

Max A. Zuni
Governor



Lt. Governor, Eugene Jiron
Lt. Governor, Juan Rey Abeita

PUEBLO OF ISLETA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 1270
Isleta, New Mexico 87022
Telephone: 505-869-3111

First Lieutenant Eugene Jiron
Remarks before the Interim Indian Affairs Committee
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Good morning Madame Chair, Vice Chair Pinto, and members of the New Mexico Legislative Indian Affairs Committee. My name is Eugene Jiron, 1st Lieutenant Governor of the Pueblo of Isleta. I'm presenting on behalf of Governor Zuni whom was unable to attend this morning. He sends his apologies for not being able to attend.

Thank you for your attendance here this morning at the Pueblo of Isleta. The Pueblo of Isleta is spread across four Counties: Bernalillo, Valencia, Socorro, and Torrance. We are also located in between different communities – Albuquerque directly to the north and Bosque Farms to the South. Because of these varying jurisdictions, the Pueblo often works closely with leadership across the State. Developing relationships with the state and local governments is imperative to tribal sovereignty. For these reasons, I am very appreciative that you have taken the time for me to share a few words about the Pueblo's priorities this morning.

Main Street

One of Governor Zuni's funding priorities, but one of great historical importance, is renovation of the Pueblo of Isleta's Village Proper. In February Governor Zuni discussed with Governor Lujan



Grisham the important need not only for our Pueblo, but for Tribes and Pueblos across the state to receive funds for “Main Street” renovations.

Our Village has a rich history, with pottery shards identified within the Village Proper dating back to the 1100s. The Village is centered around the St. Augustine Mission Church, built in the early 1700s after its congregation’s founding in 1613. The Village is listed in the U.S. National Register of Historic Places. What is unique about the Pueblo of Isleta is that our Village is not just a historic heritage site, but also a modern community where our members live, work, learn, pray, and play. The Village includes more than 600 homes in addition to public spaces, businesses, and both traditional and religious facilities. Isleta has already begun investing in our Main Street Project:

- We have utilized \$2.3 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds to improve the Village’s sewer and infrastructure
- We have invested \$200,000 in Isleta funds to make emergency repairs to homes and buildings that are in a state of disrepair.
- At present, Senator Heinrich and Senator Lujan are sponsoring an earmark of \$1.5 million for Fiscal Year 2023 to cover design costs for Phase I of this restoration project.

We anticipate that the total estimated costs for this project will reach \$52 million to bring the Village’s homes, businesses, traditional sites, and public facilities up to applicable safety standards. It is a goal of Governor Zuni’s administration to restore and preserve the Village to maintain its cultural and historic integrity for current and future generations. We are hopeful for broad support of this budget proposal in the 2024 New Mexico legislative session.



Capital Outlay & Tribal Infrastructure Funding

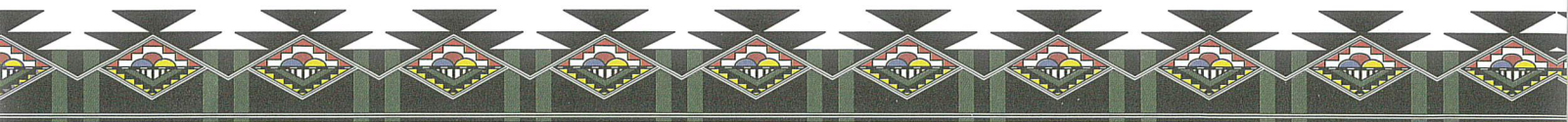
The Pueblo is thankful for the support we've received this past legislative year when it comes to our infrastructure needs.

We received important Capital Outlay funding for 3 projects in the amount of \$400,000 for a new well in Los Padillas; \$825,000 for our solid waste transfer facility; and an additional \$400,000 to purchase and equip a vacuum truck. The Los Padillas well is critical to ensuring safe drinking water on the Pueblo. The Pueblo is thankful to receive reauthorization approval for two key transportation projects - the Moonlight Drive Extension and the Highway 314 Realignment Project. These reauthorizations ensure timely completion and will improve traffic within the Pueblo. This funding directly supports the health and well-being of our community members.

Further, the Pueblo is also happy to receive additional funding in the form of Tribal Infrastructure funding (TIF). The Pueblo continues to utilize our 2025-2029 Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan, which will inform future development on the Pueblo.

Similar to Senate Bill 25 that was presented this past legislative session, continued advocacy for a separate state fund for cost matching obligations would greatly benefit the Pueblo. We have a bill similar to Senate Bill 25 will be reintroduced this coming session. This type of funding is necessary, as a separate state fund will provide designated funding to Tribes on a recurring, annual basis – doing so will address an unmet need as Tribes seek out key funding for different kinds of infrastructure projects.

For example, the Pueblo has a number of wells spread across the Pueblo that require additional funding and significant repairs. Some of the funding opportunities, whether they be state or federal



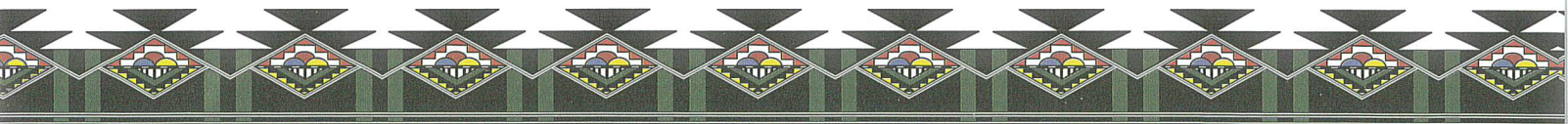
grants, likely require cost-matching. The Pueblo hopes that a portion of the historic amount of revenue the state receives can be put toward a dedicated infrastructure fund to assist with cost-matching. The Pueblo asks that the Legislature continue to support Tribes and their important infrastructure needs.

Cross-Commissioning

As I've already mentioned, our Pueblo is spread across multiple jurisdictions which sometimes presents unique challenges. One of the challenges the Pueblo faces is the ability for our law enforcement to respond to emergencies across jurisdictional boundaries. Cross-commissioning serves an important function in preventing these jurisdictional issues and reducing response times. The Pueblo and our Isleta Police Department enjoy a productive relationship with surrounding jurisdictions. All IPD officers are cross-commissioned by the Bernalillo County Sheriff and Valencia County Sherrif. Such relationships are critical in providing essential services and addressing crime in our community. Although operating under both state and Tribal law is challenging for Isleta's police force, these dual law enforcement responsibilities are critical given the amount of crime committed within the Pueblo of Isleta by non-Indians.

Governor Zuni is grateful to have the opportunity to serve on the State's Tribal Commissioning Task Force to further address jurisdictional issues and of course, to strengthen criminal enforcement with the Pueblo's neighboring law enforcement agencies.

The Pueblo looks forward to the Legislature considering a future bill that is like Senate Bill 33 presented this past year. The benefit of Senate Bill 33 was the authorization of cross-commissioning on a broad statewide level instead of individual cross-commissioning agreements.



Such an option eliminates administrative hurdles and can help further prevent crimes by Tribal members and non-Indians alike.

Closing

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, in closing, and on behalf of Governor Zuni and the Pueblo - I am thankful for your time with us this morning. I hope that the Indian Affairs Committee takes some of the Pueblo's priorities into consideration for the next legislative session. I hope that we can continue to collaborate and work together on these and other important matters. I stand ready for any questions the Committee may have.

