



*International **F**ederation of **M**unicipal **E**ngineering  
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## Technical Brief No.3

# Three Pillars of Sustainable Management of Infrastructure

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Globally our community infrastructure is under strain. In Australia, Europe and the Americas, and in developing countries, we have a responsibility to manage infrastructure to sustainably deliver services to our communities.

Quality services from infrastructure are critical for our economies. Yet insufficient resources are provided or are available to sustainably manage our services. There is a need to prioritize our budgets, our risks and the levels of service that we deliver.

Sustainability goes beyond technical management but can be lead by municipal and public works professionals. This presentation will present the three pillars for sustainable management of community infrastructure:

- Stewardship: Understanding our long term responsibilities
- Asset Management: Managing the existing as well as the new
- Financial Planning: An essential part of business.

Decaying infrastructure is leaving a liability for future generations. Infrastructure is long lived and needs to be managed accordingly. We need to communicate the stewardship role of elected members.

Asset management is about meeting a required level of service in the most cost effective manner, for present and future generations. It is about optimizing investment priorities to best meet community needs.

Sustainability is about maintaining financial capital (money in the bank) and infrastructure capital (the condition of our assets) for the long term. We need to move from annual budgeting to long term financial planning.

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In Australia, local governments account for their infrastructure in their financial statements to reflect how it is managed. Engineers and accountants work together and talk the same language. It involves strategic allocation of resources to ensure sustainable delivery of services.

It is about balancing priorities, risks, levels of service and available funding to move beyond technical management of assets to also incorporate stewardship and long term financial planning.

*The above is a short precis of a presentation by Chris Champion to the Vejforum (Roads Forum), Nyborg Denmark, on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015.*

*A copy of the presentation is available from the author.*

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