

# Infrastructure & Housing

## Infrastructure

The Roundtable’s advocacy in Washington continually emphasizes how essential a healthy and thriving real estate market is to public and private investments in roads, bridges, transit, telecommunications, power delivery, and other infrastructure systems that our communities need to function and thrive—before, during, and after a national crisis like the current pandemic. Our national recovery will depend on stable national infrastructure.

### The Roundtable Regularly Engages with Congress and the Administration to Encourage Investment to Repair and Modernize American Infrastructure

The Roundtable has engaged Members of Congress and key Administration officials in support of the critical infrastructure policies including the following:

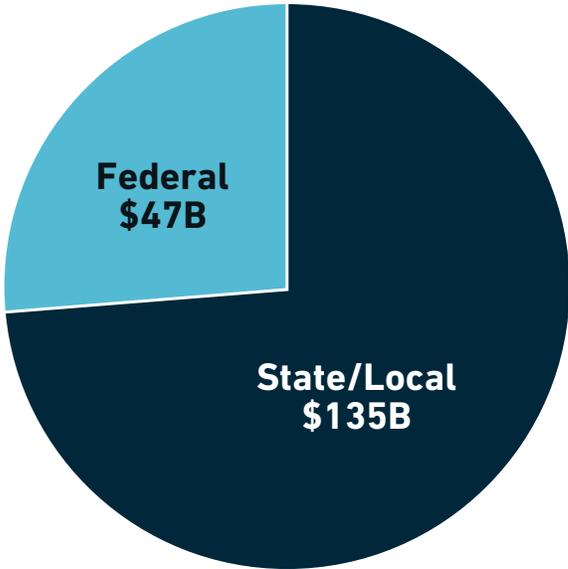
- Permit system reforms.
- Streamlining and expanding the TIFIA loan program to encourage appropriate public-private partnerships.
- Prioritization of proceeds from the Highway Trust Fund with a “Fix it First” strategy.
- Increased support for sustainable mass transit and innovative projects of regional and national significance.
- A sensible plan to make our energy infrastructure safe, reliable, and resilient.
- Parameters to capture the value of the “transit premium” on real estate located near mass transit to help finance nearby infrastructure.

The Roundtable urges a holistic approach to infrastructure modernization, which will create American jobs, boost economic growth, address climate threats, and respond to demands that reflect our nation’s changing demographic patterns.

## Sources of Highways and Roads Expenditures

Billions of Dollars by Level of Government, Fiscal Year 2017

Source: Urban Institute, State & Local Government Finance Data Query System





*Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Dr. Benjamin S. Carson, SR., M.D. briefs The Roundtable on the Administration’s efforts to reshape the role of the Government Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs) by capitalizing Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac before ending their government conservatorship.*

**Reauthorization of the Highway Trust Fund**

The Roundtable has urged Congress to reauthorize the Highway Trust Fund as a top infrastructure policy priority this year. The Fund is the nation’s main source of spending for roads and mass transit and will expire in September 2020. The Roundtable joined 150 national trade associations in the “Infrastructure Working Group” to call for:

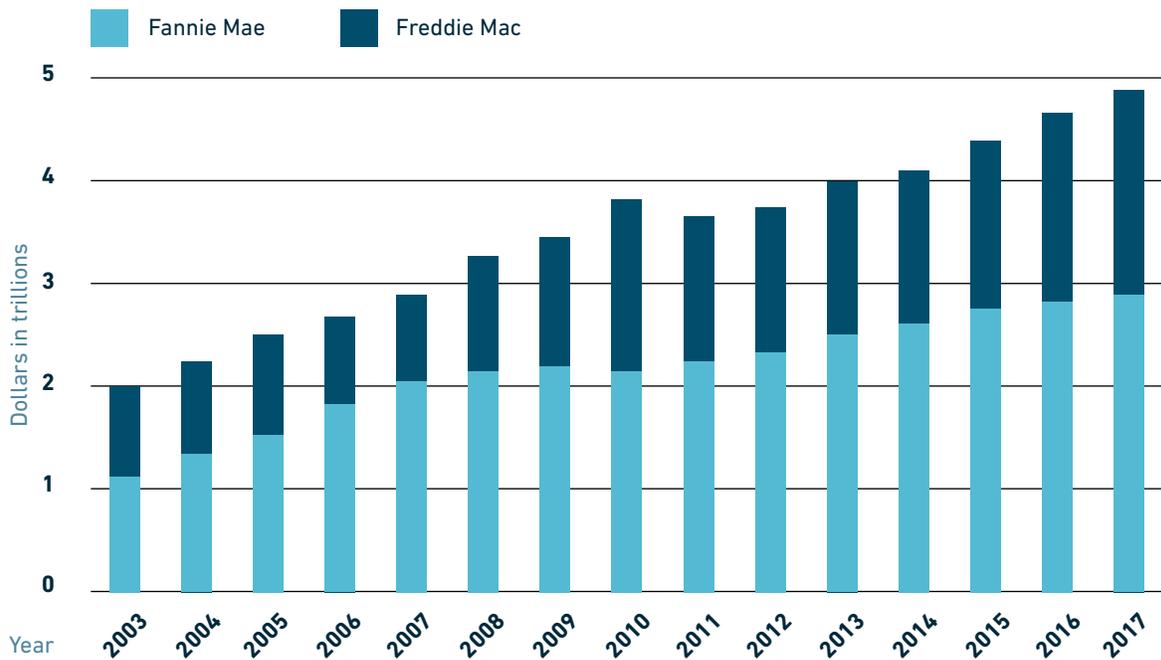
- an increase in federal investments for infrastructure;
- a sustainable solution to the recurring challenges and shortages in the Fund, such as through a reasonable increase in the federal gas “user fee” and consideration of a vehicle miles travelled fee;
- allocation of federal, state and local cost share arrangements to secure funding

for projects of national and regional significance

- enhanced opportunities for appropriate private investment in U.S. infrastructure; and
- creation of efficient systems for the federal permitting process—with the purpose of promoting key environmental protections.

The Roundtable continues to advocate for policy that will finance a stable national infrastructure network. The Roundtable strongly recommends the repeal of the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act (FIRPTA), which imposes a discriminatory layer of capital gains tax on foreign real investment—a tax burden that does not apply to any other asset class. Repealing FIRPTA would catalyze market-driven financing and improvement in our nation’s infrastructure.

## The federal government guaranteed \$5 trillion in Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac mortgage-backed securities in 2017



Source: GAO analysis of Federal Housing Finance Agency Data

## Housing

The Roundtable supports policies that will help bring safe, decent, and affordable housing more within reach of households across income levels—from families in extreme need to the teachers, first responders, and other critical contributors to the U.S. workforce. Last year, The Roundtable engaged the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs and the House Financial Services Committee, outlining the need for Congressional guidance on housing finance reform, while also calling for a bipartisan effort to end conservatorship of the GSEs.

This year, The Roundtable submitted detailed comments to the Department of Housing and Urban Development in response to HUD’s

Request for Information seeking public feedback on laws, regulations, land use requirements and administrative practices posing barriers to housing affordability and availability. The Roundtable encouraged HUD to amplify programs to secure safe, decent, and affordable housing to Americans in need. We also recommended that policy makers focus on the scarcity of homes accessible to middle-class families, and recommended policies to increase both purchase and rental workforce housing options. The Roundtable also challenges the efficacy of rent control as a long-term solution to housing affordability. The Roundtable’s key policy recommendations include the following:

- Reform the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), so banks can receive “credit” when they serve lending needs and increase housing supply in middle class

neighborhoods (80-120 percent of Area Median Income).

- Promote a “Yes in My Backyard”—or “YIMBY”—environment whereby states and cities are encouraged by the “carrot” of federal grants to oblige localities to implement land-use laws permitting the high-density zoning designations needed to entitle affordable housing and transit-oriented projects.
- Promote manufactured housing production as a high quality, less costly alternative to site-built homes.
- Push the General Services Administration to dispose of excess and under-utilized federal properties and re-purpose them to increase affordable housing supplies.
- Expand the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, and create a similar tax incentive focused on housing development for America’s middle class.
- Use GSE reform to re-focus the mission of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac on liquidity in the mortgage markets for low- and middle-income home buyers, while also encouraging GSE interventions to enhance to access middle-class rental housing.

Early this year the Roundtable joined a coalition in support of the “Yes in My Backyard” (YIMBY) Act. The YIMBY Act encourages communities to eliminate discriminatory land-use policies and remove barriers that prevent the production of housing needed in communities throughout the United States.

The Roundtable supports the “Build More Housing Near Transit Act,” to prioritize a commitment to changing local land use policies in project station areas to accommodate affordable and market-rate housing development.

The Roundtable continues to work with a diverse group of stakeholders to elevate housing reform and enhance market opportunities to spur economic growth.



*Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC), who serves on the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and Finance Committees, discusses the ongoing development of the Opportunity Zones program, designed to channel investment and spur economic development and affordable housing in distressed areas across the U.S.*