

A Strategy for Improving America's Public Works

No single approach is adequate to ensure the future viability of America's infrastructure. A broad range of measures is necessary to make a meaningful difference by the turn of the century. Specifically, these should include:

- **A national commitment, shared by all levels of government and the private sector, to increase capital spending by as much as 100 percent above current levels;**
- **Clarification of the respective roles of the federal, state, and local governments in infrastructure construction and management to focus responsibility and increase accountability;**
- **More flexible administration of federal and state mandates to allow cost-effective methods of compliance;**
- **Accelerated spending of the federal highway, transit, aviation, and waterways trust funds;**
- **Financing of a larger share of the cost of public works by those who benefit from services;**
- **Removal of unwarranted limits on the ability of state and local governments to help themselves through tax-exempt financing;**
- **Strong incentives for maintenance of capital assets and the use of low-capital techniques such as demand management, coordinated land-use planning, and waste reduction and recycling;**
- **Additional support for research and development to accelerate technological innovation and for training of public works professionals; and**
- **A rational capital budgeting process at all levels of government.**

None of these steps will be easy or unopposed. But the increasing cost of delay is certain. The Council urges the President, the Congress, and the nation's state and local leaders to act on this agenda immediately.