



**SIERRA VISTA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MEETING MINUTES: OCTOBER 27, 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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Phone Conference ID: 591 093 498#

**MEETING DATE AND TIME:**

October 27, 2021  
2:30 PM

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REQUEST  
ACCOMMODATION FOR SPECIAL NEEDS:**

Website: [www.svmppo.org](http://www.svmppo.org)  
Email: [SVMPO@SierraVistaAZ.gov](mailto:SVMPO@SierraVistaAZ.gov)  
Administrator Phone: 520-515-8525

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chair	Rachel Gray, Mayor, City of Sierra Vista
Vice-Chair	<i>Vacant</i>
Member	Cynthia Butterworth, Councilmember, 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
Member	Richard Searle, STB District 3

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:**

**STAFF:**

SVMPO Director: Karen L. Lamberton, AICP

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Ed Stillings, FHWA (*virtually*)  
Mark Hoffman, ADOT (*virtually*)  
Jeremy Moore, ADOT SouthCentral District (*virtually*)  
Kevin Adam, RTAC (*virtually*)  
Mr. Kit Judd, Citizen

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chair Gray called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m. Chair Gray, Members Butterworth, Umphrey, Johnson, Judd and Searle were present. A quorum was present.

**1. 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 Searle made the motion, Member Johnson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**MOTION:** Member Searle

**SECOND:** Member Johnson

**ACTION:** PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 6/0

**2. CALL TO THE PUBLIC**

Chair Gray noted that one member of the public was present, who indicated they did not wish to address the Board. No members of the public indicated that they were present on the virtual link and hearing no one that wished to speak Chair Gray then closed the Call to the Public.

**3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES (August 25, 2021)**

Chair Gray asked any Board member has any comments or corrections to the Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes of August 25, 2021. After a moment for Board members to take a look at the presented minutes, no corrections were noted. Hearing none, she called for the question.

Member Johnson made the motion to accept the meeting minutes as presented, Member Umphrey seconded, and the motion to approve the August 25, 2021, meeting minutes was unanimously approved.

**MOTION:** Member Johnson

**SECOND:** Member Umphrey

**ACTION:** PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 6/0

**NEW BUSINESS: POSSIBLE ACTION**

**4. ELECTION OF SVMPO BOARD VICE-CHAIR**

Chair Gray noted that the SVMPO Vice-Chair Mayor Wallace of the Town of Huachuca City had vacated his position on the SVMPO Board at the last August Board meeting. The Town has appointed Cynthia Butterworth, Councilmember, to his SVMPO seat. Nominations for the vacated Vice-Chair position were requested. Member Searle nominated Carolyn Umphrey for the position; Member Johnson seconded the motion. Chair Gray noted that Carolyn Umphrey had been on the SVMPO Board for about two years and then asked if Member Umphrey was willing to take on this position. Member Umphrey indicated that she was willing. With a motion and second on the table, Chair Gray called for the question. The motion to appoint Carolyn Umphrey as Vice-Chair passed unanimously.

**MOTION:** Member Searle

**SECOND:** Member Johnson

**ACTION:** PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 6/0

**5. 2022 ARIZONA SAFETY PERFORMANCE PROJECTIONS (TARGETS) CONCURRENCE**

Director Lamberton advised the Board that each year the State of Arizona sets new safety

performance measures each year, based on five-year rolling average of state-wide fatalities and serious injuries. Each MPO may support the State measures and strive to focus on safety measures that address the goal of reducing the number of fatalities and serious injuries or may identify their own safety measures. If an MPO chooses to set their own measures they must provide appropriate documentation, data and justification to support a regional set safety measure. The Director noted that unfortunately the data from 2019 and 2020 show an increase in fatalities and injuries even though vehicle miles traveled are down, due to the pandemic travel reductions. Several safety measures are now showing an expectation that this trend will continue in 2021 and 2022.

The Director recommended that the SVMPO concurred with the 2022 Arizona Safety Performance Projections (Targets) established by ADOT.

Member Searle then made the motion to concur with the State set safety performance measures, Member Butterworth seconded. Chair Gray asked the Board if there was any further discussion on this item. Board members then discussed the challenges the region and State were having with drivers not complying with basic traffic rules of the road and the increase in choices to disregard traffic speed signs and other engineering safety measures like no-passing zones. Director Lamberton noted that these projected 2022 state safety measures match up with the recently adopted SVMPO Long-Range Transportation Plan safety data.

Director Lamberton also noted that FHWA indicated at the October Association of MPO conference that they will be unrolling a different approach to their Vision Zero initiative (Zero Fatality initiative) as what they have been doing isn't working as they expected. The re-authorization bill, not yet passed, currently includes an education component that has not been funded in the past – only engineering solutions and some funds for enforcement. Member Johnson stated he believed more enforcement is needed and felt a request should be made to increase enforcement activities. Member Butterworth noted that she wasn't sure how effective education might be given that all the work over the years of groups like Mothers Against Drunk Drivers we still have drunk drivers on the road. Chair Gray noted that cultural changes do take a lot of time to accomplish.

Board members indicated their concern with this trend of increasing fatalities and injuries. Director Lamberton stated she would bring back to the Board FHWA initiatives to increase educational safety messages and the MPO could see how best to support those initiatives at the regional level.

Chair Gray asked if there was any further discussion and hearing none, then called for the question and the motion to concur with the 2022 State safety targets passed unanimously.

**MOTION:** Member Searle

**SECOND:** Member Butterworth

**ACTION:** PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 6/0

### **CONTINUING BUSINESS: PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION**

#### **6. WORK PROGRAM BUDGET UPDATE AND FY22 MATCH REQUIREMENTS**

The SVMPO Director stated that this item does have a very significant memo associated with it that provides a great deal of background information for new members. She then briefed the Board on the status of the current Work Program Budgets noting that typically the Budget is adjusted at least

twice, if not three times, each year. When adopted the Work Program budget is several months ahead of the end of the MPO Fiscal year, and the Budget before the Board today reflects the close of the MPO/State fiscal year with actual, not estimated, carry-forward amounts. The Director noted that faster completion of consultant projects and invoicing reduced the estimated carry forward and this also then reduced the needed FY22 match amounts. In addition, work with ADOT and the MPO/COG Directors resulted in the merging of FTA planning funds and the FHWA Planning funds into one Coordinated Planning Grant reducing the FTA portion grant match from 10% to 5.7%.

Director Lamberton noted that Congress has not yet completed the next transportation re-authorization bill and regional revenues for both the MPO Work Program and State Transportation Block Grants may yet change. Kevin Adam, RTAC liaison and Ed Stilling, from FHWA, did not yet have any additional information to share as to when this re-authorization might occur.

Chair Gray asked if there were any questions on the information presented on the SVMPO Budget. Member Searle made the observation that the City of Sierra Vista's match amount was slightly lower than the funds they were receiving from the SVMPO for space and hosting charges by about \$2,000. Chair Gray stated that she had also noted the amounts the MPO was paying to the City for services and was planning to discuss these with the City Manager's office and ensure that there was adequate justification for those charges.

Director Lamberton stated that formal match requests would be transmitted to each member jurisdictions as per their agreements with the SVMPO in the upcoming month. Continuing In-Kind contributions are important to the SVMPO to help slowly build a reserve so that eventually the SVMPO could be standing alone financially instead of using the City's budget for initial costs. Member Umphrey asked how much was needed to have a stand-alone account and Director Lamberton stated about one-fourth of the annual MPO budget would be good: about \$200,000.

Director Lamberton stated this item will come back to the Board after the federal re-authorization is approved and the State makes their decisions on what portion of those funds will be passed down to their regional governments. Chair Gray asked if there was any further discussion at this time, and hearing none, moved to the next item.

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

## **7. TIP PROJECT UPDATE AND NOTICE OF CALL FOR PROJECT**

The SVMPO Director advised the Board that the Transportation Improvement Program, known as the TIP, is currently not programmed with any projects but now that the Long-Range Transportation Plan has identified the top near-term regional priority projects the SVMPO TAC will be working toward forwarding a fully programmed TIP to the Board for approval in this fiscal year.

A formal Call for Projects has been transmitted to all member jurisdictions, through their TAC members for submittal by the first TAC meeting next year, with ranking and selection scheduled for the second TAC meeting of the year. Funding constraints and project readiness are primary considerations. The Board was advised of the available balances shown in the current STBG ledger. It is unlikely a project could be funded in FY22, but one could possibly be set in FY23.

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

## **CONTINUING BUSINESS: PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION**

### **8. COMPLETION (ADOPTION/ACCEPTANCE) OF REGIONAL PLANS**

The SVMPO Director provided a short briefing of the adoption of two mandated regional and transit plans and completed report for the Town of Huachuca City to the Board. Materials on all these three studies were available and Director Lamberton noted that as soon as these final plans were posted on the website links would be sent to the Board members.

- **2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan** was adopted by the Board at their last meeting on August 25, 2021. Hard copies were available to Board members at this meeting and will be posted shortly to the Website. Director Lamberton stated that Chair Gray and herself were at a session with FHWA, FTA and ADOT at the national Association of MPO's where they were going through the mandated and desired elements of the regional Long-Range Transportation Plans. The final draft had just been completed and during that discussion both the Chair and the Director were checking off each item and concluded at the end of that session that this MPO had completed a very good and complete Plan. Director Lamberton thanked Ed Stilling's from FHWA for their consideration in allowing an extension to our deadline so the SVMPO could do a complete and comprehensive plan and advised that a formal transmittal would be headed to both FHWA and ADOT shortly.
- **Vista Transit: Short-Range Transit Plan** was also adopted by the Board on August 25, 2021. It will be presented to the Sierra Vista City Council on December 9, 2021, along with the update to the Public Transportation (Transit) Agency Safety Plan. The full plan is at the printers, but summary flyers were available to the Board at this meeting. Member Johnson asked where these tri-fold flyers would be made available and Director Lamberton stated that an informational Board, along with these handouts, would be placed at the Vista Transit Center and provided to the City's PIO, Judy Hector, for additional distribution.
- **2021-2027 Huachuca City Transportation System: Major Streets and Scenic Route Plan** was accepted by the Town Council on September 9, 2021. Recommendations are already being implemented, including cold patch filling of 77 noted potholes identified by specific location by this study. This study completes one of the major transportation elements recommended by the Town's General Plan. Member Butterworth noted that the Town was very pleased with this Study effort and recommendations were continuing to come forward to the Town Council for adoption or action.

This was an information item. No action was taken.

## **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/DIRECTION TO SVMPO ADMINISTRATOR MAY BE GIVEN**

### **9. SOUTHCENTRAL DISTRICT REPORT**

Jeremy Moore, ADOT's Assistant District Engineer reported on several items of regional interest:

- The Pomerene Bridge Project was beginning work and the detour route would go into effect November 2<sup>nd</sup>. The detours route was developed with the input of all the emergency services in the area as well as both the City of Benson and Cochise County beginning back in July 2020. The Bridge is seriously in need of repair and is expected to be under construction for at least nine months. ADOT is beginning extensive public outreach through social media outlets, Benson newspaper,

virtual message boards are already active and ADOT is committed to working closely with the contractor and emergency services on effective traffic control throughout this project. Member Judd brought up the concerns that bicyclists and pedestrians are usually using the detour route instead of the Interstate and wanted to know if that had been taken into consideration. ADOT stated they would check on that with their Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator (Donna Lewandowski) and follow-up with the contractor to ensure that any safety measures that may be needed are considered.

- The SR90 pavement preservation projects have been identified in a set of 4 segments. Chair Gray asked about the four segments stating that Senator Gowan believes the earmarked state legislative funded project is the highway segment in front of Fry's store, but the legislation seems to be stating a different highway segment. This is confusing to residents and to elected officials and she asked if someone could clarify this with Senator Gowan. It is felt that the Highway 90 segment in front of Fry's is actually a higher local priority but that doesn't seem to be where the earmarked funds were assigned to complete. All four of these pavement preservation projects are scored and ranked in the Priority to Programming five-year plan but these projects have to compete on a state-wide level.
- The Priority to Programming (P2P) process is underway with SouthCentral just completing their meeting and SouthEast District, of which the SVMPO has a tiny portion of down in the border region, is meeting tomorrow/Thursday. ADOT thanked both Richard Searle, for the State Transportation Board and Karen Lamberton, for the SVMPO, for their participation in that effort.

Director Lamberton reminded the Board that those traveling on Highway 80 should watch for the reduction to one-lane in sections headed towards Bisbee. She complimented ADOT on the effective traffic control being done on this project.

There being no further questions for ADOT, Chair Gray moved to the next item on the Agenda.

This was an information item. No action was taken.

#### **10. CONFERENCE ATTENDEE REPORTS: 2021 RURAL SUMMIT**

The Rural Summit is an annual event addressing policy and legislative issues impacting the rural MPO's and COG's. Chair Gray stated that she felt this was a very effective forum, and well worth attending, but it would be up to the local elected officials to directly support the proposed transportation bills. A list of the legislative representatives that did attend the Rural Summit was handed out to Board members; in total 13 State representatives were in attendance including both the House and Senate Transportation Committee Chairs. It was noted that preparing for this event was a heavy lift on the part of the staff of all the rural MPO's and COG's: the booklet prepared for each State representative and the presentation prepared for an virtual ongoing booth video was available for the Board members as a handout at this meeting.

Kevin Adam, the Rural Transportation Advocacy Council (RTAC) liaison provided a legislative update of pending activities towards finalizing a proposed bill for the next legislative session for additional transportation ear-marked transportation predicts for greater rural Arizona. The SVMPO has proposed \$1.99 million in potential projects as part of this legislative action. The Board discussed the proposed projects (*detailed Fact Sheets available in the October Board Agenda*) and the fact that there seems to be available surplus state revenues that might be competitive to have a

one-time transportation earmarked bill funded. In the recent past education funding and tax cuts have been implemented when surplus funds appeared to be available.

Director Lamberton reiterated the SVMPO's Chair's comment that it would be up to the local elected officials to use their state and congressional contacts to make the request for support for this proposal as it will take more than just the House and Senate transportation committee members to get it passed and signed by the Governor's office.

Chair Gray is part of a small sub-committee to help revise/update the Rural Transportation Advocacy Council strategic plan. Revising the RTAC Strategic Plan was one recommendation that came out of a one-day strategic planning discussion that was held at the Rural Summit with the RTAC Board and MPO/COG Directors.

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

## **11. UPCOMING SCHEDULED MEETINGS and ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

- P2P ADOT Workshops on October 25<sup>th</sup> and October 28<sup>th</sup>.
- COG/MPO Planner Meeting: October 29<sup>th</sup>
- RTAC Advisory Committee Meeting: November 15<sup>th</sup>
- 34<sup>th</sup> AZ Transit Conference November 15-19<sup>th</sup>: This conference will be attended by the Vista Transit Administrator, Linda Jones (*currently Chair of the SVMPO TAC*)

The conference dates noted in the Agenda were pointed out to the Board members. The Director stated that Board members had already heard a little bit about the National Association of MPO's Conference that the Chair and herself has attended. One additional item that she noted from this conference is that although she was not absolutely pleased with the public outreach for the Long-Range Transportation planning effort after attending this conference, she did feel better about it. Across the nation every MPO was having trouble with this element of reaching out to the public on transportation issues and many simply abandoned their public outreach efforts and didn't do it or went back to traditional methods of public meetings which failed as no one attended. This MPO actually did much better in our public outreach than many larger and more funded MPO's across the nation so we could all feel good about the effort undertaken and the results we did receive.

It was noted that several TAC members from the member jurisdictions did attend the Az. State Roads and Streets Conference this month and brought back information on new tools for working on transportation systems, like technology using drones for obtaining mapping data.

This was an information item. No action was taken.

## **12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Board members checked their calendars against the drafted tentative schedule. Most members did not see any immediate conflicts, member Judd potentially has a conflict with a couple of dates but believes she can call in for most of those meetings and/or re-schedule her other activity. The SVMPO Board typically has met on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday on every other month from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. This day (Wednesday) and timeframe (2:30 to 4:00 in the afternoon) seemed to still work for Board members at this time. Work Sessions are placeholders and exact dates and times confirmed with Board members closer to those work task activities.

This was an information and discussion item, and direction was given to the SVMPO Director to keep the proposed tentative dates for the 2022 Board meetings. The Director advised that the SVMPO TAC was also keeping to the same dates but moving their meeting time to the afternoon of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesdays with a 1 p.m. start-time. Based on the draft schedule, the next SVMPO Board meeting would be held on **Wednesday, February 23, 2022, at 2:30 p.m.**

Member Searle noted that the next State Transportation Board meeting is on November 19, 2021, and anyone can call in to those meetings.

No action was taken.

**13. ADJOURNMENT of REGULAR SESSION**

By general consent, the SVMPO Board regular meeting was then adjourned at 3:51 p.m.