



YMPO EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Regular Meeting

Thursday, August 28, 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 ~
Member	Cecilia McCollough, Councilmember, Town of Wellton ^
Member	Martin Porchas, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County ^
Member	Arturo Morales, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^
Member	Karen Watts, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^
Member	Carol Smith, Deputy Mayor, City of Yuma ^
Member	Paul Patane, Southwest District Administrator for Sam Elters~

^ Attended in person.

~ Participated by teleconference.

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

YMPO Executive Board Members Absent

Secretary/Treasurer	Luis Galindo, Councilmember, City of Somerton *
Member	Darren Simmons, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County *
Member	Sam Elters, Arizona State Transportation Board, ADOT #

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

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

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

Declaration of Votes

Councilmember Art Morales declared he would exercise two votes for Councilmember Watts and two votes for himself for a total of four 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 July 31, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes
- B. YMPO Income/Expenditure Report for July 2025.

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

Recording Disclosure:

It was noted that, due to a technical issue, no audio recording was captured from the beginning of the meeting at 3:30 p.m. through the seventh minute. During this period, the Board conducted the following items in accordance with standard procedure, and these written minutes constitute the official record of those actions: (1) Call to Order and the Pledge of Allegiance; (2) Roll Call Attendance and Declaration of Votes; (3) Title VI Declaration and Call to the Public; and (4) Consent Agenda.

5. RTAC Regional Priority Projects for 2026

Ms. Figueroa reported that the Rural Transportation Advocacy Council continued to pursue one-time state funding for projects, with \$480,000 anticipated for the 2027 budget based on a population-based division among MPOs and COGs. She explained that the MPO's share totaled \$57.7 million.

She noted that during the August 14 TAC meeting, members recommended replacing the previously identified U.S. 95 Wellton Mohawk Canal/Aberdeen segment with the U.S. 95 Gila River Bridge Replacement and Expansion project,

since the former was already funded. The TAC also recommended retaining the Yuma County Pavement Rehabilitation project and the City of Somerton Main Street Improvement project as regional priorities. Project fact sheets were included in the packet for review.

The City of Yuma submitted two additional projects: (1) the 40th Street SR 195 At-Grade Intersection Project from Avenue 6E to Avenue 7E, with a \$6 million state request and \$2 million local match, to improve east-west mobility; and (2) a Traffic Signal Upgrade project, with a \$3 million state request and \$300,000 local match, to improve safety and real-time traffic operations.

Mr. Patane commented on the importance of clarifying jurisdictional responsibility for portions of U.S. 95 that fall under local agencies, to avoid confusion in project applications. Ms. Figueroa confirmed that jurisdiction logos were included in the fact sheets.

Ms. Figueroa added that while the Gila River Bridge was a major project, its reduced scope this cycle allowed other regional projects to be advanced. She emphasized that the TAC recommended the identified projects for inclusion in the 2026 RTAC Regional Priority Project booklet, which would be presented at the Rural Transportation Policy Summit in October.

MOTION: Councilmember Morales motioned to approve the RTAC Regional Priority Projects list as presented. Councilmember Smith seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

At 3:38 p.m., Councilmember Karen Watts, City of Yuma, joined the meeting. The attendance record was updated to reflect her presence. In accordance with the Declaration of Votes made at the start of the meeting, Councilmember Morales continued to exercise four votes and Deputy Mayor Smith, vote for the City of Yuma.

6. FY 2025 Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP) - Update

Mr. Heinrichs reported on the Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP), a competitive grant program administered by the Department of Defense to fund infrastructure projects that support military installations and communities. He noted that in FY 2022, ADOT received a \$13 million DCIP award for safety improvements along U.S. 95, which supported upgrades near the Yuma Proving Ground.

He further explained that YMPO, in coordination with Wilson & Company and the ADOT grant team, submitted a DCIP proposals in FY 2024 and FY 2025 that were not selected. While this outcome did not affect the planned Imperial Dam Road to

Aberdeen Road improvements, it limited funding flexibility and left remaining deficits for future phases of U.S. 95 safety improvements.

Ms. Figueroa acknowledged the unsuccessful application and stated that YMPO would participate in a debrief meeting to understand whether improvements could be made to strengthen future proposals or if the outcome was simply due to limited available funding.

ADOT Southwest District Administrator Paul Patane departed the meeting at 3:47 p.m.

7. AZ SMART Program Update

Ms. Figueroa provided an update on the AZ SMART Fund, originally established in 2022 with \$50 million and later increased by \$12 million in 2024. She explained that the program reimburses eligible costs, including grant writing, non-federal match contributions, and design/engineering expenses. She noted that in July, the State Transportation Board redistributed the program's balance equally across five funding categories, with \$2.9 million currently available in each.

She reported that Yuma County recently received \$160,000 in match reimbursement and that YMPO submitted an application for \$100,000 to cover the local match for the Safe Streets for All grant, which will go to the State Transportation Board in September. She encouraged member agencies to consider applying, noting potential opportunities such as reimbursement for design and engineering on the 40th Street project.

Chairwoman Cruz reminded members that a letter of support from YMPO would be required for applications and noted that requests should be ready by September 19. Councilmember Morales asked why the Town of Wellton was not listed as a recipient. Ms. McCollough responded that Wellton had been involved collaboratively. Ms. Figueroa clarified that although Wellton had not applied directly, it participated in the Railroad Crossing Elimination grant with Yuma County and the City of Yuma, and all three agencies benefited through the covered match.

Chairwoman Cruz also asked about Cocopah Tribe eligibility. Ms. Figueroa explained that AZ SMART requires agencies to apply for a federal grant within two years and is intended to help smaller jurisdictions leverage grant opportunities. She added that YMPO recently recommended the City of San Luis pursue AZ SMART funding for reimbursement of match for the recently submitted FTA Buses and Bus Facilities Program Grant application.

8. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Programming Process

Ms. Figueroa presented on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and stated that the purpose was to provide an overview of the TIP programming

process. She outlined the federally required five-year program, its connection to the Long-Range Transportation Plan, and the requirement for a fiscal constraint program. The presentation highlighted two funding opportunities, formula-driven and discretionary funds, and explained the different types and approximate funding. These included Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG), Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), Off-System Bridge Program (OSB), and Transportation Alternative (TA) Program. Next, Ms. Figueroa reviewed the path for inclusion and programming of STBG and CRP of projects into the TIP. She specified a call for projects, a mini-design concept report, YMPO staff evaluation, TAC review and recommendation to the Executive Board, and then advanced to the Executive Board for approval before being included in the Statewide TIP.

Mr. Villegas presented on program equity of STBG funds programmed across member agencies in the past six years, noting that each member jurisdiction has had opportunities to participate, with projects phased across multiple fiscal years. He also covered CRP Funds Programmed in FY 2026 which included two City of Yuma Projects and one county project. He added that three projects were currently being considered for STBG programming for FY 2027–2029, including projects in San Luis, Yuma County, and the City of Yuma.

Ms. Figueroa continued to present the programming process for discretionary funding Statewide for HSIP, OSB, and the TA program. Concluded that while the existing process was functioning, there was room to strengthen consistency and efficiency, and YMPO may consider developing formal programming guidelines for federally funded projects in the future.

9: Executive Board Meetings

Chairwoman Cruz noted that the item was added at the request of a board member to discuss the current meeting time. Ms. Figueroa explained that Executive Board meetings were scheduled at 3:30 p.m. on the last Thursday of each month, a change made in January 2025 from the prior 1:30 p.m. start. She asked members if the current schedule continued to work or if adjustments should be considered.

Councilmember Morales shared that he had originally requested the 3:30 p.m. start to avoid the awkwardness of a 1:30 p.m. meeting time and allow members to manage lunch and afternoon schedules better. He acknowledged, however, that meeting times remained a challenge for some members. Supervisor Porchas added that travel commitments sometimes made the current time difficult and suggested exploring alternatives, possibly through a board wide poll.

Members discussed scheduling practices, quorum requirements, and the need for flexibility given varied commitments. Several members agreed that an email should

be sent to gather input from all board members, including those not present, before making any change.

Ms. Figueroa also informed the Board that the September Executive Board meeting, originally scheduled for September 25, would be moved up one week to September 18, 2025, to avoid conflict with the Roads and Streets Conference that YMPO staff will attend.

10. YMPO FY 2026 Title VI Plan Update, Accomplishments and Goals Report

Mr. Aguilar presented the draft FY 2026 Title VI Plan and the FY 2025 Accomplishments and FY 2026 Goals Report, which were displayed on the screen for the Board's review. He explained that the report was required annually under federal regulations and had been submitted in preliminary form to ADOT, with no major findings. Limited technical revisions were requested, including updates to the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) data tables to better align with ADOT's format.

He noted that the plan included YMPO's Public Participation Plan and LEP strategies, ensuring that the public, particularly underserved communities, had fair opportunities to participate in transportation planning. He confirmed that YMPO had not received complaints or findings from ADOT, FHWA, or FTA in recent years.

Chairwoman Cruz asked about levels of public participation. Mr. Aguilar responded that participation varied depending on the topic, with strong input on more controversial items, such as the railway study, and lower turnout on routine plans. He added that YMPO continued to meet federal requirements and would submit the final version with signatures for ADOT's review.

Mr. Aguilar also added that when the reports come back approved and signed by ADOT, YMPO will post them on the website for view.

MOTION: Supervisor Porchas motioned to approve the YMPO FY 2026 Title VI Plan Update, Accomplishments and Goals Report contingent upon no major finding or correction request from ADOT. Councilmember Morales seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

11. 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 reported that preparations were underway for the Gary Knight Memorial Highway unveiling ceremony. She announced that the event was scheduled for November 6, 2025, with the time and location to be finalized. She noted that the ceremony was expected to be held in the mid-morning.

12. Possible Future Agenda Items

- A. Transportation Alternatives Program
- B. RTAC Regional Priority Project Funding for 2026 Legislation
- C. Gary Knight Memorial Highway
- D. FY 2026-2027 UPWP Amendment #1
- E. Arizona Transportation Policy Summit Update

13. Progress Report

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

- A. Aug 04 – YMPO Staff Meeting (CF, JR, JH, FV, LL, LZ)
- B. Aug 04 – YMPO RORS Monthly Check-In (CF, FV)
- C. Aug 05 – Yuma MPO LRTP Update – PMT Meeting (JH, FV)
- D. Aug 05 – YMPO Presentation to Somerton City Council (CF)
- E. Aug 05 – Roads & Streets YMPO Booth Brainstorming Session (JH, JR, FV)
- F. Aug 06 – Yuma County Resource Guide Advisory Committee (JR)
- G. Aug 06 – Priority Planning Advisory Committee (PPAC) (CF)
- H. Aug 06 – Docusign Connect (CF, LL, JH)
- I. Aug 07 – ADOT Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Training (CF, LL, FV, JH, JR, LZ)
- J. Aug 07 – Yuma TMP Biweekly meeting (JH, FV)
- K. Aug 08 – COG/MPO Planners Meeting (CF, JR, JH, FV)
- L. Aug 11 – Yuma Region Bicycle Coalition (JR)
- M. Aug 12 – ADOT/YMPO Coordination Meeting (CF, JH, FV)
- N. Aug 12 – YMPO/Docusign DEMO (CF, LL, JH)
- O. Aug 13 – Project Delivery Academy – Mod2 Federal Auth & Acct (LL)
- P. Aug 13 – Site visit with Achieve Cathy Myers (JR)
- Q. Aug 14 – YMPO Technical Advisory Committee Meeting (CF, JR, JH, FV, LL, LZ)
- R. Aug 14 – Mobility Manager Meeting (JR)
- S. Aug 14 – MPO/COG Directors Meeting (CF)
- T. Aug 14 – Quickbooks Info Meeting (LZ, LL)
- U. Aug 15 – Arizona State Transportation Board Meeting - Graham County (virtual) (CF)
- V. Aug 18 – Tour De Fields (JR)
- W. Aug 18 – RTAC Advisory Committee (CF)
- X. Aug 19 – Yuma MPO LRTP Update (JH, FV)
- Y. Aug 19 – Site visit with RISE Inc Aracely Ochoa (JR)
- Z. Aug 19 – Yuma PM 10 SIP Update Meeting (CF, FV)
- AA. Aug 20 – Site visit with Horizon William Moore (JR)

- BB. Aug 21 – Arizona Incoming Planner Information Exchange (JR, JH, FV)
- CC. Aug 21 – Networking for Community Resources Meeting (JR)
- DD. Aug 21 – Yuma TMP Bi-weekly meeting (FV, JH)
- EE. Aug 25 – RTAC Board Meeting (CF, FV)
- FF. Aug 28 – YMPO Executive Board Meeting (CF, JR, JH, FV, LL, LZ)

Chairwoman Cruz invited comments on a recent event attended by several members. She praised the opportunity to meet with Senator Farnsworth, noting his strong support for transportation needs and his encouragement for local leaders to prioritize advocacy for new roadway funding. She emphasized the importance of planning for new corridors in addition to preservation, citing safety and emergency access needs in San Luis and Yuma County.

Councilmember Morales added that the Board should develop a unified set of priorities when attending conferences and meetings, ensuring that members deliver consistent messages when advocating for regional needs.

Ms. Figueroa agreed and stated that YMPO would prepare materials for the upcoming Rural Transportation Summit, also highlighting the broader challenge of declining fuel tax revenues as a long-term funding concern.

Supervisor Porchas stressed the need to more forcefully advocate for fair funding distribution, noting that Yuma County contributes significant revenues but receives comparatively less than other counties. Ms. Figueroa responded that funding formulas were based on vehicle miles traveled, which historically disadvantaged the region, and that stronger collective advocacy would be needed to pursue changes.

14. Adjournment.

Having no further business to discuss, Chairwoman Cruz adjourned the meeting at 4:36 p.m.

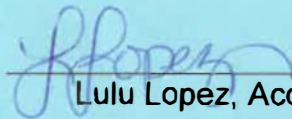
Notice: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, YMPO does not discriminate on the basis of disability, in the admission of, or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs, activities, or services. If you have any questions 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 held on the last Thursday of each month. This month's meeting was moved up by a week to take into consideration the Roads and Streets Conference. The next two meetings are tentatively scheduled for October 30, 2025, and the combined year-end meeting on December 11, 2025.

Preparation and Approval of Minutes:

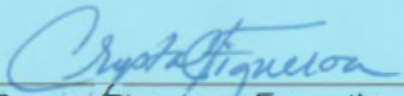
Minutes prepared by:



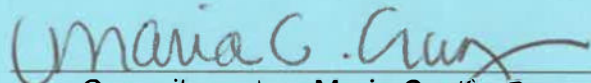
Lulu Lopez, Accountant II/Executive
Assistant

Minutes reviewed to form by:

Minutes approved in regular session on
September 18, 2025



Crystal Figueroa, Executive Director,
Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization



Councilmember Maria Cecilia Cruz,
Chairwoman, YMPO Executive Board