



AIA
New York

AIA New York Position Statement: Transportation and Infrastructure

The transportation infrastructure of New York City and the surrounding tristate area directly impacts the welfare and livelihood of its over 20 million residents and those of hundreds of millions of visitors and travelers each year. The efficient, safe, and secure movement of people and goods is essential to a robust economy for the city, region, and nation. Other critical infrastructure systems that enable our quality of life include drinking water, waste water, sanitation, power, and communications.

Although most infrastructure planning and implementation occurs at the local and state level, public utilities and transportation routes and modes span beyond their boundaries. Recognizing the crucial role these infrastructure systems play in the nation's health and vitality, the federal government has a network of agencies essential to ensuring the ongoing viability of our infrastructure. The U.S. Department of Transportation, for example, houses the Federal Aviation, Railroad, and Highway Administrations. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security, includes the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Additional entities and agencies that play a role in the country's infrastructure include the Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Forward-thinking public growth and development policies and a strong commitment to the ongoing allocation of a dependable stream of federal funding for transportation and infrastructure are essential to avoid huge costs for deferred maintenance or even replacement of systems; to expand networks to support population growth, demographic changes, economic shifts, and related needs for development; and to act on vulnerabilities to our infrastructure from threats and hazards due to climate change, and other unforeseen events.

Successful federal programs that demonstrate this commitment include the Highway Trust Fund, which supports construction and maintenance of roads, bridges, and mass transit across the nation; the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) New Starts and Small Starts programs, which fund rail and mass transit; TIGER grants, which leverage local and state transportation funding; smaller programs such as USDOT's Smart City Challenge, which provides incentive funding for mid-sized cities to develop integrated smart transportation systems; and multi-agency disaster recovery programs. To achieve multi-state transportation and infrastructure programs such as high-speed rail, that would benefit entire regions and the nation, it is important for there to be strong federal leadership with responsible public policies and funding.

Principles

- Infrastructure and land-use policies should encourage public health, efficient use of resources, and access to opportunity for all.
- Transportation systems at different scales are required to move people, goods, and services in efficient, safe, and sustainable ways to promote equity among all residents
- Funding for infrastructure projects should prioritize transparency. The decision-making process for choosing projects should be based on a data-driven model to standardize and rationalize which projects receive funding.

The American Institute of Architects

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- Research and development of alternative sustainable energy sources for transportation fuel and power generation should be supported, as well as planning for resiliency to mitigate the likelihood, seriousness, and impacts of extreme events.
- Existing transportation and infrastructure systems should be protected, modernized, and expanded to facilitate growth and prosperity.
- Public open space is the interconnecting tissue of cities, providing access and movement between residences, places of work, commerce, recreation and services, and should reflect the greatest public good and the diversity and aspirations of all users.
- Regional planning is vital to leveraging the interdependent relationship of jurisdictions to benefit the nation, region, and local communities.
- Public-private partnerships should achieve public initiatives where there is a clear benefit to the public good and where standards of quality and service are assured.
- New York's transportation and infrastructure health should be viewed in the national interest, and state-of-good repair as well as capacity enhancement programs should receive federal funding through that lens.

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