



The United States Conference of Mayors

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NATION'S MAYORS HOLD SECOND ACTION FORUM: CALL FOR RENEWED INVESTMENT IN THE NATION'S INFRASTRUCTURE

New York, N.Y. – Led by U.S. Conference of Mayors President Miami Mayor Manny Diaz, host New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Co-Chair of the national infrastructure coalition Building America's Future, and Conference Vice President Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels, the nation's mayors today held their second Mayors '08 Action Forum on Infrastructure in New York City, where mayors called for a new local/federal partnership to bring critical investment to our nation's cities in transportation, water and other critical public infrastructure.

Mayors want to replace antiquated transportation and infrastructure systems in ways that are climate and energy centered and that use existing resources more efficiently. To that end, Conference leadership and CEO Tom Cochran met with more than a dozen U.S. mayors met with city transportation officials who are responsible 24/7 for moving and operating major transportation systems in cities across the nation.

Mayor Diaz has said, "National problems require national investments. The American Society of Civil Engineers grades our nation's infrastructure at a D requiring a \$1.6 trillion investment just to fix it. A bridge collapses in Minneapolis, steam pipes explode in Manhattan, levies burst in New Orleans ... and these are not isolated incidents, they are symptoms of an underfunded national infrastructure."

The mayors also released a report on water infrastructure that shows for every one dollar invested in public water and sewer infrastructure services, approximately \$8.97 are added to the national economy. Public infrastructure is the foundation for economic development -- access to roads, water, sewer, communication technologies, and electricity are all essential to the economy. The expert consensus is that public infrastructure investment yields positive returns, and investment in water and sewer infrastructure has greater returns than most other types of public infrastructure.

Other key findings of the report reveal:

- Recent estimates are that one dollar of water and sewer infrastructure investment increases private long-term output (Gross Domestic Product, GDP) by \$6.35 – (\$1 invested yields \$6.35 output)
- The U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) estimates that for annual general revenue and spending on operating and maintaining water and sewer systems – each additional dollar of public revenue from providing water and sewer services increases revenue in all industries by \$2.62 – (\$1 dollar invested yields \$2.62 output in other industries)
- DOC estimates that adding one new job in local water and sewer creates 3.68 jobs in the national economy to support it
- An indirect benefit of local government investment in "green water and sewer infrastructure" such as protecting one hectare (2.5 acres) of wetlands for source water protection yields \$4,177 annually in avoided water treatment costs, and another \$10,000 in other ecoservices categories (e.g., water supply, climate regulation, recreation, etc.)

"Today's action forum has put the spotlight on the national failure of our infrastructure policy," said Mayor Bloomberg. "It's a failure that has two fundamental causes, the federal government is not investing enough in our infrastructure, and, when it does, it's not investing wisely. If America is going to remain the world's economic superpower this must change."

Conference President Miami Mayor Manny Diaz believes that Washington no longer invests in its cities and its people. Further, he said, "Washington has lost its values – lost its principles – lost its sense of purpose – engaging in endless debate and partisan bickering while people in this country continue to suffer. ... Plain and simple, Washington has abandoned us."

The Mayors Action Forum on Infrastructure is the second in a series of mayoral forums in key cities around the country intended to challenge the next Presidential Administration to invest in America's cities and metropolitan areas -- the economic engines of the nation accounting for 86 percent of the Gross Domestic Product and where over 85% of people in the country live. **Recommendations from this forum and four others will be presented to the next President of the United States during the critical first 100 days of the new administration.**