



The Navajo Nation
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Hospitality Enterprise to construct new hotel, convention center, and office space in the capital of the Navajo Nation



PHOTO: President Jonathan Nez, Miss Navajo Nation Shaandiin Parrish, Division of Economic Development Executive Director JT Willie, Division of Transportation Executive Director Garret Silversmith, and Navajo Nation Hospitality Enterprise Board members at the groundbreaking ceremony in Window Rock, Ariz. on Jan. 17, 2020.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez joined the Navajo Nation Hospitality Enterprise in Window Rock, Ariz. on Friday, for the ground breaking ceremony to mark the beginning of the first phase of construction for three new office complexes, which will eventually lead to the construction of an 82-room hotel and convention center in the capital of the Navajo Nation. Miss Navajo Nation Shaandiin Parrish, Division of Economic Development Executive Director JT Willie, and Division of Transportation Executive Director Garret Silversmith were also in attendance.

“This exciting new development is the result of years of hard work, effective leadership, and the persistence of the Navajo Nation Hospitality Enterprise’s administration, board, and staff. This project signifies what can be accomplished when we work together to create jobs, revenue, and a

place that can draw in outside dollars,” said President Nez, who recalled the idea of constructing a convention center in the capital of the Navajo Nation during his tenure as a Council Delegate.

President Nez also said that during the construction phase, as many as 125 new construction jobs will be created. Once the office complexes and hotel are complete, an additional 50 new permanent jobs will be created as well and approximately \$6.5 million in annual revenue.

“This initiative will help to build the momentum for further developments such as an indoor arena, additional events and meeting space, and parking facilities at the fairgrounds in Window Rock,” added President Nez.

He added that the Nez-Lizer Administration is also developing a Navajo tourism corridor and a travel agency to draw more tourism business to the Nation. Within the last year, the Division of Economic Development has worked with other entities to construct several new businesses including a new hotel in Crownpoint, shopping centers in Nahata Dziil and Burnside, retail stores in Dennehotso, and more that will help create new revenue to help offset the \$30 to \$50 million decline in revenue due to the closure of Navajo Generating Station and Kayenta Mine.

Navajo Nation Hospitality Enterprise CEO Stan Sapp commended the Hospitality Board members for their support for the project. He also acknowledged the hard work of the 200 plus employees that the enterprise employees, NTUA for providing the utility infrastructure, Keyah Construction, Inc. for constructing the office complexes, and Iron Rock Engineering for their work.

Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development Executive Director JT Willie said the project will have significant positive implications for the “Buy Navajo, Buy Local” initiative, such as recapturing lost revenues that leave the Nation, providing support for other local businesses, families, and organizations, and giving the chance for visitors to have a meaningful experience on the Nation by while staying local.

“If the Navajo people have the power, the money, and the capacity to build towns like Gallup, then we should have the power to build our own Nation,” said Director JT Willie, who also noted the importance that the new facility will play in drawing tourists to the Navajo Nation.

Hospitality Enterprise Board Chairman Lorenzo Max thanked his colleagues on the board including Council Delegate Rickie Nez, Council Delegate Otto Tso, Lawrence Platero, and Allen Naille.

“It’s always good to have something positive like this for the Navajo people. We have shortages in office space and accommodations for our people and tourists. This is an opportunity to present ourselves in a positive way,” stated Chairman Max.

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