

April 12, 2024

TO: Mr. Joshua Rubin, Chairman

FROM: Luis E. Ramirez Thomas, President, Ramirez Advisors Inter-National

SUBJECT: Monthly Report of Activities – March 2024

On behalf of Ramirez Advisors Inter-National, LLC (“RAI-N”) we are pleased to present our monthly activity report to you and the Board of Directors of the Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority (“the Port Authority”). As always, we request and welcome your continued comments and suggestions as to how we can improve on our services, our communications, and our activities on your behalf. With your feedback, we will make every effort to improve our response to your directives and ensure an effective implementation of the initiatives at hand.

Recent activities on behalf of the Port Authority have focused on the following key areas:

1. Letter of support for South32 Department of Energy grant application (3/5)
2. ADOT Seeking Public Comments for the next Five-Year Program (3/6)
3. Congressional Offices accepting CDS Requests
4. Meeting with Deputy Chief of Mission, US Embassy Mexico
5. Presentation for International Fellows from National Defense University
6. ABC15 reporting on binational workforce
7. Port Authority Roundtable with NPR Reporter Ximena Bustillo (3/20)
8. PCFR International State of the State (3/28)
9. Potrero Creek Bridge project is fully funded
10. Letters of support for county’s FY2025 CDS Requests
11. Northbound border crossings through February 2024 (3/21)
12. Letter of support for Unisource Energy’s DOE Grant Application (3/27)

This report is not intended to be a full description of all activities but rather, provides highlights and information on the direction of our activities to keep the Board of Directors informed and to ensure adherence to the vision and guidance imparted to RAI-N by the Port Authority and its leadership. Throughout this period, RAI-N has maintained active and frequent communications various members of the Board of Directors and stakeholders to ensure that we have a fully coordinated approach to our efforts. RAI-N stands ready to address any issue, concern or suggestion that may arise from this report and from our ongoing dialogue with you.

1. LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR SOUTH32 DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY GRANT APPLICATION

- On March 5, the Port Authority issued a letter in support of the application by South32 for a grant from the US Department of Energy.
- Should South32 receive the grant, the funds will be used to help the development of the Hermosa Mine.
- *“South32’s investments in our community stand to dramatically change the pervasive seasonal unemployment structure in our community. They are bringing much needed high-paying jobs and economic opportunity to our region. Moreover, they have invested their time and resources to numerous causes with great local impact. From workforce training and environmental remediation, to supporting efforts to make vaccines more accessible during the pandemic, their community involvement has been significant and greatly appreciated.”*
- A copy of the letter is provided in Attachment #1.

2. ADOT SEEKING COMMENT FOR 5-YEAR PROGRAM

- On March 6, the Arizona Department of Transportation issued a release indicating that they are looking for public comments on the next version of the 5-Year Program, the office of Senator Kyrsten Sinema hosted a roundtable discussion on the proposed Bipartisan Border Bill.

The Arizona Department of Transportation is accepting public comments for the next Five-Year Construction Program. A copy of the draft Five-Year Program can be accessed [here](#). As indicated in their message below, ADOT is placing a significant focus on pavement preservation and improvements to existing infrastructure.

*ADOT has also prepared [an interactive map](#) showing all the state and locally led projects in the program. **Most importantly, the project list includes the I-19 TI Modernization Project at Ruby Road and Rio Rico Drive!!!** This is an important win that the Port Authority can leverage as it identifies federal funding sources to pay the remaining balance for construction.*

Public comments are due at 5:00PM on May 24, 2024. The State Transportation Board is then expected to approve the final draft of the Five-Year Program at the June 21 board meeting. We would strongly suggest that the Port Authority submit a letter thanking ADOT and the Board of the inclusion of the project. Should you agree, we would be happy to prepare a draft letter.

*Respectfully,
Martin Rodriguez Nuñez*



Public comment period begins for ADOT's Tentative Five-Year Construction Program

Proposed 2025-2029 focus: upgrading pavement conditions, improving major corridors

This updates the previous alert to provide the corrected location of the I-19 interchange project in Tucson, which is at Irvington Road.

The Arizona Department of Transportation is seeking the public's input on its latest program to improve and maintain the state's highway system during the next five years, a proposal that includes several major widening projects while also improving pavement conditions.

The public can provide comments on the [Tentative 2025-2029 Five-Year Transportation Facilities Construction Program](#) in the following ways:

- Attend the May 17 public hearing of the State Transportation Board at 9 a.m. Meeting information can be found at <http://aztransportationboard.gov>
- Complete an online comment form at: azdot.gov/5yearcomments
- Email: fiveyearconstructionprogram@azdot.gov
- Call the bilingual phone line at: 1-855-712-8530
- Mail ADOT at: Attn: Nancy Becerra, c/o ADOT Communications, 1655 W. Jackson, MD 126F, Phoenix, AZ 85007

The public comment period for the FY 2025-2029 Tentative Five-Year Transportation Facilities Construction Program ends at 5 p.m. on May 24.

A major emphasis of the proposed \$7.9 billion tentative program is improving highway pavement and bridge infrastructure throughout greater Arizona, which encompasses areas outside of Maricopa and Pima counties. The plan would provide more than \$2.4 billion for these high-priority improvements during the next five years. This amounts to an average investment of approximately \$600 million per year to preserve, rehabilitate and replace pavement and bridges, including:

- \$508 million in pavement projects on interstates 10, 17 and 40.
- \$690 million in pavement projects on other routes, including US 93 and 60, and state routes 64, 160, 260 and 347.
- \$170 million in bridge projects on the interstates and \$82 million on other routes.

The program provides a total of \$685 million over five years for projects that improve highway safety, efficiency and functionality, such as intersection improvements, smart technology and adding shoulders.

The tentative program also allocates \$495 million for projects that widen highways or improve interchanges across greater Arizona, including:

- Constructing the [Interstate 40/US 93 West Kingman Interchange](#).
- Widening and improving US 93 between Wickenburg and I-40 in Kingman, including expanding three segments of the highway from two to four lanes. The US 93 improvements include [the ongoing widening project near Wickenburg](#), along with new projects near Cane Springs and Big Jim Wash.
- Widening the last two-lane section of State Route 260 in the Lion Springs area between Payson and Heber-Overgaard. This will complete a four-lane divided highway along the entire SR 260 corridor.

In the Maricopa County region, the program features \$2.5 billion in construction projects planned in conjunction with the Maricopa Association of Governments. Those projects include:

- Widening Interstate 10 between Phoenix and Casa Grande. The [I-10 Wild Horse Pass Corridor](#) will have four projects, including the construction of the I-10 bridges over the Gila River, expected to go into construction later this spring.
- Extending [Loop 303 between Van Buren Street and Maricopa County 85](#) starting in 2025.
- Widening I-10 between State Route 85 and Citrus Road in the far West Valley starting in 2025.
- Providing new [HOV ramp connections between I-10 and Loop 101](#) starting in 2025
- Reconstructing the intersection where [US 60 \(Grand Avenue\) intersects 35th Avenue and Indian School Road](#). The rebuilt intersection would separate cross traffic from Grand Avenue and the existing railroad crossing to improve traffic flow and safety, starting in 2025.

In Pima County, in association with the Pima Association of Governments, the program includes \$849 million toward:

- [I-10 improvements from Kino to Country Club](#), which includes building a new interchange at I-10 and Country Club Road, while also widening I-10 in the area starting in 2025.
- Reconstructing the I-19 interchange at Irvington Road starting in 2025.

Funding for the statewide program comes from federal and state dollars, in addition to money generated by users of transportation services in Arizona, primarily through gasoline and diesel fuel taxes and the Arizona vehicle license tax. Both the Maricopa and Pima county regions have voter-approved sales taxes for transportation that funds expansion projects.

ADOT's five-year program is developed by working closely with local governments and regional transportation planning organizations to prioritize projects that are ready to build or design. The State Transportation Board is expected to consider formal action on the program at its June 21 meeting.

The complete report is available at azdot.gov/tentative5year.

The following notes were provided to Port Authority leadership after the meeting:

3. CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES ACCEPTING CDS REQUESTS

- On March 6, the offices of Senators Kyrsten Sinema and Mark Kelly provided information on the Congressionally Directed Spending Request Process.
- In the notification to PA leadership: “We wanted to make sure that you had received the following notice from the offices of Senator Sinema and Kelly for the next round of the Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) requests. Further detailed information is provided below, but wanted to note that there will be a webinar series starting next week that provides a general overview of the CDS application process and another that focuses on requirements by project type. We plan on participating in these webinars and further reviewing the resources provided to help identify which projects in the PA’s Key Issues would be eligible for this funding opportunity. The offices of Senators Sinema and Kelly are accepting requests from Arizona stakeholders for items to be included in the fiscal year 2025 appropriations bills. These include requests for a specific funding level or directive language for an existing federal program or agency (called **programmatic requests**) or requests for funding for a specific project or activity within the state of Arizona (called **Congressionally Directed Spending requests**).”
- Below is the text of the mail that was distributed:

Subject: FY25 Requests for Federal Appropriations | The Offices of Senators Sinema and Kelly

In fiscal years 2022 and 2023, more than 150 cities, towns, counties, health clinics, schools, and other community organizations received federal funding through Congressionally Directed Spending - examples of the types of projects which were funded in previous years can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Programmatic and Congressionally Directed Spending requests are due on March 29, 2024, at 11:59pm Mountain Standard Time. To submit a request, visit: <https://kelly.senate.gov/fy25> or <https://www.sinema.senate.gov/appropriations>. For fiscal year 2025, the offices of Senators Sinema and Kelly will be using a joint request form for programmatic requests and for Congressionally Directed Spending requests.

To assist Arizona entities interested in submitting fiscal year 2025 Congressionally Directed Spending requests, we have developed resources to help applicants navigate the process.

CDS WEBINARS:

To provide an overview of the Congressionally Directed Spending process, and help organizations understand what types of projects are eligible for funding, the offices of Senators Sinema and Kelly are hosting a series of webinars to explain the process.

We will provide two introductory webinars and five project-specific webinars. Representatives from any organization interested in receiving Congressionally Directed Spending are encouraged to attend.

- **Introductory Webinars**
 - Wednesday, March 13: 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM AZ time – [REGISTER HERE](#)
 - Thursday, March 14: 9:00 – 10:30 AM AZ time – [REGISTER HERE](#)

The same information will be covered in both webinars. A copy of the slides and a recording will be made available afterward to everyone who registers for either event.

- **Project-Specific Webinars**

These webinars are designed to walk through the project-specific requirements associated with eligible appropriations accounts. These calls are intended to provide more granular information to requestors to ensure our offices receive high-quality, competitive CDS requests.

- *Health Care Projects and Programs*
 - Monday, March 18: 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM AZ time
 - [REGISTER HERE](#)
- *Transportation Projects*
 - Tuesday, March 19: 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM AZ time
 - [REGISTER HERE](#)
- *Public Safety, Fire, and Law Enforcement Projects*
 - Wednesday, March 20: 12:30– 2:00 PM AZ time
 - [REGISTER HERE](#)
- *Water Infrastructure Projects*
 - Thursday, March 21, 9:30 – 11:00 AM AZ time
 - [REGISTER HERE](#)
- *Housing, Economic Development, and Small Business Support*
 - Friday, March 22: 10:00 – 11:30 AM AZ time
 - [REGISTER HERE](#)

A copy of the slides and a recording will be made available afterward.

CDS RESOURCE DOCUMENTS:

In addition to webinars, offices of Senators Sinema and Kelly have developed guidance documents to help Arizonans understand what types of projects can be funded, and what information our office needs to receive from requestors in order to be successful. These documents are linked below:

- [Health Care Facilities and Programs](#)
- [Education and Workforce Development](#)
- [Transportation Projects – Roads, Bridges, and Highways](#)
- [Transportation Projects – Airports, Rail, and Mass Transit](#)
- [Housing, Economic Development, Rural Development, and Small Business Support](#)
- [Public Safety and Law Enforcement Projects](#)
- [Fire Department and EMS Projects](#)
- [Broadband Projects](#)
- [Drinking Water, Wastewater, Water Supply, and Flood Control](#)

A full guidance document explaining every type of project through which a requestor can receive funding can be found [HERE](#).

If you have any questions about fiscal year 2025 appropriations process, please visit kelly.senate.gov/fy25 and/ or sinema.senate.gov/appropriations. We are also available via email at appropriations@kelly.senate.gov and/ or appropriations@sinema.senate.gov.

4. PORT AUTHORITY PARTICIPATES IN MEETING WITH DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION FROM THE US EMBASSY IN MEXICO



- On March 7, at the invitation of the US Consulate General in Nogales, Chairman Rubin represented the Port Authority in a meeting with Mark Johnson, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of the United States in Mexico.
- The visit provided an opportunity of presenting the realities of the border and for the Port Authority to raise the key issues impacting trade, tourism, security, the environment and transportation, among other topics to Mr. Johnson.
- Also participating in the visit were Maria Elena Gallegos of INDEX and Georgina Felix of the Fresh Produce Association of the Americas, among others.
- Mr. Johnson also toured the Mariposa Port of Entry and received a briefing from Port Director Michael Humphries on port operations.

5. PORT AUTHORITY PRESENTS TO INTERNATIONAL FELLOWS FROM NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY



- On March 8, the Port Authority joined the City of Nogales for a presentation on the border to the International Fellows from the National Defense University.
- The fellows are all military personnel from all over the world.
- The feedback from the delegation is that they had arrived at the border with one perception founded on headlines but after a dialogue with those on the ground,

they were leaving with an image of opportunities and a better understanding of

- the importance of Nogales and the border for supply chains, investment, trade, tourism and much more.
- According to their website, the National Defense University “NDU educates joint warfighters and other national security leaders in critical thinking and the creative application of military power to inform national strategy and globally integrated operations, under conditions of disruptive change, in order to prevail in war, peace and competition.”
 - Special thanks to Mayor Maldonado, Chairman Rubin and board member Jaime Chamberlain for participating in the discussion.

6. ABC15 REPORTING ON BINATIONAL WORKFORCE



- On March 12, ABC15, a Phoenix based television station, reported on the importance of a binational workforce, with a special emphasis on Nogales.
- *“Port Authority chairman Joshua Rubin, a business leader in the area, also crosses daily into Mexico to meet with companies that operate on both sides of the border. Border communities rely so much on another country to be able to*

survive,” Rubin said. “About half of what comes into the country is going into a manufacturing plant inside Arizona.” The port authority estimates the total value of imports and exports through Nogales to be more than \$28 billion, using 2022 data. The largest industries revolve around manufacturing and produce.”

- Former PA Board member, Scott Vandervoet, was also interviewed for this report: *“Too often, the border is seen as a dividing entity, a dividing line, whereas what we see, as is more of a connecting structure,” produce importer and warehouse director Scott Vandervoet said. “The border is the opportunity to interact. It’s the opportunity to do trade and commerce. It’s an opportunity in itself.”*
- Greg Lucero of the Nogales Chamber of Commerce, was also interviewed: *“Lucero said, ultimately, he wants to see an international agreement between institutions in Mexico and the U.S. to create dual certifications that would be recognized for work on both sides of the border.”*
- A copy of the full report can be found at: <https://www.abc15.com/news/48-hours-on-the-border/multi-billion-dollar-trade-industry-relies-on-bi-national-workforce-in-nogales>

7. PORT AUTHORITY HOSTS ROUNDTABLE WITH NPR REPORTER

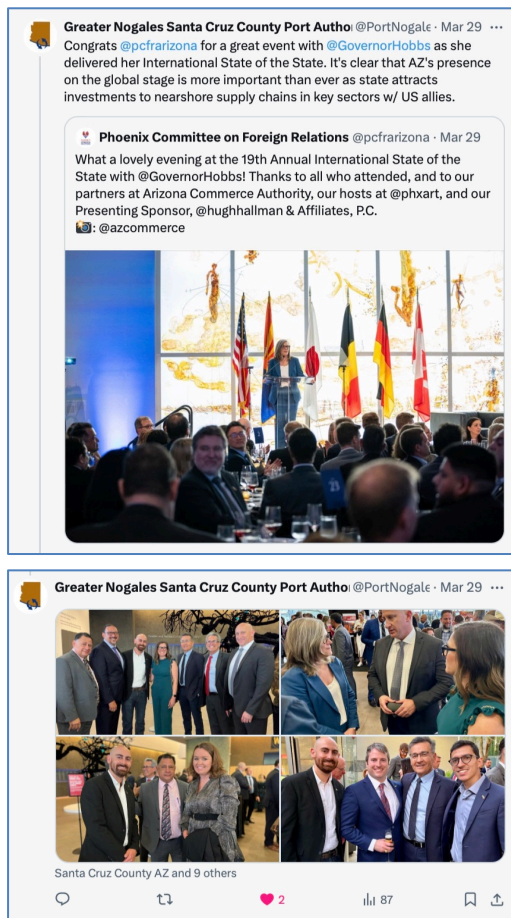


- On March 20, Ximena Bustillo, National Public Radio (NPR) reporter visited Nogales and met with various representatives of the Port Authority, including Supervisor Bruce Bracker and board member Jaime Chamberlain.
- A quote from Mr. Chamberlain: *"I think that statement is one of the statements that bothers us the most. When politicians say, 'We're going to shut down the border,' we're like, are you nuts? You can't shut*

down the border with \$700 billion worth of cross-border business that we do with Mexico in the United States," said Jaime Chamberlain, board member of the Nogales Economic Development Foundation. "They're using that statement when they should be saying, 'We need to fix our immigration issue.' But they say shut down the border. You cannot shut down the border."

- Reference to statements by both Mr. Chamberlain and Supervisor Bracker: *"Still, Chamberlain, Bracker and others want to see more help and support for the border communities and organizations managing the flow of migration, such as Casa Alitas, and they're calling for a solution that spans more than just months at a time."*
- A copy of the full report, including the 4-minute report that was broadcast on National Public Radio, can be found at:
<https://www.npr.org/2024/04/01/1241727265/arizona-immigration-politics-border-biden-trump>

8. PORT AUTHORITY ATTENDS INTERNATIONAL STATE OF THE STATE

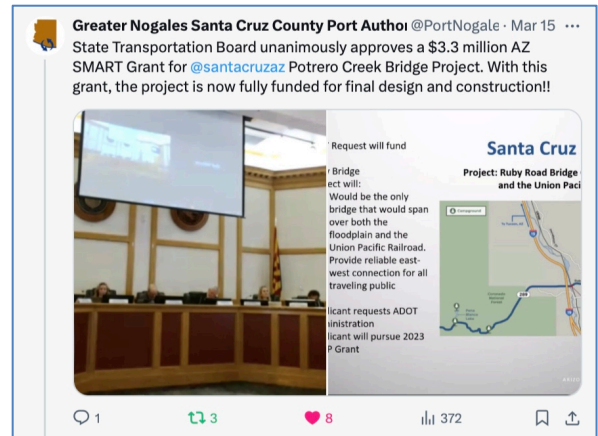


- On March 28, the Port Authority attended the International State of the State, featuring Governor Katie Hobbs.
- The Governor was joined by consular representatives from close to 2 dozen countries, in an event hosted by the Phoenix Committee on Foreign Relations.
- During her speech, the Governor highlighted many of the multibillion-dollar investments in Arizona focused on the design and production of microprocessors, and her extensive outreach to South Korea, Taiwan and Mexico.
- She also highlighted the uniqueness of the Arizona-Mexico Relationship.
- Attending the event from Nogales were:
 - Chairman Rubin
 - Guillermo Valencia
 - Pat Risner
 - Supervisor Manny Ruiz
 - Greg Lucero

9. POTRERO CREEK BRIDGE PROJECT IS FULLY FUNDED

- After a focused advocacy initiative, various studies, grant applications and many outreach and advocacy efforts, the project to modernize the Potrero Creek crossing that would create grade separation over the wash and the railroad, has been fully funded.
- This has been a high priority project for the county and the Port Authority for several years, in one of the most congested areas of the county, and a project that is intrinsic to the modernization of the I-19 Interchange at Ruby Road.
- In total, \$16.5 million were secured, which included \$3 million that were secured through the state of Arizona in January 2023.
- The new funding was secured as follows:
 - On March 8, Senator Sinema announced a \$3.6 million Congressional Directed Spending appropriation.
 - On March 11, Congressman Raul Grijalva announces a that the County had been awarded a US Department of Transportation Reconnecting Communities Grant for \$6.6 million.

- On March 15, the Arizona State Transportation Board approved a \$3.3 million State Match Advantage for Rural Transportation (SMART) Fund grant.



10. PORT AUTHORITY ISSUES LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR COUNTY CDS REQUESTS

- On March 21, the Port Authority issues letters in support of the Congressionally Directed Spending requests submitted by Santa Cruz County for the applications by Santa Cruz County for projects at Camino Ramanote and Yavapai Drive.
- These are projects that the County has determined are critical for public safety, addressing congestion and offering ease of mobility in some of the fastest areas of growth in the county.
- *“The Port Authority remains committed to addressing our community’s transportation needs as they are critical for public safety, movement of goods and people, and improving the quality of life for the residents of the region. The projects submitted by Santa Cruz County are an integral part of that commitment.”*
- Identical letters were sent to Senators Sinema and Kelly and Congressmen Grijalva and Stanton.

- A sample copy of the letters is provided in Attachment #2.

11. NORTHBOUND BORDER CROSSING DATA IS UPDATED

- On March 21, a report was provided on the latest data provided by the US Department of Transportation on border crossings. The numbers for Nogales are looking very promising for 2024.
- As reported to Port Authority leadership:

Nogales Totals

During the period from January to February 2024, the Nogales port of entry system processed:

- **75,327 northbound trucks**, an increase of 6.7% compared to the same period last year.
- **161 northbound trains**, an increase of 14.2% compared to the same period last year.
- **1.7 million total people**, an increase of 4% compared to the same period last year.
 - *Based on our assessment, there is still underreporting of the bus passenger figures. For several months last year, bus crossing volumes were increasing while bus passengers were decreasing. We continue to monitor for any changes in the data reports.*
- **616,134 northbound cars**, an increase of 2.4% compared to the same period last year.
- **451,975 northbound pedestrians**, an increase of 6.5% compared to the same period last year.
- The table below provides the border crossing data for all of Arizona's border ports of entry.

R Ramirez Advisors Inter-National		Arizona Northbound Border Crossings(*) January-February 2023 vs January-February 2024				
Port	Mode	Jan-Feb 2023	Jan-Feb 2024	Difference	Change	
Douglas	Trucks	4,277	4,414	137	3.2%	
	Personal Vehicles	256,105	240,452	-15,653	-6.1%	
	Personal Vehicle Passengers	461,529	434,889	-26,640	-5.8%	
	Pedestrians	108,641	136,266	27,625	25.4%	
	Buses	25	25	0	0.0%	
	Bus Passengers (*)	642	536	-106	-16.5%	
	Total People (*)	570,812	571,691	879	0.2%	
Nogales	Trucks	70,580	75,327	4,747	6.7%	
	Personal Vehicles	601,661	616,134	14,473	2.41%	
	Personal Vehicle Passengers	1,161,808	1,196,679	34,871	3.0%	
	Pedestrians	424,581	451,975	27,394	6.5%	
	Trains	141	161	20	14.2%	
	Buses	1,280	1,510	230	18.0%	
	Bus Passengers (*)	28,317	29,934	1,617	5.7%	
Total People (*)	1,614,706	1,678,588	63,882	4.0%		
San Luis	Trucks	9,642	8,700	-942	-9.8%	
	Personal Vehicles	590,151	524,931	-65,220	-11.1%	
	Personal Vehicle Passengers	964,541	876,260	-88,281	-9.2%	
	Pedestrians	402,189	481,122	78,933	19.6%	
	Buses	19	9	-10	-52.6%	
	Bus Passengers (*)	19	9	-10	-52.6%	
	Total People (*)	1,366,749	1,357,391	-9,358	-0.7%	
Lukeville	Trucks	101	132	31	30.7%	
	Personal Vehicles	54,901	41,406	-13,495	-24.6%	
	Personal Vehicle Passengers	113,090	81,651	-31,439	-27.8%	
	Pedestrians	12,992	11,957	-1,035	-8.0%	
	Buses	130	94	-36	-27.7%	
	Bus Passengers (*)	700	506	-194	-27.7%	
	Total People (*)	126,782	94,114	-32,668	-25.8%	
Naco	Trucks	444	511	67	15.1%	
	Personal Vehicles	50,070	52,102	2,032	4.1%	
	Personal Vehicle Passengers	90,473	98,124	7,651	8.5%	
	Pedestrians	11,937	13,526	1,589	13.3%	
	Total People	102,410	111,650	9,240	9.0%	
Sasabe	Personal Vehicles	4,321	1,697	-2,624	-60.7%	
	Personal Vehicle Passengers	8,445	2,759	-5,686	-67.3%	
	Pedestrians	65	10	-55	-84.6%	
	Total People	8,510	2,769	-5,741	-67.5%	
State Totals	Trucks	85,044	89,084	4,040	4.8%	
	Personal Vehicles	1,557,209	1,476,722	-80,487	-5.2%	
	Personal Vehicle Passengers	2,799,886	2,690,362	-109,524	-3.9%	
	Pedestrians	960,405	1,094,856	134,451	14.0%	
	Buses	1,454	1,638	184	12.7%	
	Bus Passengers(*)	29,678	30,985	1,307	4.4%	
	Total People(*)	3,789,969	3,816,203	26,234	0.7%	

SOURCE: US Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics. All data provided herein subject to change without prior notice.

(*) NOTE: Total People is comprised of the number of passengers for buses, cars, trains, and pedestrians.
 Ramirez Advisors does not have the ability to verify the accuracy of the data published by USDOT.
 We have observed some unexplained variances that we believe impact our analysis of the data trends.

Updated 3/20/2024

12. PORT AUTHORITY ISSUES LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR UNISOURCE GRANT APPLICATION BEFORE US DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

- On March 27, the Port Authority issued a letter of support for the Unisource application grant that would help increase the reliability of the electric system that services the Nogales area.
- Members of the Unisource team leading this effort briefed Port Authority leadership on this effort, including the City of Nogales and Santa Cruz County. It is important to note that this is a highly competitive process and there are no guarantees.
- The letter states: *“On behalf of the Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority, I am writing to express our support for Unisource Energy Services’ Santa Cruz County Reliability Project application. The project is essential to*

enhance reliability and quality of the electric network and service for our community and the many essential operations that support regional and global supply chains and national security initiatives at the border.”

- The Port Authority provided a packet of information on the region that was used during the application process by Unisource.
- The Port Authority wishes the best of luck to Unisource on this effort.
- A copy of the letter is provided in Attachment # 3.

Attachment #1

Copy of letter in support of South32 Grant Application to US Department of Energy



March 5, 2024

U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Manufacturing and Energy Supply Chains
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20585

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of the Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority, I am writing to express our support for South32 Hermosa Project's grant proposal submitted to the US Department of Energy under FOA 3099 focused on battery materials processing and manufacturing.

South32's investments in our community stand to dramatically change the pervasive seasonal unemployment structure in our community. They are bringing much needed high-paying jobs and economic opportunity to our region. Moreover, they have invested their time and resources to numerous causes with great local impact. From workforce training and environmental remediation, to supporting efforts to make vaccines more accessible during the pandemic, their community involvement has been significant and greatly appreciated.

They have worked with local leaders, businesses, environmental organizations, and experts from the University of Arizona to proactively address concerns and maximize opportunities arising from their investment. An area of need for them is an area of opportunity for us, and that is the development of our workforce, which includes the creation of training programs with many local partners including our community college district.

As a gateway for over \$31 billion worth of trade with Mexico, Nogales understands the importance of reliable, secure, and dynamic supply chains. Developing a domestic source for critical minerals that are essential to many aspects of today and tomorrow's economy, including the manufacturing of batteries for cell phones and electric vehicles – and many other critical uses – is in our nation's best interest.

We thank you for the consideration of this letter and hope that you will approve South32's application. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me at jrubin@javidmexico.com.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joshua Rubin".

Joshua Rubin
Chairman

P.O. Box 4518
Rio Rico, AZ 85648

www.nogalesport.org

Attachment #2

Sample letter of support for Santa Cruz County CDS requests



March 21, 2024

The Honorable Raul Grijalva
US House of Representatives
1203 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

RE: 2025 Appropriations Community Funding Requests by Santa Cruz County

Dear Congressman Grijalva:

On behalf of the Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority, I am writing to express our support for the fiscal year 2025 Appropriations Community Funding requests submitted by Santa Cruz County. The Port Authority remains committed to addressing our community's transportation needs as they are critical for public safety, movement of goods and people, and improving the quality of life for the residents of the region. The projects submitted by Santa Cruz County are an integral part of that commitment.

The County requests are for \$1.6 million for the West Frontage Road at Camino Ramanote Roundabout, as part of an effort to reduce traffic accidents and congestion at this intersection, and \$3.75 million for the West Frontage Road at Yavapai Drive Intersection in order to improve safety and efficiency for vehicular traffic and pedestrians, and better accommodate multimodal uses. Both projects are in the Rio Rico area, the fastest growing areas of the county.

As always, we are grateful for your continued support for the needs of our community and stand ready to answer any questions you might have.

Respectfully,

Joshua Rubin
Chairman

Attachment #3

Copy of letter of support for Unisource grant application
(Note: Letter was edited to fit grant application formatting requirements)



April 7, 2024

U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20585

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of the Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority, I am writing to express our support for Unisource Energy Services' Santa Cruz County Reliability Project application. The project is essential to enhance reliability and quality of the electric network and service for our community and the many essential operations that support regional and global supply chains and national security initiatives at the border.

Just last year, the Nogales port of entry system was the gateway to 382,000 trucks, 3.7 million cars and 10.3 million people. According to the US Census Bureau, Nogales processed \$10.3 billion worth of US exports destined for the Mexican market, part of over \$31.6 billion in total trade processed this critical port of entry.

The fresh produce industry, that imports over 6.5 billion pounds of fresh produce through Nogales during the winter and spring months, produce that is a critical component of our nation's food supply. All that fresh produce is processed and distributed from approximately 110 refrigerated distributions centers that must have a reliable and uninterrupted power supply. Without refrigeration millions of pounds of fresh produce would be at risk on any typical day.

US Customs and Border Protection inspections of both goods and people are intended to protect our homeland from those that would do us harm, stop the flow of fentanyl and other narcotics that are a scourge on our nation and promote legal flows of goods and people. Without power, the ports of entry must rely on backup systems that are fueled by legacy fossil-fuels or else they would be forced to shut down, negatively impacting trade, tourism, supply chains and security.

A reliable electric grid is essential to our community's sustainable growth and intrinsic to our nation's economic and security interests. support the increased power demand as part of the port authority and border patrol's strategy to electrify its fleet. We thank you for the consideration of this letter and hope that you will approve UNSE's application as it is critical to our community's future.

Respectfully,



Joshua Rubin, Chairman