



What Do Local Governments Want in an Infrastructure Bill?

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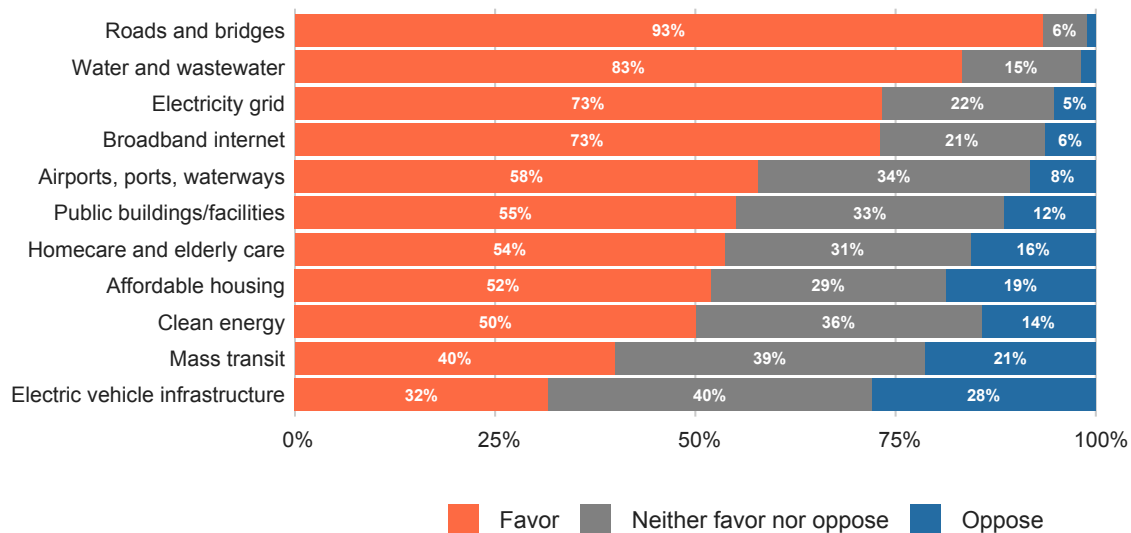
A new CivicPulse survey of local policymakers reveals strong support for roads, water, electricity, and broadband but disagreement on mass transit and clean energy.

MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA — A new CivicPulse survey of local government policymakers shows that their highest priorities for a new infrastructure bill would be funding for roads and bridges, as well as water and wastewater projects. These two priority areas had near universal support from local officials. There was also strong support for the electricity grid and broadband, with over 70% of policymakers favoring the inclusion of these items in a potential bill.

CivicPulse, in partnership with Stanford University's Bill Lane Center and the media outlet Route Fifty, surveyed 413 local government elected officials from across the country in May 2021. The survey included top elected officials and governing board members from a representative sample of counties, municipalities, and townships with populations of 1,000 residents or more.

Infrastructure Bill

For each of the following items, would you favor or oppose the inclusion of funding in a new infrastructure bill?



Source: CivicPulse (May 2021)

Policymakers from areas with higher populations (more than 75,000) expressed more support for airports and mass transit than policymakers from areas with lower populations (less than 15,000), reflecting the diversity of needs from local communities of different sizes.

There was also a strong split along partisan lines with respect to the clean energy provisions in a potential bill, with over 90% of Democratic policymakers favoring its inclusion compared to less than 30% of Republican policymakers.

“When considering what should be included in an infrastructure bill, it is important that we understand what local policymakers around the country are prioritizing. These officials, after all, will be the ones spending much of the money that is allocated, and it will fall to them to ensure whatever projects are initiated are maintained for the long run,” said Nathan Lee, Managing Director of CivicPulse and a professor in the Department of Public Policy at the Rochester Institute

of Technology. “While it was not surprising that roads and bridges ranked so highly, we were surprised by the amount of bipartisan support for new investments in water, electricity, and broadband expansion.”

Federal lawmakers are currently in negotiations about what to include in a potential infrastructure bill that would likely invest billions of dollars into communities and projects around the United States. To date, Democratic and Republican lawmakers have not been able to reach a compromise regarding the size and scope of a potential spending bill. As talks continue at the national level, this new CivicPulse report will provide a benchmark for federal policymakers to understand the priorities of the local governments who will play a critical role in realizing whatever deal is ultimately made.

More information on the survey and results can be found in the full report at <https://www.civicpulse.org/infrastructure>.

About CivicPulse

CivicPulse is a nonpartisan, nonprofit research organization that runs a national survey platform of local government officials. Our mission is to enhance local government through shared data and research. To learn more about our work, please visit civicpulse.org.

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