

May 16, 2024

TO: Mr. Joshua Rubin, Chairman

FROM: Luis E. Ramirez Thomas, President

SUBJECT: Monthly Report of Activities – April 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. NPR report on the border;
2. ADOT to begin planning for Sonoran Corridor in Pima County;
3. Letter of support for county’s congressional funding requests;
4. Leadership meets with ADOT for update on transportation issues;
5. FPAA holds Spring Policy Summit in Tubac;
6. Briefing for delegation of EU Deputy Chiefs of Mission;
7. City Approves Transfer of IOI to IBWC;
8. IBWC Announces the Completion of the IOI Rehab Project;
9. Mini-Retreat of the PA Board of Directors;
10. ADOT requests meeting for Mexican logistics company with Port Authority;
11. Port Authority meets with engineering firm on transportation projects;
12. UniSource holds Stakeholder meeting on Santa Cruz Reliability Project;
13. Valley Leadership visits to Ambos Nogales;
14. Bipartisan Congressional Delegation Visits Nogales; and
15. USDOT does not select Port Authority to receive Grant for Electric Trucks.

This report is not intended to be a full description of all activities but rather to provide 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. NPR REPORT ON THE BORDER

- On April 1, National Public Radio (NPR) released an in-depth report on the border that featured several Port Authority and Nogales leaders, including:
 - Chairman Rubin,
 - Jaime Chamberlain,
 - The Honorable Bruce Bracker, and
 - Evan Kory.
- Here are some of the quotes from local stakeholders:
 - *"We have a Republican candidate for president who said, 'Don't solve this issue for Joe Biden.' He sees this as an issue that he can run on," said Bruce Bracker, supervisor of Santa Cruz County, about Trump. "But at the end of the day, the people who we elect, we expect them to do their jobs today not to wait for 6 months to do their jobs." Others are frustrated with the Biden administration's [current reshuffling of staff](#), which [resulted in the decision to close the Lukeville port](#), and the president's expanded use of parole.*
 - *"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."*
- A copy of the article can be found at www.npr.org/2024/04/01/1241727265/arizona-immigration-politics-border-biden-trump

2. ADOT BEGINS NEW PLANNING PHASE FOR SONORAN CORRIDOR

- On April 1, the Arizona Department of Transportation issued a press release outlining the next phase of the process for the Sonoran Corridor, the Tier 2 Study.
- According to the press release, "The study will include the development of a range of approximately 400-foot-wide right-of-way alignment alternatives, including a "no-build" alternative. Results of the study will be included in the Design Concept Report and Tier 2 Environmental Impact Statement to be submitted to the Federal Highway Administration for review and approval. The study process will include comprehensive analysis, measurement, assessment and reporting on multiple factors related to environmental and community needs in the study area."
- Among the many benefits of the Sonoran Corridor, it is expected that it will reduce congestion and travel time for commercial traffic from Nogales destined for locations east of Tucson and Arizona.
- A copy of the press release can be found at: <https://azdot.gov/tags/sonoran-corridor>

3. LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR COUTNY'S CONGRESSIONAL FUNDING REQUESTS

- On April 2, the Port Authority sent letters of support to Arizona's Senators Kyrsten Sinema and Mark Kelly as well as Congressmen Raul Grijalva, Greg Stanton and Juan Ciscomani supporting the county's Congressional Directed Spending requests:
- The county's requests included:
 - \$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;
 - \$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.
- A sample of the letters is provided in Attachment #1.

4. MEETING WITH ADOT FOR UPDATE ON TRANSPORTATION ISSUES



- On April 2, the leadership of the Port Authority met with Mark Sanders of the Arizona Department of Transportation for a conversation on a variety of transportation issues affecting Nogales.
- As a follow up to the conversation, Chairman Rubin sent the following email:

Dear Mark,

On behalf of the Port Authority, I want to thank you for taking the time to meet with us earlier today to discuss a myriad of issues that are of paramount importance as residents of the Nogales contributors and one of the principal contributors to the Arizona economy.

As reflected by the length of our lunch meeting, there is quite a list of topics that we look forward to discussing with you, Director Toth and the team at ADOT. I am sure you will agree that some of the issues will take some time to resolve but we are hopeful that by putting them on the table we will all remain engaged in their respective resolutions.

- *While we are grateful for the major investment in SR-189, we have now observed some challenges with the design that are impacting the safety of the traveling public and the flow of the over 370,000 trucks that cross the border at Nogales into the US.*
 - *The Roundabout at the intersection of SR-189 and Target Range Road, continues to present a number of challenges. The gradient, the number of lanes, the constant flow of commercial traffic that is expected to slow down but because of the gradients refuse to comply, the continual flow of*

trucks carrying hazardous materials, trucks that do come to a stop and have to start moving either uphill or are to make the turn while on a gradient.

- We believe that there needs to be a more concerted effort to force traffic to slow down, be it through signing and flashing lights combined with random enforcement.*
 - Long-term we hope you agree that a more detailed analysis of possible safe and permanent solutions can be identified and implemented.*
- The condition of the pavement on Grand Avenue, particularly at the major intersections where traffic crosses the Nogales Wash. We are hoping that a more resistant types of pavement or concrete can be considered for these intersections were there are hundreds of both loaded and empty trucks starting and stopping every day with significant impacts to the road. These intersections are:*
 - Produce Road*
 - Gold Hill Road*
 - Calle Sonora*
 - Frank Reed Road*
- Also on the bridges, we are hoping to undertake a process to modernize them.*
 - The city conducted an initial assessment on three bridges, but that was done in 2015 - and the needs and costs are outdated. Any assistance in updating the designs and costs would go a long way towards advancing the modernization of these bridges.*
 - We know that they are not part of the ADOT system, but they are essential to the flow of traffic over the Nogales Wash, and therefore, critical to trade and tourism.*
- Electric Truck Pilot Program*
 - We are grateful that you will be participating in the inaugural Electric Truck program in Otay Mesa, California in coming days.*
 - It would be very helpful to determine if Bali will be willing to lease a truck(s) to an operator in Nogales. Any information you can provide on the terms of the lease would help us prepare for a possible agreement in the future.*
 - It would also be helpful to determine the details of the various programs that California has provided for Bali to make that project viable.*
 - Allow me to remind you that Unisource has indicated that the EV charging station in Kingman with 16 units, is equivalent to the consumption of a 200,000 SF refrigerated produce distribution center. Thus, the work with Unisource in strengthening the electric grid locally will be critical to the success of the Project.*
 - We are also encouraged to hear that ADOT is looking at the possibility of providing the funding that would be used upfront as this is a reimbursement grant, thus, as the money is spent and USDOT provides the refunds, ADOT would be paid back. If that is a possibility, we can explore a possible partnership with the County so that they can be the conduit for these funds.*
- For SR-83, the County is still looking to finalize the design of that project.*
- Ruby-Road/Rio Rico Interchanges, The County is excited to continue its work with ADOT on this key project.*

We look forward to finalizing the details for a meeting with the Director on April 30.

- The Port Authority is working on a possible visit to Nogales by Director Toth.

5. FPAA HOLDS SPRING POLICY SUMMIT IN TUBAC

- On April 3, the Fresh Produce Association of the Americas hosted its annual Spring Policy Summit at the Tubac Resort.
- This event features several speakers and presenters on key issues impacting the cross-border nature of their industry.
- Among the topics addressed were the Tomato Suspension Agreement, risks to supply chains, and included updates from key decision makers from both the United States and Mexico.
- Several members of the Board of Directors attended the event, including:
 - Chairman Josh Rubin, who was also a presenter;
 - Vice Chair Guillermo Valencia;
 - The Honorable Bruce Bracker;
 - The Honorable Jorge Maldonado; and
 - Pat Risner.



6. BRIEFING FOR EUROPEAN UNION DIPLOMATIC DELEGATION



- On April 8, the Port Authority hosted a delegation of Deputy Chiefs of Mission from 21 European Union nations.
- The delegation was in Arizona in a visit coordinated by the Phoenix Committee on Foreign Relations.
- During their visit to Nogales, Chairman Rubin took the delegation to see the DeConcini port of entry. This offered the opportunity for the delegates to see the dynamic opportunities of the border but also the challenges that we face with outdated technology and resource constraints.



- Santa Cruz County then hosted a roundtable discussion at the County Complex.
- The Port Authority provided a series of briefings that included the Key Issues and the latest data on border trade and crossings to help illustrate the impact of Nogales for North America.
- Special thanks to the board members that were able to take the time to engage in a dialogue with the delegates.
- A copy of the one of the handouts is provided in Attachment #2.

7. CITY APPROVES TRANSFER OF IOI TO IBWC



- On April 10, the City of Nogales, with a unanimous vote, approved the transfer to the International Outfall Interceptor (IOI) to the US International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC).
- With Port Authority leadership in attendance during the council meeting, the vote marked decades of negotiations and even lawsuits.
- Special thanks to the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, including Director Karen Peters and her predecessors Henry Darwin and Misael Cabrera, for their perseverance on this matter. Also, great appreciation to Deputy Director Amanda Stone, Joaquin Marruffo of

International Affairs, and now retired ADEQ team member Edna Mendoza, for this tremendous accomplishment.

- And special thanks to Senators Kyrsten Sinema and Mark Kelly, along with Congressmen Raul Grijalva and Juan Ciscomani for their perseverance.

8. IBWC ANNOUNCES COMPLETION OF IOI REHAB PROJECT



- On April 13, the US International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) announced the completion of the construction phase of the \$38 million Cure-In-Place of the International Outfall Interceptor (IOI).
- The repairs are designed to increase the life of the IOI by several decades, a project of great impact for generations to come in Ambos Nogales.
- The much-needed repairs of the IOI had been a top priority for the Port Authority since inception.
- The completion of the repairs greatly reduces the risk of future breaches of the

IOI, an issue that been occurring with greater frequency and with greater impact.

- The technology used for the repairs has proven to be very effective in other locations, including Tucson, where the same cure-in-place has been used in water and sewage pipes for years.
- Congratulations to the City of Nogales, Santa Cruz County, and the Port Authority for the successful advocacy of this project for so many years!
- There remain some clean up tasks that are part of the project, including the removal of the temporary pipes that were used for the bypasses during the construction phase. The City of Nogales continues to interface with the IBWC to ensure the proper completion of all aspects of the project.

9. MINI-RETREAT FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- On April 18, Chairman Rubin brought the board of directors together for a mini retreat to ensure alignment of priorities, consensus on activities and guidance for the officers on procedures going forward.
- Among the topics addressed by the board were:
 - The creation of shareable folder for the storage of records and files;
 - Consideration for the expansion of the board of directors;
 - Sponsorships;
 - Electric Truck Pilot Program;
 - DeConcini Modernization Stakeholder Outreach Project;
 - CABC Visit to Ambos Nogales;
 - Cold Room Activities;

- Cure-In-Place for IOI and clean up; and
- Among others.

- Special thanks to the Fresh Produce Association of the Americas for the use of their facilities to hold the meeting.
- A copy of the agenda is provided in Attachment #3.



10. ADOT REQUESTS MEETING FOR MEXICAN LOGISTICS COMPANY WITH PORT AUTHORITY



- An April 18, at the request of the Arizona Department of Transportation, the Port Authority met with representatives of MexLog, a Mexican logistics and transportation company that is providing support for Ford Motor Company operations in Hermosillo, Sonora
 - During the meeting, company representatives indicated that they were concerned over the impacts of the Querobabi Inspection on MX 15 between Hermosillo and Nogales.
- The Port Authority indicated that this was an issue that has impacted the entire corridor since it became operational some 20+ years ago.

- The Port Authority agreed to provide any additional information as it would become available.
- Special thanks to the Fresh Produce Association of the Americas for hosting the meeting.

11. PORT AUTHORITY MEETS WITH ENGINEERING FIRM ON TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

- On April 19, the Port Authority met with HDR, an engineering firm that is very familiar with Nogales and is interested in being considered for the design phase of the projects on I-19 at Ruby Road and Rio Rico Drive.



- The Port Authority stressed that the organization is open to meeting with any prospective vendor to provide them the same input.
- The meeting pointed out a that creative approaches are required at the interchanges.
- That both commercial and non-commercial traffic have grown significantly since the completion of the Design Concept Report in 2018.
- Members indicated that beyond the infrastructure improvements that

there needs to be a traffic mobility study that looks at the two interchanges as a system and not as independent. That consideration must be given to encouraging more commercial traffic to rely on Rio Rico Drive as it is expected that the east frontage road access from Rio Rico drive will become bidirectional instead of the single direction that it is today.

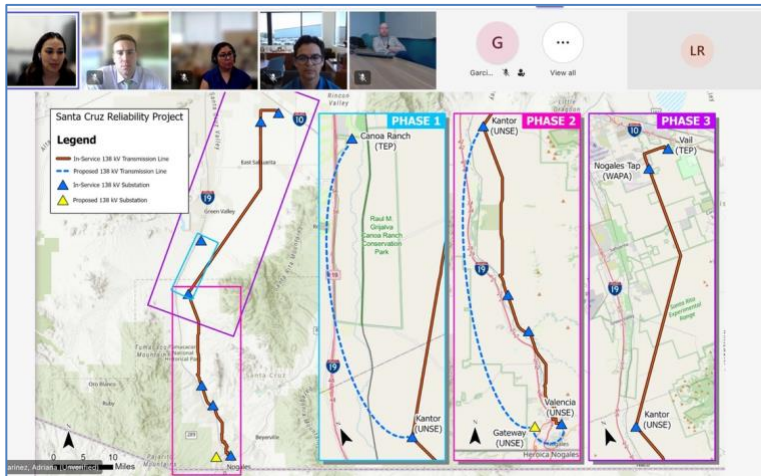
- That consideration must also be given to the impacts of the new bridge at Potrero Creek that will expedite traffic to and from I-19 on Ruby Road.

12. UNISOURCE HOLDS STAKEHOLDER MEETING ON SANTA CRUZ RELIABILITY PROJECT



- On April 23, Unisource Energy Services (UES) held a virtual public stakeholder meeting regarding the Nogales Reliability Project North.
- During the meeting the technical team offered an overview of the what the project entails, including the grant application, project scope and possible timetables should UES secure a federal grant.

- The project not only offers enhanced reliability for the greater Nogales area but can also be used to increase the capacity of the transmission system to help meet future needs in Nogales.



- The proposed timeline indicates a tentative project completion date of 2030.
- The modernization of the DeConcini port of entry, growth in the produce industry and the deployment of electric cars and trucks stand to greatly increase the demand for electricity in Nogales and without this project there could be limits to future growth.



13. VALLEY LEADERSHIP VISITS AMBOS NOGALES



- On April 26, Valley Leadership once again brought a delegation to visit the Ambos Nogales region.
- Valley Leadership, a Phoenix-based leadership development organization, that has been organizing visits for their Explore Program to border communities for several years.
- Initially their focus was exclusively on immigration issues but a few years ago, and in great part at the urgency of the Port

Authority, have expanded to include more trade and tourism related topics. Further information on Valley Leadership and the Explore program can be found at: <https://www.valleyleadership.org/leadership-development/explore/>.

- During their visit they had a presentation from South32, met with the city and the county, conducted a tour of a produce distribution center, visited the Wittner Museum, met with the leadership of the port authority, and conducted visits with several local organizations on the Sonora side.



14. BIPARTISAN CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION VISITS AMBOS NOGALES



- On April 26, the Bipartisan Policy Center organized a visit to Ambos Nogales by a bipartisan Congressional Delegation to see the challenges and opportunities of the border first-hand.
- The delegation was led by Arizona Congressmen Greg Stanton and Juan Ciscomani, and were joined by:
 - Reps. Young Kim (R-CA-40);
 - Anthony D'Esposito (R-NY-4);
 - Nikki Budzinski (D-IL-13); and
 - Eric Sorensen (D-IL-17).

- As described by the director of the American Congressional Exchange (ACE) program at the Center:



Under the unique ACE program, BPC sponsors participating members from the House of Representatives to:

** Visit a member from the opposite party in their district for one weekend or weekdays during a recess.*

** Tour sites of local economic, military, cultural, or social significance with their colleague.*

** Meet civic, business, education, or faith leaders for policy discussions in which the two Members have common interests.*

To date, dozens of Republican and Democratic members across the political spectrum have returned from these illuminating visits with new constructive relationships and a genuine interest in working together;

resulting in co-sponsoring bills, introducing new legislation, and other collaborative efforts.

On April 25-27, we are sponsoring our first bipartisan multi-member trip with U.S. Reps. Greg Stanton and Juan Ciscomani from Arizona hosting Reps. Young Kim (R-CA-40), Anthony D'Esposito (R-NY-4), Nikki Budzinski (D-IL-13) and Eric Sorensen (D-IL-17). The comprehensive trip will explore places and issues concerning border and immigration policy including meetings with academic institutions, legal experts, business leaders, local and county officials, law enforcement, NGOs, economic development agencies, health officials, a border patrol and facilities visit with Customs & Border Protection, and meetings across the border in Nogales, Mexico with the U.S. Consulate.

In Tumacacori-Carmen, we are hosting a working dinner with the six members of Congress on Fri., April 26, 5:30-7:30 p.m. The other invited guests include: Nogales Mayor Jorge Maldonado; Manuel Ruiz, Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors Chairman; Olivia Ainsa-Kramer, President & CEO, and Jessy Fontes, Board Chairman, Nogales-Santa Cruz County Chamber of Commerce; David Hathaway, County Sheriff; County Sheriff David Hathaway; Lance Jungmeyer, President, Fresh Produce Association of Americas; and Josh Rubin (representing INDEX Nogales), Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority. Also invited are representatives from the Tohono O'Odham Nation to communicate their concerns about movement of migrants through their culturally-sensitive lands.

The conversation with these stakeholders in the Nogales area will focus on economic development, trade, workforce development, migrant services. Also, on the agenda are talks about Mexico's role in protecting the border while also facilitating commerce and labor.

15. USDOT DOES NOT SELECT PORT AUTHORITY TO RECEIVE ELECTRIC TRUCK GRANT



- On April 24, the US Department of Transportation issued a Press Release indicating which projects had been selected to receive grants under the Program to Reduce Truck Air Pollution Near America's Ports.
 - The Port Authority had applied in July 2023 for a \$1 million grant to pay for up to 2 electric trucks for the pilot program to test cross-border drayage operations with electric trucks.
 - A review of the projects listed indicates that there Arizona was not a recipient of any of these funds.
- The technical team will meet on May 6 to identify possible next steps to keep the project alive.
 - The Port Authority has reached out to the NADBank and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality to verify that the other grants for the charging stations and the analysis respectively, would continue until the Port Authority could determine if there was another path for the pilot program.
 - The next meeting of the technical team is scheduled for May 6, 2024.

Attachment #1

Sample letter in support of County's Congressional Funding Requests



April 2, 2024

The Honorable Greg Stanton
US House of Representatives
207 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

RE: 2025 Appropriations Community Funding Requests by Santa Cruz County

Dear Congressman Stanton:

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,

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

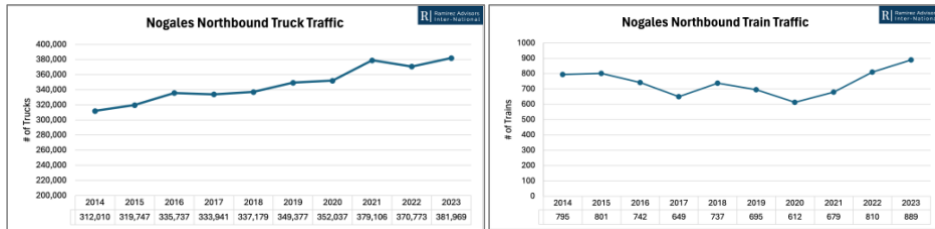
Attachment #2

Copy of Handout for European Union Delegation



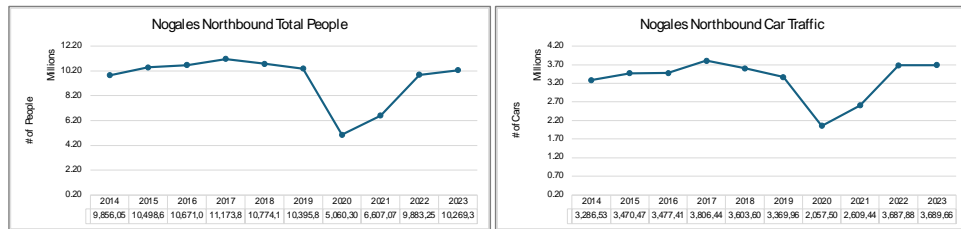
NOGALES BY THE NUMBERS

NORTHBOUND COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC



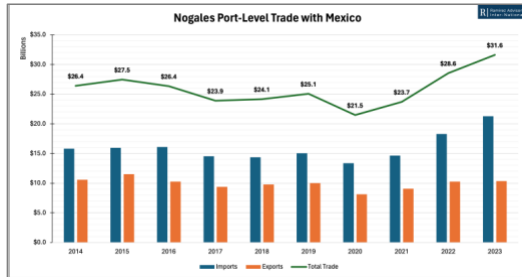
Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

NORTHBOUND NON-COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC



Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

TRADE THROUGH THE NOGALES PORT OF ENTRY



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

- Data represent the value of goods (\$USD) processed at the port of entry, regardless of whether origin/destination is the state of Arizona.
- "Total Trade" is the sum of imports and exports.

ALL DATA SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE



ABOUT THE GREATER NOGALES PORT AUTHORITY

Founded in December 2004, the Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority (GNSCCPA)—or the Port Authority—brings together the key stakeholders from the Ambos Nogales region together to address issues that impact our ports of entry.

MISSION STATEMENT

In partnership with public and private sectors, the strategic mission of the Port Authority is to strengthen the regional economy, improve international trade and spur tourism and community development by making the international ports of entry and surrounding areas the most efficient and effective for generations to come.

2024 KEY ISSUES

Not listed in order of priority.

- Expediting commercial traffic at the Querobabi military inspection station.
- Modernization of the Fiscal Corridor in Nogales, Sonora that connects the the Mariposa Port of Entry to Mexico Federal Highway 15.
- Implement initiatives that offer solutions for stormwater issues in Ambos Nogales.
- Implement programs that promote workforce development.
- Modernization of the DeConcini Port of Entry in downtown Nogales.
- Design, construct, maintain and operate a multimodal facility.
- Modernization of I-19 interchanges at Ruby Road and Rio Rico Drive.
- Modernize east-west railroad crossings.
- Participate in EPA-funded Urban Design Study to plan for the modernization of DeConcini Port of Entry.
- Support the Joint Resolution by Arizona border communities on CBP port staffing and operations.
- Support efforts of the fresh produce import industry for adherence to the principles of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) to ensure safe, affordable food supply in North America.
- Deploy a SENTRI lane (Secure Electronic Network for Travelers Rapid Inspection) at the Mariposa Port of Entry.
- Ensure appropriate staffing for ports of entry.

For a copy of the full document visit: <https://www.nogalesport.org/reports>

Attachment #3

Copy of Board of Directors Mini Retreat Agenda

AGENDA

**Board of Directors Quarterly Retreat
Greater Nogales Santa Cruz County Port Authority**

Noon – 2:30 PM
April 18, 2024
Nogales, Arizona

- Call to Order Josh Rubin, Chair

- Administrative Updates Josh Rubin, Chair
 - Schedule for Board Meetings and Activities
 - Shareable Folder for PA Files and Archives
 - Financial Update

- Sponsorship Program Josh Rubin, Chair

- Consideration of Board expansion Josh Rubin, Chair
 - Process to consider new board members
 - Santa Cruz County Community College District
 - Constellation Brands
 - Others

- Policy Discussion (Possible Action): Josh Rubin, Chair
 - Port Authority Board invitations by like-minded organizations
 - Priority Issues Document
 - Nogales Community Development
 - Requests for sponsorships by third parties

- Updates Jaime Chamberlain,
Project Lead
Luis Ramirez
 - Electric Truck Pilot Program
 - DeConcini Modernization Stakeholder Outreach Project
 - CABC Visit to Ambos Nogales
 - Cold Room Activities Josh Rubin, Chair
 - Other Guillermo Valencia

- New Business Josh Rubin, Chair

- Adjournment Josh Rubin, Chair