



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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25th Navajo Nation Council confirms appointment of Tommy Platero as Executive Director of Navajo Division of Transportation



Council Delegates raised concerns about road projects, bad road conditions, and comprehensive road plans during the confirmation of Tommy Platero as Executive Director of the Navajo Division of Transportation.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On Wednesday, the 25th Navajo Nation Council confirmed the appointment of Tommy Platero as Executive Director of the Navajo Division of Transportation (Navajo DOT). Platero, a longtime Navajo Nation employee, brings more than 40 years of experience across multiple departments and divisions.

“Acting Director Platero has institutional knowledge of Navajo Nation policies and procedures that will greatly contribute to addressing the transportation needs of the Navajo people,” said legislation sponsor and Resources and Development Committee Chair Brenda Jesus. “I believe Platero is acting progressively to lead the Navajo Division of Transportation.”

Platero reflected on his service to the Navajo Nation, including roles with Navajo Head Start, the Office of Legislative Services (OLS), the Fiscal Recovery Fund Office, and Navajo DOT. Notably, he collaborated with OLS staff to develop the DIBB system, which tracks legislation throughout the legislative process.

During deliberations, Council Delegates raised concerns regarding the status of road projects, the development of a comprehensive road plan for Navajo DOT, and Platero’s management approach with staff and oversight committees.

Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty cited findings from recent Budget and Finance Committee hearings on the Fiscal Year 2026 Comprehensive Budget, noting that roads and

transportation ranked as the fifth-highest public priority. Crotty asked whether Navajo DOT has developed a plan that consolidates all funding sources and establishes a prioritized project list.

“We see funding available from state and federal agencies along with Navajo Nation funds. What we don’t see is a solid plan for these projects,” said Delegate Crotty. “We need to see a funding plan.”

Platero acknowledged that Navajo DOT currently lacks a comprehensive road plan but affirmed that development of such a plan is underway.

Council Delegate Dr. Andy Nez referenced updates to the personnel policy manual spearheaded by the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee, asking how Platero would address personnel matters, from treatment of employees, equity, and concerns involving falsifying documents.

“I want to know that anyone in managerial positions adhere to equity across the board,” said Dr. Nez.

Platero stated that he does not tolerate falsified documents and emphasized the importance of equitable pay across Navajo DOT positions. Platero added that as director, his goal is to maintain collaboration across all branches of government to advance Navajo DOT’s mission effectively.

Council Delegates Helena Nez Begay and Nathan Notah raised concerns about deteriorating road conditions affecting school bus routes and emergency response, as well as stalled projects and procedural delays.

Platero responded that Navajo DOT continues to address compliance requirements impacting project timelines and is working to expand the Chapter Road Maintenance Policy, which limits maintenance to 15 miles per chapter—a figure he said does not meet community needs.

Council Delegate Arbin Mitchell supported Platero’s confirmation, citing his leadership in providing emergency response equipment during flood situations and his strong understanding of Navajo DOT’s budgetary responsibilities.

“I’ve seen his management style, and he doesn’t favor anyone in his organization,” Mitchell said. “Under his leadership, chapters have the necessary heavy equipment.”

Chair Jesus thanked her colleagues for their input during the discussion. “There are still barriers and challenges that need to be resolved,” she said. “What I heard today is that Platero is thinking critically about solving these issues.”

The 25th Navajo Nation Council voted 17 in favor and six opposed to confirm Tommy Platero as Executive Director of the Navajo Division of Transportation. The Council serves as the final authority on this appointment.

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