

# California's Crumbling Infrastructure Challenge

California's economic prosperity was built on world-class infrastructure. To assure a prosperous future, those investments need to be drastically updated and expanded. Demographers project that California's population will continue to grow by 300,000 to 400,000 annually. These new residents will need roads to drive, public transit to commute, clean water to drink, schools to attend and parks to recreate. State lawmakers must make investing in additional infrastructure a priority.



1400 K Street, Suite 400  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 658-8200  
[www.cacities.org](http://www.cacities.org)

 [www.facebook.com/leagueofcities](http://www.facebook.com/leagueofcities)

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Local Streets  
and Roads Need  
**\$82 BILLION**  
IN NEXT 10 YEARS

California's  
Population  
will continue to grow  
**\$300-400K**  
ANNUALLY



Numerous studies suggest that not only is the state unprepared for future growth, its current condition does not adequately support today's population. Quite simply, California's infrastructure is crumbling.

The infrastructure situation at the local level is bleak. Cities are where 83 percent of Californians live, work and play. As the state has struggled to balance its budget, it has cut infrastructure funding programs and taken local revenues. Cities face monumental challenges as they address local needs including:

- **Local Streets and Roads.** Local streets and roads make up 81 percent of California's roadways. Literally every trip begins and ends on a local street or road and this system serves the foundation of our economy. Unfortunately, *The 2012 California Statewide Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment* found that local streets are rapidly deteriorating. The average ranking is "at risk." Nearly twice the current funding level is needed just to maintain the status quo; \$82 billion is needed in the next decade to bring them up to "best management practices."
- **Bridges.** California's bridges are not in good shape. Failures in local bridges can have catastrophic economic and public safety consequences. Bridges are typically built to last 50 years. The 2012 National Bridge Inventory Database tallied a total of 11,863 local agency bridges in California; 5,544 are more than 50 years old, and another 2,384 are between 40 and 49 years old.
- **Public Safety Facilities.** With the implementation of realignment in 2011, local governments took on more responsibility for housing inmates. As a result of this shift, city and county jails are becoming overcrowded and will need to be upgraded to house these more long-term and dangerous prisoners. Safe communities foster economic development and sound local jails are critical.
- **Affordable Housing.** Even with the recent recession the price of housing in California remains among the highest in the nation. The impact most significantly hits low-income Californians, two-thirds of whom spend more than half of their income for housing. Few resources remain to help build the low and moderate income housing needed to house their teachers, firefighters and retail workers.
- **Water Supply.** Clean drinkable water is the lifeblood of California's residents, thriving agriculture and other industry. California's water infrastructure needs are ranked highest among all other states. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that California needs \$44.5 billion to fund improved drinking water transmission, water treatment, and water storage.





Wastewater  
Management  
**\$4.5 BILLION**  
Annual Price Tag

Flood Control  
Facilities  
**\$2.8 BILLION**  
Annual Price Tag



- **Wastewater Management.** Significant investments are needed to address renewal and replacement, maintenance, security and reliability funding for California's wastewater infrastructure. The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) *2013 California Infrastructure Report Card* estimates that \$4.5 billion will need to be spent annually for the next 10 years to modestly improve wastewater infrastructure.
- **Flood Control.** Levees and other flood control measures protect thousands of homes, businesses and vital community infrastructure. The *ASCE 2013 California Infrastructure Report Card* found that the backbone flood control and drainage systems serving California cities, including channels, levees, retarding basins, dams and pump stations, varies widely in condition and capacity to prevent flooding from major storms. It's estimated that flood control funding short falls for regional flood control facilities are in excess of \$2.8 billion annually over the next 10 years.
- **Stormwater.** As regional water quality boards adopt more stringent requirements, local agencies are being called on to adopt expansive and expensive stormwater management programs, which will require funding that simply does not yet exist. The magnitude of this need is significant and funding options are extremely limited without changes in state law
- **Zero Emission Vehicles Infrastructure.** California cities are already home to tens of thousands of plug-in electric vehicles and the state currently represents 30 to 40 percent of the national market. To support this growing technology and to meet the Governor's target of having 1.5 million zero-emission vehicles on the road by 2025, significant investment must be made to support related infrastructure. This includes everything from installing the actual chargers to ensuring that electricity is available and reliable.
- **Technology.** The Federal Communications Commission expects that by 2016 the number of mobile broadband users nationally will reach 5 billion. Nevertheless, more than 9 million Californians are unable to access broadband in their homes. Significant investments must continue to be made if California is to remain a national and world leader in communications technology.
- **Schools.** Schools are also deteriorating; according to a 2012 UC Berkeley report, *California's K-12 Educational Infrastructure Investments*, 73 percent of the schools in California are more than 25 years old and a growing number need rehabilitation.



## The Golden State's Golden Opportunity

To once again truly be the Golden State where residents enjoy a high quality of life, innovations launch and business flourishes, California will need to invest a staggering \$500 billion in infrastructure over the next two decades. While these costs are high, the price tag for waiting is far higher. The conclusions are inescapable — we must pay now to update our infrastructure or pay much more later to replace it.



The League of California Cities® is advocating for funding and tools for infrastructure investment and job creation. We must work with the state and federal governments, opinion leaders, the press and others to develop answers — and funding — to repair and replace our collapsing infrastructure. Join us in finding solutions for our future.