



CITYAGE

EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE ON INFRASTRUCTURE

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In partnership with Siemens,
Accelerator for America and National League of Cities

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BACKGROUND:

According to the White House, the bi-partisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) -- worth \$1.2 trillion -- makes America's largest-ever investment in public transit, the largest federal investment in passenger rail in half a century, the single largest dedicated bridge investment since the construction of the interstate highway system, the largest investment in clean drinking water and wastewater infrastructure in the country's history, and commensurate investments in terms of country-wide high-speed internet accessibility, clean energy transmission and electric vehicle infrastructure, electrification of schools and transit buses, and the building of a "resilient, clean, 21st century grid."

During Infrastructure Week, CityAge, Siemens, Accelerator for America and the National League of Cities (NLC) gathered 25 local and national leaders in Washington, DC to discuss how to build better American cities through public and private sector partnerships.

ABOUT THE TOPIC:

This extraordinary funding means America has a huge opportunity to boost once-in-a-lifetime public investment with private sector funding. Realizing the full scope of this opportunity will require prompt, decisive action by governments at every level.

- What can they do to make sure that the money available does the maximum amount of good in terms of infrastructure, promoting equity and driving U.S. competitiveness internationally?
- How can governments develop more expertise on the P3 side, leverage partnerships with the private sector, get funding more quickly and accomplish their mutual goals in good time?
- How can states and cities determine which kinds of infrastructure projects will have the most impact and which technologies are future-proof?

"We just need five to seven regions in the country to build better American cities through an innovative new model of public-private project delivery and show the way. A few have begun: Erie, Pennsylvania, Richmond, Virginia, and Dubuque, Iowa, are ready."

PARTICIPANTS INCLUDED:



PHIL WASHINGTON

CEO, Denver International Airport



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PERSPECTIVES AND INSIGHTS



WHAT IS TECHNOLOGY'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING P3S, AND VICE VERSA?

Future-minded infrastructure requires state-of-the-art technology.

Modernizing infrastructure is a technological endeavor.

The energy sector in particular needs updating with things like grid edge, two-way power flow with microgrids and 3D manufacturing.

We need to build a national electric vehicle charging network.

The Equity in Infrastructure Project (EIP) asks people to take a pledge to increase the number, size and percentage of contracting opportunities going to Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs); streamline and centralize certification, improve payment time, and standardize transparent data collection; and increase appropriate financing to HUBs working with private and public partners.



2. AMERICA'S 'DELIVERY CRISIS' IS SLOWING DOWN THE COUNTRY'S GROWTH. HOW CAN NEW PARTNERSHIPS HELP RESOLVE THE ISSUE?

There's a deep need for regional collaboration.

In terms of the delivery crisis, P3s are a fine, but limited, tool. We also need to drive supplier diversity, inclusive growth and catalyze community development.

A big problem is the lack of municipal capacity in project design and delivery -- we need a quick set-up with pilots in leading jurisdictions to show how money can be spent well.

“Governments need someone who swims in the P3 waters as a dolphin, not a shark.”



Keys to successful public-private collaboration include:

- Put the emphasis on performance outcomes and don't get hung up on how those outcomes can be achieved, because that constrains innovative ideas.
- If we work fast, we can lead a generation's worth of change in 90 days. If we're too slow, we risk congressional inquiries into forsaken funds and burned political capital, because the IJA's funding won't get spent on deserving projects.
- Governments need to find experts to advise them on their side of the P3 table.

The bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is expected to add about two million American jobs per year over a decade.

3. HOW CAN WE MAKE SURE THIS FUNDING MEETS ITS OBJECTIVES, FAST? AND THAT IT SUPPORTS PEOPLE AND SMALL BUSINESS?

Working together is how we'll get things done.

Collaborate regionally, assembling a tight network of public and private leaders.

Identify three to five major “nodes” of investment in your region that are worthy of investment and could impel broader reinvestment, whether that’s a bridge that could be refurbished or a part of town that still lacks digital connectivity.

Hire a small team to apply for the patchwork of grants and find federal government funding.

Tell a compelling local story about how much impact these investments could have -- on the economy, employment and, perhaps most importantly, how this investment would build equity in your community.

Spend some of the money on new educational and vocational programs.

Once you get the money, use it right away and work alongside local business leaders. Make sure you pay small business to get the project done.

The Act will invest \$110 billion of new funds for roads, bridges, and major projects, and reauthorize the surface transportation program for the next five years. It includes about \$16 billion for major projects that are “too large or complex for traditional funding programs but will deliver significant economic benefits to communities.

4.

HOW DO WE IDENTIFY THE INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITIES OF OUR CITIES?

There's lots of need and a finite amount of money.

Business can certainly partner with government in these arenas: transit-oriented development; reconnecting communities; adding to and improving the workforce; smoothing the supply chain; addressing the challenges of climate change by, for example, providing an electric vehicle charging network; ensuring that 15% of these funds goes to small business.

PARTICIPANTS' KEY CONCLUSIONS:

We must work fast to make the most of this opportunity by facilitating collaboration between public and private sectors.

Technology and innovation must be central to all our efforts.

Small businesses should be uplifted, and new jobs should be created.

Community-building means inclusion, with equal opportunities, like high-speed internet, provided to everyone.

Clean energy, clean drinking water and solutions that tackle the challenges of climate change are national concerns that must be addressed by this funding.



Thank you to Siemens, Accelerator for America and
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