

On behalf of the 19,000 cities, towns, and villages represented by the National League of Cities (NLC), we encourage the 2016 presidential candidates to address the issues that are at the forefront of our nation's communities: the **economy, infrastructure, and public safety**.

The next president will govern an increasingly urban country. Presently, 80% of Americans live in cities. Working

with and understanding the **issues that most impact our cities** is not just good practice, it is a necessity to lead our country.

The National League of Cities, on behalf of the communities it represents, is excited to be a resource to the 2016 presidential candidates and their campaigns.

Over the course of the 2016 election cycle, National League of Cities is excited to serve as a resource to those vying to be the next leader of our nation, and to those who want to better communicate about the needs most important to America's cities.

For more information about the Cities Lead 2016 Campaign, visit:

Citieslead2016.nlc.org

 [#CitiesLead2016](https://twitter.com/CitiesLead2016)



Cities stand ready to work with our next president to do what cities do best: create environments that support workers and grow business.

Six years after the Great Recession, the nation's economy has turned a corner.

In 2015, our economy outpaces the rest of the world in innovation, but is weighed down by other factors like slow productivity growth. The median income has increased in 53% of cities, but the demand for survival services such as food banks has also increased.

Cities work best when the economy works for every resident. To address economic disparities in our nation, we ask that the next administration:

1. Increase federal funding for workforce development, to cultivate a skilled workforce that meets 21st century employer needs
2. Support initiatives that ensure all youth have an opportunity to graduate from high school prepared for post-secondary education or employment
3. Support federal economic development tools such the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) that will help attract and retain small businesses

INFRASTRUCTURE

If America is to preserve its economic prominence, our federal leaders must modernize our nation's infrastructure.

Critical infrastructure across the nation is in a state of neglect and disrepair, slowing down economic growth.

- One in nine of the nation's bridges are rated as structurally deficient, while the average age of the nation's 607,380 bridges is currently 42 years.
- Extreme weather events are increasing, and straining existing infrastructure
- Another type of infrastructure needs bolstering too: Smartphones are raising expectations for reliable broadband networks

As we set the foundation for the next century of economic activity, the federal government must remain a reliable partner in supporting critical infrastructure. We call upon the next president to:

- 1.** Support reliable long-term funding for infrastructure that reflects local needs
- 2.** Ensure equity and connectivity among transportation options—such as railways, roads, and waterways—to reduce congestion, protect the environment, and stimulate economic development
- 3.** Preserve local authority to take action to ensure all residents have access to high speed Internet and other communications services

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety is just as important to growing an economy as reliable infrastructure.

20 years after the federal government's investment in community policing initiatives in our cities, the national rate of violent crime continues to decline. However, crime continues to disrupt social cohesion in racially diverse and disadvantaged neighborhoods in cities across the country.

As recent events have demonstrated, good relations between police and the community they serve are vital to a thriving city. Local elected leaders have played a huge role in bringing together officers, stakeholders, and non-profits to help develop trust between residents and law enforcement. To strengthen these crucial efforts, we ask that the next president:

- 1.** Support local government authority to manage law enforcement and emergency management operations
- 2.** Establish national training standards and technical assistance to improve community policing
- 3.** Provide sufficient funding to support coordination and cooperation between federal, state and local law enforcement agencies
- 4.** Expand the deployment of advanced communications and broadband technology to improve public safety.

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