



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

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\$25 Million for Shiprock Road Project Approved, Applauded by Chairwoman Eugenia Charles-Newton

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Law and Order Chairwoman Eugenia Charles-Newton of the 24th Navajo Nation Council commends the leadership of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, Deputy Assistant Secretary Arlando Teller, and Congressional leaders for a recent allocation of \$25 million in grant funding from the Department of Transportation (USDOT) for repairs and improvements to the U.S. Highway 64 corridor in Shiprock, N.M.

This new road project will reconstruct approximately 21 miles of U.S. Highway 64 that will include four complete bridge replacements.

Funding will be used for drainage improvements, safety and lighting upgrades, and the installation of fiber optic cable lines to connect communities in the area.

“In October, we traveled to Washington, D.C., to meet with Congressional leaders from New Mexico and the Transportation Department for this \$25 million grant funding request,” said Madam Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton (Shiprock). “Upgrading our roads and bridges so they meet safety standards is important to the Navajo Nation and our families who travel in the Shiprock area. We commend President Joe Biden and Secretary Pete Buttigieg for their leadership in prioritizing Shiprock for this important road infrastructure project.”

According to the USDOT, the Biden Administration remodeled an existing program to be the ‘Rebuilding America’s Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)’ grant program. One of the goals of the reform is to make funding more accessible for projects that can demonstrate improvements to racial and tribal equity.

In a prepared statement, Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM) said, “We are grateful to President Biden for making transportation infrastructure investment in Tribal communities a reality and not just a talking point. This \$25 million investment will mean better, safer roads for thousands of Shiprock residents and their families. In addition, I can’t wait to see how the funding we passed



PHOTO: Madam Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton with Senator Martin Heinrich in Washington D.C.

in the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will provide even more infrastructure opportunities across our state. You can count on me to keep fighting to ensure that New Mexicans, no matter where they live, have access to quality highways, roads, and bridges.”

Last month, Chairwoman Eugenia Charles-Newton met Congresswoman Teresa Leger Fernandez (D-NM) and other federal officials in Washington, D.C. to garner support for this grant funding, tribal justice centers, and additional public safety facilities for the Navajo Nation.

Additionally, the Chairwoman hosted meetings with the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs and the Office of Justice Services within the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

“Safe roads and bridges are essential to connect our rural and tribal communities to critical health resources, job opportunities, and schools. Highway 64 is an important transportation corridor that connects New Mexico to our neighboring states and provides mobility for many of our northwestern communities, especially Navajo,” said Congresswoman Teresa Leger Fernandez. “This grant will connect communities within the Navajo Nation to each other and their neighbors. I’m excited to see this important infrastructure investment for my district.”

In 2020, Senator Heinrich and Senator Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM) sent a letter to the USDOT in support of the project requested by the New Mexico Department of Transportation and Navajo Transportation Division.

“Billions of dollars for road infrastructure projects and improvements was approved by the Biden Administration this week,” said Speaker Seth Damon (Bááhaalí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tséyatoh). “This means immediate construction of roadways, bridges, broadband lines, and water pipelines will begin. The Council appreciates Madam Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton for her leadership and advocacy to get this grant funding approved for the Shiprock community.”

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