this past May, but the detailed budget was only provided for the first year of the two-year budget. There will be some changes to the budget now that we know the actual carried-forward amounts and the new federal funding amounts will be awarded in October.

Amendments to the budget will include the allocation of funds to the Safety Study, Roads of Regional Significance, Complete Streets, and the Long-Range Transportation Plan. There will also be changes to YMPO staff salaries as a result of pay increases that occurred at the beginning of this fiscal year. YMPO staff will update the UPWP and the Annual Budget for possible approval by the Executive Board in a future meeting.

9. 2023 Arizona Rural Transportation Summit (AZRTS) Planning.

YMPO Bookkeeper/ Administrative Assistant, Norma Chavez said the Arizona Rural Transportation Summit was less than four weeks away. There were 236 people registered for the conference. The Welcome Reception will take place at Cafecito, in downtown Yuma. YMPO staff provided a draft of the conference agenda to the Executive Board members at the beginning of the meeting and said that slight changes may be made as the program is finalized. YMPO staff had confirmed keynote speakers such as US Department of Transportation Deputy Assistant Secretary for Tribal Affairs, Arlando Teller, North American Development Bank Deputy Managing Director, John Beckham, and Sonora State Government Representative in Arizona, David Figueroa.



Ms. Figueroa added that she spoke with Julietta Cruz, Transportation Policy Advisor to Governor Katie Hobbs, who will be attending the conference. Ms. Cruz told her the governor's office was trying to make arrangements for the governor to attend the conference as well. If the governor is able to attend, we will have the governor speak during Thursday's luncheon. All the other speakers on the agenda had been confirmed. The conference will take place on October 18-19, at the Yuma Hilton Pivot Point, followed by the State Transportation Board on October 20, at City of Yuma Council Chambers.

A key feature of the conference will be the Regional Priority Project List, which will be presented by the Rural Technical Advisory Committee board members. Councilmember Gary Knight will present YMPO's priority project: US95. YMPO will have a display table at the conference providing information about all the other priority projects in the region. She invited Executive Board members to visit the YMPO table during the conference.

Councilman Knight said that this conference is considered a big event. The conference attendees will come from rural counties throughout the state. He explained that this conference allows local governments to discuss rural transportation needs with state legislative officials who have the power to pass legislation to help fund these transportation projects.

Councilman Shelton suggested that YMPO prepare talking points to ensure local elected officials are giving the same message to state legislative officials during the conference.

Ms. Figueroa added the theme for this conference is: Beyond the Horizon, Shaping Transportation. There are challenges in obtaining funding for rural Arizona. Rural Arizona was currently getting one-time funding, though the State Legislature 2024 budget. She said one of the questions this conference would explore is what the future looks like regarding funding resources for rural Arizona transportation needs.

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

Rural Transportation Advocacy Council Liaison, Kevin Adams said there was a lengthy legislative session last year, but the legislature had made the transition into preparing for next year. There was a substantial amount of revenue the legislature had to work with. \$650 million in additional revenue was directed to the infrastructure last year and the year before had \$1 billion directed in that same manner.

Much of the balances that the legislature had to work with were tied into the federal and state responses to COVID, which created historical surpluses, that the state had to work with in previous years. That funding was essentially exhausted last year, so going forward, they will not have this substantial balance to work with and will deal exclusively with revenue collections for the upcoming year, as well as any required expenditure adjustments, at the state level. At this point, the state was still experiencing some growth, but that growth had declined substantially. It was hoped that there would still be a balance to work with, and if so, RTAC was going to be proactive in its efforts to make the case that any available funding would go towards transportation.

RTAC would do that in two ways: pursue priority project legislation for greater Arizona, and take a look at the Arizona SMART fund, which was established a couple of years ago. That fund provided assistance to local rural governments to pursue federal competitive grants. Mr. Adams felt that going forward over the next couple of years, the SMART fund would be the greatest opportunity for additional transportation funding.

The SMART fund enables local rural governments to apply for state money that could be used to hire a consultant to help complete an application, do the engineering and planning of a project to bring it up to the federal standards, or to satisfy or contribute to any local match requirements of federal grants. RTAC had seen several local governments using the SMART fund, so much so that several sub-allocations of the fund had been entirely exhausted, proving there is a demand.

He said RTAC would be pursuing this funding program as well as other potential reforms. RTAC wants every local government to have the opportunity for a successful application, but not see balances going unused. RTAC wants the eligibility opened up so that if a project is eligible for federal transportation grants, it would also qualify for the SMART fund. The funds are available to COGs, MPOs, transit organizations and tribes.

He then discussed the Rural Transportation Summit. He advised that several legislators attend each year, however, several that plan to attend will have to cancel, but generally around fourteen legislators are scheduled to attend this year's conference. This year, there will be a panel discussion that will include some of these legislators. There is a good chance the governor will attend.

During the conference, RTAC will promote one-time investment funding in infrastructure projects. He mentioned a recent report he had sent out that discussed the growing revenue to needs gap. ADOT just released its Long-Range Update plan that plans out to year 2050 and shows that the gap will expand

dramatically. This is an issue that needs to be kept in the forefront in order to ensure it receives the necessary attention.

He then thanked the YMPO staff for planning the conference, he believes the agenda is timely and overall should be a great event.

**11. 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:

- A. LRTP Outline
- B. AZ RTS Update
- C. Regional Project Priority List for 2024
- D. Transportation Alternatives Program
- E. 2022-2045 LRTP Amendment #1, Conformity update

Ms. Figueroa stated that in addition to the items listed, a presentation on In-Kind revenue should be added. She explained that In-Kind funds are used for the federal fund's required local match. She concluded by explaining how In-Kind is created.

**12. Progress Reports**

Members are encouraged to suggest topics for discussion at a future Board meeting:

- a. Aug 25 - Site Visit Introduction with YPG Commander Col. John Nelson (CF, FV)
- b. Aug 28 - LRTP Planning Meeting (CF, BD)
- c. Aug 28 - RTAC Board Meeting (CF)
- d. Aug 29 - Rural Transportation Summit Tribal Nations Program Follow Up Meeting (CF, BD)
- e. Aug 30 - Yuma County CRP Project Review (CF, FV)
- f. Aug 30 - RFP Review for LRTP Update (CF, FV)
- g. Aug 31 - YMPO/Yuma County ED & IGA Lunch (CF)
- h. Sep 5 - Staff Meeting (CF, BD, NC, JR, RA, FV)
- i. Sep 6 - RTS Planning Meeting (CF, BD, NC, JR, FV, RA)
- j. Sep 6 - RTS HPP Site Visit (CF, BD, NC, JR, FV)
- k. Sep 6 - Review Scope of Work with Kittelson (CF, FV)
- l. Sep 7 - LRTP Planning Meeting (CF, FV, JH)
- m. Sep 11 - Rural Transportation Summit Tribal Nations Program Follow Up Meeting (CF, BD, JH)
- n. Sep 11 - ADOT/YMPO Monthly Coordination Meeting (CF, JH, FV)
- o. Sep 11 - YMPO Regional Mobility Committee Meeting (JR)
- p. Sep 11 - ADOT Truck Parking Implementation Plan - Stakeholder/TAC Meeting 2 (FV)

- q. Sep 12 - Yuma County Chamber's Office Transportation Committee Meeting
- r. Sep 12 - RTS Tribal Nation Program coordination meeting (CF, BD, FV)
- s. Sep 12 - ADOT Urban Smoothing - YMPO (CF, JH)
- t. Sep 12 - COG/MPO Meeting Coordination with ADOT (CF)
- u. Sep 13 - Mohave Webinar (NC)
- v. Sep 13 - Yuma County's Regional Economic Development Quarterly Meeting (CF)
- w. Sep 13 - FY27/28 Proposed HSIP Application Changes (CF, FV)
- x. Sep 13 - Arizona Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment - Stakeholder Meeting 1 (CF, JR)
- y. Sep 13 - Staff Pictures for Website (FV, RA, JH)
- z. Sep 14 - TAC Meeting (CF, BD, JR, JH, NC, FV)
- aa. Sep 14 - LRTP Planning Meeting (CF, FV, JH)
- bb. Sep 15 - Arizona State Transportation Board Meeting in Kingman (CF)
- cc. Sep 18 - P2P Workshop Southwest District (CF, FV)
- dd. Sep 18 - RTAC Advisory Committee Meeting (CF, FV)
- ee. Sep 18-21 - David Sirius from The Pun Group on-site visit (BD)
- ff. Sep 19 - Yuma O3 MVEB Stakeholder Meeting (CF, FV)
- gg. Sep 19 - Yuma PM10 SIP Update Meeting (CF, FV)
- hh. Sep 20 - RTS Planning Meeting (CF, BD, JH, NC, JR, FV)
- ii. Sep 20 - Equity in Roadway Safety Workshop: Strategies for Meaningful Public Involvement in Roadway Safety (FV)
- jj. Sep 21 - LRTP Planning Meeting (CF, FV, JH)
- kk. Sep 25 - RTAC Board Meeting (CF)
- ll. Sep 26 - ADOT TA Program Evaluation Scoring Tool Training (CF, JH)
- mm. Sep 28 - LRTP Planning Meeting (CF, FV, JH)
- nn. Sep 28 - Executive Board Meeting (CF, BD, JH, NC, JR, FV)

Ms. Figueroa replied as listed.

### 13. Adjournment

Having no further items to discuss, Chairman Knight adjourned the meeting at 2:16 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 2023 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 26, 2023, and December 14, 2023.

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  
October 26, 2023



Crystal Figueroa, Executive Director,  
Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization



Councilmember Gary Knight,  
Chairman, YMPO Executive Board