Public works is the combination of physical assets, management practices, policies, and personnel necessary for the public and private sectors to provide and sustain structures and services essential to the welfare and high quality of life for our citizens.

The American Public Works Association (APWA) serves professionals in all aspects of public works – a fact that sets it apart from other organizations and makes it the ‘voice of public works’ throughout North America. With a membership more than 30,000 strong, APWA includes not only personnel from local, county, state, provincial, and federal agencies, but also private sector personnel who supply products and services to those professionals. Public works professionals are first responders and they often get to work – sometimes before our other first responder partners, and then after to restore essential services – wherever there is an emergency affecting public services.

Membership in APWA is open to any individual, agency, or corporation with an interest in public works and infrastructure issues. Common job titles include public works directors; city engineers; city managers; fleet managers; community development directors; transportation managers; park directors; county officials; and representatives from engineering and other consulting firms, manufacturers, construction companies, and a multitude of other service providers.

How states and localities utilize federal funding to help finance infrastructure projects:

- **TAX EXEMPT BONDS**: 67.2%
- **TAX CREDIT BONDS**: 12.5%
- **STATE REVOLVING FUNDS AND INFRASTRUCTURE BANKS**: 14.1%
- **DIRECT FEDERAL CREDIT PROGRAMS**: 6.3%

State and local governments outspend the federal government on infrastructure in every category of project:

- **HIGHWAYS**: 74% vs 26%  
  $131B vs $46B
- **MASS TRANSIT & RAIL**: 77% vs 23%  
  $57.4B vs $17.2B
- **WATER UTILITIES**: 96% vs 4%  
  $108.5B vs $4.5B
- **AVIATION**: 55% vs 45%  
  $20.4B vs $16.7B
- **WATER TRANSPORTATION**: 57% vs 43%  
  $5.8B vs $4.4B
- **WATER RESOURCES**: 65% vs 35%  
  $18.7B vs $10B

*Pre-IIJA totals, CBO report Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure (October 2018), https://www.cbo.gov/publication/54539
The United States has approximately 19,500 municipalities of varying sizes. In each community, whatever the size, there are needs common to all that must be met through the provision of public works services. These needs are met on a daily basis by visionary, values-driven, and hardworking men and women who provide and sustain public works services in the best interests of their communities.

An infrastructure investment gap of nearly $2.6 trillion this decade, if unaddressed, could cost the U.S. $10 trillion in lost GDP by 2039.