



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

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**Local Navajo leaders prioritize infrastructure projects to  
create long-term benefits using American Rescue Plan Act funds**



**PHOTO:** Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez meets with Tohatchi, Mexican Springs, Naschitti, Bahastl'a'a', Coyote Canyon local leaders in Tohatchi, N.M. on June 9, 2021.

**WINDOW ROCK, N.M.** — Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, and Division Directors under the Nez-Lizer Administration continue to meet with leaders and officials from Navajo Nation chapters to hear the needs and priorities of their communities regarding the COVID-19 recovery efforts under the American Rescue Plan Act. On May 28, the Navajo Nation received its initial funding allocation from the American Rescue Plan Act totaling over \$1.8 billion.

In April, the Nez-Lizer Administration also hosted virtual meetings with each of the five Navajo agencies to layout the process of submitting feasible/construction ready project listings to the Division of Community Development to be considered for funding through the American Rescue Plan Act. All 110 chapters are required to submit their proposals through the Division of Community Development's online portal by this week.

"This is the Navajo people's money and that's why we, along with Division Directors and Navajo Police Chief Phillip Francisco, are going out to the communities to listen to the recovery needs related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our administration has also developed a comprehensive project listing that includes over 9,000 projects at a cost of over \$20 billion, so it's clear that \$1.8 billion will not meet all of the Nation's priorities, but we have to do our best to leverage the funds to implement changes and improvements. The Navajo Nation has never received this amount of funding from the federal level at one time – this is possibly a once in a lifetime opportunity for our Nation to create changes and benefits for future generations. The common priorities that we are hearing from the community level include bathroom additions, rural addressing needs, water and power lines, warehouses to store supplies, broadband coverage, public safety, housing needs, waste management, road improvements, drought mitigation," said President Nez.

During the meetings, President Nez also recommended that some of the funds from the American Rescue Plan Act be used to complete projects that were previously funded through the Navajo Nation's Síhasin Fund in order to save for future needs.

As of Friday, the Nez-Lizer Administration has met with officials from Kayenta, Chilchinbeto, Tuba City, Chinle, Dilkon, Crownpoint, Tohatchi, Mexican Springs, Naschitti, Bahastl'a'a', Coyote Canyon, Thoreau, St. Michaels, Shiprock, and Aneth and plans to meet with more. The Division of Community Development has also invited members of the 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council to the meetings as well.

"We appreciate all of the local leaders who put forth the voice of the people as well as our Division Directors, Police Chief Francisco, and all of the employees who are committed to hearing from the communities. Generations from now, our people are going to look back on this opportunity and ask what we accomplished. We are striving to provide long-term improvements and benefits that will help to empower our people and communities for generations down the road. We also thank the 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council for all of the work they are doing and for taking the time to meet with us as well," said Vice President Lizer.

The American Rescue Plan Act provides \$20 billion for tribes to help recover from the devastating impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The Nez-Lizer Administration will continue to meet with community leaders. Chapters are encouraged to visit the Division of Community Development website for more information about submitting proposals: <https://www.nndcd.org>.

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