

FORT YUMA QUECHAN TRIBE
 MEETING SUMMARY NOTES
 THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2022
 2:00 PM TO 3:30 PM

MEETING ATTENDEES

- Brian Golding, *Economic Development Director, Fort Yuma Quechan Tribe (FYQT)*
- Jason James, *LRTP Project Manager, Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) MPD*
- Don Sneed, *Planning Program Manager/Tribal Liaison, ADOT MPD*
- Bruce Fenske, *District Administrator, ADOT Southwest District*
- Michael Grandy, *Kimley-Horn (KH)*
- Kristen Faltz, *KH*

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Jason James welcomed attendees and introduced the Project Team.

2. P2P OVERVIEW

Jason James provided an overview of ADOT’s performance-based Planning-to-Programming (P2P) process, which is used to prioritize projects on the state highway system. He explained that performance-based planning is federal law and is also required by State statute.

- Jason shared a flowchart that provided an overview of the annual P2P timeline. P2P starts with the planning process, which includes project nominations and prioritization. Following prioritization, the top performing projects are added to the 5-year program following State Transportation Board approval.
- Jason provided a detailed explanation of P2P scoring for pavement preservation, bridge preservation, modernization, and expansion projects, as well as annual investment target amounts. He also provided a breakdown of the scoring percentages for technical, district, and policy components.
- He mentioned that a Tribe can nominate projects by submitting them directly to him, through the ADOT District Engineer/Administrator, or the Tribe’s regional council of governments (COG) or metropolitan planning organization (MPO). Project nominations need to be supported by data and are scored based on how well they meet the P2P scoring criteria.
- Brian Golding confirmed that the focus of the P2P funding process was on the state highway system.
 - Jason confirmed this is correct.
- Brian asked if there are records of any state highway on the reservation. He stated that until the reservation has a state highway, the program is irrelevant to the Tribe.
 - Jason stated that the P2P program may not apply directly but it can apply when providing equitable access to the state highway system. Any roadways that connect the reservation to the state highway system are eligible to be looked into for improvements or funding partnerships.
 - Brian inquired if those connecting roadways would have to be located within Arizona.
 - Jason stated he believes so but will follow up.
 - Bruce Fenske confirmed that no state highways cross FYQT tribal land.

3. LRTP OVERVIEW

Jason James provided an overview on ADOT's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the update that is specific to this tribal outreach effort.

4. FYQT PRIORITIES/COMMENTS

The Project Team led an open discussion on priorities specific to FYQT and any additional questions or comments attendees had.

- Jason James inquired what priorities FYQT has related to transportation.
 - Brian stated that the Tribe's priority related to transportation is maintaining existing roadways and filling potholes.
- Brian shared a map of the reservation. He shared that the vast majority of the reservation falls within California but connects to I-8 via Quechan Drive. He states that he believes this is the connection to the state highway system.
 - Brian stated that the existing bridge on Quechan Drive, at the railroad, is functionally obsolete and will become a priority when the Tribe updates their Transportation Improvement Plan this coming year.
 - Jason inquired if there are any plans for widening the existing bridge.
 - Brian stated that it is not being used currently so there are no specific plans for improvement.
- Jason inquired who the Tribe's point of contact is at CalTrans. Brian stated that the contact's name is Rafael Reyes (the CalTrans District 11 Native American Liaison).
- Don stated that he recalls the casino being located within Arizona. He inquired if there were any plans for expansion of the casino facility over the next 10 years. He shared that ADOT is looking to determine if there are upcoming developments that would generate more traffic within the area.
 - Brian confirmed that the casino is being renovated. The Tribe is also looking to build 44 new homes and has recently built a new health clinic. There are also plans to add more commercial retail space on the reservation.
- Jason asked what challenges the Tribe has faced outside of transportation that they are working to address.
 - Brian stated that housing is a challenge on the reservation. Housing is not commonly built and what is built is for low-income housing. He is tasked with building an economic development effort but has difficulty doing this when those living on the reservation typically do not have disposable income.
 - Brian stated that the reservation has a significant portion of irrigated land that is tied to the development of Laguna Dam on the Colorado River. The irrigation infrastructure is aging and is in need of replacement in order to preserve the value of the agricultural land and agriculture leases.
 - Jason asked what the current condition of the dam is.
 - Brian informed that the dam is more of a weir, it has been functionally replaced by the Imperial Dam.
- Jason asked if Brian has been working with any COGs or MPOs.
 - Brian shared that the Tribe does not normally work with YMPO but does typically work more closely with Yuma County Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority (YCIPTA). YCIPTA allows tribes to be members and have an equal voice on the board. The Tribe also works closely with Imperial County Transportation Commission, who provides funding for costs regarding tribal transit services.

- Brian stated that the Tribe runs two routes, a circulator through the reservation, providing access to the port-of-entry (POE) and Yuma, and a commuter route serving Downtown Yuma, through the reservation, and to El Centro.
- Jason asked if there was a Veteran's Affairs (VA) hospital nearby. Brian stated that there is a location in Yuma.
- Jason asked what Brian's top three statewide priorities would be if he were in charge of identifying them.
 - Brian stated he does not know the state's transportation system. There is significant emphasis on implementing I-11 and electrification and the need for electrical vehicle charging stations.
 - Brian stated that when looking at a statewide level, it shows how the bridge need in his community pales in comparison to the top three state priorities.
 - Jason stated that what happens in your backyard is what makes up the state priorities.
 - Brian stated that a small project like his may rise up and receive funding. It requires that he is persistent and actively shares information after updating the Tribe's planning documents.
- Brian stated that ADOT should review if there are any state highway system programs relevant to FYQT and review the Tribe's LRTP to identify the Tribe's top priorities.
 - Jason agreed that this is something ADOT needs to improve on this and that will be taken into consideration.
- Brian asked if Don is the Arizona counterpart for a tribal liaison. Don confirmed.
- Don stated that other tribes talking with ADOT have identified priorities as well. He shared that there has been much more engagement with tribal nations than previous plans. It tells ADOT that there is interest, so ADOT needs to improve on tribal communication.
- Jason stated that ADOT wants the consultation sessions to be candid and honest, so he appreciates Brian's comments.
- Don asked if the Tribe has developed a Tribal Safety Plan.
 - Brian stated that the Tribe does not have one in place but they are preparing an application for funding that is due in December. He shared that the Tribe is fortunate that many of the improvements in safety plans stem from injury or property damage from crashes and the Tribe does not have those data points. He shared that three years ago, near the bridge mentioned previously, there was a fatality on the reservation. From this, the safety plan will be recommending improvement to that area to avoid this happening again.
- Michael Grandy inquired if there is any usage or concern to the east side of the reservation via US 95. He asked if this is a route that tribal community members use often.
 - Brian stated that there is some usage, especially when traveling to the Colorado River Indian Tribes (CRIT) or Fort Mojave Tribe. It is a well-maintained roadway. When improvements are made to the road, they begin just north of the reservation.
- Michael asked how ADOT can better work with FYQT.
 - Brian stated that it would be beneficial to determine what can be considered an ADOT asset and how the bridge can be funded.
 - Michael shared that the ADOT bridge group has a limited amount of funding available for local bridge projects that is available for the Tribe to apply for.
 - Brian requested that it be confirmed that the bridge would be eligible and if so, forward the information to him.

5. CLOSING REMARKS

The Project Team thanked FYQT for their participation in the Consultation Session.

6. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following links provide additional resources:

- [State Long Range Transportation Plan](#)
- [Planning to Programming Information](#)