



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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**Nez-Lizer Administration meets with chapters
regarding priorities for the American Rescue Plan Act**



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez meets with Kayenta Chapter and Kayenta Township officials regarding American Rescue Plan Act priorities in Kayenta, Ariz. on May 24, 2021.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez was joined by Navajo Nation Division of Community Development Executive Director Dr. Pearl Yellowman, Division of Transportation Executive Director Garret Silversmith, Division of Human Resources Executive Director Dr. Perphelia Fowler, Division of Natural Resources Executive Director Dr. Rudy Shebala, and Miss Navajo Nation Shaandiin Parrish on Monday, as he met with chapter officials and local leaders from the communities of Chinle, Kayenta, and Chilchinbeto to discuss local priorities in anticipation of receiving funds through the American Rescue Plan Act in the next several weeks.

In April, the Nez-Lizer Administration 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 no later than May 31, 2021.

"Last month, we provided the opportunity for all 110 chapters to present their project priorities and now we are following up with further discussions with some of the larger populated chapters so that we can present a comprehensive construction ready listing to the Navajo Nation Council for consideration. There are many needs in all of our communities and the funds that will be coming in from the federal level are not enough to address all of the needs. The priorities will help to narrow the overall project listing. The majority of the priorities received so far are related to infrastructure development related to water, electricity, and roads," said President Nez.

The American Rescue Plan Act provides \$20 billion for tribes to help recover from the devastating impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. On May 10, the U.S. Department of the Treasury issued a letter requiring all tribal governments to submit a request for funding through an online portal no later than May 24, in order to receive its share of \$1 billion that will be allocated equally among the tribes. After a tribe's submission is received, it will take approximately four to five days for the Treasury Department to review and process. The Navajo Nation submitted its request to the Treasury Department on May 21.

For the remaining \$19 billion, 65-percent or \$12.35 billion of the Treasury's allocation will be based on self-certified tribal enrollment numbers that were submitted to the Bureau of Indian Affairs in April 2021. The Navajo Nation submitted updated enrollment information reflecting close to 400,000 enrolled members of the Navajo Nation on April 21. The remaining 35-percent, or \$6.65 billion, will be distributed to tribes based on tribal employment data. Tribes will have until June 7, 2021 to confirm or amend employment numbers. In mid-June the Treasury will inform tribes of their portion of funding and the anticipated date to receive it.

Chinle Chapter President Dr. Rosanna Jumbo-Fitch presented several chapter resolutions supporting bathroom additions for 34 families as the top priority, followed by water line projects and a new warehouse to store PPEs and other essential supplies to help residents. Council Delegate Eugene Tso was also present and spoke about the challenges that Chinle residents face on a daily basis due to inadequate infrastructure.

President Nez also met with Kayenta Chapter President Dalton Singer, Kayenta Township Manager Gabriel Yazzie, and Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown in Kayenta, where he received a list of priorities related to the construction of a new Kayenta Diversion Dam, a multi-purpose facility, farmers market, gravel transport and placement, water lines, power lines, house wiring, broadband infrastructure, water and waste water, heavy equipment needs, judicial facility, and reimbursement for costs and losses incurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Chilchinbeto Chapter Vice President Thomas Bradley stated that water lines, bathroom additions, and house wiring for residents are the top three priorities for the American Rescue Plan Act. Chapter Manager Eugene Badonie also provided an overview of other chapter projects including the development of a new c-store, multi-purpose building, solid waste station, broadband, and others.

“We appreciate the efforts of all chapters to compile their priorities and submit them before the May 30 deadline. We have so many needs in our communities, but water, electricity, broadband, and capital projects are the most common. As we move forward through this process, we must continue to work together and support one another and keep in mind that we want these funds to provide long-term benefits for our people. I also thank our Division Directors for working with chapters and many others to move us forward,” stated Vice President Lizer.

The Nez-Lizer Administration will continue to meet with chapters and to provide support for the submission of chapter priorities related to the American Rescue Plan Act. 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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