

# Drive America's Economy Forward by Reinvesting in Municipal Infrastructure

## Guiding Principles

- 1** America's cities are paying their fair share: over two-thirds of all public infrastructure projects in the United States are locally financed by municipal bonds.
- 2** While the demands on America's infrastructure grow each year, federal funding has fallen to historically low levels, placing the economic and physical well-being of our cities in jeopardy.
- 3** City leaders are best positioned to identify where infrastructure needs are greatest, and should be given a stronger voice in how limited federal dollars are spent.

The vibrant network of infrastructure in America's cities is the economic competitive advantage that allows our 122.5 million households and 7.5 million businesses to lead the world in an increasingly globalized economy. Yet, we know that our infrastructure is failing us. Too many bridges are in a state of disrepair, our internet lags behind the rest of the world, families drink from bottled water in the absence of safe tap water.

The economic costs of continued inaction are staggering. Failing infrastructure costs America's families \$3,400 annually in lost disposable income. Cities are already paying their fair share — financing more than two-thirds of all infrastructure projects through tax-exempt municipal bonds — but cities

simply cannot afford to carry our nation forward alone. For that reason, the National League of Cities calls on Congress and the administration to invest in making America's transportation, water and broadband infrastructure, once again, the envy of the world.

## Transportation

**NLC calls on Congress and the President to modernize our nation's transportation infrastructure by passing legislation that will:**

- 1** Identify a user-fee based pay-for that keeps the Highway Trust Fund fully paid for beyond the expiration of the FAST Act;

- 2** Fund transportation infrastructure projects by putting money directly in the hands of local governments, who are best equipped to identify high-priority projects and where the need is the greatest;
- 3** Increase federal funding for programs that support all modes of transportation, including TIGER, Transportation Alternatives, the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, New Starts and FASTLANE; and
- 4** Identify opportunities for greater private investment while recognizing that privately financed public private partnerships only work for a limited number of expensive projects.

## Water

### **NLC calls on Congress and the President to improve our nation's water infrastructure by passing legislation that will:**

- 1** Reauthorize and provide federal funding for water infrastructure improvements through the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) programs;
- 2** Provide full appropriation to the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) and permanently establish the program beyond a pilot program;
- 3** Remove the federal volume cap on tax-exempt bonds for water and wastewater infrastructure projects;

- 4** Establish a comprehensive and flexible integrated planning and permitting process for local water, wastewater and stormwater management; and
- 5** Clarify that rebates provided by local water utilities to homeowners for water conservation and water efficiency are not subject to a federal income tax.

## Broadband

### **NLC calls on Congress and the President to update our nation's broadband infrastructure by passing legislation that will:**

- 1** Expand broadband access by eliminating state barriers to municipal broadband networks;
- 2** Establish a grant program to accompany the Rural Utility Service Broadband Loan program;
- 3** Increase funding for Community Development Block Grants and Choice Neighborhoods Grants;
- 4** Expand the HUD ConnectHome program to ensure low-income children have Internet access; and
- 5** Incentivize inclusion of conduit or fiber placement in federally-funded infrastructure projects.

## For more information

For a full report on NLC's infrastructure priorities, visit [www.nlc.org/infrastructure](http://www.nlc.org/infrastructure)