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America's Infrastructure Solutions Begin at the Ground Level.

In 2016, both presidential candidates pledged that their administrations would dedicate billions of dollars to federal infrastructure investment. But a full election cycle and many "[Infrastructure Weeks](#)" later, there have still been no significant advances in federal infrastructure policy. Lawmakers have made proposals ranging from [status quo](#) to [revolutionary](#), but these top-down proposals have gone nowhere, failing to shake up the federal-centric approach that has failed the nation's infrastructure.

This June, that pattern was broken with the release of [America's New Playbook for Infrastructure](#) from the New Partnership on Infrastructure, which contains 26 proposals to enhance the country's built environment. The playbook is a months-long effort—led by Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti's group [Accelerator for America](#)—which involved interviewing dozens of mayors and experts in the field of infrastructure. What makes the playbook different from plans coming out of the [White House](#), [Senate](#), or [House of Representatives](#) is that it starts with a bottom-up approach. The playbook is rooted in a practitioner's perspective, targeted toward solving the routine challenges of developing meaningful infrastructure projects. [Full disclosure: I participated in the comment process on an early draft.

The result is a document that adds critical nuance and a unique perspective to the national conversation—focusing on local flexibility, encouraging innovation, and positioning infrastructure policy to meet the needs of the future instead of the past. As the federal government struggles to reconfigure its infrastructure program for the new century, policymakers would be wise to listen to the practitioners and consider the policies outlined in the playbook.

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