

Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, 1956 to 2023

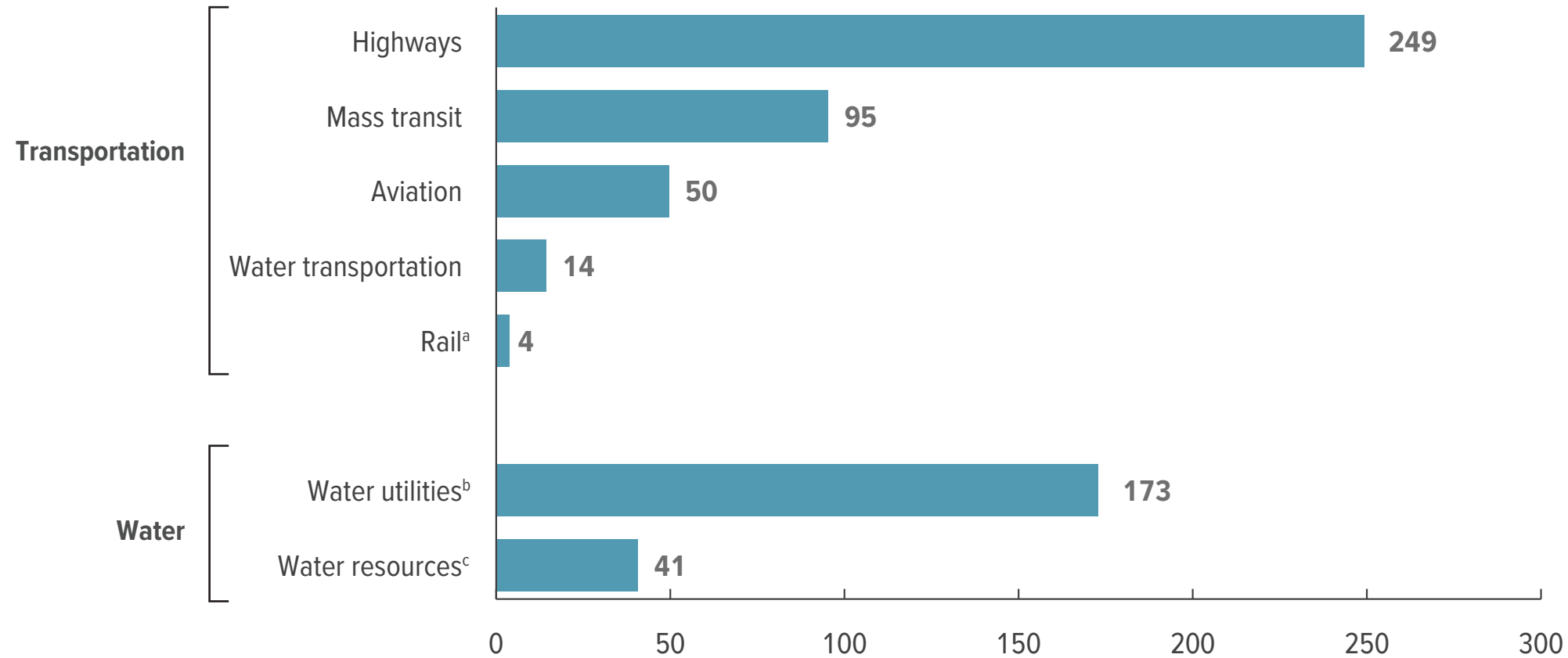
February 2025



Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure

Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, 2023

Billions of 2023 dollars



Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget and the Census Bureau. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

a. States and localities do not report expenditures on freight rail. They report expenditures on passenger (commuter) rail as spending on mass transit.

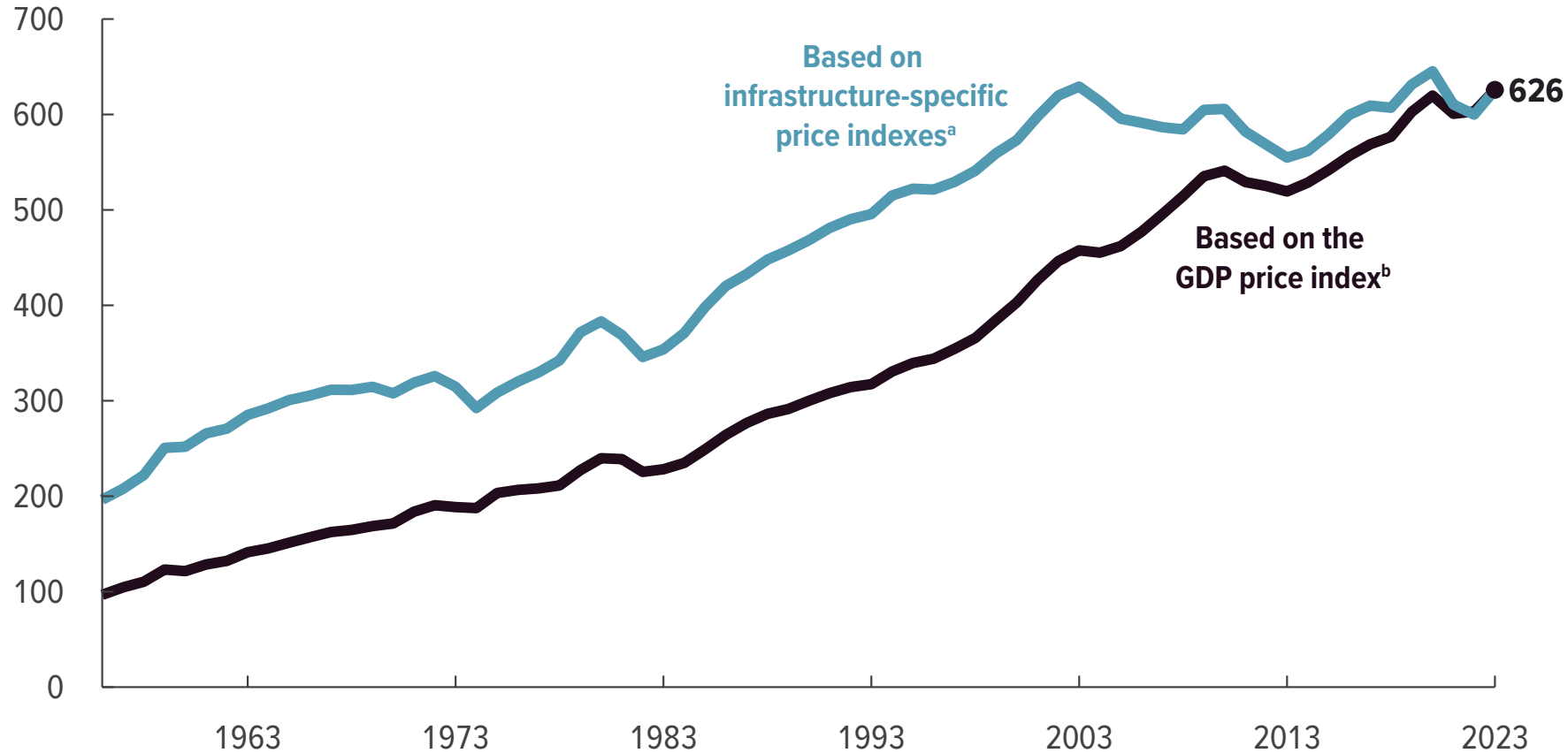
b. Includes water supply and wastewater treatment facilities.

c. Includes water containment systems (dams, levees, reservoirs, and watersheds) and sources of fresh water (lakes and rivers).



Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure Under Alternative Adjustments for Inflation, 1956 to 2023

Billions of 2023 dollars



Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget, the Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

GDP = gross domestic product.

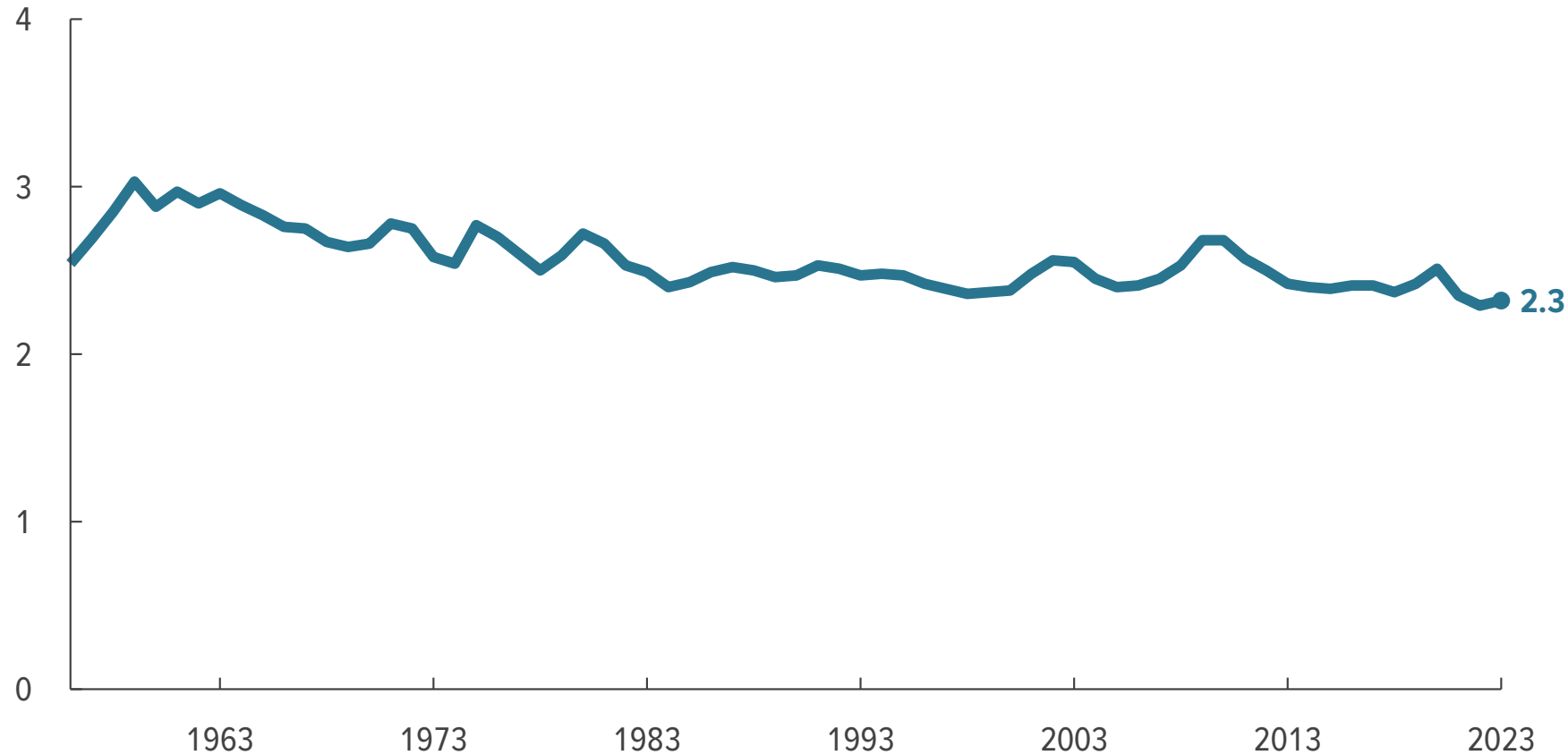
a. Those price indexes for government spending measure the prices of materials and other inputs used to build, operate, and maintain transportation and water infrastructure.

b. That price index measures the prices of goods and services that make up the nation's GDP.



Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure as a Share of GDP, 1956 to 2023

Percent

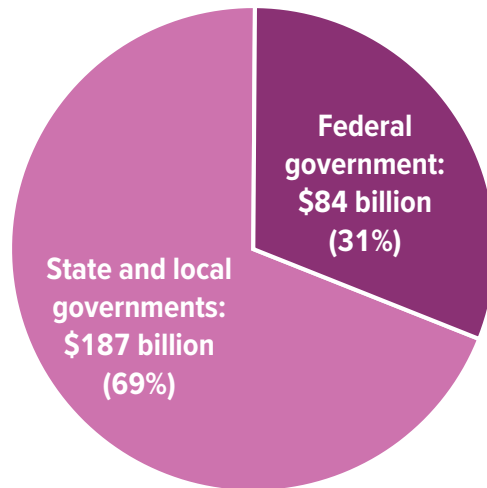


Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget, the Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

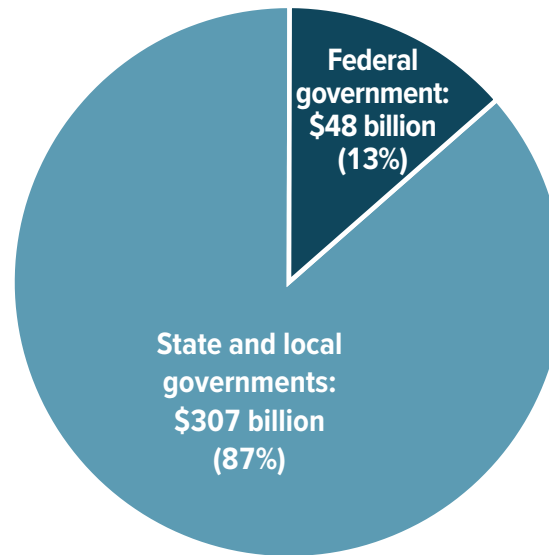
GDP = gross domestic product.

The Federal Government's and State and Local Governments' Shares of Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, by Category of Spending, 2023

Capital
\$271 billion

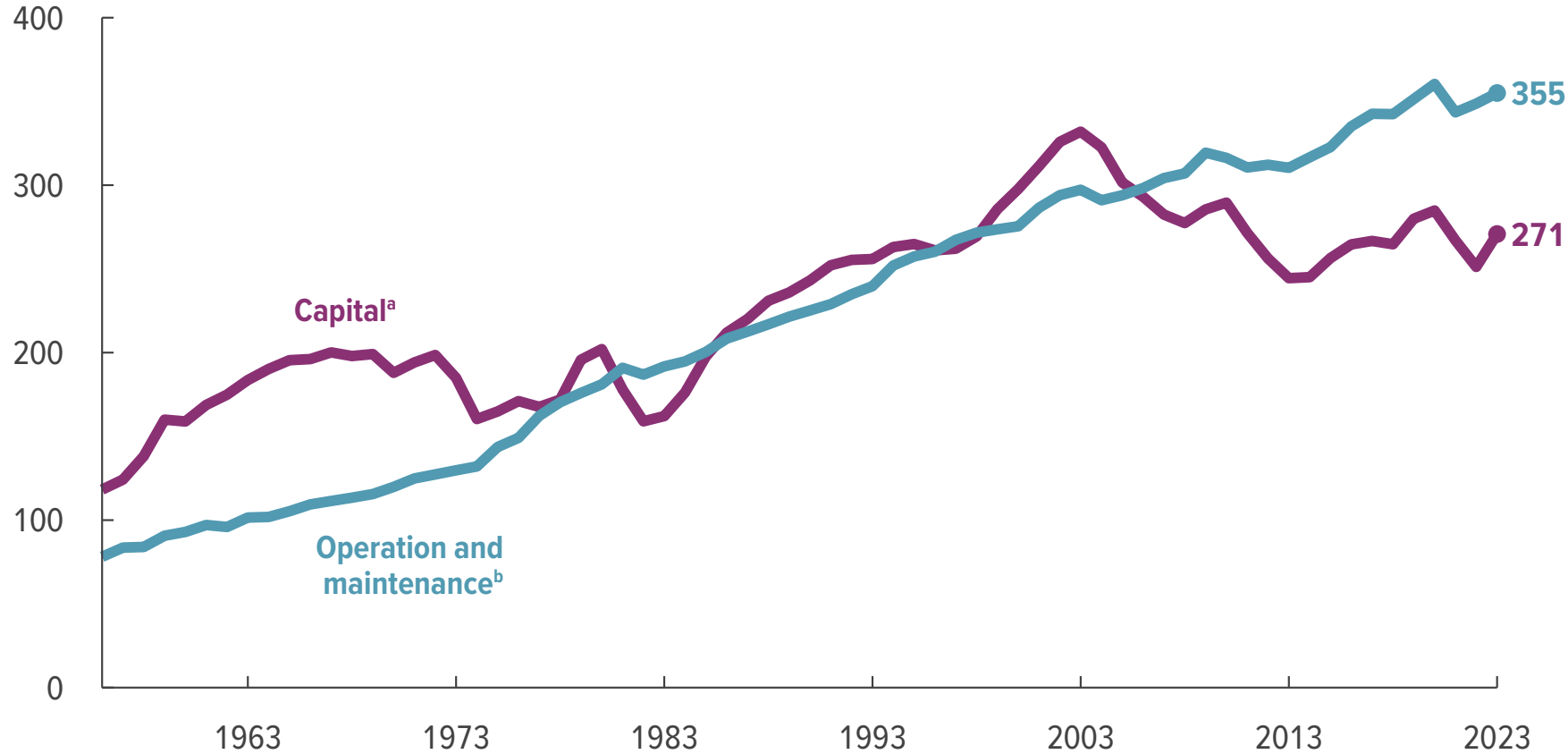


Operation and maintenance
\$355 billion



Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, by Category of Spending, 1956 to 2023

Billions of 2023 dollars

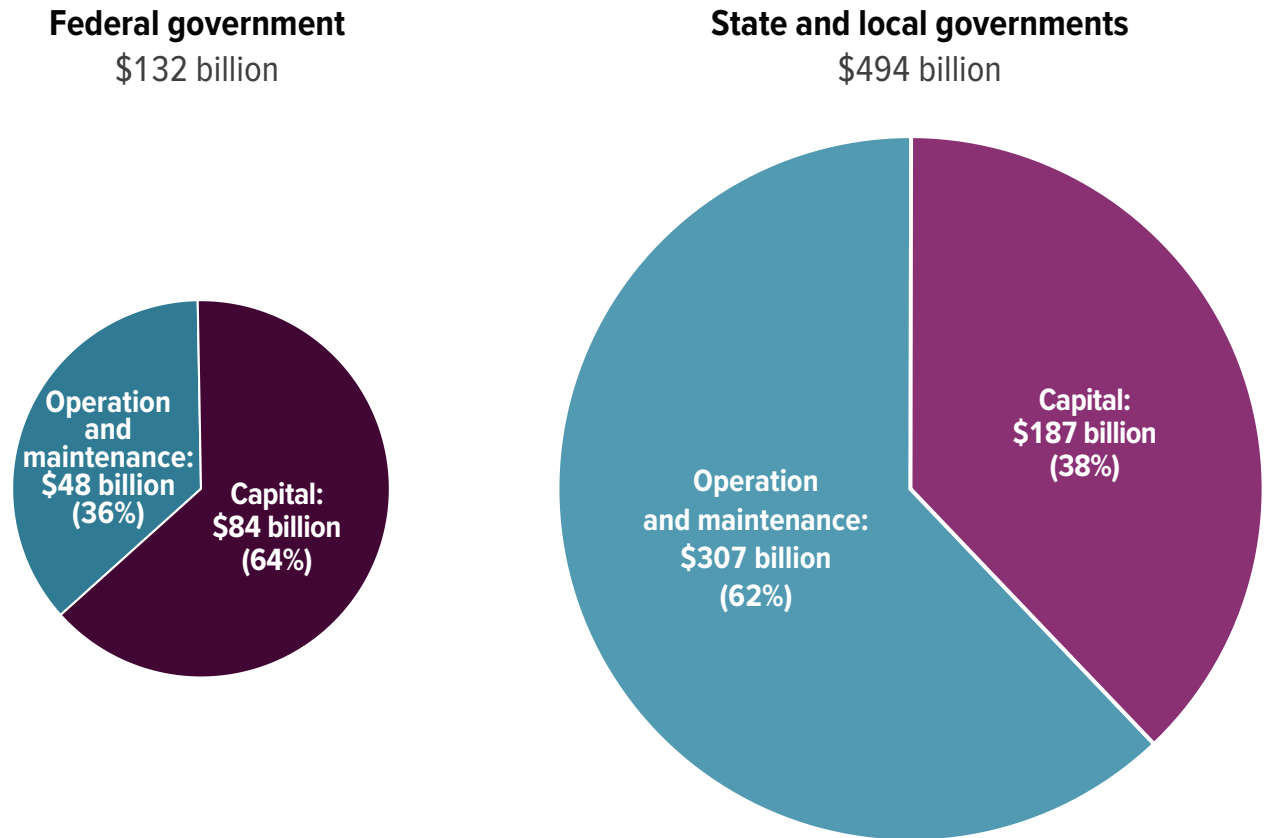


Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget, the Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

a. Dollar amounts are adjusted to remove the effects of inflation using price indexes for government spending that measure the prices of materials and other inputs used to build transportation and water infrastructure.

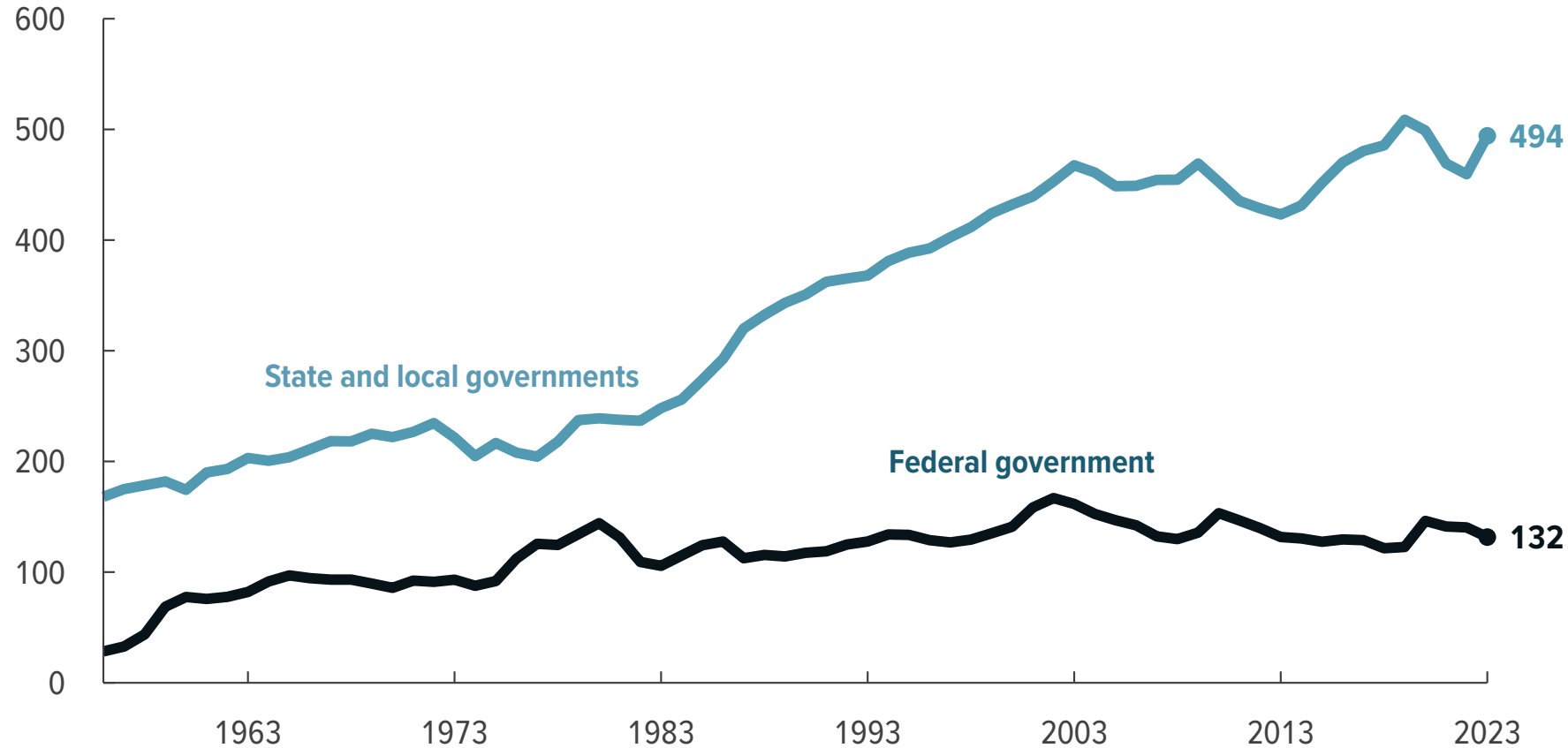
b. Dollar amounts are adjusted to remove the effects of inflation using price indexes for government spending that measure the prices of goods and services consumed by governments, including materials and other inputs used to operate and maintain transportation and water infrastructure.

Shares of Public Spending for Capital and for the Operation and Maintenance of Transportation and Water Infrastructure, by Level of Government, 2023



Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, by Level of Government, 1956 to 2023

Billions of 2023 dollars



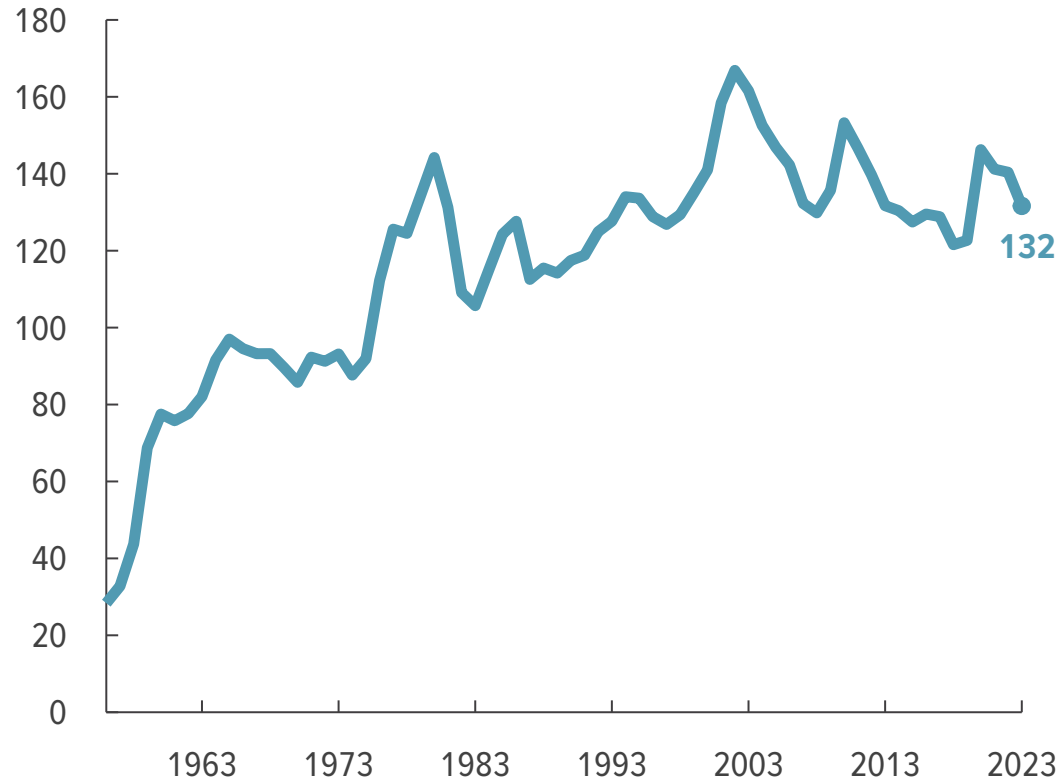
Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget, the Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

Dollar amounts are adjusted to remove the effects of inflation using price indexes for government spending that measure the prices of materials and other inputs used to build, operate, and maintain transportation and water infrastructure.

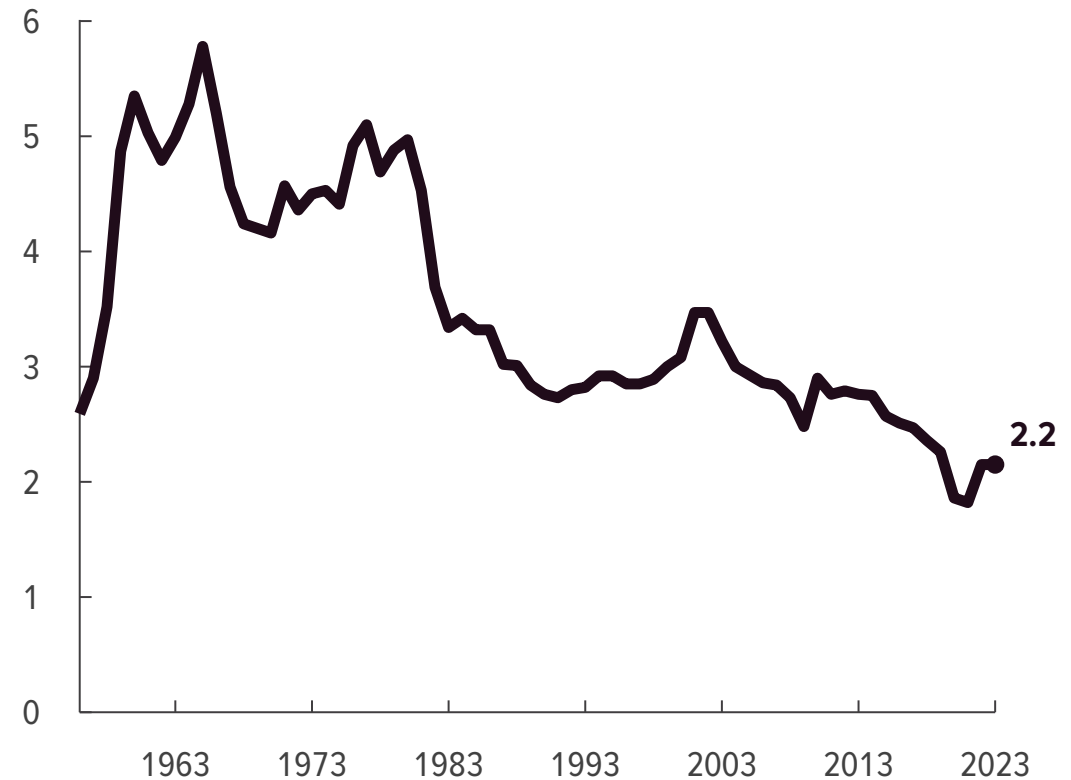
Federal Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure

Federal Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, 1956 to 2023

Billions of 2023 dollars



Percentage of total federal spending

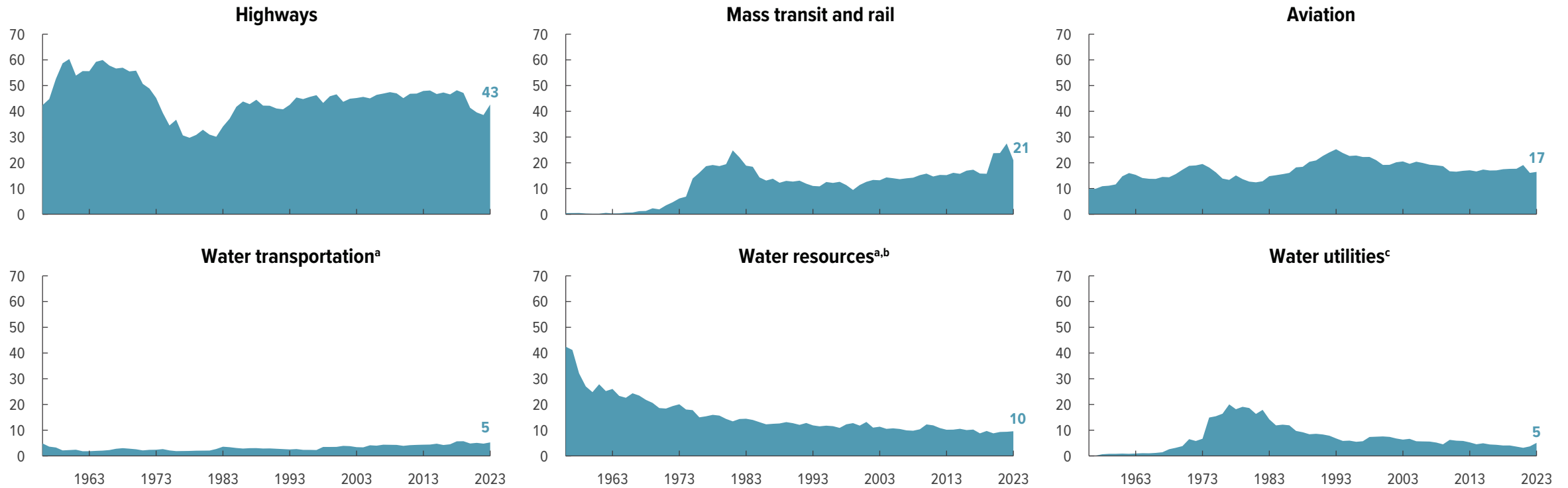


Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget and the Census Bureau. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

Dollar amounts are adjusted to remove the effects of inflation using price indexes for government spending that measure the prices of materials and other inputs used to build, operate, and maintain transportation and water infrastructure.

Federal Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, by Type of Infrastructure, 1956 to 2023

Percent



Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget and the Census Bureau. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

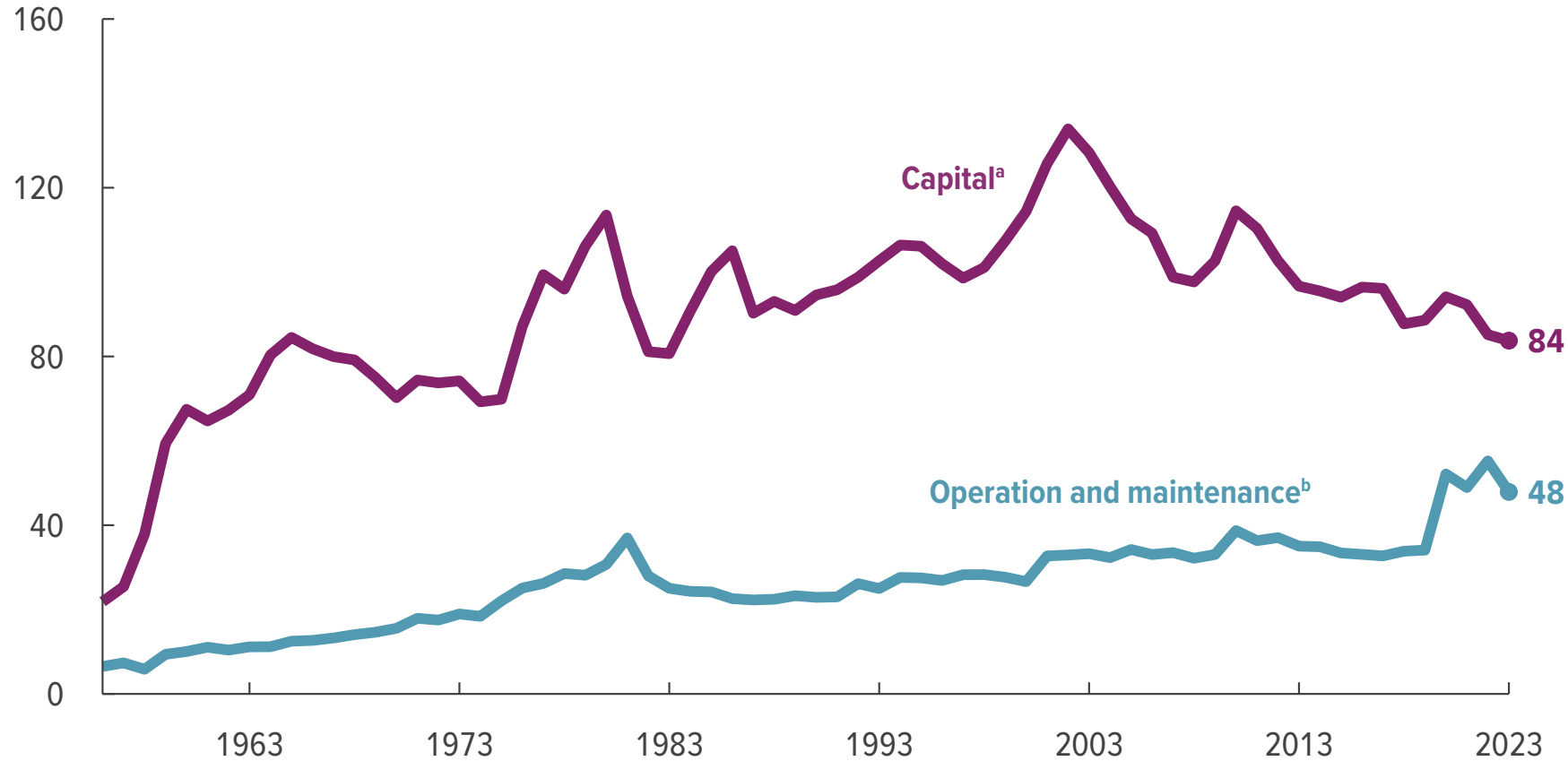
a. Outlays for navigation by the Army Corps of Engineers are included in water resources rather than in water transportation.

b. Includes water containment systems (dams, levees, reservoirs, and watersheds) and sources of fresh water (lakes and rivers).

c. Includes water supply and wastewater treatment facilities.

Federal Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, by Category of Spending, 1956 to 2023

Billions of 2023 dollars



Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget, the Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

a. Dollar amounts are adjusted to remove the effects of inflation using price indexes for government spending that measure the prices of materials and other inputs used to build transportation and water infrastructure.

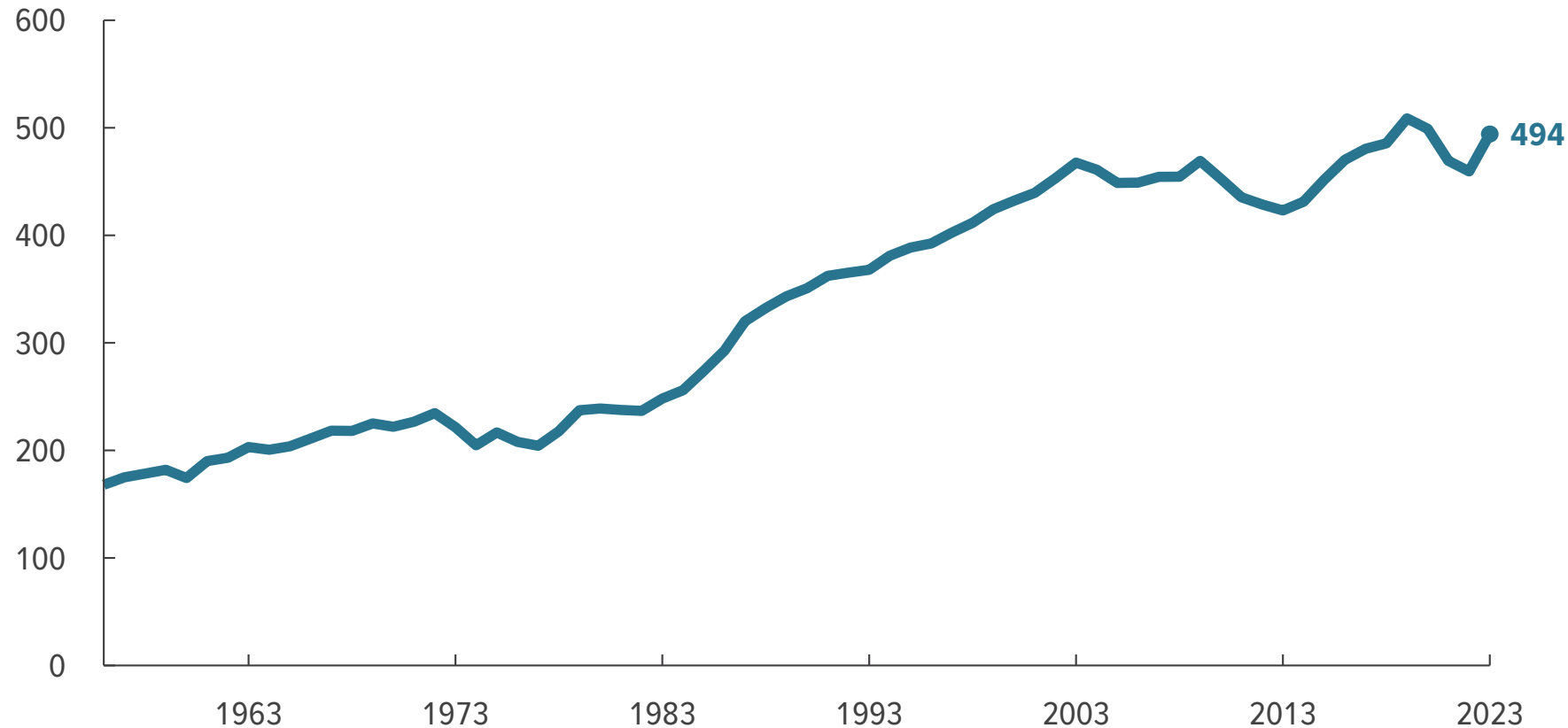
b. Dollar amounts are adjusted to remove the effects of inflation using price indexes for government spending that measure the prices of goods and services consumed by governments, including materials and other inputs used to operate and maintain transportation and water infrastructure.

State and Local Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure



State and Local Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, 1956 to 2023

Billions of 2023 dollars



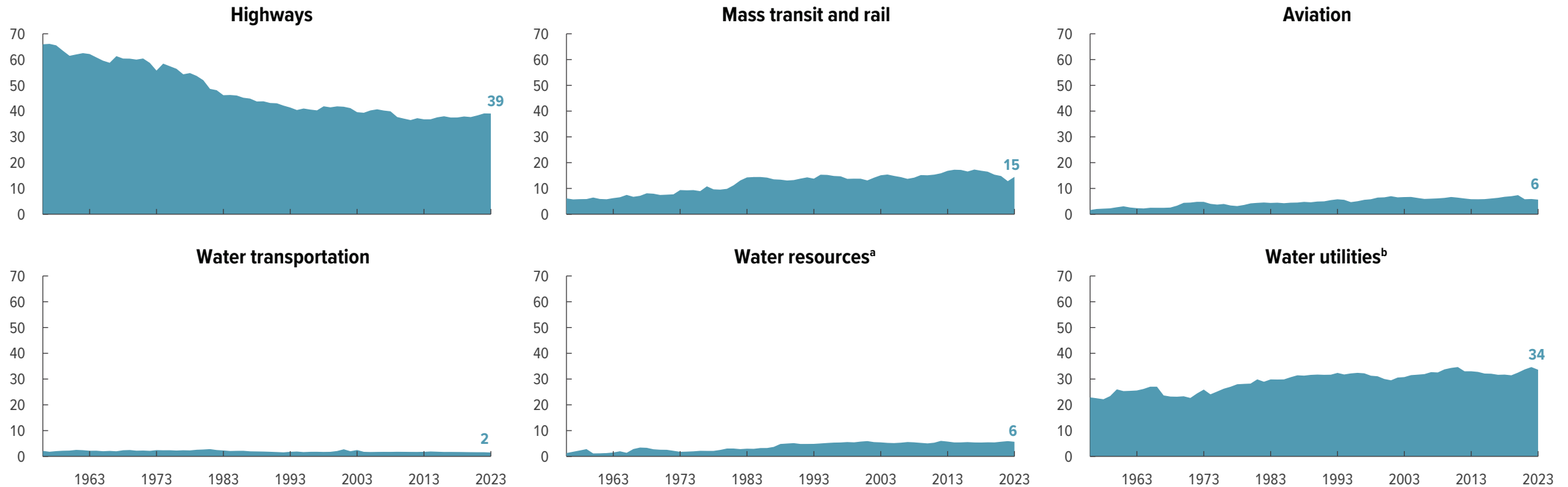
Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget and the Census Bureau. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

State and local spending is net of federal grants.

Dollar amounts are adjusted to remove the effects of inflation using price indexes for government spending that measure the prices of materials and other inputs used to build, operate, and maintain transportation and water infrastructure.

State and Local Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, by Type of Infrastructure, 1956 to 2023

Percent



Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget and the Census Bureau. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

State and local spending is net of federal grants.

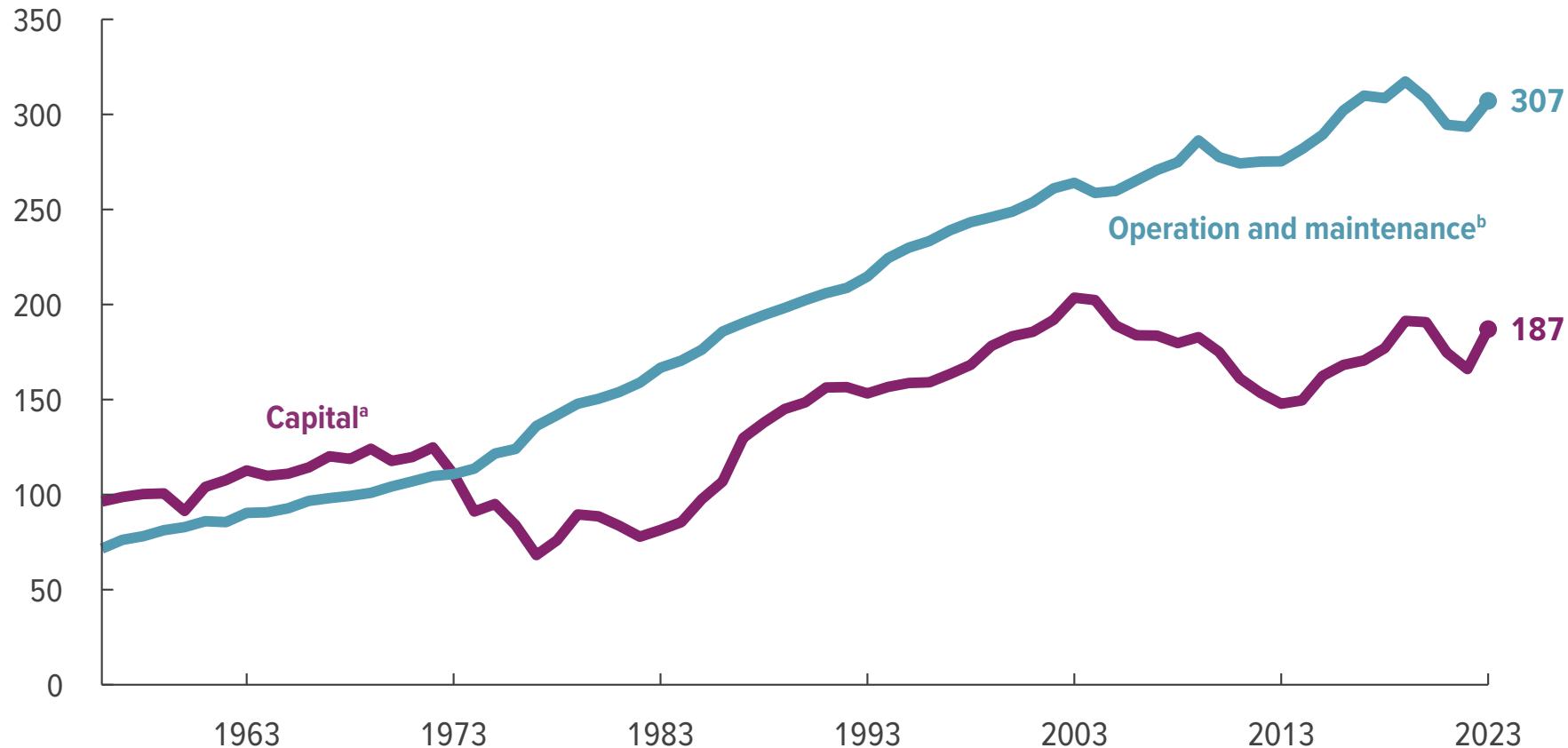
a. Includes water containment systems (dams, levees, reservoirs, and watersheds) and sources of fresh water (lakes and rivers).

b. Includes water supply and wastewater treatment facilities.



State and Local Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, by Category of Spending, 1956 to 2023

Billions of 2023 dollars



Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget, the Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

State and local spending is net of federal grants.

a. Dollar amounts are adjusted to remove the effects of inflation using price indexes for government spending that measure the prices of materials and other inputs used to build transportation and water infrastructure.

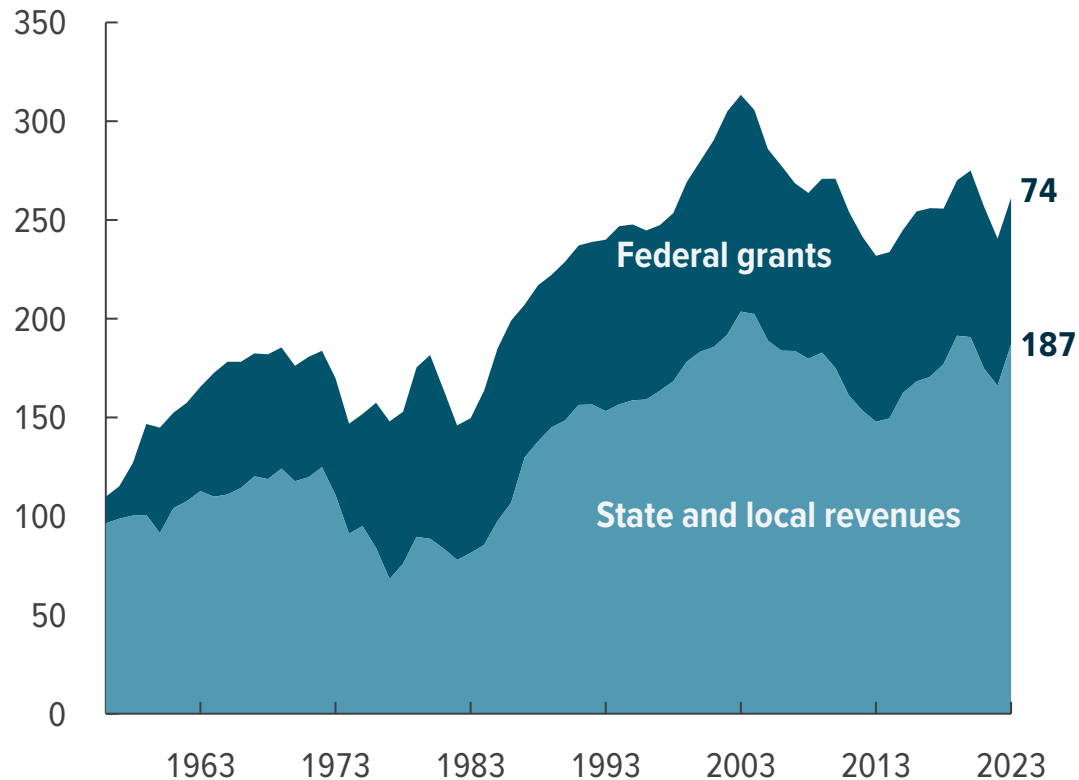
b. Dollar amounts are adjusted to remove the effects of inflation using price indexes for government spending that measure the prices of goods and services consumed by governments, including materials and other inputs used to operate and maintain transportation and water infrastructure.



State and Local Capital Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, 1956 to 2023

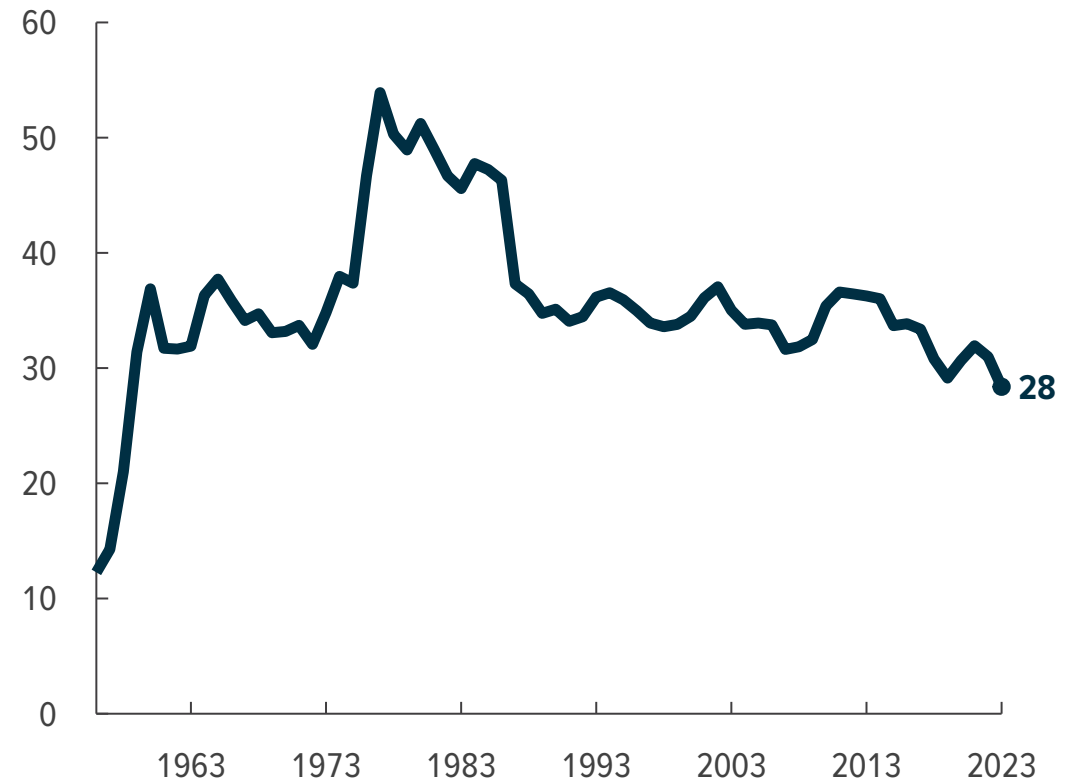
By source

Billions of 2023 dollars



Percentage of state and local capital spending funded by federal grants

Percent



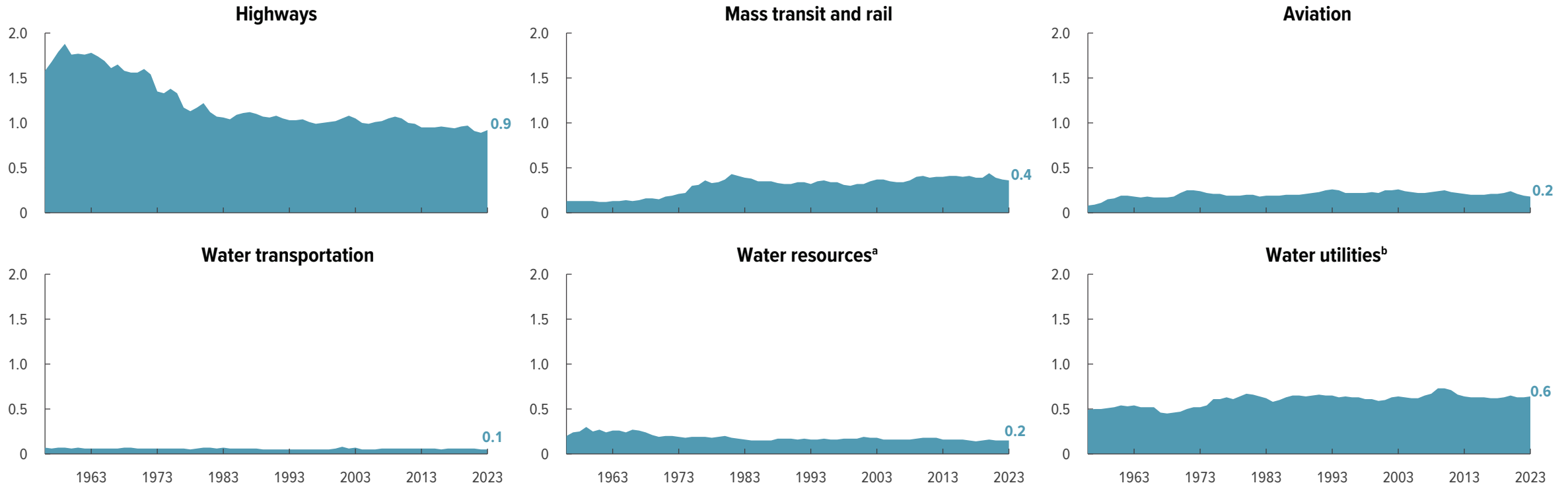
Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget and the Census Bureau. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

Dollar amounts are adjusted to remove the effects of inflation using price indexes for government spending that measure the prices of materials and other inputs used to build transportation and water infrastructure.

Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, by Type of Infrastructure

Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure as a Share of GDP, by Type of Infrastructure, 1956 to 2023

Percent



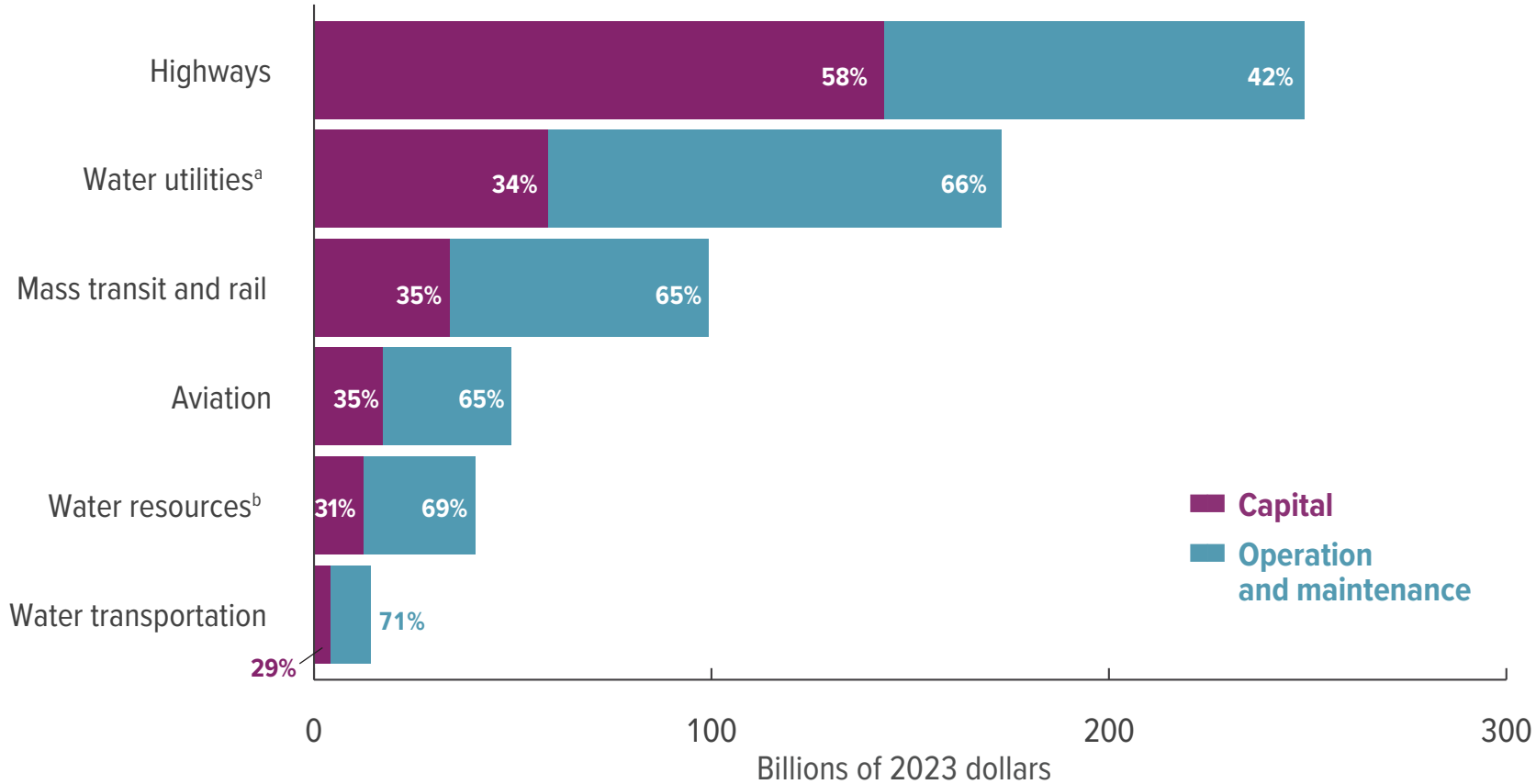
Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget, the Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

GDP = gross domestic product.

a. Includes water containment systems (dams, levees, reservoirs, and watersheds) and sources of fresh water (lakes and rivers).

b. Includes water supply and wastewater treatment facilities.

Public Spending for Capital and for the Operation and Maintenance of Transportation and Water Infrastructure, by Type of Infrastructure, 2023



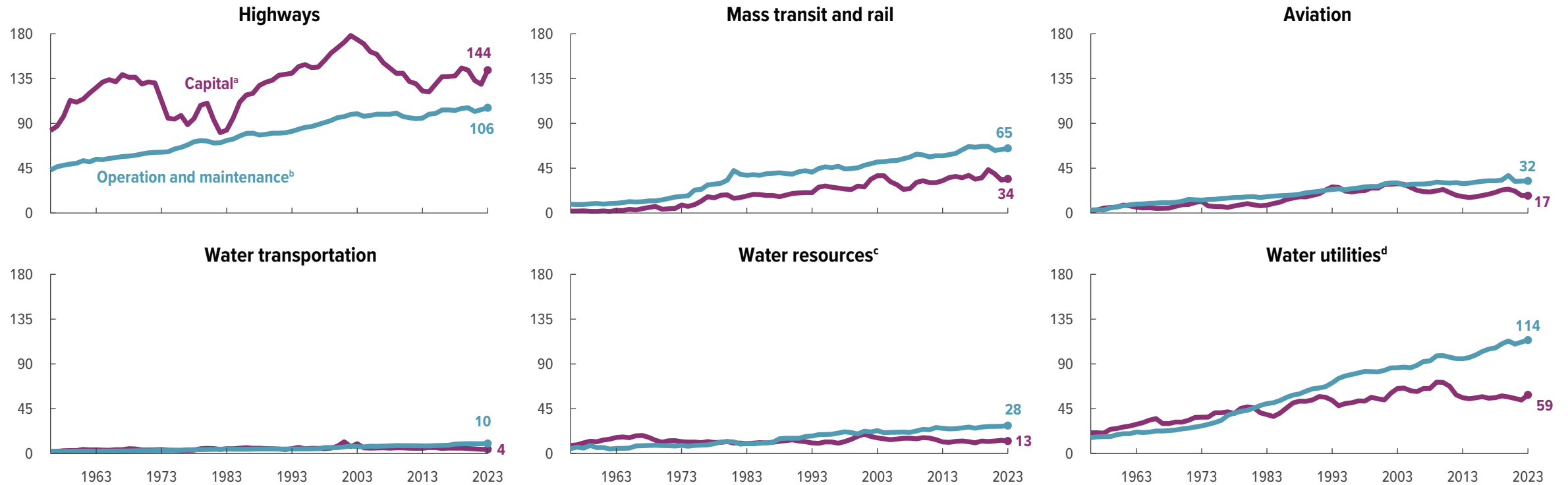
Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget and the Census Bureau. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

a. Includes water supply and wastewater treatment facilities.

b. Includes water containment systems (dams, levees, reservoirs, and watersheds) and sources of fresh water (lakes and rivers).

Public Spending for Capital and for the Operation and Maintenance of Transportation and Water Infrastructure, by Type of Infrastructure, 1956 to 2023

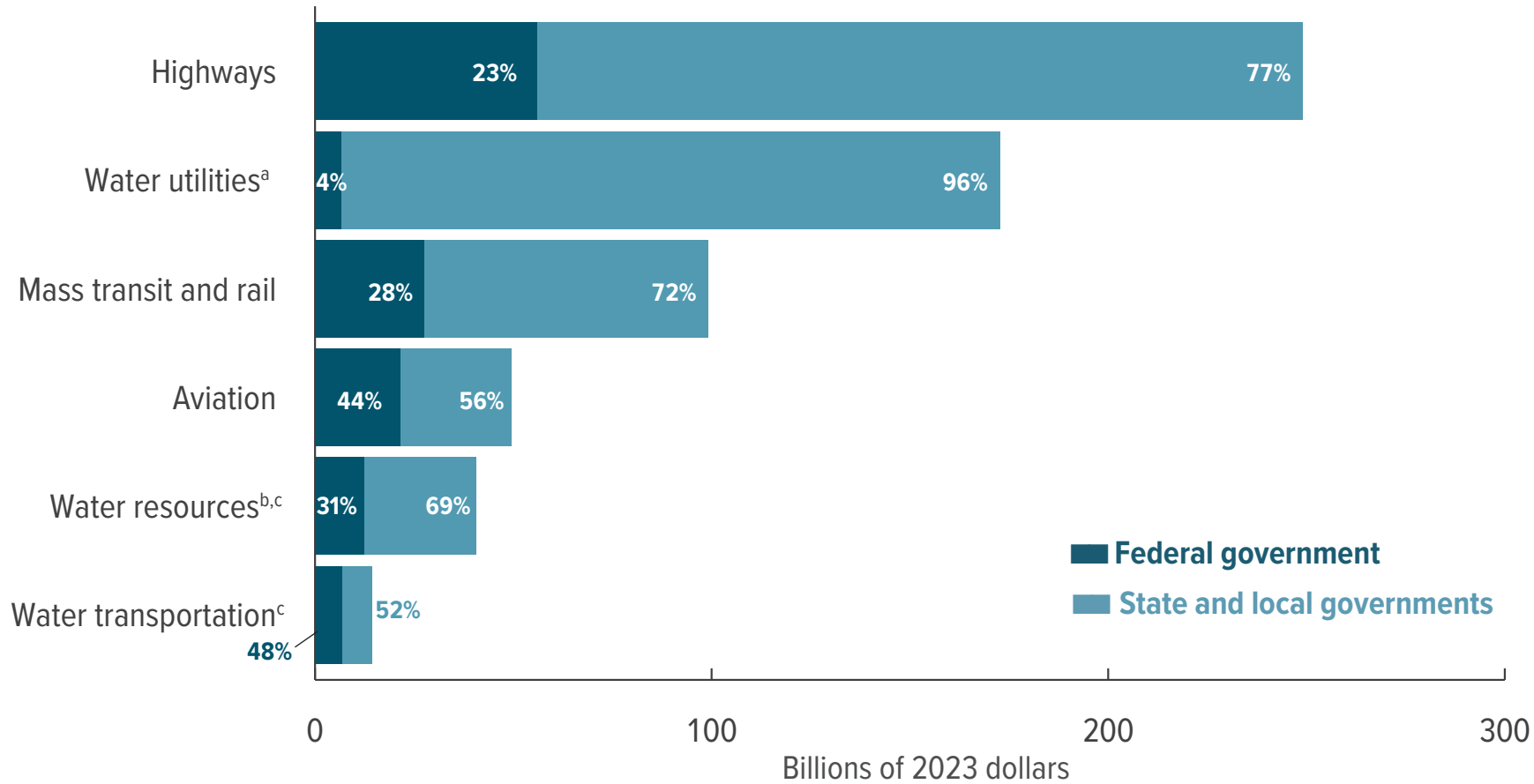
Billions of 2023 dollars



Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget, the Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

- a. Dollar amounts are adjusted to remove the effects of inflation using price indexes for government spending that measure the prices of materials and other inputs used to build transportation and water infrastructure.
- b. Dollar amounts are adjusted to remove the effects of inflation using price indexes for government spending that measure the prices of goods and services consumed by governments, including materials and other inputs used to operate and maintain transportation and water infrastructure.
- c. Includes water containment systems (dams, levees, reservoirs, and watersheds) and sources of fresh water (lakes and rivers).
- d. Includes water supply and wastewater treatment facilities.

Shares of Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, by Level of Government and Type of Infrastructure, 2023



Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget and the Census Bureau. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

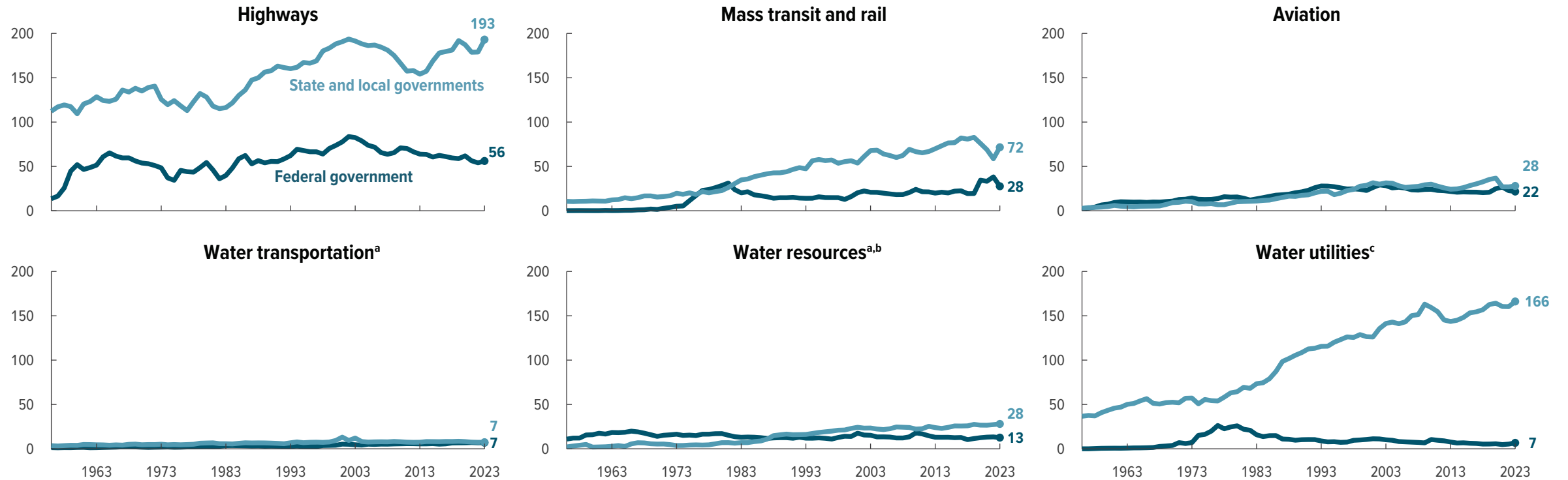
a. Includes water supply and wastewater treatment facilities.

b. Includes water containment systems (dams, levees, reservoirs, and watersheds) and sources of fresh water (lakes and rivers).

c. Outlays for navigation by the Army Corps of Engineers are included in water resources rather than in water transportation.

Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, by Level of Government and Type of Infrastructure, 1956 to 2023

Billions of 2023 dollars



Data source: Congressional Budget Office, using data from the Office of Management and Budget, the Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. See www.cbo.gov/publication/60874#data.

Dollar amounts are adjusted to remove the effects of inflation using price indexes for government spending that measure the prices of materials and other inputs used to build, operate, and maintain transportation and water infrastructure.

- a. Outlays for navigation by the Army Corps of Engineers are included in water resources rather than in water transportation.
- b. Includes water containment systems (dams, levees, reservoirs, and watersheds) and sources of fresh water (lakes and rivers).
- c. Includes water supply and wastewater treatment facilities.

How Did CBO Prepare This Update?

The Congressional Budget Office updated this material using the methods that were described in an appendix to a 2010 report and modified by changes described in an appendix to a 2015 report. See *Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure* (November 2010), www.cbo.gov/publication/21902, and *Public Spending on Transportation and Water Infrastructure, 1956 to 2014* (March 2015), www.cbo.gov/publication/49910.

Specifically, CBO obtained data about federal outlays from the Office of Management and Budget and about state and local governments' outlays from the Census Bureau. CBO then converted those nominal (current-dollar) data into real (inflation-adjusted) data, using two sets of price indexes created by the Bureau of Economic Analysis that track government expenditures and investment. One set measures the prices of materials and other inputs used by state and local governments to build transportation and water infrastructure and was applied to nominal capital spending to convert it into constant dollars; the other set measures the prices of materials and other inputs used to operate and maintain that infrastructure and was applied to spending for operation and maintenance.

Notes and Acknowledgments

All years referred to are federal fiscal years, which run from October 1 to September 30 and are designated by the calendar year in which they end.

Numbers in the figures may not add up to totals because of rounding.

Detailed spending tables are available as a supplement to this publication at www.cbo.gov/publication/60874.

Nathan Musick prepared this publication with guidance from Joseph Kile. Jeffrey Kling reviewed it, Caitlin Verboon edited it, and Jorge Salazar created the graphics.