



SIERRA VISTA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES: JUNE 24, 2021

DRAFT

MEETING LOCATION:

City of Sierra Vista, City Hall
City Manager's Conference Room
1011 North Coronado Drive
Sierra Vista, AZ 85635

MICROSOFT TEAMS VIRTUAL MTG

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MEETING DATE AND TIME:

June 24, 2021
2:45 PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REQUEST ACCOMMODATION FOR SPECIAL NEEDS:

Website: www.svmpto.org
Email: SVMPO@SierraVistaAZ.gov
Administrator Phone: 520-515-8525

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Chair	Rachel Gray, Mayor, City of Sierra Vista
Vice-Chair	Johann Wallace, Mayor, Town of Huachuca City
Member	Carolyn Umphrey, Councilmember City of Sierra Vista
Member:	Gregory Johnson, Councilmember City of Sierra Vista
Member	Peggy Judd, County Supervisor, Cochise County(<i>telephonically</i>)
Cynthia Butterworth	Town of Huachuca City, (<i>alternate member/telephonically</i>)

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

Member	Richard Searle, STB District 3
Alt. Member	Rod Lane, ADOT SouthCentral District

STAFF:

SVMPO Administrator: Karen L. Lamberton, AICP

OTHERS PRESENT:

William Benning, Councilmember, City of Sierra Vista (*partial meeting/joined at Item 8*)
Ed Stillings, FHWA (*telephonically*)
Kevin Adam, RTAC (*telephonically*)
Brent Crowther, Kimley-Horn Consultant Team
Chris Johannes, Kimley-Horn Consultant Team
Taylor Dunkle, Kimley-Horn Consultant Team
Brian Snider, Michael-Baker Consultant Team

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Gray called the meeting to order at 2:53 p.m. Members Johnson, Umphrey were present. Vice-Chair Wallace, Member Judd, and alternate member for the Town, Cynthia Butterworth, were present telephonically. A quorum was present.

2. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

Chair Gray asked if there were any adjustments requested to the presented agenda. Hearing none, the Chair asked for a motion to accept the agenda. Member Johnson made the motion, Member Umphrey seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Member Johnson

SECOND: Member Umphrey

ACTION: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 5/0

3. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Chair Gray noted that no members of the public were present at the meeting and asked if anyone was present on the phone that wanted to speak. Hearing none, the Call to the Public was closed.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES (May 27, 2021)

Chair Gray asked any Board member has any comments or corrections to the Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes of May 27, 2021. Hearing none she called for the question.

Member Umphrey made the motion to accept the meeting minutes as presented, Member Johnson seconded, and the motion to approve the May 27, 2021 meeting minutes was unanimously approved.

MOTION: Member Umphrey

SECOND: Member Johnson

ACTION: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 5/0

5. ACCEPTANCE OF WORK SESSION SUMMARY (June 10, 2021)

Chair Gray asked any Board member has any comments or corrections to the summary of the June 20th Work Session. These are not formal minutes and do not require formal approval. The SVMPO Administrator stated that she does present these summaries to provide an opportunity to make corrections or add anything that Board members felt was important to record for future reference.

There was general concurrence with the acceptance of the Work Session Summary, as presented.

This was a discussion item. No action was taken.

CONTINUING BUSINESS: PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION

6. 2022-2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (Final Draft)

The SVMPO Administrator noted that the Final Draft TIP was primarily transit projects in this upcoming Fiscal Year. This is the result of obligating the full construction funding for the City of Sierra Vista's HURF Exchange project in the last fiscal year and the remaining projects are primarily transit related: it is a requirement of FTA funding that those projects are noted in the regional TIP.

Transit projects and funding amounts have been coordinated with the Vista Transit Administrator, the City's Finance Dept. and upcoming FY22 budget, and with the Short-Range Transit Plan consultant team. The SVMPO feels that this TIP reflects the anticipated projects and funding that may be needed in FY22 but also noted that this TIP may be amended throughout the year and is annually updated.

In addition, the SVMPO Chair noted that the SVMPO was notified of an unexpected distribution of funds to two non-profit agencies within the SVMPO region for American Rescue Plan funds: VICAP and HOPE. Both of these are non-profit agencies and including these additional four projects (two to each agency) results in no changes to any member jurisdiction or regional match required in this current or future fiscal year TIP budget.

The SVMPO Administrator shared information about both of these non-profit agencies and their work to transport elderly and disabled riders to medical and mental health clinic visits. Both of these non-profits, run primarily by volunteers, have been not in operation for much of the pandemic timeframe but are beginning to run trips again. Both agencies have met eligibility requirements for 5310 funds in the past and were chosen for zero or lower match operating funds with the end of fiscal year remaining 5310/American Rescue Act Plan funds that FTA requested ADOT Transit to distribute.

Chair Gray asked any Board member has any additional questions about the 2022-2026 TIP. Hearing none she called for the question.

Member Johnson made the motion to adopt the 2022-2026 TIP, with the inclusion of the new 5310 awarded funds. Member Umphrey seconded, and the motion to approve the 2022-2026 TIP was unanimously approved. Chair Gray then signed the FTA concurrence letters needed for Vista Transit grant applications and those were then immediately delivered to the City's Finance Dept. for timely submittal to FTA (grant applications being due the following day: June 25, 2021).

MOTION: Member Johnson

SECOND: Member Umphrey

ACTION: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 5/0

7. SHORT-RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and ADOT Transit requires updates to small urban (5307) transit system plans every five years. Brain Snider, with Michael-Baker, the Short-Range Transit Plan consultant team, presented the requirements for this plan, identified the five sections completed, and indicated that their goal is a federally compliant document that is easy to use, easy for the public to review, and addresses the short-term needs for the Vista Transit agency. This effort is now about 80% completed and five drafted strategies for the near-term activities to support the transit multi-modal element of travel within the region area were presented for Board member discussion.

The five potential recommended strategies presented were:

- 1. Purchasing New Fareboxes that Accept Additional Fare Media:** enhances the ability to use technology like apps, reloadable cards, vouchers and other electronic payment methods.

2. **Increase Online Engagement & Advertise a Bus-Tracking App:** shown to increase new riders and improve rider satisfaction.
3. **Deploy Paratransit Scheduling Software:** shown to increase efficiencies in services and improve performance tracking.
4. **Fare Adjustments:** adjustments consistent with ADA and FTA standards help to increase revenues while minimizing impacts to ridership.
5. **Expand & Optimize Bus Network:** longer-range recommendations for extensions of service hours on key routes, additional weekend service, high volume routes migrated to bi-directional to avoid longer circulator routes.

Board member discussed these strategies in relationship to public comments, feedback from the Work Session, and the reality that route changes had just been made recently. Reference was made to the 2017 Transit Efficiency Study that had been completed by the City of Sierra Vista. It was also pointed out that the number one complaint from riders and drivers was dealing with the limitations of fare payment options, and the difficulties, and costs, of handling a fare amount (0.60 cents) that has dimes, nickels and pennies used for payments rather than increments of quarters. Member Johnson noted these fares seemed really quite low compared to other transit agencies he was familiar with. Vice-Chair Wallace cautioned that the Consultant Team needed to compare fares against similar sized transit system. Ranges of online options for route information was discussed with the Consultant Team noted that options ranged from \$2,000 a year to \$10,000 a year depending on features offered. They also stated that these types of electronic options typically result in increased ridership when implemented.

Fare increases were noted as being obviously a challenge to implement, yet, it is also clear that the current rates are very low as compared to other systems. Previous research by Vista Transit found that there were some legal constraints on what the gap could be between discounted rates for elderly/disabled and regular fares. An incremental level of increases is the tentative recommendation, moving first to a potential 0.75 cent rate to move the fare into a rate more easily managed for accounting.

None of these strategies were rejected outright by the SVMPO Board members. It was also noted that Vista Transit was taking advantage of American Rescue Plan act funds, some with zero percent match, to begin to address the first of these recommendations, providing other fare payment options. This project is in the 2022-2026 TIP adopted by the Board earlier in this meeting.

Board members were reminded that drafted chapters for the first five sections are available on the SVMPO website for review: <https://www.svmopo.org/transportation-planning/short-range-transit-plan-update/>

The Short-Range Transit Plan is anticipated to be completed and brought before the Board for adoption at their August 26, 2021 Regular Board Meeting. The Final Draft will be reviewed by the Transit TAC that includes the region's Mobility Manager, ADOT's Transit Dept. and Vista Transit drivers, as well as the SVMPO TAC. Coordination with these final projects and costs with the Long-

Range Transportation Plan effort to ensure consistency with the just adopted TIP and the pending LRTP is part of the consultant efforts.

This was an information and discussion item. No action was taken.

8. SVMPO 2050 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP) STATUS UPDATE

The Board were briefed on the results of the June 10th Work Session. The SVMPO Administrator noted that this required regional long-range transportation plan document was expected to be finalized within the next two months and would likely be presented for adoption by the SVMPO Board at their next regularly scheduled Board Meeting. For the benefit of new members a quick review was shown of the federal and state performance measure goals that led to the development of the regional priorities for the regional long-range transportation plan.

Board members were reminded that preliminary drafted sections were available on the SVMPO website for review: <https://www.svmpos.org/transportation-planning/2050-long-range-transportation-plan-update-2050-lrtp/> Both the Administrator and the Consultant Team staff are available for any questions that Board members might have as the final draft reports are completed and distributed for review.

This was an information and discussion item. No action was taken.

9. SVMPO 2050 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN PRIORITIES

Brent Crowther and Chris Johannes from the Kimley-Horn Consultant Team provided a prepared presentation of the November adopted regional priorities. Chair Gray then opened up the discussion with the SVMPO Board with the question: Based on the Work Session do Board members have a position on if the equal weighing of these priorities should stand as adopted in November or should they be re-weighted at this time? Member Johnson pointed out that the Work Session results do indicate that some priorities did not rank equally among the Work Session attendees. Vice-Chair Wallace agreed, adding that when it comes to making decisions on spending money, it was clear that some priorities were more important within the region than others. Member Umphrey stated that she agreed with these perspectives. Member Judd added she shared the same opinion as stated by the other Board members. Chair Gray then noted that it appears that a consensus among the SVMPO Board was that the SVMPO re-weight the SVMPO LRTP regional priorities.

The SVMPO Administrator had provided a breakdown of the Work Session findings for priorities as ranked by importance, and then as ranked by funding choices, within the Board packet. For discussion purposes, a combined ranking was also shown of all three categories. The hybrid option was quickly identified by several Board members as having strong support, not only did the hybrid option take into account the consideration and decisions made by the November Board members, but it would also enhance the perspectives of importance and funding choices made by the larger group present at the Work Session.

In real-time, the Consultant Team showed what that re-ranking would look like to the Board. A discussion was then had on if this would adversely affect smaller projects like bicycle and pedestrian projects. Several Board members and the SVMPO Chair noted that those projects should rank higher in the safety and economic vitality sections, and if those elements taken into consideration, these important enhancement projects should not be harmed by the revised rankings.

Chair Gray then individually queried each SVMPO Board member, as well as the alternative Board members present, for their position on using the hybrid version as a re-ranking of priorities. With consensus among the Board members, she then called for the question. Member Johnson then moved that the LRTP priorities be re-ranked as shown by the Consultant Team averaging out the hybrid version. Member Umphrey seconded. Hearing no other questions or requests for further discussion, Chair Gray asked for the vote and the motion passed unanimously.

The new rankings fell out as follows:

<i>REGIONAL PRIORITY</i>	<i>June 24th BOARD ADOPTED</i>
<i>Safety</i>	19
<i>System Preservation</i>	18
<i>Regionally Significant</i>	17
<i>Multimodal Integration and Accessibility</i>	15
<i>Economic and Community Connectivity</i>	12
<i>Sustainable Environmental and Social Investment</i>	10
<i>Vehicle and Freight Mobility</i>	9

MOTION: Member Johnson
SECOND: Member Umphrey
ACTION: PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 5/0

10. SVMPO 2050 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN PROJECT LIST & FISCAL CONSTRAINT IMPLICATIONS

The Consultant Study team provided a real-time interactive review with the Board of how the just adopted priority rankings adjusted the potential top ranked priority projects in roadway, preservation, bicycle/trail and pedestrian categories. These project lists, now in preliminary

form, will be finalized with costs, phasing and recommendations for Board consideration within the Final Report. It was emphasized that the technical analysis is one tool, but not the only consideration, of which regional and/or state projects move forward within the next five years toward construction.

The implications of including the State Highway system within the regional transportation network was discussed and concurrence reached that the State Highway system was a key component of the regional system but should be shown as a separate list and the regional funding available assigned to regional, not state projects, within the Long-Range Transportation Plan funding section.

Board members were advised that the final draft project lists, as re-prioritized and with projected costs, would be likely be available for their review in the later part of July.

This was a discussion item. No action was taken.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/DIRECTION TO SVMPO ADMINISTRATOR MAY BE GIVEN

11. STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD/SOUTHCENTRAL DISTRICT REPORT

No ADOT representative was present to speak to this item. SVMPO Board members indicated they had no questions for the SVMPO Administrator to follow-up with ADOT at this time. Kevin Adam, RTAC liaison, noted that ADOT had passed their last five-year transportation plan at their last State Transportation Board meeting the previous week. This item was then deferred to the next scheduled meeting.

This item was deferred. No action was taken.

12. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The Rural Transportation Advocacy Council (RTAC) Liaison, Kevin Adam, discussed with Board members National and State legislative updates regarding transportation activities and funding. Information related to the potential of additional dedicated transportation funding to the State of Arizona were discussed. It appears that the most recent proposal for sharing additional one-time funds with the Greater AZ area *might* result in an estimated \$1,990,533 for programming for regional projects. It is not at this time known if this proposal or proposed funding amounts will be approved.

There is a great deal of activity at the national level on infrastructure bills. Both the re-authorization transportation bill and a one-time infrastructure funding bill are under consideration and seem to be reaching a level of consensus among the House, Senate and White House. The current re-authorization bill is set to expire at the end of September, after last year's one-year extension of the previous bill. Officially known as the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act of 2021, the current version show an estimated 34% increase in potential funding from the 2015 version of the FAST-ACT.

Efforts by the League of Cities and Town, supported by local agencies like the City of Sierra Vista, has resulted in some adjustment to the state shared revenues passed down to the cities and towns but increasing the share from 15% to 18% still is not likely to make up completely the shortfall

anticipated by a shift to a flat tax, as proposed by the Governor (at least 18.9% was estimated as needed to hold harmless the Cities and Towns from this proposed change). This compromise is the best the Cities think they will get but feel it will still have a negative impact on future budgets for Arizona's cities and towns.

Work is continuing to develop a targeted Rural Summit focused on a smaller strategic planning session with the rural MPO's/COG's. The dates for this Summit are October 13th-15th.

This is an information and discussion item. No action was taken.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS & JURISDICTION UPDATES

This is the time set aside for the SVMPO Board of Director members to share information and current events. Chair Gray queried each Board member, and no member jurisdiction had anything to add at this time.

This was a discussion item. No action was taken.

14. SVMPO 2021 AND 2022 MEETING SCHEDULE & FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The SVMPO Administrator noted that the SVMPO Board typically sets their tentative annual calendar at the last Board meeting of each year (October 2021). It was noted by Chair Gray that several newly appointed Board members may not easily be able to meet at the previously identified dates and times.

The SVMPO Board tentative 2021 meeting schedule was then discussed and after consideration of Board member schedules, the timing of City, Town and County meetings as well as the State Transportation Board meeting times the SVMPO Board concurred with changing the next two SVMPO Board meetings to the Wednesday rather than the Thursday as follows:

- **Wednesday, August 25, 2021 2:30 to 4:00 p.m.**
Adoption of both Long-Range Transportation Plan and Short-Range Transit Plan
- **Wednesday, October 27, 2021 from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m.**
Set tentative 2022 Board meeting dates.

The SVMPO Board also discussed potential Work Sessions. It was decided that the tentative August 12th Work Session would not be needed but that an earlier session on the Administrator's Contract was desired. A date for that Executive Session was set for **Wednesday, July 28th from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m.**

This was a discussion item and direction was given to the SVMPO Administrator to set up the new meeting schedule and send out Outlook Invites with the new meeting dates and times.

15. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The next SVMPO Board meeting is now scheduled for **Wednesday, August 25th at 2:30 p.m.**

This was an information item. No action was taken.

16. ADJOURNMENT of REGULAR SESSION

By general consent, the SVMPO Board regular meeting was then adjourned at 4:28 p.m.