



YMPO EXECUTIVE BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Regular Meeting

Thursday, February 26, 2026,
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 (YMPO) Chairwoman, City of San Luis Councilmember, Maria Cruz, called the YMPO Executive Board (the Board) meeting to order at 3:36 p.m. and asked Mr. Paul Ward, to lead, and the Board to join her, in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call Attendance and Declaration of Votes.

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	Lynne Pancrazi, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County ^
Member	Karen Watts, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^
Member	Mark Martinez, Councilmember, City of Yuma ^
Member	Sam Elters, State Transportation Board, ADOT ~

^ Attended in person.

~ Participated by teleconference.

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

YMPO Board Members Absent:

Secretary/Treasurer	Luis Galindo, Councilmember, City of Somerton *
Member	Martin Porchas, Board of Supervisors, Yuma County #
Member	Carol Smith, Councilmember, City of Yuma #
Member	Cecilia McCollough, Councilmember, Town of Wellton *

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 ^

YMPO Staff Present:

Fernando Villegas Senior Transportation Planner
Jesus Aguilar, Jr Mobility Manager
Lourdes Lopez Accountant II/Executive Assistant
Jeffrey Heinrichs IT Manager/Associate Planner
Lucia Zamudio Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper
Paul Ward Award Consulting, Principal Engineer

Declaration of Votes

Councilmember Mark Martinez arrived at the meeting at 3:40 p.m., and Councilmember Karen Watts arrived at 3:41 p.m. As representatives of the City of Yuma, their vote declarations were made following their arrival, shortly after Agenda Item No. 4, as they were not present when Agenda Item No. 2 was initially considered.

Ms. Watts declared three (3) votes, and Mr. Martinez declared two (2) votes on behalf of the City of Yuma.

3. Title VI Declaration and Call to the Public.

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

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

4. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of January 29, 2026, Board Meeting Minutes.
- B. YMPO Income/Expenditure Report for January 2026.

MOTION: Supervisor Lynne Pancrazi, moved to approve both Items A and B on the consent agenda. Vice-Chair Wynnie Ortega, seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

5. Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program Update

YMPO Senior Transportation Planner, Mr. Fernando Villegas presented the item and informed the Board that the information had previously been presented to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) during its meeting on February 12. He explained that TAC members and local agencies had been notified that funding was available through the program and that applications would open on February 27. He noted that the application period was expected to remain open for approximately 30 days, although the exact deadline had not yet been confirmed.

He stated that interested applicants could visit the ADOT website to review the application materials and determine the required documentation.

Mr. Villegas also explained that local agencies, tribal governments, transit agencies, school districts, and nonprofit organizations were eligible to apply for funding. He reported that approximately \$11.1 million was available for new projects in Greater Arizona. He also provided examples of projects that had received funding during the previous year. One project involved a multi-use pathway along Yuma County's East Main Canal between County 12th Street and County 14th Street, which had been awarded \$183,885 for project scoping. A second project involved a shared-use pathway in the City of Yuma along Avenue 6E from 32nd Street to 36th Street, ending at East Mesa Community Park. That project included features such as high-intensity activated crosswalk beacons to improve pedestrian safety and had been awarded \$424,350 in design funds for Fiscal Year 2027 and \$1.2 million in construction funds for Fiscal Year 2029. Mr. Villegas noted that all engineers, public works directors, and TAC members had been informed of the funding opportunity and that a webinar for applicants would be held on March 4.

Supervisor Pancrazi asked for clarification regarding the \$183,885 award and whether that amount had been allocated to one project or shared between two projects. Mr. Villegas clarified that the \$183,885 had been awarded solely to the Yuma County project for scoping, while the second project referenced was the City of Yuma project. He added that those applications had been submitted during the previous year.

Chairwoman Cruz asked whether the Gadsden School District could apply for funding for improvements along 10th Avenue in San Luis, where several schools were located. Mr. Villegas confirmed that school districts were eligible to apply and noted that the Crane School District had previously submitted an application and received funding for project scoping. He added that the district was now working with the City of Yuma and might pursue design and construction funding in the future. Mr. Villegas suggested that it could be beneficial for the Gadsden School District to coordinate with the City of San Luis when developing a potential application.

Chairwoman Cruz asked what types of improvements could be eligible for funding. Mr. Villegas explained that eligible projects could include sidewalks, multi-use pathways, crossings, and pedestrian safety improvements such as HAWK signals. Chairwoman Cruz described safety concerns along 10th Avenue, noting that parents and children often had to cross the roadway without crosswalks or signals, creating hazardous conditions.

Mr. Villegas reminded the Board that projects submitted through the program must not require additional right-of-way and that the necessary right-of-way must already be secured. He also noted that improvements at the intersection of 10th Avenue and Chávez Boulevard in San Luis were expected to begin construction soon as part of a two-year project.

Mr. Ward added that safety lighting was also an eligible improvement under the program. He explained that projects could be submitted for scoping, design, or construction if the applicant had an agreement ensuring access to the required right-of-way. As an example, he noted that the East Main Canal project had been possible because the City and County had previously established a cooperative agreement with the canal company to use the right-of-way.

6. Fortuna Road Railroad Crossing Resolution of Support #161

Mr. Ward reported that the item had been brought forward following concerns raised by Supervisor Simmons regarding ongoing issues at a railroad crossing intersection in Yuma County. He explained that the matter had previously been discussed at the prior meeting, during which the Board had asked whether staff could provide both a letter and a resolution of support for Yuma County's efforts to address the problem.

Mr. Ward stated that staff had already prepared and submitted a letter on behalf of YMPO and that the resolution had also been drafted and placed on the agenda for consideration. He noted that the item had been reviewed by the Technical Advisory Committee a few weeks earlier and was being presented with the committee's recommendation for approval. If approved, the resolution would be signed by the YMPO Chair and transmitted to support Yuma County's resolution on the matter.

Mr. Ward further explained that each railroad crossing includes a blue emergency notification plaque with a phone number that can be used to report malfunctioning crossing equipment. He noted that when the number is called, the notification is sent to both the railroad company and the Arizona Corporation Commission, the state agency responsible for working with railroads on crossing issues. He stated that staff planned to verify the number at the crossing and that encouraging the public to report malfunctioning crossing arms could help prompt corrective action from the railroad. He concluded by noting that while YMPO typically adopts resolutions for items such as the Transportation Improvement Program or long-range planning documents, staff had prepared this resolution in response to the Board's request.

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi, moved to approve YMPO Resolution #161, supporting Yuma County's suggested repairs to the railroad crossing at Fortuna

Road. Councilmember Watts, seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

7. Election of Executive Board Officers – Calendar Year 2026

YMPO Accountant II/Executive Assistant, Lourdes Lopez explained that the YMPO By-Laws provide that the elected officers of YMPO shall serve on a rotation basis. Usually, the Vice-Chair assumes the position of Chair, the Secretary/Treasurer assumes the position of Vice-Chair, and the Board elects a new officer to fill the Secretary/Treasurer position. Based on the rotation calendar presented, Yuma County representative is next for consideration and acceptance.

MOTION: Councilmember Ortega, moved to nominate Supervisor Pancrazi as Secretary/Treasurer and she accepted. Councilmember Martinez seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Councilmember Ortega took over as the Chair. Councilmember Luis Galindo was elected to serve as Vice-Chair, consistent with the Board's customary officer rotation in which the prior year's Secretary/Treasurer advances to the Vice-Chair position.

8. Election of YMPO Subcommittee Members and Identification of Officials for Attending AZSTB and RTAC meetings – Calendar Year 2026

Mr. Ward stated that the YMPO Executive Board had three possible subcommittees: the annual Audit Committee, YMPO By-Laws and YMPO Policies and Procedures Committee, and the performance evaluation of the Executive Director committee.

The Secretary/Treasurer/Supervisor Pancrazi is automatically appointed chair of the Audit Committee. Councilmember Watts self-nominated and Councilmember Galindo was nominated for the Committee.

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi moved to elect YMPO Audit Subcommittee members for the calendar year 2026, as discussed. Councilmember Cruz seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Ward stated that members of the By-Laws and/or YMPO Policies and Procedures Subcommittee were only selected IF there were any proposed changes to the By-Laws or YMPO Policies and Procedures and he confirmed that they were needed. Councilmember Martinez and Chairwoman Ortega both self-nominated and Supervisor Porchas was nominated for the By-Laws and YMPO Policies and Procedures Committee.

MOTION: Councilmember Cruz moved to elect YMPO By-Laws (or YMPO Policies and Procedures) Subcommittee members for the calendar year 2026, as

discussed. Supervisor Pancrazi seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Ward continued by stating that the YMPO Executive Director Evaluation Subcommittee called for three different agencies, one of whom will be the current Chair. Councilmember Martinez self-nominated and Councilmember McCollough was nominated to be on the committee.

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi moved to elect YMPO Evaluation Subcommittee members for the calendar year 2026, as discussed. Councilmember Cruz seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Ward went on to explain that the two Statewide Boards/Councils: the Arizona State Transportation Board (AZSTB); and the Rural Transportation Advocacy Council (RTAC) also need to be determined. YMPO generally appoints members (and alternates) to attend and represent the region. The Chair opened it to self-nominations, Councilmember Watts and Councilmember Martinez both self-nominated as the AZSTB representatives with Councilmember Martinez as the alternate.

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi moved to elect the YMPO representatives to attend the AZSTB meetings for the calendar year 2026, as discussed. Councilmember Watts seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

ADOT State Transportation Board member, Sam Elters provided additional insight regarding participation in State Transportation Board meetings. He explained that State Transportation Board members were not permitted to ask questions of speakers on behalf of agencies during public comment, which helped streamline the process. He noted that speakers were generally allotted three minutes to present their comments, after which no follow-up questions were asked. Mr. Elters further stated that there were certain times during the year when input from local representatives was particularly valuable, such as during the upcoming period when the draft Five-Year Transportation Facilities Construction Program would be released for review. He encouraged local agencies to provide comments during that time, noting that participation could occur either in person or virtually and that both methods of participation were equally accepted and considered by the Board.

Councilmember Cruz was self-nominated herself as the YMPO representative to attend RTAC meetings. Supervisor Pancrazi stated that Councilmember McCollough has traditionally always self-nominated as the RTAC alternate, so was in turn, nominated. Board members all agreed.

MOTION: Supervisor Pancrazi motioned to elect YMPO representatives to attend the RTAC meetings for the calendar year 2026, as discussed. Councilmember Cruz seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

9. FY2026 General Accounting Services and Auditing Services Request for Proposals (RFPs)

Ms. Lopez presented the item and explained that YMPO By-Laws require an annual audit of YMPO's financial accounts. She stated that, to meet this requirement, YMPO utilizes the services of two separate firms: one to provide General Accounting Services and another to provide Auditing Services. She noted that the accounting services firm assists YMPO staff in preparing the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR), while the auditing firm performs the independent audit of the financial statements.

Ms. Lopez explained that both contracts are structured as one-year agreements with up to four possible one-year extensions. Because the scope of work and expected timeframe for both services are clearly defined, YMPO was utilizing a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to procure these services. She noted that the most recent procurement for these services had occurred in June 2020, and YMPO planned to advertise new RFPs for General Accounting Services and Auditing Services for Fiscal Year 2026 between February 23 and March 5, 2026.

She added that while some firms may be qualified to provide both accounting and auditing services, YMPO staff typically recommend selecting two separate firms to perform these functions in order to maintain auditor independence and appropriate internal controls.

Supervisor Pancrazi asked whether, once the RFP was released and proposals were received, the selection would be based on the best bid submitted. Ms. Lopez explained that the Audit Subcommittee was involved in the selection process. She stated that proposals would be received and evaluated by the subcommittee, and upon completion of the evaluation, a preferred consultant would be recommended to the Executive Board, which would then make the final decision.

Councilmember Watts asked whether the subcommittee members would be notified when it was time to review the proposals. Ms. Lopez confirmed that she would contact all Audit Subcommittee members once the proposal deadline was established and would maintain communication with them regarding the next steps in the review process.

10. 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.

Councilmember Cruz reported that on February 18, she and Mr. Villegas attended the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee hearing at the State Legislature. She stated that representatives from approximately twenty-five counties, including county supervisors and other elected officials, were present to provide testimony regarding regional transportation needs and projects. She noted that speakers were given two minutes to present their comments and that she used the opportunity to represent projects from across the YMPO region, including projects in Somerton, Yuma, and the State Route 195 corridor. She added that Yuma County had requested approximately \$57 million for infrastructure needs and emphasized that many counties expressed similar funding shortages during the hearing.

Mr. Villegas added that they had spoken in support of two bills, including House Bill 2304, which addressed the Regional Transportation Advocacy Council (RTAC) priority projects, and Senate Bill 2760, which proposed increasing funding for the AZ SMART program. He explained that the AZ SMART program helps municipalities by providing funding that can be used toward the local match required for federal grants. Mr. Villegas noted that they waited approximately three hours before making their comments and stated that the bills would now move forward to the House for further consideration.

Mr. Villegas added that several committee members appeared to be familiar with projects from the YMPO region, noting that local officials often communicate directly with legislators who serve on the committee. He stated that during the hearing, one committee member specifically asked about the Somerton Intersection Project, indicating awareness of regional priorities. He emphasized the importance of maintaining communication with legislative representatives to ensure they remain informed about projects within the region. Councilmember Cruz added that Representative Teresa Martinez had also referenced concerns in San Luis, particularly regarding students crossing busy roadways to reach their

schools. She noted that it was encouraging to know that state representatives were aware of the issues affecting the region.

Mr. Ward provided an update from the MPO/COG Directors meeting and RTAC activities, noting that Kevin Adam, who had led RTAC for approximately eighteen years, would be leaving the organization to join the National Association of Development Organizations. He stated that RTAC was currently in the process of identifying a replacement and that, in the interim, Tom Dorn Associates would be assisting to continue RTAC's legislative advocacy efforts. Mr. Ward added that the temporary support would help maintain lobbying efforts at the State Legislature over the next several months, particularly regarding transportation funding and continued support for the AZ SMART Fund.

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. YMPO Accounting Manual, Employee Manual, and Procurement Updates.
- B. AZ SMART Fund
- C. Transportation Alternatives Program
- D. FY 2026 and 2027 YMPO Unified Planning Work Programs

Mr. Ward informed the Board that staff would soon begin presenting information related to the Fiscal Year 2027 Work Program and that initial expectations for the program would be discussed in the near future. He noted that development of the work program could be influenced by changes occurring at the federal level, as the current year represents the final year of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

Mr. Ward also mentioned that new federal legislation, currently referred to as BASICS, had recently been introduced at the national level and that staff planned to provide a brief presentation at a future meeting to explain its potential impacts. He explained that under the current federal funding structure, approximately 85 percent of transportation funding is distributed to states and about 15 percent to regions, cities, and towns. He noted that the proposed legislation could shift this distribution closer to 75 percent for states and 25 percent for regional and local entities, which could provide organizations such as YMPO with greater influence over federal transportation funding allocated within the state.

Mr. Villegas reported that YMPO had been awarded \$13.6 million in Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding. He noted that the funding included one project in Yuma County and five projects in the City of Yuma. Mr. Villegas stated that additional information regarding these projects would be presented as a future agenda item at the next meeting.

15. Progress Reports.

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

- A. Jan 29 – Executive Board Meeting (JR, JH, LL, PW)
- B. Jan 30 – YRBC meeting with Gene Dalbey (PW)
- C. Feb 02 – Tour de Fields (JR)
- D. Feb 02 – YMPO RORS Monthly Check-In (FV, JH, PW)
- E. Feb 02 – Staff Meeting (FV, PW, JR, JH, LL, LZ)
- F. Feb 03 – ESRI Training - ArcGIS Pro Basics (JH)
- G. Feb 03 – Partnering/Precon: SZ01801C Cesar Chavez Boulevard - US 95 to SR 195 (FV)
- H. Feb 04 – Advanced Roofing & Cooling – Roof Replacement Initial Meeting (FV, JR, LL, LZ)
- I. Feb 04 – ArcGIS Pro - Querying Data (JH)
- J. Feb 04 – ArcGIS Pro - Integrating Data (JH)
- K. Feb 04 – Reimagine Roofing Phone Call with Haven Campbell (FV)
- L. Feb 05 – Basics of Geographic Coordinate Systems (JH)
- M. Feb 05 – ADEQ Workshop (FV)
- N. Feb 05 – Save the Date Arizona Regional Mobility Manager's Coordination Meeting (JR)
- O. Feb 09 – ArcGIS Workflow Manager: An Introduction (JH)
- P. Feb 09 – ArcGIS Workflow Manager: Basic Concepts (JH)
- Q. Feb 09 –AZ@Work Travel Training Program Meeting (JR)
- R. Feb 09 – Tour de Fields (JR)
- S. Feb 09 – ArcGIS Workflow Manger: Configure and License (JH)
- T. Feb 09 – ArcGIS Workflow Manager: Designing Workflow Diagrams (JH)
- U. Feb 09 – ArcGIS Workflow Manager: Overview Step Types (JH)
- V. Feb 09 – RTAC Advisory Committee (PW)
- W. Feb 10 – Acct/Audit RFP Draft Review Work Session 2 (LL, PW)
- X. Feb 11 – ADOT/YMPO Coordination Meeting (FV, JH, PW)
- Y. Feb 11 – ADOT Annual FHWA/FTA Title VI Training (JR)
- Z. Feb 12 – YMPO TAC Meeting (PW, JR, JH, FV, LZ)
- AA. Feb 12 – MPO/COG Directors Meeting (FV)
- BB. Feb 13 – COG/MPO Planners Meeting (FV, JH, JR)
- CC. Feb 17 – Sharing Maps and Layers using ArcGIS Pro - PART 1 (JH)
- DD. Feb 17 – Sharing Maps and Layers using ArcGIS Pro - PART 2 (JH)
- EE. Feb 17 – Yuma PM10 SIP Update Meeting (FV)
- FF. Feb 18 – ArcGIS Workflow Manager Fundamentals (JH)
- GG. Feb 18 – YMPO Rise Introduction (JR)
- HH. Feb 18 – CityData.ai Meeting (JR, JH)
- II. Feb 19 – WACOG-Networking for Community Resources (JR)
- JJ. Feb 19 – ADOT TAM Plan Update Workshop Option 1 (FV)
- KK. Feb 19 – ArcGIS: Getting Started with Mapping and Visualization (JH)
- LL. Feb 19 – T0542 Budget Discussion (FV)

- MM. Feb 19 – Governor’s Office of Youth, Faith & Family - Older Adult Listening Session (JR)
- NN. Feb 22 - 25 – Grant Writing USA Training (LZ, JR)
- OO. Feb 23 – Automating Workflow Using ArcGIS Pro (Part 1) (JH)
- PP. Feb 23 – TA materials comment resolution w/ YMPO (FV, JH)
- QQ. Feb 23 – Automating Workflows Using ArcGIS Pro (Part 2) (JH)
- RR. Feb 23 – RTAC Board Meeting (FV, PW)
- SS. Feb 23 – CTS Meeting (FV)
- TT. Feb 26 – Executive Board Meeting (PW, JR, FV, LL)

16. Adjournment.

Having no further business to discuss, Chairwoman Ortega adjourned the meeting at 4:39 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 2026 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, and the next two meetings are scheduled for March 26, 2026, and April 30, 2026.

Preparation and Approval of Minutes:

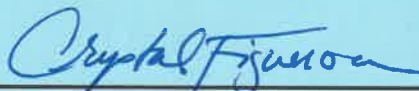
Minutes prepared by:



Lulu Lopez, Accountant II/Executive Assistant

Minutes reviewed to form by:

Minutes approved in regular session on
March 26, 2026



Crystal Figueroa, Executive Director,
Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization



Councilmember Wynn Timer,
Chairwoman, YMPO Executive Board