

MINUTES
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YUMA, ARIZONA
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, YUMA CITY HALL
ONE CITY PLAZA, YUMA, ARIZONA
MAY 20, 2026
5:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Deputy Mayor McClendon called the City Council meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE

Pastor Tom Renard of Zion church gave the invocation. **Nora Ebert**, Budget Manager, led the City Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

FINAL CALL

Deputy Mayor McClendon made a final call for the submission of Speaker Request Forms for agenda related items from members of the audience.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Present: Martinez, Morris, McClendon, Smith (5:31 p.m.- 6:32 p.m.), Morales, Watts
Councilmembers Absent: Mayor Nicholls
Staffmembers Present: Acting City Administrator, John D. Simonton
Principal Planner, Erika Peterson
Various Department Heads or their representative
City Attorney, Richard W. Files
Acting City Clerk, Janet L. Pierson

I. MOTION CONSENT AGENDA

Motion (Morales/Watts): To approve the Motion Consent Agenda as recommended. Voice vote: **approved** 6-0.

A. Approval of minutes of the following City Council meeting(s):

Regular Council Meeting Minutes April 15, 2026

B. Executive Session

Executive Sessions may be held at the next regularly scheduled Special Worksession, Regular Worksession and City Council Meeting for personnel, legal, litigation and real estate matters pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03 Section A (1), (3), (4), and (7). (City Atty)

C. Approval of Staff Recommendations

1. Authorize the award of traffic control services for community events and additional services City wide to the lowest responsive and responsible bidders, Quail Construction, Yuma, Arizona, and Hollis Brothers, Yuma, Arizona. The award consists of a one-year contract, with the option to renew for four additional one-year periods, depending on satisfactory performance at an estimated annual expenditure of \$100,000.00. (RFB-26-216) (Admn/Purch)
2. Pursuant to the Yuma City Code § 36-36, reject the bid received for the Main Street Water Treatment Plant Filters 9, 10, 11, and 12 Rehabilitation/Upgrades Phase 3 project due to the bid exceeding the allocated amount for the Capital Improvement Project. (RFB-26-200) (Eng/Purch)
3. Authorize an engineering design services contract for the initial scoping documents of 40th Street from Avenue 6E to Avenue 7E in the amount of \$116,680.00 to Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., Tucson, Arizona. (RFQ-26-180) (Eng/Purch)
4. Ratify and approve the Job Order Contract (JOC) proposal for the Roadway Improvements, 28th Street, I-8 and Avenue 4E Project in the amount of \$383,600.00 to DPE Construction Inc., Yuma, Arizona. (RFQ-25-159) (Eng/Purch)
5. Authorize a professional services agreement with Mosaic Public Partners of Lincoln, California, at an estimated expenditure of \$35,000.00 to conduct a national executive recruitment for the position of City Administrator. (CPA-26-324) (HR/Purch)

II. RESOLUTION CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution R2026-016 – Development Fee Deferral: Santana Unit 1 Subdivision (Authorize an agreement to defer City of Yuma development fees and water and sewer capacity charges for Santana Unit 1 Subdivision, and to collect a \$500.00 administrative fee for the deferral agreement. The effective term of the deferral agreement is three years from date of execution) (Eng)

Discussion

- Staff are actively working on future discussions on applying Attainable Housing Committee recommendations to development fee deferrals, especially for infill areas. (Smith/Simonton)

Motion (Morris/Smith): To adopt the Resolution Consent Agenda as recommended.

Pierson displayed the following title(s):

Resolution R2026-015

A resolution of the City Council of the City of Yuma, Arizona, authorizing a delegation agreement between the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and the City of Yuma, Arizona (The Yuma Fire Department issues these permits, reviews them for fire safety and air-quality compliance, and periodically undergoes ADEQ audits to ensure proper documentation and reporting) (YFD)

Resolution R2026-016

A resolution of the City Council of the City of Yuma, Arizona, authorizing and approving a Development Agreement permitting the deferral of City of Yuma development fees and water and sanitary sewer capacity charges for Santana Unit 1 Subdivision (Deferral for a period of three years upon payment of a \$500.00 administrative fee.) (Eng)

Resolution R2026-017

A resolution of the City Council of the City of Yuma, Arizona, authorizing and approving a Development Agreement permitting the deferral of City of Yuma development fees and water and sanitary sewer capacity charges for Santana Unit 2 Subdivision (Deferral for a period of three years upon payment of a \$500.00 administrative fee.) (Eng)

Resolution R2026-018

A resolution of the City Council of the City of Yuma, Arizona, authorizing and approving a Development Agreement permitting the deferral of City of Yuma development fees and water and sanitary sewer capacity charges for Santana Unit 3 Subdivision (Deferral for a period of three years upon payment of a \$500.00 administrative fee.) (Eng)

Roll call vote: **adopted** 6-0.

III. ADOPTION OF ORDINANCES CONSENT AGENDA

Motion (Morales/Watts): To adopt the Ordinances Consent Agenda as recommended.

Pierson displayed the following title(s):

Ordinance O2026-009

An ordinance of the City Council of the City of Yuma, Arizona, amending Title 7 of the Yuma City Code, Chapter 70, revising Section 70-05 to exempt veteran-owned businesses and merchants from Section 70-05 (To recognize the service of military veterans and promote veterans entrepreneurship by reducing financial barriers to starting and operating a veteran-owned business within the City.) (Admn)

Roll call vote: **adopted** 6-0.

IV. PUBLIC HEARING AND RELATED ITEMS

Resolution R2026-019 - Major General Plan Amendment: 1912 S. Arizona Avenue (Following a public hearing, approve the request to amend the City of Yuma General Plan to change the land use designation from Low Density Residential to High Density Residential, for the property located at 1912 S. Arizona Avenue) (GP-44756-2025) (Cmty Dev)

Morris declared a conflict of interest on Resolution R2026-019 as his firm was involved in the design of the project and left the dais.

Deputy Mayor McClendon opened the public hearing at 5:41 p.m.

Peterson presented the following information:

- This is a major amendment request by Brittani Lee, on behalf of T3AZ, LLC, to change the land use designation from Low Density Residential to High Density Residential for approximately .72 acres, for the property located at 1912 South Arizona Avenue, Yuma, AZ
- Property currently zoned General Commercial Infill Overlay
- Currently under development with 15 dwelling units and one commercial office
- On January 8, 2024, the Planning and Zoning Commission approved a Conditional Use Permit allowing development of 15 multifamily residential dwelling units in conjunction with an established business activity within the General Commercial zoning district.
- Surrounding Land Uses:
 - North: Low Density Residential
 - South: Low Density Residential
 - East: Industrial
 - West: Low Density Residential
- Development Potential
 - Pursue a rezone to High Density Residential (R-3) to allow for the conversion of the commercial office into a residential dwelling unit, for a total of 16 dwelling units on site.
 - Dwelling Units-Potential development of 22 dwelling units
 - Population- Potential expected population of 40 people
- Neighborhood Meeting
 - January 6, 2026, on site
 - 660' notification boundary
 - One (1) neighbor in attendance wanting additional information
 - Four (4) neighbors called or emailed
 - Two (2) neighbors in opposition
 - Two (2) had questions about the request
- On April 13, 2026, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of this request

Motion (Smith/Watts): To close the Public Hearing. Voice vote: **approved** 5-0-1, Morris abstaining due to conflict of interest. The Public Hearing closed at 5:44 p.m.

Discussion

- **Morales** expressed support for higher-density housing but asked how Police and Fire departments provide input on such projects, noting the potential service impacts of adding residents in concentrated areas. **Peterson** explained that both departments are notified during project review and may submit comments, but none were received for this item. **Morales** requested that future project narratives include any identified impacts to public safety services. **Simonton** noted that every department has the opportunity to provide input, concerns, or questions regarding projects. If no comments were received from the Police Department or Fire Department, it is because they did not feel the project would impact their operations. Comments from departments would typically be on the staff report City Council receives for review.

Motion (Morales/Watts): To adopt Resolution R2026-019 as recommended.

Pierson displayed the following title(s):

Resolution R2026-019

A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Yuma, Arizona, amending Resolution R2022-011, the City of Yuma 2022 General Plan, to change the land use designation of approximately .72 acres from Low Density Residential to High Density Residential located at 1912 S. Arizona Avenue (The applicant's intent in changing the land use designation now is to pursue a rezone of the site from General Commercial (B-2) to High Density Residential (R-3) to allow for the conversion of the commercial office into a residential dwelling unit, for a total of 16 dwelling units on site) (Admn)

Roll call vote: **adopted** 5-0-1, **Morris** abstaining due to conflict of interest.

Morris returned to the dais.

V. BUDGET AND RELATED ITEMS

MC 2026-093 - Public Hearing: Capital Improvement Program Fiscal Year 2027 - Fiscal Year 2031
(Conduct a public hearing for the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 – Fiscal Year 2031 City of Yuma Capital Improvement Program pursuant to Yuma City Charter, Article XIII, Section 11) (Eng)

Deputy Mayor McClendon opened the Public Hearing at 5:48 p.m.

Speakers

Henry Valenzuela, City resident, observed that inconsistent reporting of multi-year versus single-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding makes total project costs unclear. He urged including cumulative expenditures for each project to improve transparency.

William Katz, City resident, sought disclosure of any communication between Councilmembers and the firefighters' union regarding the CIP. He also questioned the proposed \$2 million land purchase for Elevate Southwest without a feasibility study and raised conflict-of-interest concerns.

Motion (Morris/Morales): To close the Public Hearing. Voice vote: **approved** 6-0. The Public Hearing closed at 5:56 p.m.

Discussion

- **Morales** noted that the July CIP includes a \$450,000 study for the Innovation Hub and asked Council to clarify the study's scope before July. He suggested the study also include the Spaceport, citing past presentations, public statements, and the Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) with Mexico that have linked the two projects.
- **Simonton** stated the Innovation Hub and Spaceport are separate projects and explained ongoing efforts to acquire property and negotiate with a national firm for the Innovation District. He noted a contract related to the Innovation District is expected in July.
- **Morales** reiterated that previous discussions and materials have consistently connected the two projects and requested that the July study reflect that.

- **Deputy Mayor McClendon** requested that staff schedule a meeting for discussion before the July vote to ensure City Council clearly understands the distinctions between the Innovation Hub and Innovation District.
- **Morales** added that during prior presentations, the Innovation District was presented with various amenities, and when he asked if smaller phases could begin first, he was told the project must start with the large initial building. He stated this reinforces his concern that the Innovation Hub and Spaceport have been consistently presented as connected. He emphasized the need for City Council to clearly understand what the July item entails and what the \$150,000 contract would cover.
- **Deputy Mayor McClendon** agreed to schedule a review before the final July vote so City Council can gather questions and ensure a shared understanding of the project. This discussion will not delay the CIP vote or the Innovation Hub contract.
- **Morales** clarified he is not requesting a delay but wants City Council to be fully informed before approving the item in July.
- **Morris** stated he is open to discussing a Spaceport feasibility study but does not believe it is currently needed. He expressed concern that adding such a study could affect project momentum or interest. He stated he does not support any action that would condition or delay approvals.
- **Morales** again clarified that his comments were informational and not tied to any vote.

MC 2026-094 - Tentative Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2027 (Adopt the Fiscal Year 2027 Tentative Annual Budget in the amount of \$566,762,519 which includes a Capital Improvement Plan budget of \$215,883,457; combined Maintenance Improvement Districts of \$757,034; and Operating Expenditure / Expense Budget of \$350,122,028 including Governmental and Enterprise operations) (Admn/Fin)

Deputy Mayor McClendon declared a conflict of interest on MC 2026-094 due to being employed by Visit Yuma, turned the meeting over to Councilmember **Smith** and left the dais.

Speakers

William Katz, City resident, requested disclosure of any budget discussions with the firefighters' union, questioned Councilmember Smith's involvement in Onvida matters due to a perceived conflict, and asked what support Onvida is seeking in the upcoming budget.

Henry Valenzuela, City resident, clarified his earlier comments, noted Elevate Southwest is not funded in the current budget, and urged redirecting funds to non-profit organizations in the community.

Discussion

- **Martinez** toured the Safe House recently and encouraged them to submit a funding request through the formal process for next year's budget. He also discussed this with **Simonton** and shared his guidance. The City of Yuma supports the Safe House and appreciates their work. Thank you to their representative for attending.

Motion (Morales/Morris): To adopt the Fiscal Year 2027 Tentative Budget for Visit Yuma in an amount not to exceed \$901,500. Voice vote: **approved** 5-0-1, **Deputy Mayor McClendon** abstaining due to conflict of interest.

Deputy Mayor McClendon returned to the dais.

Motion (Morris/Watts): To adopt and publish for the June 17th budget hearing, the Fiscal Year 2027 Tentative Budget for the Capital Improvement Program in the amount of 215,883,457. Voice vote: **approved** 6-0.

Motion (Watts/Smith) To approve and publish for the June 17th budget hearing, the Fiscal Year 2027 Tentative Budget in the amount of \$349,977,562 which **excludes** Visit Yuma funding and the Capital Improvement Program, as approved through the prior motion. Voice vote: **approved** 6-0.

VI. APPOINTMENTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SCHEDULING

Appointment

Motion (Smith/Morales): To appoint Ann Wilkinson to the Parks, Arts, and Recreation Commission with a term expiration of December 31, 2027. Voice vote: **approved** 6-0.

Announcements

Smith, Martinez, and Watts reported on events and meetings they attended during the last two weeks and upcoming events of note.

Scheduling – No meetings were scheduled at this time.

VII. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS

Simonton reported the following events:

- The City is beginning its summer season, and Parks and Recreation activities will be starting shortly. The public was encouraged to visit the City's website for a full list of scheduled youth activities.
- May 22 - May 24 - The 54th Annual Dennis Donnelly 16-inch Softball Tournament.
- June 6 - Water Safety Day will be held at the Valley Aquatic Center.
- May 25 - City offices will be closed in observance of Memorial Day. Monday trash collection will occur on Tuesday, with the remainder of the week's collections shifted one day later.
- **Simonton** announced that Janet Pierson has been promoted to City Clerk full-time and offered congratulations.

Deputy Mayor McClendon called for a five-minute recess at 6:32 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 6:38 p.m.

VIII. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

Carlos Adams, City resident, reported that documents obtained through multiple public records requests raised concerns about transparency, conflicts of interest, and fairness in city travel, contracting, and development practices, and he urged the City Council to review these matters to uphold public trust.

William Katz, City resident, said his questions were not addressed by Council or staff, raised concerns about transparency and responsiveness, and urged the Council to improve communication and ensure residents feel heard.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, **Deputy Mayor McClendon** adjourned the meeting at 6:42 p.m. No Executive Session was held.

Janet L. Pierson, City Clerk

APPROVED:

Douglas J. Nicholls, Mayor

Approved at the City Council Meeting of:

Acting City Clerk: _____