

The Navajo Nation and the City of Los Angeles (City) have long collaborated on energy matters, primarily through the Department of Water and Power's (DWP) ownership stake in the Navajo Generating Station (NGS). Through this ownership stake, the City powered its growth using resources mined on the Navajo Nation for over 40 years.

The recent closure of NGS has had an impact on the Navajo Nation's revenues and budget. For many years, the NGS has been an important economic driver for members of the Navajo Nation - providing jobs and stability. The NGS closure threatens the Navajo Nation's long-term economic stability.

To address this matter, the Navajo Nation seeks to create new energy partnerships with the City. Specifically, the Navajo Nation would like to implement solar/clean energy projects on tribal lands to replace the gap created by the NGS closure. Generated solar/clean energy would be delivered through existing DWP power transmission infrastructure from the Navajo Nation to the City.

There are utility-scale solar energy and storage projects currently under development by the DWP, such as the Eland Solar and Battery Energy Storage Projects - Phase One and Two. These projects are supported by the DWP and are slated to provide clean energy to the City for many years. The City can benefit from more projects like these.

Given the City's long-term partnership with the Navajo Nation, the City should consider entering into a new partnership with the Navajo Nation to implement solar/clean energy projects on tribal lands. In this manner the City can obtain cost-effective clean energy while ensuring environmental justice and economic equity to members of the Navajo Nation. Finally, any recommendations from the Department must be seen with the interest of the ratepayer in mind.

A government to government conversation must follow, in order to assess whether a partnership is beneficial to ratepayers and viable in relation to a fundamental change in the generation of a new power source.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Department of Water and Power (DWP) be requested to report to the Council in 30 days on the feasibility of entering into partnerships with the Navajo Nation to implement solar/clean energy projects, in a cost-effective manner, for the City while ensuring environmental justice and equity to the Navajo Nation.

I FURTHER MOVE that the DWP be requested to meet with representatives of the Navajo Nation to explore the viability of implementing solar/clean energy projects on tribal lands; and any associated impacts.

PRESENTED BY:


MITCH O'FARRELL
Councilmember, 13th District

SECONDED BY:



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