

# Report Card 2009 Grades

## Aviation **D**

Despite surging oil prices, volatile credit markets, and a lagging economy, the Federal Aviation Administration predicts a three percent annual growth in air travel. These travelers are faced with increasing delays and inadequate conditions as a result of the long overdue need to modernize the outdated air traffic control system and the failure to enact a federal aviation program.

## Bridges **C**

More than 26%, or one in four, of the nation's bridges are either structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. While some progress has been made in recent years to reduce the number of deficient and obsolete bridges in rural areas, the number in urban areas is rising. A \$17 billion annual investment is needed to substantially improve current bridge conditions. Currently, only \$10.5 billion is spent annually on the construction and maintenance of bridges.

## Dams **D**

As dams age and downstream development increases, the number of deficient dams has risen to more than 4,000, including 1,819 high hazard potential dams. Over the past six years, for every deficient, high hazard potential dam repaired, nearly two more were declared deficient. There are more than 85,000 dams in the U.S., and the average age is just over 51 years old.

## Drinking Water **D-**

America's drinking water systems face an annual shortfall of at least \$11 billion to replace aging facilities that are near the end of their useful life and to comply with existing and future federal water regulations. This does not account for growth in the demand for drinking water over the next 20 years. Leaking pipes lose an estimated seven billion gallons of clean drinking water a day.

2009 GRADES	
Aviation	D
Bridges	C
Dams	D
Drinking Water	D-
Energy	D+
Hazardous Waste	D
Inland Waterways	D-
Levees	D-
Public Parks & Recreation	C-
Rail	C-
Roads	D-
School	D
Solid Waste	C+
Transit	D
Wastewater	D-

### Raising the Grades: 5 Key Solutions

America's Infrastructure G.P.A. = D

Total Investment Needs = \$2.2 Trillion, (estimated 5 year need)

A = Exceptional

B = Good

C = Mediocre

D = Poor

F = Failing

## **Energy D+**

Progress has been made in grid reinforcement since 2005 and substantial investment in generation, transmission and distribution is expected over the next two decades. Demand for electricity has grown by 25% since 1990. Public and government opposition and difficulty in the permitting processes are restricting much needed modernization. Projected electric utility investment needs could be as much as \$1.5 trillion by 2030.

## **Hazardous Waste D**

Redevelopment of brownfields sites over the past five years generated an estimated 191,338 new jobs and \$408 million annually in extra revenues for localities. In 2008, however, there were 188 U.S. cities with brownfields sites awaiting cleanup and redevelopment. Additionally, federal funding for "Superfund" cleanup of the nation's worst toxic waste sites has declined steadily, dropping to \$1.08 billion in 2008, its lowest level since 1986.

## **Levees D-**

More than 85% of the nation's estimated 100,000 miles of levees are locally owned and maintained. The reliability of many of these levees is unknown. Many are over 50 years old and were originally built to protect crops from flooding. With an increase in development behind these levees, the risk to public health and safety from failure has increased. Rough estimates put the cost at more than \$100 billion to repair and rehabilitate the nation's levees.

## **Inland Waterways D-**

The average tow barge can carry the equivalent of 870 tractor trailer loads. Of the 257 locks still in use on the nation's inland waterways, 30 were built in the 1800s and another 92 are more than 60 years old. The average age of all federally owned or operated locks is nearly 60 years, well past their planned design life of 50 years. The cost to replace the present system of locks is estimated at more than \$125 billion.

## **Public Parks & Recreation C-**

Parks, beaches, and other recreational facilities contribute \$730 billion per year to the U.S. economy, support nearly 6.5 million jobs, and contribute to cleaner air and water and higher property values. Despite record spending on parks at the state and local level, the acreage of parkland per resident in urban areas is declining. While significant investments are being made in the National Park Service for its 2016 centennial, the agency's facilities still face a \$7 billion maintenance backlog.

## **Rail C-**

A freight train is three times as fuel efficient as a truck, and traveling via passenger rail uses 20 percent less energy per mile than traveling by car. However, growth and changes in demand patterns create bottlenecks which are already constraining traffic in critical areas. Freight and passenger rail generally share the same network, and a significant potential increase in passenger rail demand will add to the freight railroad capacity challenges. More than \$200 billion is needed through 2035 to accommodate anticipated growth.

## **Roads D-**

Americans spend 4.2 billion hours a year stuck in traffic at a cost to the economy of \$78.2 billion, or \$710 per motorist. Poor road conditions cost motorists \$67 billion a year in repairs and operating costs, and cost 14,000 Americans their lives. One-third of America's major roads are in poor or mediocre condition and 36% of major urban highways are congested. The current spending level of \$70.3 billion per year for highway capital improvements is well below the estimated \$186 billion needed annually to substantially improve the nation's highways.

## **Schools D**

Spending on the nation's schools grew from \$17 billion in 1998 to a peak of \$29 billion in 2004. However, by 2007 spending fell to \$20.28 billion. No comprehensive, authoritative nationwide data on the condition of America's school buildings has been collected in a decade. The National Education Association's best estimate to bring the nation's schools into good repair is \$322 billion.

## **Solid Waste C+**

In 2007, the U.S. produced 254 million tons of solid waste. More than a third was recycled or recovered, representing a seven percent increase since 2000. Per capita generation of waste has remained relatively constant over the last 20 years. Despite those successes, the increasing volume of electronic waste and lack of uniform regulations for disposal creates the potential for high levels of hazardous materials and heavy metals in the nation's landfills, posing a significant threat to public safety.

## **Transit D**

Transit use increased 25% between 1995 and 2005, faster than any other mode of transportation. However, nearly half of American households do not have access to bus or rail transit, and only 25% have what they consider to be a "good option." The Federal Transit Administration estimates \$15.8 billion is needed annually to maintain conditions and \$21.6 billion is needed to improve to good conditions. In 2008, federal capital outlays for transit were only \$9.8 billion.

## **Wastewater D-**

Aging systems discharge billions of gallons of untreated wastewater into U.S. surface waters each year. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that the nation must invest \$390 billion over the next 20 years to update or replace existing systems and build new ones to meet increasing demand.