

A. Public Hearing

Pursuant to 12 N.N.C. §§ 800 and 840(A), the Budget and Finance Committee (“Committee”) may hold public hearings at each agency and take testimony on the budget, and to plan for adequate funding of services desired by the Navajo People, including provision and maintenance of public facilities.

The public hearing process begins with public notification from the Committee by contacting Navajo Nation Government entities and/or officials of the intent of the public hearings and by posting public notices on and/or near the location of the public hearing, placing an advertisement in a newspaper having general circulation, sending notices by email, or a combination of these. At the public hearing, the Committee will read and/or summarize the intent of the public hearings and procedures for conducting the public hearing.

The public hearing allows the opportunity for the Navajo People to recommend to the Committee how the Navajo Nation Government should prepare the Fiscal Year Comprehensive Budget. Every hearing will result in a written report and, when necessary, a recommendation that is provided to the Navajo Nation Council.

All persons who would like to participate in the public hearing are asked to sign-in and provide their name, email address and telephone number at the registration table and to fill out a “Request to Speak” form if providing verbal testimony. Completed “Request to Speak” forms may include written testimony and supporting documentations such as attached agency or chapter resolution. By completing this form interested parties are ensuring, if time permits, that they will provide recommendations for the upcoming Fiscal Year Comprehensive Budget. The public individually should not contact any Committee Members *privately* as the Committee may only consider what is on the public record or presented during public hearing.

The Committee Chairperson will establish a reasonable time limit for public testimony prior to the public hearing. After hearing public testimony, the Committee may decide to either recess or conclude the public hearing entirely. Once the public hearing process is concluded, the public hearing is closed, and *no further testimony* will be taken. However, the Navajo People will still be able to provide their comments when the Fiscal Year Comprehensive Budget is made public and posted on the Navajo Nation Council’s website.

B. Public Hearing Rules

Rule 01. Committee Quorum

Because public hearings of the Committee are purely planning for the upcoming Fiscal Year Comprehensive Budget and not quasi-judicial in nature, quorums are not required for the purpose of calling the public hearing to order and receiving testimony from the Navajo People.

Rule 02. Chairperson/Chairperson Pro Tempore

The Chairperson of the Committee shall preside over all public hearings of the Budget and Finance Committee. In the event the Chairperson does not attend the public hearing, the Vice-Chairperson shall preside over the public hearing. In the event the Chairperson nor the Vice-Chairperson are not present, a Chairperson Pro Tempore shall be selected by the Committee Members present at the time the public hearing is to be called to order. If only one Committee Member is present at the time the public hearing is to be called to order that the Committee Member shall be deemed the Chairperson Pro Tempore.

Rule 03. Public Participation

- a. Interested person wishing to provide testimony on their recommendation(s) to the Committee on how the Navajo Nation Government should prepare the Fiscal Year Comprehensive Budget must print their name and required information on the public hearing roster and complete the "Request to Speak" form.
- b. The Chairperson/Chairperson Pro Tempore has discretion to exclude testimony that is deemed irrelevant, immaterial, or unduly repetitious.
- c. The Chairperson/Chairperson Pro Tempore shall establish, for good cause, a declared time limit for any verbal testimony to maximize the number of participants.

Rule 04. Maintaining Records

A journal containing the minutes of all public hearings held by the Committee and testimony on how the Navajo Nation Government should prepare the Fiscal Year Comprehensive Budget shall be kept by the Office of Legislative Services and made available at the office for inspection by the Committee or any interested party who complete a "Request for Information" form.

Rule 05. Report and Recommendations

Every public hearing on the Fiscal Year Comprehensive Budget will result in a written report and, when necessary, a recommendation that is provided to the Navajo Nation Council. The written report will be completed and presented by the Office of Legislative Services to the Committee at their Regular Meeting, at a minimum, a week before the Committee deliberates the Branch Chiefs and Oversight Committee's budgets in preparation for the Fiscal Year Comprehensive Budget.

Rule 06. Amendments

These public hearing rules may be amended by the Committee and/or Office of Legislative Services prior to the budget public hearings.

Rule 07. Effective Date

These rules shall become effective upon presenting them to the Chairperson and/or Vice-Chairperson.

C. Public Hearing Notices

Notices of the Committee’s public hearing were issued by the Office of Speakers and Office of Legislative Services by press release, Navajo Nation Announcement, radio, social media platform, and email. Notices of the Committee’s public hearing on the Fiscal Year Comprehensive Budget included the dates, times, and locations.

June 04, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Chichiltah Chapter

Jones Ranch Road

Vanderwagen, New Mexico 87326

June 05, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Navajo Division of Transportation

#16 Old Coalmine Road, Rooms 306/307

Mentmore, New Mexico 87319

June 06, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Tuba City Judicial District

240 Main Street, Building 7173

Tuba City, Arizona 86045

June 09, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Navajo Nation Welcome Center

Welcome Center Drive

Oljato-Monument Valley, Utah 84536

June 10, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Nenahnezad Chapter

County Road 6675 & Navajo Route 365

Fruitland, New Mexico 87416

June 11, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

NTUA—Chinle District Office

101 Main Street

Chinle, Arizona 86503

On April 29, 2025, the Office of the Speaker issued the following press release entitled, “Budget and Finance Committee finalizes Budget Instruction[s] Manual for Fiscal Year 2026,” which was on posted on the Navajo Nation Council’s website and indicated the Committee hosting public hearings for the Fiscal Year 2026 Comprehensive Budget.

On May 09, 2025, the Navajo Nation Government Announcements emailed all Navajo Nation employees of the upcoming Fiscal Year Comprehensive Budget public hearing which included a direct link to the flyer developed by the Office of the Speaker entitled, “Budget and Finance Committee Public Hearing – FY 2026 Comprehensive Budget (hosted by the 25th [Navajo Nation Council Budget and Finance Committee]).”

Following the press releases and announcements of the public hearings, radio was next utilized by the Office of the Speaker. Council Delegate Lester C. Yazzie provided the radio recording of the public hearings to maximize public notice and participation. Finally, the Office of the Speaker’s Legislative Information Technology (IT) posted notices of the Committee’s public hearing on the Navajo Nation Council’s website (<https://www.navajonationcouncil.org/meetings-2025/>), which was followed by attaching the public hearing agendas on Monday, June 02, 2025.

On June 20, 2025, a final press release entitled, “Budget and Finance Committee concludes Fiscal Year 2026 Comprehensive Budget public hearings across all five agencies,” was issued from the Office of the Speaker and highlighted the public testimony received from each agency. Lastly, the press release indicated the Office of the Speaker will provide a resolution template for chapters to use when submitting their budget priorities and public input will continue to be accepted until the end of July 2025 and submitted to Legislative Advisor Rodney L. Tahe by email.

D. Public Hearing Presentations

At each of the Committee's public hearings, the following information was presented:

- a. How the Comprehensive Budget is Prepared and Completed (See Resolution BFAP-21-25, Exhibit C and Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Instructions Manual, Page 13).
- b. Annual Revenue Projection for Fiscal Year 2026, Expenditure Rate of the Navajo Nation Government for Fiscal Year 2024, and the Current Expenditure Rate of the Navajo Nation Government for Fiscal Year 2025 (See Resolution BFAP-21-25, Exhibit A)
- c. The Total Planning Base Amounts for the Fiscal Year 2026 Comprehensive Budget (See Resolution BFAP-21-25, Page 3).

Information was color-coded green, white, and blue to help the public understand the material being presented. This also included the "Budget Public Hearing Flow Chart" (color-coded brown) and "Request to Speak" form (color-coded pink).

E. Public Hearing Attendance Information

Number of ...	Totals
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1. Attendees	181
2. Request to Speak	95
3. Unmet Needs (Exhibit E)	05
4. Resolutions	10
5. Request for Public Records	06
6. Questionnaire Returned	114

- a. Request to Speak (Top Five Public Testimony Topics)
 - i. Community Development
 - Communication and Direct Services to Chapters is Deficient
 - Chapter Need Additional Funding to Provide Direct Services
 - Need Additional Project Managers for Housing and Infrastructure Projects
 - Need Additional Employees and Allocations for Chapters and its Programs
 - ii. Natural Resources
 - Need Additional Allocations for Farm, Land Board, and Grazing Officials
 - Need Additional Allocations for Waterpoint Maintenances and Repairs
 - Need Technical Assistance to Provide Clarification on Farm, Land and Grazing Matters as it relates to Agriculture Infrastructure Fund, Homesite Leases, Land Withdrawals and Probates
 - iii. Public Safety
 - Need Additional Allocations for Additional Officers at each Agency
 - Need Additional Allocations for Substations at each Agency
 - iv. Economic Development
 - Examination of Business Regulatory, Tourism and Real Estate Fees & Taxes

- Need Additional Allocation for Regional Business Development Offices for Local Communities to Develop and Regulate “Illegal” Pop-Up Businesses
- v. Transportation
 - Need Additional Allocations for Road Maintenances and Repairs
- b. Unmet Needs (Exhibit E in the Total Amount of \$38,580,668)
 - i. Teec Nos Pos Senior Center (Program Title) – \$2.6 Million – Matching Allocations for New Senior Center
 - ii. Tsé Ahnáozi’í (Sanostee) Chapter (Program Title) – \$936,988.00 – Chapter related Projects, Purchases, and Shortfalls (Business Unit No. 108100)
 - iii. Nahodishgish Chapter (Program Title) – \$30,960 – Public Employment Program and Housing Discretionary (Business Unit No. 108045)
 - iv. Iyanbito Chapter (Program Title) – \$657,720 – Chapter related Employment, Financial Assistance, Projects, and Training (Business Unit No. 108039)
 - v. Eastern Navajo Agency Council (Program Title) – \$34,355,000 – Chapter related Employment, Financial Assistance, and Project Development.
- c. Resolutions
 - i. Requesting the 25th Navajo Nation Council Through Honorable Council Delegate Steven Arviso for the Appropriation of a Maintenance Technician Position at 110 Navajo Nation Chapters (Res. No. MLC2025-01-05)
 - ii. Requesting the Navajo Nation Council; and Budget and Finance Committee to Amend the Planning Base Amounts for the Fiscal Year 2026 Comprehensive Budget to include Personnel Lapse Fund Totaling \$15,999,610.00; and \$6,999,740.00 of the Unreserved Undesignated Fund Balance (UUFB) (Res. No. MLC2025-SP-063-01)
 - iii. The Navajo Nation Eastern Agency Land Board – District 16 Members Hereby Submits the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget and All Requisite Budgetary Documentation for the Eastern Agency District Land Board to the 25th Navajo Nation Council, Resources and Development Committee, Budget and Finance Committee, and Other Pertinent Tribal Entities (Res. No. EALBD16-2025-06-04)
 - iv. Supporting and Authorizing the Creation of an Intergovernmental Between Teec Nos Pos Chapter and Division of Aging and Long-Term Care Support, and a Replacement Facility for the Senior Citizens Program at Teec Nos Pos (Res. No. TNPCH-04-18-2025-FY25-R-43)
 - v. Accepting and Approving the Unmet Needs Budget for the Fiscal Year 2026 for the Tsé Ahnáozi’í Chapter (Res. No. TAT-25-05-60)
 - vi. Requesting the Office of the Navajo Nation President and Vice President, the 24th Navajo Nation Council, the Navajo Nation Resources Development Committee, the Navajo Nation Budget & Finance Committee, and the Navajo Nation Department of Agriculture to Secure Additional Funds for the 78 District Grazing Officials for Stipends Funds to Attend District Grazing Meetings, Agency Grazing Meetings, Planning Meetings, Chapter Meetings, Conducting Permittee Meetings, Reservation Wide Meetings and Mileage During the Fiscal Year 2026 (Res. No. NAGC-06122025r6)

- vii. Resolution of Many Farms Chapter for the Many Farms Veterans Organization Requesting Resources and Development, Health Education and Human Services, Budget and Finance, Law and Order, and Naabik'iya ti Committees and the 25th Navajo Nation Council to Fund the Many Farms Veterans and all Navajo Nation Chapter Veterans Organization in the Amount of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) and to be used by the Veterans at their Discretion with Proper Accountability (Res. No. MFVO-36-06-2025)
- viii. Approving and Requesting the 25th Navajo Nation Council and President Buu Nygren to Approve and Support Sihasin Fund for Many Farms Senior Center in the Amount of \$6,000,000.00 for a New Senior Center (Res. No. MF-08-10-2024)
- ix. Approving Iyanbito Chapter's FY2026 Unmet Budget Priorities and Urging the Resources & Development Committee and Budget & Finance Committee to Allocate Funding for Longstanding and Essential Unmet Community Needs (Res. No. ICH67-06-2025-067)
- x. Approving the FY2026 Budget Funding Priorities to Strengthen Operational Capacity, Leadership Development, and the Future Establishment of a Permanent ENAC Headquarters (Res. No. ENAC-06-2025-027)

F. Public Hearing Questionnaire Results

1. Age Category (98% Answered)

☐ 18-21	☐ 22-31	☐ 32-41	☐ 42-51	☐ 52-61	☐ 62+
7%	3%	11%	13%	24%	40%

2. Gender (98% Answered)

☐ Male **43%** ☐ Female **54%** ☐ Prefer Not to Say **1%**

3. Do you primarily live off the Navajo Nation? (92% Answered)

☐ Yes **36%** ☐ No **56%**

4. What is your Chapter Agency? (100% Answered)

☐ Eastern	☐ Central	☐ Northern	☐ Western	☐ Fort Defiance
26%	8%	38%	11%	17%

5. Are you a Registered Voter at your Chapter? (91% Answered)

☐ Yes **82%** ☐ No **9%**

6. Are you a Navajo Veteran? (98% Answered)

☐ Yes **15%** ☐ No **83%**

7. Are you a Blue Star Mother? - OR - Are you a Gold Star Family?

☐ Yes **4%** ☐ No **75%** ☐ Yes **4%** ☐ No **54%**

8. Do you understand the Comprehensive Budget Process? (93% Answered)

☐ Yes **44%** ☐ No **49%**

9. Rate Your Knowledge of the Comprehensive Budget Process? (97% Answered)

☐ Not Knowledgeable **14%** ☐ Little Knowledgeable **51%**
☐ Knowledgeable **27%** ☐ Very Knowledgeable **5%**

10. What are your top three priorities for Direct Services Funding? (100% Answered)

☐ Community Development 17%	☐ Veterans 11%
☐ Health 11%	☐ Public Safety 11%
☐ Economic Development 10%	☐ Social Services 6%
☐ Diné Education 6%	☐ Human Resources 6%
☐ General Services 6%	☐ Transportation 5%
☐ Natural Resources 4%	☐ Environmental Protection 3%
☐ Department of Justice 3%	☐ Telecommunication 1%

11. Is there a Program or Service you feel is underfunded? (87% Answered)

☐ Yes **72%** ☐ No **15%** If yes, please indicate (use list above): 1) Public Safety, 2) Veterans, and 3) Community Development

12. Is there a Program or Service would you like to see improved? (82% Answered)

☐ Yes **72%** ☐ No **10%** If yes, please indicate (use list above): 1) Community Development, 2) Public Safety, and 3) Veterans

13. Is there a Program or Service you believe funding should be reduced or redirected? (71% Answered)

☐ Yes **35%** ☐ No **36%** If yes, please indicate (use list above): Executive Branch – Office of the President & Vice-President¹, Department of Justice², and Navajo Nation Council³. Other Programs or Services indicated include Human Resources, Community Development, Telecommunication, Veterans, Public Safety, Transportation, Social Services, Health, Judicial, General Services, Economic Development, and Diné Education.

14. Should the Navajo Nation Government allocate additional funding toward emergency preparedness and response? (98% Answered)

¹ Indicated Twelve Times

² Indicated Three Times

³ Indicated Three Times

☐ Yes **91%** ☐ No **7%**

15. Do you feel the Navajo Nation Government is transparent with how it spends the Navajo People funds? (84% Answered)

☐ Yes **22%** ☐ No **62%**

16. Has your community fully benefited from the COVID-19 or APRA Funds? (83% Answered)

☐ Yes **33%** ☐ No **50%** If no, please explain: _____

17. Do you support natural resource extraction on the Navajo Nation as a source for generating revenue? (79% Answered)

☐ Yes **39%** ☐ No **32%** ☐ Only Certain Types **8%** (Please indicate the type): Oil, Coal, Helium, Hydrogen, Gravel Pits, and Existing Extraction.

18. Only answer this question if you answered “No” above. Would you support natural resource extraction if the community receives a share of royalties, lease payments, or taxes from the project? (44% Answered)

☐ Yes **30%** ☐ No **14%**

19. Only answer this question if you still answered “No” above. Would you support natural resource extraction if the Navajo Nation Government set aside direct funding from the projects to support the following needs? (76% Answered)

- ☐ Food Assistance for Families **9%**
- ☐ Housing & Home Repair Assistance **18%**
- ☐ Education Assistance **13%**
- ☐ Infrastructure (i.e., roads, waters, etc.) **18%**
- ☐ Workforce Development **10%**
- ☐ Environmental Protection and Cleanup **8%**
- ☐ Other: _____

20. What types of Policies or Programs do you support as a source for generating or preserving revenue for the future of the Navajo Nation Government? (Select your top 3) (100% Answered)

- ☐ Manufacturing & Industrial Jobs Creating (i.e., factories) **22%**
- ☐ Solar Energy Development **21%**
- ☐ Increasing Navajo Nation funds for Public Water Points (i.e., windmills) **17%**

- ☐ Wind Energy Development **13%**
- ☐ Limiting Grazing Permittees' ability to intervene in Development Projects **12%**
- ☐ Expanding or maintaining the rights for Grazing Permittees **11%**
- ☐ Limiting or maintaining Navajo Nation funds for Public Water Points **4%**

G. Committee Members Noted Conditions of Appropriations or Legislative Concerns

During the six (06) days public hearing, the Committed noted several Conditions of Appropriations or Legislative Concerns. These noted Conditions of Appropriations or Legislative Concerns are: 1) the usage of the Junk Food Tax for Chapter usage as it relates to offsetting Farming and Farming Fuel cost; that clarification needs to be made, 2) Divisions of Natural Resources and Community Development collect data on direct services as it relates to waterline extensions and waterpoints operations and maintenance, 3) Division of Health complying with federal funding as it relates to working directly with the Navajo Nation Council on Aging and how often both parties meet, 4) the impact of the Pay Wage Study for Navajo Nation Government employees to be presented by Division on Human Resources, and 5) the usage of veterans funds allocations, which are held by the Chapter, for veterans organizations to use as they see fit; that clarification needs to be made.

H. Next Steps

The public hearing testimonies, which include the transcript, resolutions and written comments, will be given to the Office of Legislative Services Tracking Section to be uploaded to the Internet Public Review Summary when the Fiscal Year 2026 Comprehensive Budget for the Navajo Nation Government is introduced and undergoing the five (05) comment period. This will ensure those who attended and participated in the Committee's public hearing on the comprehensive budget voices are heard and recorded for the official record. Additionally, it will demonstrate the Committee abide by 12 N.N.C. §§ 800 and 840(A) by holding public hearings at each agency and taking testimonies on the budget, and to plan for adequate funding of services desired by the Navajo People, including provision and maintenance of public facilities.