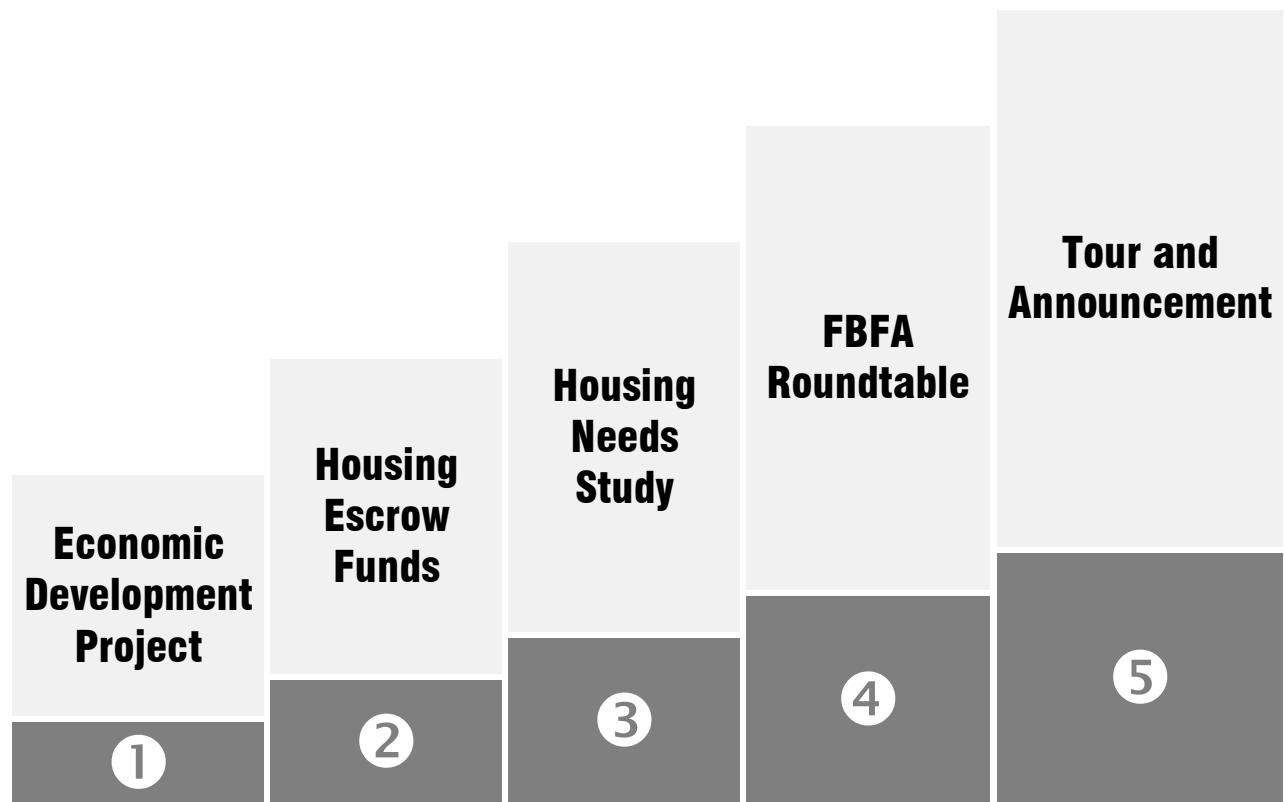


# BENNETT THAW IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

## Five Steps to Improve Housing, Create Jobs and Benefit the People of the FBFA

September 2015



### A Collaboration

President Begaye & Vice President Nez



Navajo-Hopi Land Commission



Navajo-Hopi Land Commission Office



Navajo Housing Authority

#### Former Bennett Freeze Chapters

Bodaway-Gap

Cameron

Coalmine Canyon

Coppermine

Kaibeto

Leupp

Tonalea

Tolani Lake

Tuba City

# BENNETT THAW IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

## Improving Housing, Creating Jobs and Benefitting the People of the FBFA

Over 20,000 people reside in what today is known as the Former Bennett Freeze Area (FBFA). The FBFA comprises all or part of nine Navajo Nation Chapters, and is the result of a moratorium that then-Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Robert Bennett, placed upon 1.5 million acres of land that, in effect, stopped all development (housing repairs, housing

construction, infrastructure, and business activity). The moratorium lasted for 40 years and was lifted in 2006. By 2011, dedicated funding was received by Navajo Nation for housing and economic development. Despite this, however, the funding has not been released for use, and poverty and poor living conditions persist throughout the FBFA.

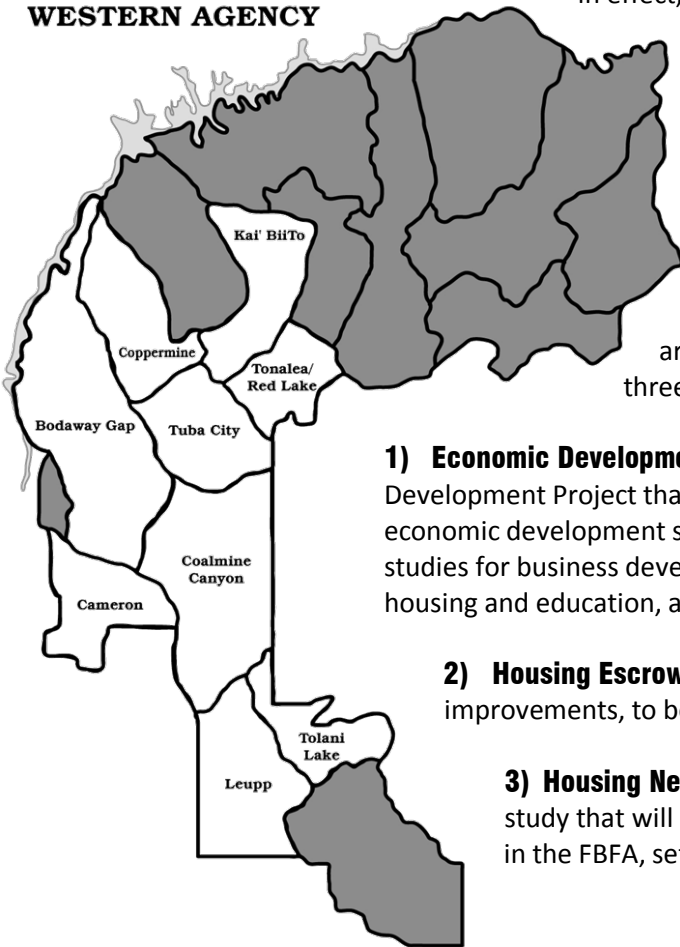
This **Bennett Thaw Implementation Plan** is designed to utilize the financial resources possessed by Navajo Nation that are dedicated to the FBFA. In particular, funding is in place for three primary objectives:

**1) Economic Development Project**—\$999,000 is available for an Economic Development Project that generates seven deliverables including Chapter-based economic development strategic plans, an FBFA regional economic plan, feasibility studies for business development projects, Individual Development Accounts for housing and education, and financial literacy training.

**2) Housing Escrow Funding**—\$3.6 million is available, targeted for housing improvements, to be distributed on a formula-basis to the nine Chapters.

**3) Housing Needs Assessment Study**—\$2.0 million is available for a housing study that will make specific recommendations on the needs for each house in the FBFA, setting the stage for future investments in the housing stock.

### NAVAJO NATION - WESTERN AGENCY



### Leadership has come forward to assist the people of the FBFA

- **President Russell Begaye and Vice-President Jonathan Nez (OPVP)** have made the FBFA a priority of their administration
- The **Navajo-Hopi Land Commission (NHLC)** authorized the use of financial resources for this purpose in July of 2013 (and reaffirmed that resolution since)
- The **Navajo-Hopi Land Commission Office (NHLCO)** has a pending decision on the Economic Development Project and is poised to release the Housing Escrow Funding
- The **NHLCO** and the **Navajo Housing Authority (NHA)** have \$2.0 million and a scope of work designed for a Housing Needs Assessment Study.

# The Bennett Thaw Implementation Plan has five steps

## Step #1: Select Native Builders LLC to complete the Economic Development Project

The NHLCO issued an RFP for their Economic Development Project with a deadline of March 13, 2015. A decision has not officially been made on that RFP.

Native Builders believes the combination of the ten resolutions of support from the FBFA Chapters and Districts combined with its strong qualifications uniquely positions the company to do such work. Unfortunately, the decision is still bogged down in the complexities of procurement and contracting. A separate document explains such details and positions the NHLCO to make an immediate decision to award the project to Native Builders. ***If Native Builders is selected, not only will the Economic Development Project be implemented, but administrative capacity to support the entire Bennett Thaw Implementation Plan will be in place.***

Project Deliverables	
I.	Chapter Plans
II.	FBFA Regional Plan
III.	Feasibility Studies
IV.	Individual Development Accounts
V.	Individual Matching Funds
VI.	Financial Literacy
VII.	Final Report

Ideally, the selection of Native Builders would be made immediately, and the 164 Process would be expedited in order that Native Builders can officially be on board in advance of the Former Bennett Freeze Tour in September.

## Step #2: Release the Housing Escrow Funds to Chapters with Approved Housing Plans

\$3.6 million of Housing Escrow Funding is available on a formula basis to the nine Former Bennett Freeze Chapters. The formula determining the amount of funding for each Chapter has been agreed to.

Chapters are required to develop and submit their plan for the use of such funding (most of the Chapters have completed this requirement). As four of the nine Chapters are certified, funding would be directed to those Chapters. The remaining five Chapters would have such funding held in a central account for dispersal.

<b>Navajo Nation</b>	1966
	<u>September 16, 2015</u>
PAY TO THE	
ORDER OF <i>Nine FBFA Chapters</i>	\$3,606,808.00
Three Million, Six Hundred Six Thousand, Eight Hundred Eight and <sup>00</sup> / <sub>100</sub>	
Memo: <u>Housing Improvements</u>	<u>Navajo Nation</u>

The President/Vice President have an opportunity to announce the dispersal of such funds and to indicate that Native Builders is available to assist with programming such funds as a part of the Economic Development Project. ***This will be a momentous occasion, ending the Freeze that has effectively been in place now for 49 years!***

### Step #3:

## Issue an RFP for the Housing Needs Assessment Study

\$2.0 million of funding is available jointly through the NHLCO and the Navajo Housing Authority (NHA) for an in-depth door-to-door analysis of the housing needs throughout the FBFA.

The NHA and NHLCO have worked closely with Chapter leaders throughout the FBFA to develop a precise scope of work and needed human and technical resources in order to conduct the study.

An effort was made during the final month of the Shelly Administration to formalize a relationship with an FBFA-based certified Chapter to administrate the study. Recent changes at the Bodaway-Gap Chapter led to an effort to ask the Tuba City Chapter to be the administrator for the study.

Simultaneously, members of the Shelly Administration, including the Attorney General, voiced concern that the Indirect Cost Rate would need to be waived, thus diminishing the financial resources to Navajo Nation by approximately \$340,000.

By issuing an RFP, it could be determined if the work could be performed through a contract, and Navajo Nation could potentially retain the Indirect Cost Rate funding during these very tight fiscal times.

Housing Needs		
Example	100 Pole Line Road Tuba City	
	Power	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Water	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Bathroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Roof	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Insulation	<input type="checkbox"/>

Regardless of the path chosen, the Housing Needs Assessment Study needs to begin right away in order for it to be coordinated with the Economic Development Project.

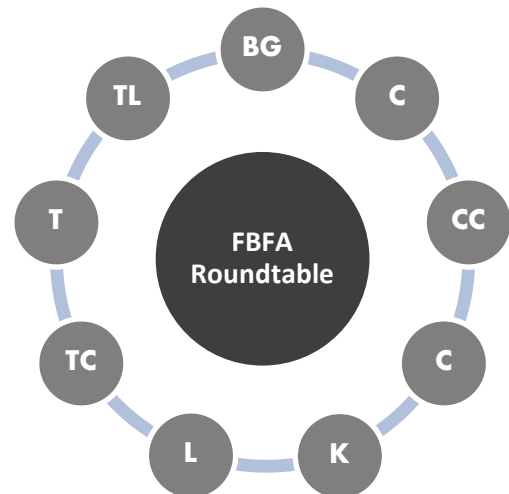
### Step #4:

## Announce Formation of the FBFA Roundtable

Chapter leaders in the FBFA have been working to organize themselves as a cohesive group since December 2013. In general, they agree that their nine-Chapter region forms a functional unit to plan regionally, complete projects, and to improve housing and the economy.

The proposal submitted by Native Builders for the Economic Development Project presumes that an “FBFA Roundtable” would be formed. The purpose of the FBFA Roundtable would be to identify one or two representatives from each Chapter to help oversee and govern the Economic Development Project and other resources identified in this ***Bennett Thaw Implementation Plan***.

The FBFA Roundtable would also serve to be a point of contact with the NHLCO, the NHLC, the NHA and the Office of the President/Vice President for the project.



## Step #5: Announce "Thaw" During Tour

The ***Bennett Thaw Implementation Plan*** provides the perfect opportunity for the Begaye/Nez Administration to make a bold statement that “the FBFA is one of our top priorities.” Due to work by the NHLCO supported by FBFA Chapters, everything is ready to go—the Economic Development Project, the Housing Escrow Funding and the Housing Needs Study. All that is needed are official decisions and documents. An announcement in September is possible.

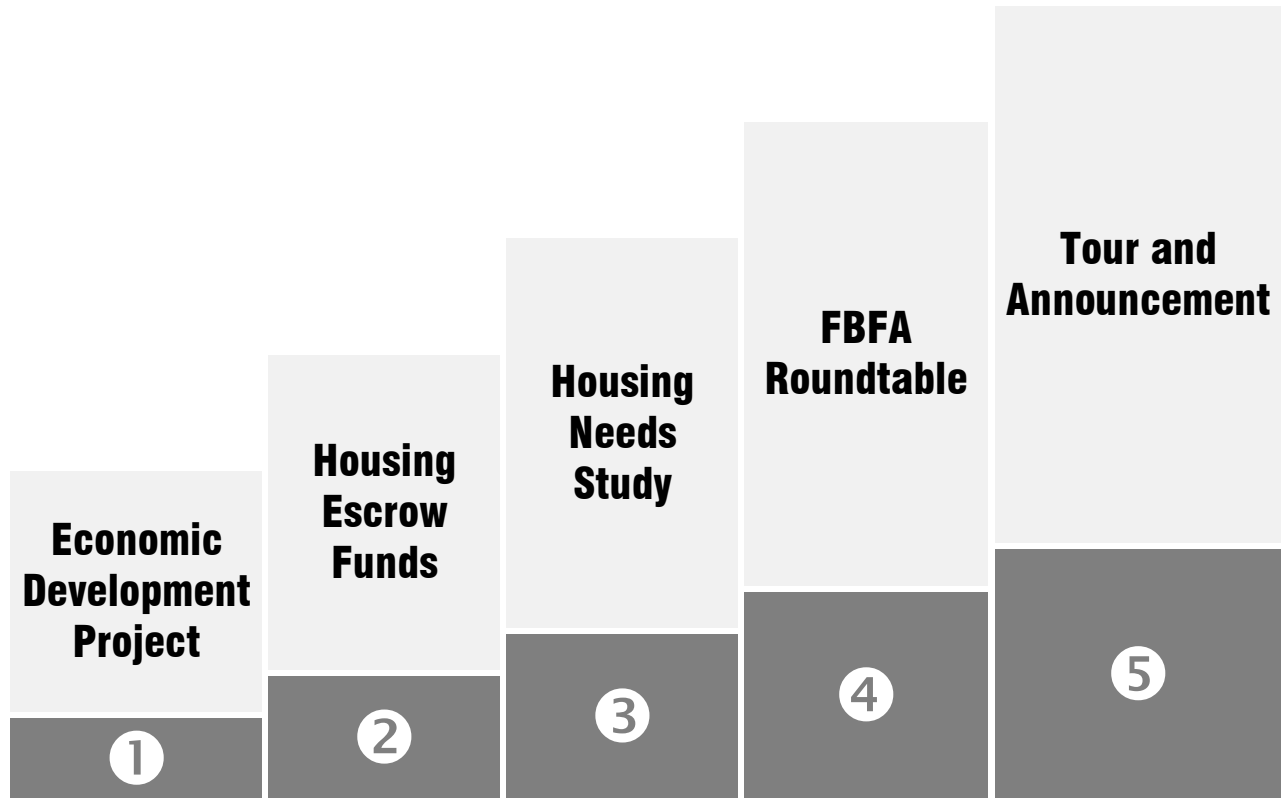
The Former Bennett Freeze Chapters—their members and their leaders—are ready to create a much brighter future. This collaboration of Chapters and the executive and legislative branches of Navajo Nation government is what it will take to envision and enact such a future.

**Press Release**

**Begaye/Nez Administration  
Announces Help for Former  
Bennett Freeze Area**  
“The time has come to help the FBFA”

TUBA CITY—The Russell Begaye/Jonathan Nez Administration announced today a series of commitments designed to reverse the decades-old impact to the Former Bennett Freeze Area from a decision made in 1966.

The announcement was made before hundreds of people



**The Bennett Thaw Implementation Plan**

**The people of the FBFA have been waiting  
for nearly a half a century for progress.**

**The *Bennett Thaw Implementation Plan* delivers on a promise that was made in 2006: The  
Bennett Freeze was ending and help was on the way.**

**That help is coming now!**