

INFRASTRUCTURE

FAST FACTS

Joint Economic Committee

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Federal Investment in Infrastructure Is at Its Lowest Level on Record

- According to the Congressional Budget Office, federal investment in transportation and water infrastructure made up only 2.47 percent of federal spending in 2017, the lowest level on record.¹
- In the 2010s, federal investment in transportation and water infrastructure averaged 2.69 percent per year, whereas in every previous decade, save for the 1990s, federal spending in infrastructure amounted to more than 3 percent of federal spending.
- Since the 1990s, the public housing stock has fallen by over 200,000 units—only a fraction of which have been replaced. Today, there are only 958,000 public housing units.² The “massive backlog of unmet capital [housing] needs due to decades of federal underfunding” has left a funding hole of \$26 billion according to a 2010 study, which is likely much higher today.³
- Public schools cut capital spending by \$19 billion—25 percent—between fiscal years 2008 and 2016. A 2014 U.S. Department of Education study found that to bring all K-12 school buildings into good condition would cost almost \$200 billion.⁴

¹ Congressional Budget Office, “Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure,” October 15, 2018, <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/54539>.

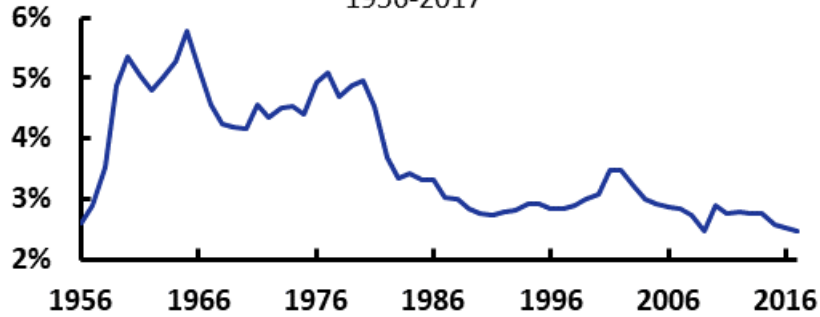
² Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “Policy Basics: Public Housing,” June 16, 2021, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/public-housing>.

³ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “Infrastructure Plans Should Boost Affordable Housing For Lowest Income Americans,” April 30, 2019, <https://www.cbpp.org/blog/infrastructure-plans-should-boost-affordable-housing-for-lowest-income-americans>.

⁴ Huang, Chye-Ching and Roderick Taylor “Any Federal Infrastructure Package Should Boost Investment in Low Income Communities,” Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, June 28, 2019, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-budget/any-federal-infrastructure-package-should-boost-investment-in-low-income>.

Federal Investment in Infrastructure Has Fallen in Recent Decades

Infrastructure spending as a share of federal spending,
1956-2017



Source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget and the Census Bureau.