



The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

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Navajo Nation senior centers receive new transportation and delivery vans



PHOTO: President Jonathan Nez, Division of Aging and Long-Term Care Support officials, Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty, and Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown at Fleet Management in Window Rock, Ariz. on Feb. 13, 2019.

WINDOW ROCK – President Jonathan Nez and officials from the Navajo Nation Division of Aging and Long-Term Care Support celebrated the arrival of new transportation vans and food delivery vehicles for senior centers in Window Rock on Wednesday. The vans will be delivered to the five Navajo agencies to help Navajo elders that benefit from senior center services.

President Nez said Wednesday's gathering is the culmination of the collaborative efforts between the Navajo Nation Department of Health, Division of General Services, Division of Aging and Long-Term Care Support, and the Navajo Nation Council. He added that the new vans ensure that

Navajo elders travel in safe and reliable transportation, and helps to provide meals to Navajo elders in their homes who are unable to travel to senior centers.

“Senior centers throughout the Nation provide door-to-door services and transportation to the senior centers for lunch, social gathering, or special events. Many of the existing vehicles have high mileage and in need of repairs,” said President Nez. “Our senior centers need these vans to provide effective services for our elderly population.”

In April 2018, the 23rd Navajo Nation Council approved legislation sponsored by Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty, which provided \$2.8 million from the Navajo Nation’s Unreserved, Undesignated Fund Balance to the Division of Aging and Long-Term Care Support to fund needs assessments, equipment, food menu consultation, and the new vehicles.

“Over the last several years, programs for elders have been chronically underfunded and often bear the brunt of any shortfall in funding. This was an opportunity to provide more funding for essential services like food and especially vans for our seniors to be safe and to have reliable transportation and the ability to have access to food and resources. It’s about working together with leadership to prioritize our elders,” said Delegate Crotty.

The funds allowed the Nation to purchase 36 new vehicles, which are gradually being delivered to the central Fleet Management office where they will undergo inspections before being delivered to the five agencies across the Navajo Nation. They will also receive food delivery vehicles, referred to as “hot shots,” that will be used to deliver meals to elders at their homes – each vehicle can hold up to 150 cold and hot meals.

“The Nez-Lizer Administration recognizes that our Navajo elders play an important role in our families and communities. They carry on the knowledge of our way of life and they bring us joy and comfort within our families, so we must continue to provide adequate resources and services for them,” added President Nez.

He also noted that the Division of General Services will develop policy to ensure that senior centers receive vehicle repairs and new vehicles on a periodic basis to ensure the continued safety of Navajo elders and the availability of food delivery services.

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