



State of the Navajo Nation April 21, 2025

Ya'ateeh! Members of the 25th Navajo Nation Council, Speaker Crystalynne Curley, Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne, Navajo elected officials, and the Navajo people.

I respectfully inform you that I will not be attending the Spring Council Session today on April 21, 2025, as I am in Washington, D.C. advancing the Navajo Nation's priorities. This engagement with our federal partners is always critical to ensuring our voice is heard and our needs are addressed.

I understand the importance of my State of the Navajo Nation report to the Navajo Nation Council and to the Navajo people. In full recognition of that and pursuant to 2 N.N.C. §1005, I am submitting a detailed written report, which will also be provided to the public. I trust that my report will provide valuable insight and offer a meaningful overview of the current state of the Navajo Nation.

Before you question my commitment to the Nation, I must take a moment to remind everyone that the United States is a democracy, and the President of the United States has been elected. We signed two treaties with the United States. I must and will work with any administration—Republican or Democrat—to protect jobs, preserve and increase revenue for our communities, and expand new opportunities for our Nation. Our allegiance is to the Navajo people and to the treaties we have signed.

Recently, I was invited to the White House to witness the signing of three federal executive orders. By accepting the White House's invitation, I was exercising my Title 2 authority to represent the Navajo Nation in its relations with government agencies and to create goodwill toward the Navajo Nation. I was invited because of my willingness to work together to find shared priorities, because I believe that engagement opens doors. I may not agree with all the policies or positions of the federal government, and I make my views known in every discussion. I remind federal leaders of our treaty, our sovereignty, and the responsibility we all share to work in good faith and in partnership in order to co-exist.

I accepted the invitation because the three executive orders that President Trump signed are intended to advance America's dominance in energy. The Navajo Nation shares the goal of American energy dominance because the Navajo Nation has for 100 years been a part of the energy framework of the United States. Our lands have natural resources and transmission lines, also known as the grid. We will forever be part of the American energy framework and therefore Navajo's voice and involvement in these discussions is required.



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When the Navajo Generating Station closed, we lost thousands of jobs and tens of millions of dollars in annual revenue. Our Nation is still feeling the effects of that loss today. I will not allow that kind of economic collapse to happen again.

The Four Corners Power Plant and the associated mine provides hundreds of jobs and tens of millions of dollars to the Navajo Nation. The Plant is slated to close in 2031. The Navajo Transitional Energy Company (NTEC) was created to help us transition into newer and different forms of energy development. NTEC has proposed the NavEnergy Hub, which includes continued operations of Four Corners after 2031, development of natural gas energy production, and renewable energy production. Importantly, NTEC has proposed that continued operations include carbon sequestration. My office has been working with the Department of Justice, the Minerals Department, and outside legal experts on supporting the NavEnergy Hub. Importantly, we have to move quickly because the Navajo Nation Council's Resources and Development Committee has reported that it would like the necessary documents requiring their approval by August – a mere four months away.

President Trump's Three Executive Orders concerning American energy dominance opens up unprecedented opportunities for the Navajo Nation and NTEC. We believe these Orders can help us make the NavEnergy Hub a reality. We also believe we can include a new element to provide more jobs which is an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Data Center. The U.S. Department of Commerce is also assisting us and will be visiting the Navajo Nation next week to support our visions.

Let me be clear that I do not support the reopening of mines that are closed. This current window of opportunity is about creating a diversified portfolio of energy production. We need to maintain current operations as long as possible while we diversify our energy portfolio. We are looking to the future for market competitive industries and emerging technologies.

We are not here to go backward. We are here to build. And I will continue to fight for every job, every opportunity, and every investment that keeps our communities strong, and our families supported. I am elected by the entire Navajo Nation, and I do my best to ensure that every voice is heard. As we move forward, I am happy to report on some of the major accomplishments my Administration has achieved in the last quarter.

HOUSING

I want to reflect on the deep cultural significance of "hooghan" in our Diné way of life. This has been a priority of the Nygren Administration from the beginning. Homes are not just physical structures; they are sacred spaces where we build our lives, teach and safeguard our families, and foster our connections to one another. Our homes provide safety and belonging. Recognizing the importance of homes, we commit ourselves to ensuring every family has a place to call their own.



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The Housing Improvement Program (HIP) aims to help our most vulnerable Navajo families—those who are homeless or living in substandard conditions. With the over \$9 million in ARPA funding that HIP received, we will deliver a total of 76 homes under this program. All homes have passed land clearances and other HIP requirements. Delivery of these homes began in

November 2024. Currently, five (5) homes are in production with Homes Direct, while 24 delivered homes are awaiting utility connections, and two (2) homes are under construction.

We are also excited to report that under the Community Housing and Infrastructure Department (CHID), 360 homes will be delivered. The Division for Community Development (DCD) received \$50 million in ARPA funding, which was equally distributed among our 24 delegate regions. This means that each region received \$2,083,333 to help address their housing needs.

Currently, seven (7) homes are in production with contractor Homes Direct, three (3) homes have been renovated, and 29 are waiting on utility connections. Modular homes are also being delivered at a rate of four (4) homes per week. Once we receive approval for ADA-compliant manufactured homes, fabrication of these homes will begin.

CHID coordinated an applicant portal where registered chapter members can enter their information. Each chapter provided ten (10) names to a master list shared with the Council, Veterans, and the Hopi Land Commission directors.

The collaborative efforts among CHID, HIP, and the Navajo Hopi Land Commission (NHLC) offices, in addition to Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA), Indian Health Service (IHS), and the Navajo Engineering Construction Authority (NECA), have streamlined infrastructure connections for new ARPA homes. The CHID project managers are conducting site visits to document existing utility services and plan the required connections for water, electricity, and wastewater. Thank you to all involved as we see lives changing with the delivery of these homes.

Our commitment to providing homes to our Navajo veterans remains strong. Together with the Navajo Nation Veterans Administration (NNVA) and our partners, we have a total of 187 homes planned for our veterans. Of the 187, ten (10) homes have been delivered and being occupied by Navajo veterans and their families, while 12 are complete and awaiting utility connections.

As of April 15, an additional 59 housing projects have started, including housing renovations. Our contractors including SWIF, BITCO, and the Sparrow Group, have begun laying foundations for these 59 homes.

Some of the most recent beneficiaries of homes are families impacted by the Navajo-Hopi land dispute. Five (5) homes are projected to be delivered in the next two weeks – two (2) homes will be delivered to families in the Former Bennett Freeze area of the Tonalea Chapter and three (3) modular homes will be delivered in the White Cone Chapter area.



These homes were purchased using \$14 million in ARPA funds, which will be used to purchase a total of 96 modular homes to benefit 23 chapters – nine (9) in the Former Bennett Freeze (FBF) area and 14 in the Navajo Partitioned Lands (NPL). Since the launch of its efforts, NHLCO has delivered three (3) modular homes within the Pinon Chapter. Looking ahead, the NHLCO anticipates receiving two (2) to four (4) modular homes per week through Homes Direct, the contractor building the 96 modular homes.

HOME SITE LEASES

In the second quarter from January to March, the Navajo Nation has approved more than 400 homesite leases across all five agencies. We have a goal of approving 2,000 for the year. The Eastern Agency reported 442 pending applications; Northern Agency reports 470 applications; Central Agency processed 93 pending applications and completed 33 leases; Fort Defiance Agency approved 184 approved homesite leases and reported 68 applications pending, while the Western Agency followed with 93 approved leases.

The data highlights not only the significant demand for homesite leases but also the administration's ongoing efforts to provide secure residential land use for tribal members.

CHAPTER RENOVATIONS

I have committed to visiting all 110 Chapters over the next two years. In my visits, I'm happy to see that some major chapter house renovation projects are underway.

Oak Springs Chapter is 95 percent complete and expected to be finished in May. The renovation, totaling \$3,481,368.14, is funded by Sihasin and Arizona state funds. The chapter is renovating a 6,323-square-foot facility to better serve its growing population. The project includes ADA-compliant access, improved parking and drainage, an expanded kitchen, and flexible space for meetings and events.

St. Michaels Chapter is 80 percent complete and is projected to be completed by August 2025. The \$7,485,767 renovation will include renovations to expand its 8,500-square-foot facility. Features include a modern steel structure, salvaged sandstone exterior, open office space, larger kitchen, and high-ceiling meeting area. The project is now set for completion in July 2025.

Construction at Ramah Chapter is 99 percent complete and expected to be complete this month. The \$1,760,600 project is funded through New Mexico Capital Outlay and the Navajo Nation's Sihasin Fund.

Although both the Gadii'ahi/To'Koi Chapter and Senior Center are 100 percent complete, the Chapter is addressing a major issue. Water line connections have become a challenge due to the presence of the endangered Mesa Verde cactus. We will continue to work to ensure that this \$11 million for both buildings begin to serve the community.



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Meanwhile, planning is underway for a new Oljato Chapter House after the previous facility was condemned a year ago. The chapter currently operates out of a double-wide trailer. In August 2024, the Navajo Nation Capital Projects Management Department issued a work order to proceed with design planning by Indigenous Design Studios + Architect. Architectural fees total \$551,616.27 and include added services for a kitchen and landscaping. The proposed 7,500-square-foot facility is modeled after the Iyanbito Chapter Multi-Use Building, with an estimated construction cost of \$9 million.

These projects are overseen by the Navajo Division of Community Development and represent a coordinated investment to modernize and reestablish foundational spaces for community decision-making, events, and services.

SENIOR CENTERS

The Navajo Division of Aging and Long-Term Care Support Senior Center (DALTCS) has been diligently working to provide services and wellness resources to our elderly community. Currently, there are four (4) senior centers that have reopened in Lupton, Nahata Dziil, Hogback and Upper Fruitland, while six (6) more centers are planned to open in late May in communities of Shiprock, Standing Rock, Coyote Canyon, Jeddito, St. Michaels and Tohatchi. Huerfano senior center is expected to open in June.

At this time, 11 senior centers remain closed, but a corrective action plan is being implemented to address this. Moving forward, four (4) new sites have been proposed in Bodaway/Gap, Black Mesa, Mitten Rock, and in Mexican Springs, while Kayenta is being considered for new development.

ROADS

Earlier this year in January, Navajo Department of Transportation announced it would prioritize \$144.6 million in road plans including: contracting 9 road construction projects at 9 sites - Newcomb, Toadlena, Wheatfields Lake, Blue Canyon, Many Farms, Alamo, Tuba City, Greasewood Cornfields-Burnside and Red Valley. In addition, Navajo DOT announced it would be applying for bridge construction funding for 71 bridges across Navajo.

Since January, the following projects will be going into construction this summer:

- 2.8 miles of Navajo Route 5001 in Toadlena and Two Grey Hills, NM will see improvement, while three bridges will be replaced. NDOT anticipates it will begin construction by June 30, 2025.
- In addition, the Navajo Engineering Construction Authority (NECA) is in negotiation to improve Navajo Route 12 in Tsaille and Wheatfields areas. This will include 7.2 miles of Navajo Route 12, which will see improvement from the Agency Line to Wheatfields, AZ,



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including one bridge replacement. The Wheatfields Lake parking lot will also be starting construction. Construction is anticipated to start in late June 2025.

- 11 miles of Navajo Route 13 in Red Valley, AZ/NM will see pavement rehabilitation. This is anticipated to begin June 2025 and will include a concrete box culvert inlet and outlet rehabilitation work.
- 8.2 miles of Navajo Route 55 in Alamo, NM will also undergo pavement rehabilitation during June 2025.

The following projects are still awaiting final planning before construction begins:

- 7.4 miles of Navajo Route 8066 and Navajo Route 8065 in Black Mesa, AZ.
- 5.4 miles of Navajo Route 9073 in Blue Canyon and Fort Defiance, AZ
- 3.6 miles of Navajo Route 8084 and two new bridges in Many Farms, AZ
- 1.3 miles of Navajo Route 609 including a concrete retaining wall in Tuba City
- 7.1 miles of Navajo Route 15 will undergo pavement reconstruction and shoulder widening in Cornfields and Burnside, AZ

Two ongoing projects are currently under construction. NECA has started work on Navajo Route 35 in January 2024, an existing paved road that ends after 7 miles in Sweetwater. The remaining 6.4 miles is in the progress of laying base course gravel before it can be paved in late May with fully completed road striping by June 30, 2025. The cost of construction in Sweetwater is about \$21,155,004. The FNF Construction company is currently working to improve Navajo Route 6461 and Navajo Route 6460 projects in Dennehotso, which started back in September 2024. FNF will pave a total of 5.7 miles and include bridge repairment. However, with utility delays, the completion date of road construction may be pushed back from end of August 2025 to December 30, 2025, but depending on weather, early spring of 2026. The cost for Dennehotso is about \$18,832,820.

BROADBAND DEVELOPMENT

In today's digital age, access to the Internet is crucial, and I have assembled the best team possible to bring broadband solutions to the Nation. These solutions include extensive fiber builds, implementing Low Earth Orbiting (LEO) Satellite Services and Fixed Wireless Access.

To ensure that no funding goes unused, we are closely monitoring the \$42 million of broadband-encumbered ARPA dollars. These funds are allocated for 4G mobility upgrades, community Wi-Fi, and fiber projects, both middle mile and fiber to the home.

NNBO needs Council to allocate \$77.8 million for Phase I of the Broadband plan which will construct 36 towers across the Navajo Nation to deploy 5G and provide the foundation for BEAD program. We have already completed the RFP process for Phase 1 projects, and we are



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waiting for funding, hoping to make an award for the initial phase by end April 2025. Funding these Phase 1 projects will provide the critical foundation for BEAD program projects.

In March 2025, we submitted a New Mexico BEAD application, and the Utah BEAD application is in progress. The NM application targets over 4,000 unserved locations including Pine Haven Fire and Rescue, Jones Ranch Community School, and many others. The Utah application is due in April 2025 and aims to connect 2,000 unserved and underserved locations, ensuring more communities can access high-speed internet.

The BBO is proud to report \$27 million in savings through carrier negotiations and technical analysis of projects. This stretches available funds further to serve more Navajo communities and homes. While the BBO is doing its best to save and responsibly manage available funds, Council must act to allocate the approximately \$80 million in requested funding to continue to advance broadband services and upgrades in every chapter across our great Nation.

WATER PROJECTS

Ensuring access to clean water continues to be a priority for our administration.

The most notable and recent celebration was that of a new \$267 million water treatment plant that broke ground on April 16. This is the second water treatment plant for the Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project, which is the cornerstone of our River water rights settlement to the San Juan River in New Mexico.

The San Juan Lateral Treatment Plant is set to be completed by late 2028. This project will provide water security and clean drinking water to over 200,000 people in the span of 40 years, reaching into Arizona. The water treatment will provide 200 jobs and treat up to 18.8 million gallons of water per day, in accordance with the Safe Drinking Water Act standards. The plant also has the capability to treat up to 37.6 million gallons per day.

For Aneth, Nageezi and Huerfano, a \$3.8 million budget will bring water loading stations and connections to community members. As far as drinking sources for our people, made possible through this Council and my administration, 314 waterlines have been completed and in-service to Navajo families, along with 24-bathroom additions. In total, NTUA has connected 359 homes with 152 miles of waterlines for its water service connections over the last three years, though most of these water lines are relatively short distances.

Just in this first quarter, NTUA connected 34 homes to water lines and in quarter two has connected ten homes to water lines. As of this date, NTUA has 104 water lines under construction in quarter two.

Through partnerships with NTUA, we are connecting our people to water and constructing water treatment plants like those in Chinle, Kayenta and Shiprock. These water treatment plans will



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allow for these communities to plan for economic growth, so big box stores could potentially open their doors here.

UTILITY CONNECTIONS

There's an active campaign to connect more people to electricity. Currently, 10,470 Navajo families still lack power. The next phase of the 'Light Up Navajo' project runs until the end of July, with 46 utility companies assisting. In 2025, NTUA aims to connect 523 families to the electric grid and finish wiring for 250 homes.

Additionally, the Navajo Division of Natural Resources is helping to make these utility projects a reality with granting rights-of-way, which is necessary for all infrastructure like water, sewer, gas, fiber. These clearances because lands are legally withdrawn for community development.

I would like to discuss our efforts regarding rights of way and TAA. When we process these, it enables us to ensure that utilities can be provided to our communities. Whenever a utility line is connected to serve a customer, we refer to these connections as service line agreements. This process helps us track the origin and destination of the lines in compliance with federal regulations under the CFRs.

Importantly, the CFR states that utility companies can only serve authorized occupants—those who hold a home site lease. The creation of these leases allows our people to access utility services, adhering to federal law.

In the past, many residents didn't receive essential utilities because they lacked home site leases. However, with the recent changes brought forth by ARPA, we have made it easier for them to obtain these leases.

WINDMILLS FIXED

This quarter, to support our ranchers and farmers, our Department of Water Resources inspected and repaired 433 windmills and maintained 57 pieces of essential field equipment. We transported 71 loads of heavy machinery, fuel, and materials to sites across the Nation, from Farmington to Fort Defiance. We installed storage tanks in Chichiltah, Tsaile Wheatfields, Naschitti, and Sanostee, and began pre-construction in Indian Wells, Oaksprings, and Lake Valley. In Tolani Lake, we completed three miles of livestock waterline, including one mile this quarter. At Greasewood Springs, we finished another mile.

Every project strengthens our communities and ensures greater access to water and resources for our people and their livestock. Every month, we plan to repair at least 50 windmills.



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PHOENIX TREATMENT CENTER

For our Phoenix Urban Residential Treatment Center, Yideeskáądi Hózhóójí Iiná Center, we are continuing to make significant headway. We celebrated the purchase of this building during a ribbon cutting ceremony on March 27. Axiom Care has begun renovations and setup for the facility. NDOH will meet with Axiom Care to discuss personnel requirements and recruitment, traditional healing grounds, and strategic planning.

This 37,000 square foot facility was acquired for \$9.5 million and the anticipated opening for this residential treatment center is by midsummer 2025. With a vision of serving up to 350 Navajo Nation members annually and creating over 60 jobs, this facility features patient rooms and is near major medical centers, enhancing our care capacity. Additionally, offering residential treatment for 92 adults and their families, including childcare for children under five, ensuring families stay together during treatment. Shuttle services will eliminate transportation barriers.

TAXES

April 16, 1985, marked a pivotal moment for the Navajo Nation with the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Kerr-McGee v. Navajo Tribe*, affirming our sovereign right to tax without federal approval. Since that time, we have collected over \$1.6 billion in tax revenue, laying the foundation for growth and stability.

As of April 10, 2025, we have already generated more than \$83 million this fiscal year, which represents 64% of our projected \$131 million. This achievement demonstrates the strength of our government, built upon the solid foundation of economic independence and the exercise of our sovereign authority.

LOOKING AHEAD

As we move forward, we have several key priorities that require action:

Education is essential for our future. After the recent fire, which has destroyed buildings on the campus, we must ensure that Diné College receives the necessary support and funding of at least \$45 million to rebuild its campus and allow it to continue serving our community and our students.

We must advance the procurement amendments. The deadline was set by law for November 2024. It is crucial to stay on schedule to meet our development goals.

With projected revenue of \$285 million, combined with tariffs, we are experiencing rising costs. This reality necessitates higher budgets for FY2026 to effectively meet our commitments to our



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communities. As such, we are being creative to find solutions. Some of these include a bus route maintenance program of \$25 million (\$5 million for each agency) and a building maintenance fund that needs to increase from \$3 million to \$10 million.

From being on a tour with chapters, my Administration is learning again about the needs of our communities. For instance, Kayenta Chapter wants more road maintenance and Oljato Chapter wants more help on getting access to Homesite leases in Monument Valley Tribal Park. These listening sessions are helpful to the Navajo Nation Council, since legislation and funds come from your branch of government. As I continue on this tour, I hope that we can come to consensus to fund necessary infrastructure projects.

We need to stay committed to our broadband plan. The NNBO needs Council to allocate \$77.8 million for Phase I of the broadband plan which will construct 36 towers across the Navajo Nation to deploy 5G.

Each initiative we undertake—whether it's working with federal officials, delivering new homes, enhancing our infrastructure, or securing broadband access—represents our unwavering commitment to building a stable and thriving future for the Diné people.

Thank you for allowing me to share this message with you today. Ahéhee!