



## YMPO EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

EXECUTIVE BOARD  
Regular Meeting  
Thursday, July 31, 2025  
3:30 P.M.

The Meeting will be 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, City of San Luis Councilmember, Maria Cecilia Cruz, called the YMPO Executive Board (the Board) meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. and asked Supervisor Porchas to lead, and 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, Lulu Lopez, called the roll as follows:

YMPO Executive Board Members Present:

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Chairwoman          | Maria Cecilia Cruz, Councilmember, City of San Luis ^  |
| Vice-Chair          | Wynnie Ortega, Councilmember, Cocopah Indian Tribe ~   |
| Secretary/Treasurer | Luis Galindo, Councilmember, City of Somerton ^        |
| Member              | Cecilia McCollough, Councilmember, Town of Wellton ~   |
| Member              | Martin Porchas, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County ^    |
| Member              | Darren Simmons, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County ^    |
| Member              | Arturo Morales, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^          |
| Member              | Sam Elters, Arizona State Transportation Board, ADOT ~ |

^ Attended in person.

~ Participated by teleconference.

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

YMPO Executive Board Members Absent

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| Member | Carol Smith, Deputy Mayor, City of Yuma #  |
| Member | Karen Watts, Councilmember, City of Yuma # |

# Not present, but was represented by proxy by another member, or attendee.

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

Other Attendees Present:

Paul Patane, Southwest District Administrator, ADOT  
Chris Joannes – Kimley Horn  
Ryan McKell – Kimley Horn  
Vamshi Yellisetty – Kittelson & Associates

YMPO Staff Present:

|                   |                                     |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Crystal Figueroa  | Executive Director                  |
| Fernando Villegas | Senior Transportation Planner       |
| Jesus Aguilar, Jr | Mobility Manager                    |
| Lourdes Lopez     | Accountant II/Executive Assistant   |
| Jeffery Heinrichs | IT Manager/Associate Planner        |
| Lucia Zamudio     | Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper |

At 3:32 PM, Board member Sam Elters announced he would depart at 4:30 p.m., with his proxy designated to ADOT Southwest District Administrator Paul Patane.

Declaration of Votes

Councilmember Art Morales declared he would exercise all five (5) votes for the City of Yuma.

3. Title VI Declaration and Call to the Public

The Chairwoman called on Jesus Aguilar, Jr., YMPO Mobility Manager, who read the YMPO Title VI obligations.

No members of the public were present to address the Board.

4. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of June 26, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes
- B. YMPO Income/Expenditure Report for June 2025.

MOTION: Supervisor Darren Simmons motioned to approve both Item A and B of the consent agenda. Councilmember Morales seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

5. FY 2026-50 Long Range Transportation Plan and Resolution Adoption

Vamshi Yellisetty, Kittelson & Associates consultant, presented the final 2026-2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for YMPO. He reported that the plan outlined the region's transportation needs and investment priorities through 2050 and followed three phases of public outreach. Phase three, a 30-day public comment period, generated 548 website visits, 427 unique visitors, and 18 written comments addressing roadway, transit, safety, and multimodal needs. All comments were reviewed and incorporated into the final draft. Vamshi explained that the LRTP included the main public-friendly document and five supporting

appendices covering federal and state requirements, maps, existing and future conditions, public engagement, air quality conformity, and the FY2026–2030 Transportation Improvement Program. He highlighted performance measures, noting unmet targets for bridge conditions and bicycle/pedestrian crashes, which reinforced the focus on multimodal safety improvements. The final recommendations included 41 roadway projects, 46 intersection safety improvements, 78 multimodal projects, and 10 transit improvements, prioritized into short-, mid-, and long-term phases. He further noted that while some projects, such as County 14th were placed in the “beyond 2050” timeframe due to financial constraints, they could be accelerated if warranted by future development. He confirmed that air quality conformity requirements were met and that railroad crossing evaluations and future grade separation studies were also included.

Board members expressed significant concerns regarding regional growth and infrastructure needs, particularly in the Foothills area. Supervisor Porchas and Supervisor Simmons emphasized the importance of prioritizing County 14 and 40th Street, noting the rapid pace of residential and commercial development and the lack of sufficient roadway access. Supervisor Simmons warned that the area faced serious risks in the event of an interstate accident or train blockage, stressing the need for alternate relief routes. Councilmember Morales agreed, highlighting congestion issues and the growing demands on emergency response in the Foothills, while also acknowledging the strong community outreach conducted during the planning process. Chairwoman Cruz raised questions regarding bridge conditions and aviation project funding, seeking clarification on eligibility and funding sources for Raleigh Airfield. In response, Vamshi explained that bridge conditions were classified by ADOT based on deck area, with only one bridge rated in poor condition, and clarified that aviation improvements were listed from airport plans and would fall under the airport authority’s responsibility for funding. The Board also discussed the need for ongoing attention to railroad impacts, particularly in Wellton and Fortuna, and agreed on the importance of advancing critical projects ahead of 2050 should funding or development justify acceleration.

MOTION: Councilmember Morales motioned to approve the FY 2026-50 Long Range Transportation Plan and Resolution 158 Adoption. Supervisor Porchas seconded, adding the contingency that YMPO continue to prioritize County 14 and 40th Street as funding opportunities become available prior to 2050. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. FY 2026-2030 YMPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Resolution Adoption

YMPO Senior Transportation Planner, Fernando Villegas, presented the FY 2026–30 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which outlined the list of fully funded transportation projects for the next five years. He explained that the TIP was consistent with the newly adopted Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)



and had been reviewed and recommended for approval by the TAC. He noted that some projects were existing and had been shifted between fiscal years, while others were newly added with available funding. Villegas detailed projects across the jurisdictions, including City of Yuma projects in fiscal years 2026, 2027, and 2030; Yuma County projects such as the Avenue E/D extension; and projects in San Luis, Somerton, and Wellton. He highlighted that the Town of Wellton's William Street Improvement Project required a cost adjustment due to scope changes, resulting in an increase of \$262,232 in STBG funds, bringing the total project cost to \$784,099, which had been recommended for approval by TAC. He further explained that the TIP only included fully funded projects but could be amended when new federal, state, or local funding became available. Villegas also noted that the program incorporated ADOT projects, transit elements coordinated with YCIPTA, and illustrative unfunded projects that could move into the TIP once funding was secured. He stated that, following Board approval, the TIP would be submitted to ADOT, FHWA, and FTA for final approval.

Board members raised concerns about long-term growth, particularly in the Foothills area. Chairwoman Cruz clarified that although projects such as County 14th had been discussed earlier, they could not be included in the TIP without full funding. Supervisor Simmons emphasized that residential development in the Foothills was rapidly outpacing infrastructure and stressed the urgency of addressing County 14th as an alternative route, even suggesting interim dirt-road solutions to alleviate congestion. He cautioned that without proactive measures, the region would fall behind in meeting future needs. Supervisor Porchas agreed, noting that if funding became available, County 14th should be prioritized at the state level. Councilmember Morales echoed these concerns, urging the Board to establish a stronger advocacy effort, including the potential formation of an ad hoc committee in advance of the upcoming statewide conference, so regional leaders could present a united position on priority corridors. He recommended preparing joint materials to deliver a clear, consistent message to state officials. Chairwoman Cruz agreed that collaboration was needed among the jurisdictions and YMPO to advance shared priorities. Ms. Figueroa suggested re-evaluating regional priority projects, emphasizing that US 95 remained a corridor of regional significance, but that the Board should continue to identify and reassess priority corridors as growth pressures evolved. Mr. Patane confirmed that YMPO was undertaking a Regional Significance Corridors study, which would provide another opportunity to advocate for Foothills-area improvements. Supervisor Porchas added that the region should better coordinate with its six legislative representatives to ensure consistent advocacy and prioritization of key projects, warning that fragmented requests weakened the region's ability to secure funding.

Mr. Patane addressed questions regarding Raleigh Airfield and clarified that, as a public airport, it was eligible for inclusion in ADOT's Airport Capital Improvement Program. He explained that projects would need to compete statewide for funding

within ADOT's five-year program. He further offered to arrange a meeting with an ADOT representative who could provide additional guidance on how airport projects are programmed and how funding opportunities could be pursued.

MOTION: Councilmember Morales motioned to approve the FY 2026–30 Transportation Improvement Program and Resolution 159. Supervisor Porchas seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

7. 2026 Air Quality Conformity Analysis (AQCA) and Resolution

Vamshi Yellisetty explained that, because YMPO is located in a non-attainment area for PM10 and ozone, federal requirements mandated that each update of the LRTP include an air quality conformity analysis. He noted that, in the past, YMPO compared project emissions against state-established budgets for PM10 and ozone; however, those budgets had been rescinded by EPA. As a result, the current process required a build versus no-build comparison to demonstrate that recommended projects would not worsen emissions. Vamshi reported that for each horizon year—2030, 2040, and 2050—the analysis showed emissions were lower with the projects built than if no projects were built, thereby satisfying conformity requirements. He added that YMPO worked closely with the interagency consultation group, including ADEQ, EPA, FHWA, and ADOT, to review findings and address comments. Ms. Figueroa further clarified that air quality conformity ensured transportation projects in both the LRTP and TIP did not worsen regional air quality and that projects could not advance without compliance. She noted that the state was currently implementing new improvement plans and developing updated emission budgets for ozone and PM10, and YMPO may be required to conduct an additional conformity analysis once those budgets are finalized.

MOTION: Councilmember Morales motioned to approve the FY 2026 Air Quality Conformity Analysis and Resolution 160. Supervisor Simmons seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

8. Complete Streets Concept Study (CSC) Final Report

Chris Joannes of Kimley-Horn presented the final Complete Streets Concept Study report to the Board. He explained that the study was developed to establish the benefits of Complete Streets for YMPO's member agencies, define goals and strategies, and provide a consistent planning process across the region. The study inventoried and defined street types and bus pullout priorities, developed sample plans for street typologies and bus pullouts, and created an objective ranking process for identifying priority Complete Street locations. Joannes noted that the draft final report had been presented the previous month and that the second round of public involvement had since been completed, coordinated with the LRTP and Yuma Transportation Master Plan outreach efforts.

Ryan McKell of Kimley-Horn continued the presentation, explaining that the study provided recommended urban and rural street typologies for each functional classification, including cross sections with dimensions, right-of-way allocations, and target speeds. He reported that all regional transit stops were analyzed, resulting in a list of the top 20 recommended bus pullout locations with sample plans and cost estimates. The study also produced a consolidated flowchart to guide member agencies in applying Complete Streets principles during project development, providing design guidance, checklists, and references to supporting documents. McKell further highlighted a regional analysis that identified high-, medium-, and low-priority locations for Complete Streets, noting that priority rankings could change as development occurred. He stated that the final public comment period closed on July 12, and all comments from the public, jurisdictions, and the TAC had been incorporated into the final report.

Joannes concluded that the updated final report had been recommended for approval by the TAC earlier in the month and requested Board approval of the study.

MOTION: Supervisor Simmons motioned to approve the Complete Streets Concept Study. Supervisor Porchas seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

9. Gary Knight Memorial Highway Proposal Approved

Ms. Figueroa reported that on July 22 the Arizona State Geographic and Historic Names Board approved the proposal to designate a portion of U.S. Highway 95, from Milepost 31 to 41, as the Gary Knight Memorial Highway. She explained that the proposal originated from the Executive Board's adoption of Resolution 156 on August 22 and had been developed in collaboration with ADOT's Southwest District Office under Paul Patane and with Wilson & Company consultant support from Doug Eberhart. She confirmed that YMPO would coordinate with ADOT to procure and install two signs and anticipated holding a ceremony before the end of the year to honor Gary Knight's legacy. Chairwoman Cruz noted that YMPO would host the ceremony, and Ms. Figueroa added that YMPO would engage with ADOT in the planning process and invite local jurisdictions once a preferred day for an unveiling ceremony was selected. She shared that Gary Knight's widow Bonnie Knight, daughter Mellisa, and Mayor Doug Nichols spoke in favor of the naming proposal during the Board meeting.

Mr. Patane advised that the next steps included submitting a formal request to the ADOT District Office, noting that the signs would take approximately six weeks to develop. He offered to coordinate directly with Mark Sanders of the State Transportation Board to ensure the signs were installed properly and that the process moved forward smoothly. Ms. Figueroa agreed to follow up and provide the necessary requests to facilitate the effort.



10. Notification of FTA Grant for Buses and Bus Facilities Program – City of San Luis Letter of Support

Ms. Figueroa reported that YMPO had received a request from the City of San Luis for a regional letter of support for its application to the Federal Transit Administration's 2025 Buses and Bus Facilities and Low-Emissions Grant Program. The grant proposal sought funding for a downtown park-and-ride transit facility to improve traffic and pedestrian access. She noted that the project was coordinated with YCIPTA and had been supported by a resolution of the San Luis City Council, which also committed to the required local match. Ms. Figueroa added that Chairwoman Cruz had recommended that YMPO provide a regional letter of support for the application.

Mr. Armando Esparza, Director of Economic Development for the City of San Luis, presented details of the project. He thanked YMPO staff for their quick turnaround on the letter and emphasized that the project was regional in nature, with YCIPTA's involvement strengthening the application. He explained that the facility would be located on federal land in central San Luis and would provide much-needed parking for pedestrians crossing into Mexico. The project design was already completed and shovel-ready, with City Council approving a 20% local match. The plan included the development of parking lots, a park element, and two transit hub buildings with restrooms, shade structures, and amenities. Esparza noted that the grant would support integration with YCIPTA routes by adding three new transit stops, creating a multimodal park-and-ride and park-and-walk facility modeled after successful systems in Phoenix. He added that the project was expected to generate revenue year over year and represented a long-standing priority for the community.

Mr. Patane emphasized the importance of coordinating with ADOT regarding the Cesar Chavez Boulevard improvements to ensure proper access and integration. Mr. Esparza confirmed that the final project design, updated from earlier versions, accounted for the Cesar Chavez improvements and was technically coordinated with ADOT's plans.

11. Personnel: Executive Director's Evaluation

Ms. Figueroa introduced the item regarding the Director's annual performance evaluation, which included a review conducted by the evaluation subcommittee composed of the Chair and two Board members from different jurisdictions. She noted that Chairwoman Cruz had met with Deputy Mayor Smith and Councilman Luis Galindo on July 25 to conduct the evaluation and requested that the Board enter executive session to discuss the matter.

At this point, Supervisor Porchas suggested completing the remainder of the agenda before moving into item 11, "Personnel: Executive Directors Evaluation

Executive Session.” Ms. Figueroa agreed and confirmed that the Board would proceed with that approach and the Board continued to Item 14

12. Reconvene to Public Meeting

Following action on Item 14, the Board returned to Item 12, as listed on the agenda.

MOTION: Supervisor Porchas moved to reconvene the Executive Board meeting into regular session. Supervisor Simmons seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

13. Executive Director’s Evaluation – Open Discussion

MOTION: Supervisor Porchas moved to approve a 5.7% salary increase for the Executive Director for Fiscal Year 2025–26. Councilmember Morales seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Patane sought clarification on whether the increase applied to all staff or solely to the Executive Director. Ms. Figueroa confirmed that the adjustment was specific to her position and explained that the calculation was based on the same performance evaluation methodology she uses for evaluating YMPO staff, which consisted of a 4.5% pay-scale adjustment and a 1.2% pay-for-performance increase, for a total of 5.7%.

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 the 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

Ms. Figueroa noted that Lucia Zamudio, Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper, would provide an update on the Summit. Ms. Zamudio reminded members to notify her by August 11 if they wished to register. She explained that YMPO would cover registration costs up front, and for the Golf Registrations being paid by YMPO upfront, the reimbursement is expected within 30 days of the trip. She added that a golf tournament was scheduled for October 15, with hotel reservations available beginning October 14 for those wishing to participate. She reported that, as of the meeting date, three members had registered for the Summit. Councilmember



Morales responded that additional registrations were expected, noting that the mayor would also be attending.

Ms. Figueroa provided a status update on the AZ SMART Fund. She reported that the Arizona State Transportation Board met on July 18 and redistributed the funding categories, resulting in \$14 million in state funds available to leverage federal grants. She explained that this funding source was designed to strengthen member agencies' federal grant applications and noted that Yuma County had submitted a railroad crossing elimination project with a request for \$160,000 in matching funds, which was recently approved. She added that, following this round, each funding category now had \$2.9 million available, but no additional funding would be provided unless secured through the state legislature or another RTAC initiative.

Councilmember Morales asked whether YMPO's projects were not funded because they were not submitted on time or not chosen. Ms. Figueroa clarified that the process was highly competitive and that there was insufficient funding to award all requests. She confirmed that none of YMPO's projects were funded in this round, consistent with the outcome for the entire greater Arizona region, since the funding was not included in the state appropriations.

Supervisor Simmons emphasized the importance of addressing growth and transportation needs in the eastern part of Yuma County, particularly in the Foothills and Wellton areas. He cautioned that delaying planning efforts would place the region at a disadvantage as growth continued eastward, eventually moving beyond the Foothills due to limited space. He noted that Wellton was already experiencing growth and stressed the need to plan proactively for transportation and related infrastructure to stay ahead of demand.

Ms. Figueroa responded that economic development considerations were included in the regional studies and analyses conducted by consultants but emphasized that public input was also critical in ensuring local needs and priorities were captured. She expressed appreciation for the feedback.

15. Possible Future Agenda Items

- A. Transportation Alternatives Program
- B. YMPO FY 2026 Title VI Plan Update
- C. RTAC Regional Priority Project Funding for 2026 Legislation
- D. Gary Knight Memorial Highway

16. Progress Report

Members and staff will update the Board on the progress of ongoing projects and other recent events:

- A. Jun 27 – Daily 2025 US-95 DCIP Proposal Updates Meeting (CF, JH)

- B. Jun 30 – Daily 2025 US-95 DCIP Proposal Updates Meeting (CF, JH)
- C. Jul 01 – DCIP Application Submission (CF, JH)
- D. Jul 02 – YMPO AQ EPA Comments Review (CF)
- E. Jul 08 – Yuma MPO LRTP Update - PMT Meeting (FV)
- F. Jul 09 – Canyon State Bus Sales Meeting (JR)
- G. Jul 10 – YMPO Technical Advisory Committee Meeting (JR, FV, LZ)
- H. Jul 10 – Yuma TMP Bi-Weekly Check-in (FV)
- I. Jul 10 – Transportation Alternatives TAC Meeting #3 – Selection of Projects/Debrief (FV)
- J. Jul 14 – Regional Mobility Committee Meeting (JR)
- K. Jul 14 – ADOT/YMPO Coordination Meeting (CF, JH, FV)
- L. Jul 15 – Yuma PM10 SIP Update Meeting (CF, FV)
- M. Jul 15 – Staff Meeting (CF, JR, JH, FV, LL, LZ)
- N. Jul 17 – Arizona Incoming Planner Information Exchange (JR, FV)
- O. Jul 17 – T0634 40th Street Ave 6E to Fortuna Rd Meeting (CF, FV)
- P. Jul 17 – YMPO CSCS and RORS - Monthly Check-In Meeting (CF, JH, FV)
- Q. Jul 18 – Arizona State Transportation Board Meeting (CF)
- R. Jul 21 – RTAC Advisory Committee (CF)
- S. Jul 21 – MPO/COG - SAFE ROADS information gathering (CF)
- T. Jul 21 – RTAC Advisory Committee (CF)
- U. Jul 21 – CTS Meeting (FV)
- V. Jul 22 – Yuma MPO LRTP Update - PMT Meeting (JH, FV)
- W. Jul 22 – Arizona State Board Geographic and Historic Names (CF)
- X. Jul 23 – Farallon/Yuma Metropolitan Check In (JR)
- Y. Jul 23 – JH Performance Evaluation (CF, JH)
- Z. Jul 24 – 5310 Program Visit (JR)
- AA. Jul 24 – Yuma Transportation Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting #5 (CF, FV)
- BB. Jul 24 – Quarterly SWAZ WLG Professional Development Seminar (CF)
- CC. Jul 25 – YMPO Director Evaluation (CF)
- DD. Jul 28 – RTAC Board Meeting (CF, FV)
- EE. Jul 30 – YMPO/YCIPTA SRTP Update Discussion (CF, FV)
- FF. Jul 31 – YMPO Executive Board Meeting (CF, JR, JH, FV, LL, LZ)

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

MOTION: Councilmember Morales motioned to enter Executive Session to discuss and evaluate the Director's performance. Supervisor Porchas seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved. No minutes were recorded for this portion of the meeting.

17. Adjournment.

Having no further business to discuss, Chairwoman Cruz adjourned the meeting at 5:36 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 2025 Meetings

Future meetings will continue 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. In general, meetings will be the last Thursday of each month, and the next two meetings are tentatively scheduled for August 28, 2025, and September 18, 2025

Preparation and Approval of Minutes:

Minutes prepared by:



Lulu Lopez, Accountant II/Executive Assistant

Minutes reviewed to form by:

Minutes approved in regular session on  
August 28, 2025



Crystal Figueroa, Executive Director,  
Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization



Councilmember Maria Cecilia Cruz,  
Chairwoman, YMPO Executive Board