

Forming New Transit Authorities - How to Regionalize Transit



John Andoh, CCTM

Transit Director

*Yuma County Intergovernmental
Public Transportation Authority*

Yuma, Arizona

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Where is Yuma County?



YCAT Services Provided

- **Yuma County Area Transit Fixed Routes**
 - Eleven routes serving the Cities of Yuma, Somerton, San Luis, Town of Wellton and unincorporated Yuma County areas. Additional areas served includes Winterhaven, El Centro, Cocopah & Fort Yuma Reservations
 - Monday-Friday service from 5:50 am to 7:30 pm with limited night service from AWC until 11:00 pm and Saturday service from 9:15 am to 6:30 pm.
- **YCAT OnCall Demand Response**
 - Demand response service throughout southwest Yuma County for those that have a disability that prevents the use of public transportation.
 - Provides the complementary paratransit service within a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of YCAT routes.



Who is the Yuma County Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority?

Under Arizona Revised Statutes - Title 28 Transportation, an intergovernmental public transportation authority may be organized in any county in Arizona with a population of two hundred thousand persons or less. YCIPTA is an IPTA that was formed on December 13, 2010 by the Yuma County Board of Supervisors to administer, plan, operate and maintain public transit services throughout Yuma County, including within the political jurisdictional boundaries of the Cities of Yuma, San Luis, Somerton, Town of Wellton and the unincorporated Yuma County areas.

Nine Board of Directors consisting of the County, City and Town Administrators as well as the local college and university Presidents which governs the activities of the Transportation Authority and set policy.



How was YCIPTA formed?

- On September 21, 2010, the Town of Wellton and City of Somerton passed a resolution to petition the County to form the IPTA. On October 3 and 20, 2010 respectively, the Cities of San Luis and Yuma passed a resolution to petition the County to form the IPTA. On December 6, 2010, Northern Arizona University petitioned the County to join the IPTA. On December 13, 2010, the County held a public hearing and approved the formation of the IPTA.
- On January 24, 2011, the Yuma County Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority (YCIPTA) held its first Board of Directors meeting.
- Since the formation of the IPTA, Arizona Western College, Cocopah Indian Tribe and Quechan Indian Tribe has joined.



The Situation

Yuma County Area Transit (YCAT) has struggled in a stable funding source to fund its transit operations, as the funding has previously been dependent on the following sources:

- Local Match Funding from municipalities
- Former Local Transportation Assistance Fund (LTAF I and LTAF II) ended in 2010
- Fares
- Advertising, In-Kind Support, Miscellaneous Revenues
- Federal Transit Assistance through ISTEA, TEA-21, SAFETEA-LU and MAP-21
- Private contributions

Due to significant changes in transit funding dating back to 1999 when Greater Yuma Area Dial-A-Ride and Valley Transit first started, the former agency responsible for the oversight of YCAT, the Yuma Metropolitan Planning Organization (YMPO) has been forced to restructure, reduce and at times, consider transit service elimination in 2002, 2003, 2006 and 2010.

This matter was the large reason regarding the change in governance for YCAT.



Why Form a Regional Transit Authority?

In Spring 2010, when LTAF II was eliminated, the municipalities funding YCAT were facing significant issues what services were important to fund and what services needed to be cut. Since each member agency provided a local match contribution to the LTAF II funding, the elimination of LTAF II placed into question the need for bus service that was not serving the population effectively.

In July 2010, the largest funder for transit in Yuma County, the City of Yuma passed a resolution stating its desires to suspend providing funding to YCAT pending a review of institutional arrangements to better effectively manage YCAT and determine an equitable funding arrangement.

In September 2010, with the City of Yuma funding subsidy eliminated, a last ditch effort to save the transit system was implemented by a subcommittee of the YMPO Executive Board and each member agency increased its contribution with the notion that a separate regional transit authority must be formed by July 2011 or the transit system will shut down.

YMPO, the prior administrator of YCAT did not have the necessary staff or resources to continue to manage YCAT and the underlying responsibilities associated with it (grants, marketing, contract administration, route planning)



Important Points in Formation of Regional Transit Authority

- Identification of member agencies and understanding member agencies desires and expectations early on
- Development of guiding principles, goals and objectives
- Development of equitable cost sharing that takes into consideration levels of service, population/ridership and geographical land area
- Development of Board and administrative governance structure, balance of power (voting power), bylaws and/or legal documents
- Early involvement of technical member agency staff in the development of any transition documents and plans to continue build trust and support of member agency staff whom would recommend to their policy boards the formation of such authority
- Development of an Agreement binding member agencies to a partnership
- Identification of appropriate state statues, codes or laws that allow for the formation of a regional transit authority
- Find a legislative champion to sponsor formation of transit authority (if required).



Making the Transition

Making a transition plan is critical in the success for implementation of a regional transit authority. To the left, is a transition plan outline that YCIPTA to ensure that there was no interruption in the administration and provision of transit service.

Being staffed with permanent personnel is also critical in ensure for the smooth transition.

Transition Implementation Schedule	
June 7, 2011	
Action	Draft Schedule
Continue Work on Transit Study, Perform Passenger Survey, Hold Public Meetings	June 2011-December 2012
Transit Director Starts	July 5, 2011
Learn Operations, Meet Partner Agencies, Observe and Research	July 2011
Draft Transition Plan, Bylaws, Governing Documents	August-October 2011
Finalize YCIPTA Agreements in Task 2 Necessary for Agency Operations	August-December 2011
Finalize YCIPTA Operations Identified in Task 2 Necessary for Agency Operations	August 2011-January 2012
Develop and Adopt Interim Agreement with YMPO to manage Transit Operations	August 2011
Develop Agreements for Use of Assets, Facilities, etc with YMPO	September 2011
YCIPTA and YMPO Adopt Agreements	September 2011
Interim Service Adjustments to Match Available Funding	September 2011
Prepare FTA Compliance Documents	September 2011-December 2011
Develop Agreements for Use of Assets, Facilities, etc with YMPO	September 2011-December 2011
Transition Plan Reviewed By Member Agencies and YMPO	October 2011
Transition Plan Adopted by Member Agencies and YMPO	November 2011
Transition Plan Adopted by YCIPTA	November 2011
Start Recruitment of Contract Administrator and Hire	December 2011-February 2012
Obtain FTA Grantee Status	January 2012
Transition of Service Agreements from YMPO to YCIPTA	January 2012-March 2012
YCIPTA Adopts Transit Study	January 2012
YCIPTA Adopts Service Changes Based on Transit Study	March 2012-July 2012
FTA Grantee Status Approved	March 2012
Transfer of Assets Completed	July 2012
Formal Transfer of Transit Operations Completed	July 2012
Start Work on Task 4 Items	August 2012



The Original Funding without YCIPTA

Contributions FY 10-11		
Agency	Funding	%
Yuma County	\$ 44,500	37.56%
City of Yuma	\$ 0*	0%
City of Somerton	\$ 6,785	5.73%
Town of Wellton	\$ 14,499	12.24%
City of San Luis	\$ 11,200	9.45%
Cocopah Tribe	\$ 41,496	35.02%
TOTAL	\$ 118,480	100.00%

*When the City of Yuma discontinued funding support to YCAT in August 2010, the other member agencies had to increase its contributions to continue a minimal base level of service. Previously, the City of Yuma contributed \$151,985.

Change in Funding with Formation of YCIPTA FY 2011-2012

Contributions FY 11-12		
Agency	Funding	%
Yuma County	\$ 154,960	30.30%
City of Yuma	\$ 200,000	39.10%
City of Somerton	\$ 29,919	5.85%
Town of Wellton	\$ 14,499	2.83%
City of San Luis	\$ 70,572	13.80%
Cocopah Tribe	\$ 41,496	8.11%
Arizona Western College	\$ -	0.00%
Northern Arizona University	\$ -	0.00%
TOTAL	\$ 511,446	100.00%

Due to elimination of LTAF II, the municipalities are contributing to match the FTA funds received (net fares) from their general funds. The formula was developed based on population against the local match requirement of use of FTA 5307 funds which totals \$1,599,419.



Change in Funding with Formation of YCIPTA FY 2012-2013

Contributions FY 12-13		
Agency	Funding	%
Yuma County	\$ 154,960	24.94%
City of Yuma	\$ 200,000	32.19%
City of Somerton	\$ 29,919	4.81%
Town of Wellton	\$ 14,499	2.33%
City of San Luis	\$ 70,573	11.36%
Northern Arizona University	\$ 6,800	1.09%
Arizona Western College	\$ 100,000	16.09%
Quechan Indian Tribe*	\$ 5,757	0.93%
Cocopah Indian Tribe*	\$ 38,898	6.26%
TOTAL	\$ 621,406	100.00%



Prior LTAF and FTA Funding for YCIPTA

Historical LTAF and FTA Funding for Yuma County		
Year	LTAF Funding	FTA Funding
2008	\$314,587.30	\$1,510,438
2009	\$328,000.00	\$1,613,790
2010	\$365,000.00	\$1,467,078
2011	\$165,352.79	\$1,599,419
2012	\$0	\$1,467,499

The LTAF funding went to the municipalities and then was pass though to YMPO for local match revenue towards the YCAT system. FTA funding to Yuma County is based on the Yuma Urbanized Area Population, which includes the City of Yuma, surrounding unincorporated areas that are adjunct to the City and Winterhaven, California – population area is 135,267 (2010 Census)



What Types of Regional Transit Authorities Are Available by State

- Arizona – Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority, Regional Public Transportation Authority, Regional Transportation Authority
- California – Transit District, Joint Powers Agency
- Colorado – Regional Transportation District, Regional Transportation Authority
- Connecticut – Transit District
- Florida – Special District Acts
- Georgia – Special District Acts
- Idaho – Regional Public Transportation Authority
- Illinois – Local Mass Transit District, Metropolitan Transit Authorities,
- Indiana – Regional Transportation Authority
- Iowa – Regional Transit Authority
- Louisiana – Special Act
- Massachusetts – Regional Transportation Authority
- Michigan – Metropolitan Transportation Authorities, Public Transportation Authorities
- Minnesota – Regional Transit Board
- Missouri – Transportation Development District or Corporation
- Montana – Urban Transportation District
- Nevada – Regional Transportation Commission
- New Mexico – Regional Transit District
- Ohio – Regional Transit Authority
- Texas – Mass Transit Authority, Regional Transportation Authority, Metropolitan Rapid Transit Authority
- Utah – Public Transit District
- Vermont – Regional Transit District
- Washington – Public Transportation Benefit Area Corporation



What are the keys to success and potential pitfalls?

- Establish Logical District Boundaries
- Ensure Transit Service Equity (balance service, funding and land use)
- Ensure Appropriate Balance of Power for Governing Board
- Follow the Statutes Regarding Creation and Operation of a Regional Transit Authority
- Identify and Communicate Transportation Needs
- Coordinate with Stakeholders and Potential Transportation Partners
- Revenue Considerations



Thank You!

Questions?

