



# REBUILD WITH US.

## REBUILD AND REIMAGINE AMERICA'S INFRASTRUCTURE

[WWW.NLC.ORG/INFRASTRUCTURE](http://WWW.NLC.ORG/INFRASTRUCTURE)

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

#### »» SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT

Together, cities and our federal partners must address the existing core infrastructure backlog, reestablish long-term funding, and use new technologies that will serve America's cities for the next 100 years.

#### »» EXPAND REVENUE TOOLS

Cities should be given more flexibility to raise revenues and use innovative financing techniques while protecting existing tools, such as tax-exempt bonds, to drive regional investments that tie into the national network.

#### »» LOCALLY-DRIVEN PROJECTS

Local leaders, from cities large and small, are best positioned to identify where infrastructure needs are greatest and should be given a stronger voice in how limited federal dollars are invested in their communities.

#### »» STRONG COMMUNITIES

Cities and our federal partners must make investments that will strengthen our infrastructure and our communities before disaster strikes to ensure they can withstand extreme weather events.

#### »» FEDERAL-LOCAL PARTNERSHIP

Cities are already paying their fair share and need a steady federal partner to fund existing national programs and make significant capital investments for the long-term benefit of the economy.

#### »» REBUILD AND REIMAGINE

Cities are leading the way in building intermodal, sustainable and interconnected infrastructure networks that support a modern economy. Congress must invest in cities' vision to rebuild and reimagine America's infrastructure.





# TRANSFORMING TRANSPORTATION



# PREPARING A SKILLED WORKFORCE

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

- Ensure **transportation programs are right-sized** to meet the needs of cities of all sizes;
- Allow flexibility for **targeted grants to be used for any transportation solution** that eases congestion and improves Americans' commutes – from bike paths to bus rapid transit to transportation flow management;
- Expand the **Surface Transportation Block Grant Program** to provide cities direct, flexible funding to invest in high priority projects across modes;
- Increase grant funding and flexibility to save the lives of riders, bikers and pedestrians through **local Road to Zero and "Safe System" projects** to reduce deaths on urban and rural roads to zero;
- **Modernize data-sharing** across all U.S. Department of Transportation programs to ensure real-time and accessible data is available for cities and regions to use for planning and congestion management;
- Provide additional federal resources and coordination to help **"Smart Cities"** of all sizes scale up research and pilot deployments of future transportation solutions;
- Learn from TIGER/BUILD success by encouraging grants for **local and multimodal projects of significance** with stable grant structures and adequate resources for success;
- Increase **transit capital funding certainty** for cities and grow multimodal options as a congestion-fighter in busy regions;
- Incentivize zero- or low-emission vehicles of all types and deploy transportation-energy efficiency pilots to **reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation**; and
- Require the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to move quickly to set **safety standards for autonomous vehicles** to alleviate concerns and continue piloting in cities nationwide.

***NLC calls on Congress to invest in our nation's workforce by passing legislation that will:***

- Provide full appropriation to programs that build on the **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**;
- **Create additional workforce funding and training programs**, such as the aviation maintenance technician program as authorized within the FAA bill and the water workforce development program within the America's Water Infrastructure Act;
- Expand dedicated funding for **sector-based partnerships** that would jump-start local infrastructure projects and maintain necessary skilled labor;
- Expand funding and opportunities for local programs that increase overall awareness, diversity and equity, and bridge the skills gap for those interested in an **apprenticeship program**;
- Connect investments to existing local **Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs** and workforce development board initiatives focused on infrastructure skill development;
- Expand the **Pell Grant program** to cover needed workforce skills training for short-term and certificate training programs;
- Establish a **permanent summer jobs program** for young people ages 14 through 24 that will provide youth, including economically disadvantaged and disconnected youth, with paid jobs that provide measurable world-of-work training and job skills development;
- Maintain our current workforce by ensuring **protections for immigrants**, including those with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) status; and
- Ensure access to **affordable, high-quality childcare and a portable benefits system** to ensure all those capable of engaging in the workforce are able.



## IMPROVING BROADBAND ACCESS



## ENSURING CLEAN AND SAFE WATER

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

- Expand **broadband access** to underserved neighborhoods by eliminating state barriers to municipal broadband networks;
- Target federal money to community institutions, underserved communities, and low-income families by fixing funding shortfalls in the **Federal Communications Commission's Universal Service Fund** and modernizing contribution methods;
- Increase funding for **Community Development Block grants and Choice Neighborhoods grants**, and expand the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) **ConnectHome program** so that local governments can allocate funding for broadband planning and deployment alongside affordable housing and neighborhood improvement projects;
- Protect **local authority over broadband infrastructure and local rights-of-way from preemptive regulatory action** by the Federal Communications Commission;
- Increase the financial viability of middle- and last-mile broadband infrastructure investment with **dig once policies** for inclusion of conduit or fiber placement in federally-funded infrastructure projects; and
- Dedicate more federal funding and oversight to **broadband mapping**, to ensure that federal agencies and local governments have a complete, accurate, street-level understanding of broadband access, adoption, and affordability.

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

- Reauthorize and provide federal funding for water infrastructure improvements through the **Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF)** programs;
- Provide full appropriation to the **Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA)** for loans and loan guarantees for water infrastructure projects;
- Modernize the **National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permitting process** to allow states with delegated authority to issue permits of up to ten years;
- Provide federal funding for **grant and technical assistance programs** to improve the resilience and sustainability of drinking water systems, assist with lead testing and remediation, and address sewer overflows; and
- Require full use of the **Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund** for its original intent, ensuring that our nation's ports and harbors do not continue to fall into disrepair.





# SUPPORTING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

***NLC calls on Congress to develop a coordinated federal plan that supports community resilience by passing legislation that will:***

- Provide local governments with tools and information to mitigate risk and improve local infrastructure to better **withstand extreme weather** in the short- and long-term;
- Streamline **federal assistance programs**, such as CDBG Disaster Recovery grants, to ensure local governments can access and effectively use the resources they need for long-term recovery;
- Provide financial and technical assistance for local **government vulnerability assessments** and pre-disaster and hazard mitigation efforts;
- Provide local governments with incentives to consider the **effects of climate change and extreme weather** in their mitigation, adaptation, and resilience planning;
- Better **align federal funding with local preparedness and resilience-building efforts** to reduce the risks to the federal government from extreme weather;
- Dedicate a **mandatory funding source for the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership program**, which helps cities create and maintain local parks and outdoor recreation areas, particularly in underserved communities; and
- Take urgent action to **reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the effects of climate change**, including developing a multi-pollutant strategy to reduce emissions across a broad sector of the economy and incentivizing energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy development and deployment.



# INVESTING IN INFRASTRUCTURE

***NLC calls on Congress to invest in cities' vision to rebuild and reimagine America's infrastructure by passing legislation that will:***

- Protect the tax exemption on **municipal bonds** and **qualified private activity bonds**, which finance two-thirds of U.S. infrastructure projects;
- Reinstatement the tax exemption for **advance refunding bonds** to provide cities with the flexibility to lower borrowing costs and free up capital for new infrastructure;
- Exempt current and future **direct subsidy bond payments and tax credits**, such as Build America Bonds, from sequestration to give city leaders the confidence to better plan and budget for long-term infrastructure needs;
- Remove the federal volume cap for qualified **private activity bonds for water and wastewater infrastructure projects**, which will make additional private capital available for water projects;
- Raise the threshold for **qualified small issuers** to \$30 million per year to lower borrowing costs for small cities, towns and villages;
- Replenish the **Trust Fund for transportation** and implement a **sustainable revenue strategy** that keeps the Trust Fund **fully funded** for rebuilding and maintaining roads, bridges and transit options;
- Create greater **flexibility for private investment** in infrastructure, while also recognizing that public-private partnerships may only be viable for a limited number of infrastructure projects; and
- Clarify that **water conservation and water efficiency rebates** provided by local water utilities to homeowners are not subject to a federal income tax.