**CONFIDENCE IN STATE’S ABILITY TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE IS DECLINING.**

California’s population, currently about 38 million, is projected to grow by nearly 25% to 47 million in 2025. But only 50% of Californians have confidence in the state government’s ability to plan for this growth—and only 10% say they have a great deal of confidence. Although confidence was 8 points higher in 2004 (58%), only 12% said they had a great deal of confidence in the state. Among registered voters, Democrats are more likely than Republicans (55% to 47%) to express confidence in the state’s ability to handle this future population growth.

**MANY ARE UNAWARE OF THE TERM “INFRASTRUCTURE,” BUT NEARLY ALL RECOGNIZE ITS IMPORTANCE.**

California will need significant infrastructure improvement if it’s to accommodate its projected growth. Although 34% of residents say they know a lot (and 35% a little) about the concept of infrastructure, another 30% say they have never heard of this term. In August 2004, a similar percentage of residents had heard of the term infrastructure, but they were less likely to know a lot about it (26% a lot, 45% a little), and nearly as many as today had not heard of the term at all (27% in 2004, 30% in 2008). When told that infrastructure refers to a variety of public works projects, 94% say that the condition of roads and other infrastructure is very (67%) or somewhat (27%) important to the quality of life and economic vitality in their region. Findings were similar in 2004 (68% very important, 29% somewhat important).

**MAJORITIES BELIEVE THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS LACK ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING.**

Infrastructure projects require major outlays of public funds, and 55% of residents believe their local government does not have adequate funding for the roads, school facilities, and other infrastructure projects necessary to prepare for future growth (39% believe their local government does have adequate resources). In 2004, residents were slightly more likely to say funding was falling short (60%). Residents are definitely interested in infrastructure: 71% would like to be involved a lot (32%) or some (39%) in discussions about planning for the future in their part of California. A slightly lower percentage (66%) said the same in 2004 (25% a lot, 41% some).

**CALIFORNIANS ANTICIPATE A WORKFORCE SKILLS GAP...**

Recent studies have indicated that more college-educated workers will be needed as the California economy transitions from manufacturing to service-oriented jobs. When asked to look ahead 20 years, most residents (67%) recognize that the state’s economy will need a greater percentage of college-educated workers if current trends continue, yet nearly half (47%) anticipate that there may not be enough college-educated residents to fill the jobs and skills likely to be in demand.

**... AND PLACE HIGH IMPORTANCE ON THE STATE’S HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM.**

Nearly all Californians (95%) say the state’s higher education system is important to the quality of life and economic vitality of the state over the next 20 years, with 72% saying it is very important. And while 85% percent think it is very (46%) or somewhat (39%) important for the state to spend more money to increase capacity at public colleges and universities, 45% have very little (33%) or no (12%) confidence in the state’s ability to plan for the future of the higher education system.
Californians’ Attitudes Toward the Future

Confidence in State Government’s Ability to Plan for Future

![Confidence in State Government’s Ability to Plan for Future](image)

Understanding of Infrastructure

![Understanding of Infrastructure](image)

Importance of Infrastructure to Regional Economy and Quality of Life

![Importance of Infrastructure to Regional Economy and Quality of Life](image)

Adequacy of Local Government’s Infrastructure Funding

![Adequacy of Local Government’s Infrastructure Funding](image)

Perceptions of California's Future Workforce Needs

![Perceptions of California's Future Workforce Needs](image)

Perceptions of California's Future Supply of Workers

![Perceptions of California's Future Supply of Workers](image)

**Sources:** State of California, Department of Finance, Race/Ethnic Population with Age and Sex Detail, 2000–2050. PPIC Statewide Surveys, August 2004 and October and November 2008.

**Contact:** surveys@ppic.org

Supported with funding from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.