

*Rebuilding the Foundations: A Special
Report on State and Local Public Works
Financing and Management*

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**REBUILDING
THE FOUNDATIONS**



A Special Report on State and Local
Public Works Financing and Management



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

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Foreword

Potholes and sewer problems are perpetual items on local government agendas—they never go away and there is never enough money to fix all of them, or to reconstruct bridges and roads that may be in danger of collapse. In 1988, prompted by the many national studies calling for more investment in public works infrastructure, the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation asked the Office of Technology Assessment to evaluate how technologies, management, and financing could improve public works and make them more efficient and productive.

From the outset, OTA planned to review State and local public works management and finance to spotlight issues that needed attention. The review produced so much practical and useful information that a decision was made to publish the results early in 1990 for use by the 101st Congress in this special report, *Rebuilding the Foundations: State and Local Public Works Financing and Management*. OTA's final report for this assessment, *Rebuilding the Foundations: Public Works Technologies, Management, and Financing*, will be completed in the summer of 1990.

Several intertwined issues quickly came to dominate OTA's discussions with State and local public works officials. As this report documents, the concerns centered on how to raise more money for upgrading and maintaining public works, how to enhance public works, and how to preserve the community environment and quality of life. Local officials focused on the complex tasks of resolving conflicts among these issues in a controversy-ridden and politically charged arena. State representatives highlighted the steps they have already taken to increase support for localities. This special report also outlines the roles of Federal, State, and local governments and points to avenues for strengthening the intergovernmental structure for managing and financing public works.

Throughout the study, the advisory panel, workshop participants, and a host of government, industry, and private citizen reviewers contributed a broad and invaluable range of perspectives. OTA thanks them for their substantial commitment of time and energy. Their participation does not necessarily represent endorsement of the contents of the report, for which OTA bears sole responsibility.



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NOTE: OTA appreciates and is grateful for the valuable assistance and thoughtful critiques provided by the advisory panel members. The panel does not, however, necessarily approve, disapprove, or endorse this report. OTA assumes full responsibility for the report and the accuracy of its contents.

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