



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 6, 2021

**Shonto community breaks ground on new
hotel to support tourism corridor, jobs, and revenue**



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, and Council Delegate Herman Daniels, Jr. join local Shonto leaders to break ground on a new hotel facility in Shonto, Ariz. on April 6, 2021.

SHONTO, Ariz. – On Tuesday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer joined local community members, Shonto Community Governance officials, and 24th Navajo Nation Council members to celebrate the start of construction of a new three-story, 83-room La Quinta Inn hotel in the community of Shonto, Ariz., which will support tourism and create new jobs and additional revenue for the Navajo Nation. The groundbreaking event was hosted by the Shonto Community Governance in Shonto, Ariz.

The 54,000 square-foot hotel will offer 83 hotel rooms, conference rooms, and other amenities, located at the intersection of U.S. Route 160 and State Route 98 next to the existing Shonto Marketplace. The construction phase is expected to create 80 jobs, and once the hotel is in operation an additional 30 permanent jobs.

The new hotel was part of a Permanent Trust Fund interest income five-year plan that was developed in collaboration between the Office of the President and Vice President and the previous 23rd Navajo Nation Council with input from local chapter officials. As Vice President of the Navajo Nation under the former Begaye-Nez Administration, President Nez worked closely with Speaker Seth Damon and others to finalize legislation that allocated \$150 million from the interest income earned from the Permanent Trust Fund principal for economic development, water projects, and other initiatives.

“This is a great milestone for the Shonto community and the entire Navajo Nation. Years ago, when I had the honor of serving as the Vice President for Shonto Chapter, we had a vision to empower our local leaders and to create a local economy to sustain jobs and revenue for our people. A few years ago, the Navajo Nation completed the travel center here in Shonto and now we are taking another step forward with the start of construction of the new hotel. This initiative is part of a larger vision of creating a tourism corridor that will attract more visitors to Navajo land to increase our economic potential. I extend my appreciation to everyone, including all of the past and present local leaders, who advocated and remained committed to this project over many years,” said President Nez.

The Nez-Lizer Administration also continues to support local communities that were impacted by the closure of the Navajo Generating Station, to help transition to other economic opportunities related to renewable energy, tourism, and other industries.

The hotel project is overseen by the Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development in partnership with Shonto Economic Development Corporation, which is a non-profit entity that was created by the Shonto Community Governance. Local officials led the efforts to withdraw 10 acres of land for business development.

Council Delegate Herman Daniels, Jr., Shonto Community Governance President Roland Smallcanyon, Shonto Economic Development Corporation President Arlene Edd, Miss Navajo Nation Shaandiin Parrish, Navajo-Hopi Land Commission Office Executive Director Robert K. Black, Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources Dr. Rudy Shebala, and representatives from Medallion Hospitality and La Quinta Inn spoke during the event, to offer their support and appreciation for the project.

“This is an exciting time for the Shonto community, as construction begins on the second major economic development initiative in recent years. The Shonto Marketplace that was constructed a few years ago has proven to be a successful endeavor. The COVID-19 pandemic has set us back in some ways, so it’s great to see progress being made. The Nez-Lizer Administration continues to promote the ‘Buy Navajo, Buy Local’ concept and the new hotel in Shonto is part of that vision,” said Vice President Lizer.

The construction of the hotel is funded through a \$5 million allocation from the Permanent Trust Fund interest income, \$3 million from the Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development, and \$3.1 million from the Abandoned Mines Land Program. Medallion Hospitality was selected to construct the new facility.

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