

Rhys Roth, Director  
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at The Evergreen State College



Infrastructure Assistance Coordinating Council  
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### Infrastructure = Boring!? ...but SO Important!



- ▶ Economic Development
  - ▶ Environment
    - ▶ Quality of Life
      - Vital services for local businesses
      - Affordable for residents and business
      - Job creator
      - Spur real estate investment



### We are going to spend staggering sums

...in the coming decades to keep our transportation, energy, water, and waste systems in working order.



- ▶ Globally, \$57 trillion will be required for infrastructure by 2030 just to keep up with GDP growth -- McKinsey and Company
- ▶ Along the Pacific Coast, \$1 trillion needed in the next 30 years -- CH2M Hill

These are the vital circulatory systems of our society!

### Our Infrastructure Deficit



1. Capital funding is lagging to restore aging facilities, and to accommodate growth.
  - ▶ Traditional state and federal funding sources have shrunk.
    - ▶ [Check out AWC's new video!](#)
2. Budgets for O&M are under serious strain as systems age and costs escalate.
  - ▶ Maintenance deferred is 2-4x more expensive

### Innovation Required!



"We're making decisions today that we'll live with for 50 years. We can't keep doing things the way we always have."  
-- Peter Binney, 2011 winner of the ASCE President's Medal.



The purpose of the Center for Sustainable Infrastructure:  
*Advance a new sustainable infrastructure paradigm and practice in the Pacific Northwest, and help Washington and Oregon become nationally-recognized innovators in sustainable infrastructure solutions.*

### Interview 70 Thought Leaders and Innovators



- ▶ From Washington, Oregon and British Columbia
- ▶ Span the water-related, energy, transportation and waste sectors, plus cross-cutting experts.

**Special report coming in early November:**  
Inspiration and guidance for current and future infrastructure leaders, policymakers, and change agents.



### Go for the Triple Crown: Fiscally Sound, Resilient, and Sustainable

The best infrastructure solutions do these simultaneously:

- ▶ **affordability** for residents and businesses, for the long-term
- ▶ **superior environmental performance**
- ▶ **resilience** in the face of major disruptive events

And the Fourth Crown:

- ▶ **multiple community-wide benefits** - economic, health, social, and environmental



### Consider Broader Alternatives and Encourage Silo-Busting

- ▶ Smart investors seriously consider alternatives as part of their due diligence.
- ▶ Before committing real money to business-as-usual infrastructure projects and programs:
  - ▶ Invite innovative ideas
  - ▶ Thoroughly compare options to find the most cost-effective over the lifecycle with the most community-wide benefits
- ▶ Silos in our communities' infrastructure: Streets and bridges, electricity, natural gas and heating services, water supply, sewers and stormwater, and waste recycling and recovery.
- ▶ Consider these systems as parts of a larger interacting whole to find valuable synergies -- for example, waste from one system can become a resource for another.



### Build a Better Business Case

- ▶ Measure full benefits and costs, and to do it on a life-cycle basis.
- ▶ Within the department silo, to government more broadly, and to the community.
  - ▶ Smart investments will save money, manage risk, and accrue benefits across departments, and serve broader community goals.



### Choose for a Changing World

- ▶ Infrastructure decision-makers must increasingly be future-casters.
- ▶ It's vital to build infrastructure systems well-adapted to our changing world
  - technology revolutions
  - major environmental stresses
  - shifting demographics, living patterns and changing lifestyles of the next generation



### Get Smart

- ▶ Today people carry devices packing information, communications, and monitoring capabilities unimaginable a generation ago.
- ▶ Advanced technologies are transforming many industries.
- ▶ Infrastructure managers, tapping private sector expertise, could achieve radical cost efficiencies and service gains.



### Build Community Prosperity

- ▶ Infrastructure is a job generator and vital to local business and economic vitality.
- ▶ Integrate the community's strategies for infrastructure and economic development
  - Opportunity to in-source infrastructure jobs and lift up segments of the community too often left out.
- ▶ Higher education can build the critical pipeline of local talent
  - The infrastructure workforce is graying!



**Bottom Line: We've Gotta Make Infrastructure Sexy!**

- ▶ Traditional funding sources are drying up
- ▶ The public is largely oblivious
- ▶ The workforce is aging

We need to:

- ▶ Galvanize the public
- ▶ Make this a winning issue for elected officials
- ▶ Inspire a new generation to get into the field



**Stay Tuned!**  
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