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[A Fix for America's Infrastructure Paralysis](#)

Mandatory processes and detailed rules have increasingly constrained officials' discretion, leading to endless lawsuits, decadeslong project delays and multibillion-dollar cost overruns. There's a better way.

In recent weeks, Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) has moved to eliminate the U.S. Agency for International Development, while President Trump prepared an executive order to wind down the U.S. Department of Education. It's the latest attempt to make government more efficient by eliminating things that it does. Merely shuttering departments, however, won't get to the heart of the problem DOGE seeks to correct: The American public sector, at any level of government, can't get things done in a time-effective and efficient manner.

A [new Manhattan Institute report](#) provides an antidote to this public malaise in the context of infrastructure. Its author, Philip K. Howard, offers a new governing vision that authorizes officials to weigh tradeoffs and make decisions for the public's benefit.

Decades ago, Democrats and Republicans both understood the need for a well-functioning, results-oriented government to provide public goods. On Nov. 15, 1933, Harry Hopkins, overseer of much of the New Deal, called governors and mayors to Washington to request that they submit proposals to get their residents working again. By Nov. 26, he had approved 920 projects just for Indiana and begun employing nearly 50,000 of its residents to repave streets, roads and airport runways. In the early 1940s, the 6.5 million-square-foot Pentagon was built in just 16 months.

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