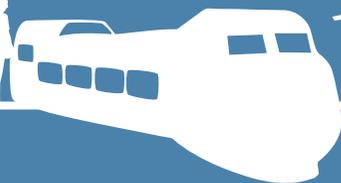




America 2050



A Prospectus





→ As never before, the nation's economic prospects are being threatened by global competitors, all of whom have created long-range strategies for growth and competitiveness.

Executive Summary

→ **The America 2050 Strategy** will provide a framework for the public and private policies and investments needed to accommodate the nation's growth in the 21st century. This framework is urgently needed in a time of rapid technological, geopolitical, demographic, and environmental change. As never before, the nation's economic prospects are threatened by global competitors, all of whom have created long-range strategies for growth and competitiveness. In the face of these challenges, America is flying blind. We have no national strategy to sustain our success in the face of this competition.

America's third century urgently requires a new strategy to lay the foundation for the nation's future competitiveness, sustainability, and quality of life. The National Committee for America 2050, composed of business and civic leaders, policy makers, and regional planners, was formed in response to this challenge. America 2050 is developing a framework for America's future growth that identifies 10 or more emerging megaregions as the proper scale at which to make the investments that will maximize America's competitiveness and broaden opportunities for all members of our society.

This framework will promote integrated investments in mobility, environment, and economic development that are needed to guide the nation's growth in the 21st century. It will provide capacity for growth by creating a world-class multimodal transportation system of new smart highways, high-speed rail, airports, and seaports, all of these linked to concentrated developments at central hubs. It will preserve large environmental (or "green infrastructure") systems, strengthen metropolitan regions and urban centers, and alleviate concentrated poverty by expanding economic opportunities to bypassed areas. The federal role in land use will be reformed to support collaborations across regional boundaries, promote megaregional decision making, and utilize federal funding to ensure consistency with national objectives for growth.

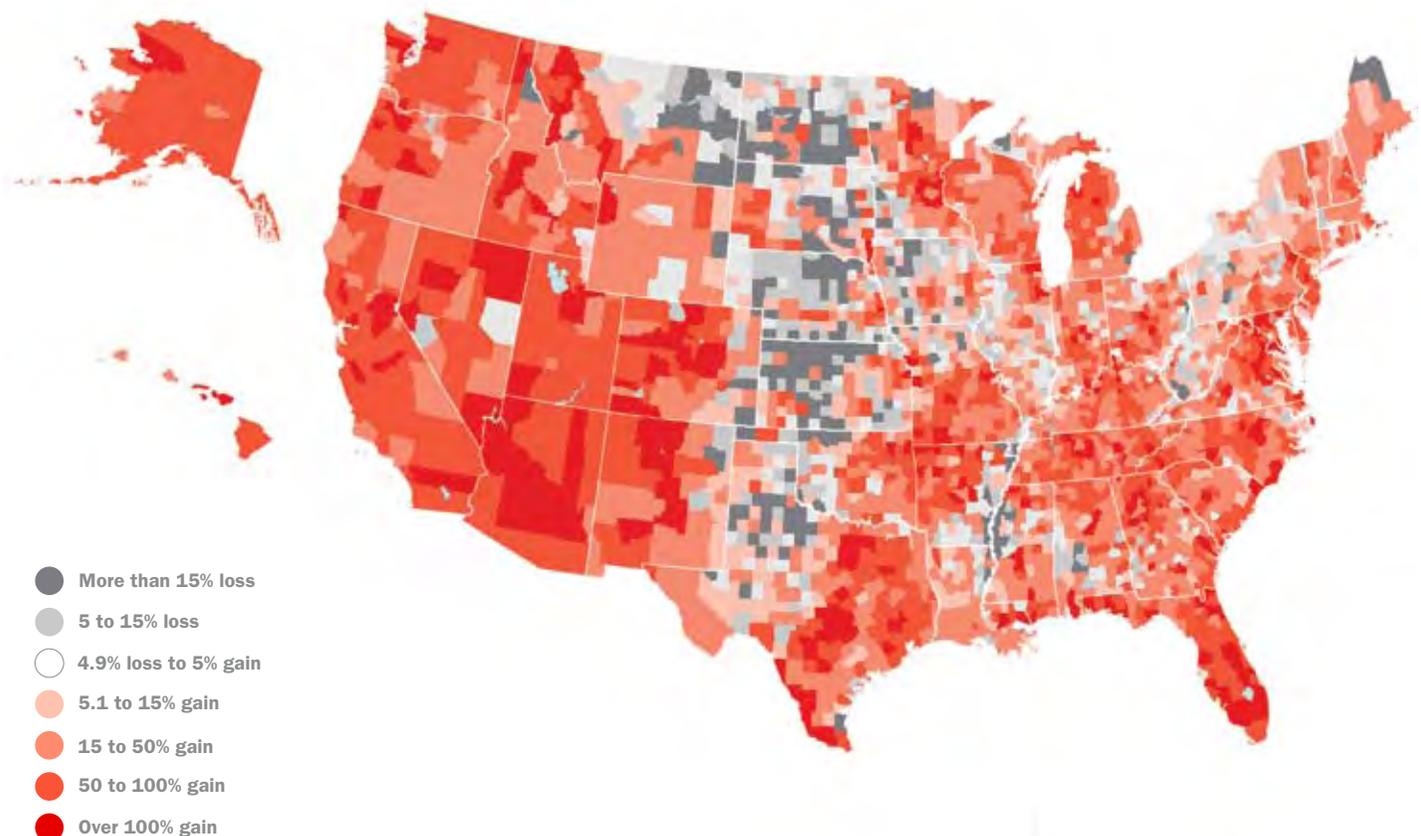
In the process of achieving these outcomes, we are harnessing one of America's great strengths – the ability of private associations of business and civic leaders to work in partnership with government across economic sectors, political boundaries, and functional disciplines. We are creating "bottom up" strategies to guide the actions of local and state governments and the business and civic sectors.

At stake is a fundamental opportunity to organize and direct the trillions of dollars of investments that will be made over the next generation in infrastructure, housing and urban development, environmental protection, and new energy systems and to harness these investments to improve the competitiveness and livability of every part of the country.

America 2050 will result in five major outcomes →

- **A national framework for prosperity, growth, and competitiveness**
- **A world class multimodal transportation system**
- **Protected environmental landscapes and coastal estuaries**
- **Economic and social opportunities for all members of society**
- **Globally competitive megaregions**

U.S. Population Change, 2000-2050, by county



Problem Statement

→ **Our world is experiencing a transformation** of historic proportions. Open markets and information technology have broken down barriers, bringing us closer to our international neighbors. Businesses have been transformed by international outsourcing, taking advantage of lower-cost labor, high-skilled workers, and global time differences. In America, domestic goods are being edged out by the influx of cheaper goods from China and the Far East as service industries grow to occupy a greater share of the American economy. Whether our world is getting “flatter” or growing smaller, these global trends have tremendous impacts on our economy, society, and environment at home.

America is experiencing shifting dynamics of its own. By the year 2050, the U.S. population is expected to grow by almost half from its 2000 level – providing tremendous opportunities even as it creates new challenges for communities and regions already reeling from growth-related concerns. But America is growing unevenly, exacerbating population pressures in some areas while bypassing concentrated poverty in others.

While the southern and western regions of the United States are leading the nation’s growth, both from immigration and natural births, vast regions like the Midwest, the Great Plains, and the Lower Mississippi Valley will experience flat population growth or decline by 2050. Dense, established regions like the Northeast will also add population, but the constraints of its aging infrastructure systems will limit economic potential. In the Southeast, places like Atlanta are booming but with no end to the expansion of outer suburbs. And at the metropolitan scale across the nation, regions continue to experience the problems of concentrated poverty in the inner city and inner suburbs, while new suburban development consumes land at the urban fringe.

By mid-century, more than 70 percent of the nation’s population growth and economic growth is expected to take place in extended networks of metropolitan regions linked by environmental systems, transportation networks, economies, and culture. These emerging

“megaregions” are becoming the new competitive units in the global economy, characterized by the increasing movement of goods, people, and capital among their metropolitan regions. Just as metropolitan regions grew from cities to become the geographical units of the 20th century global economy, megaregions – agglomerations of metropolitan regions with integrated labor markets, infrastructure, and land use systems – are rapidly taking their place.

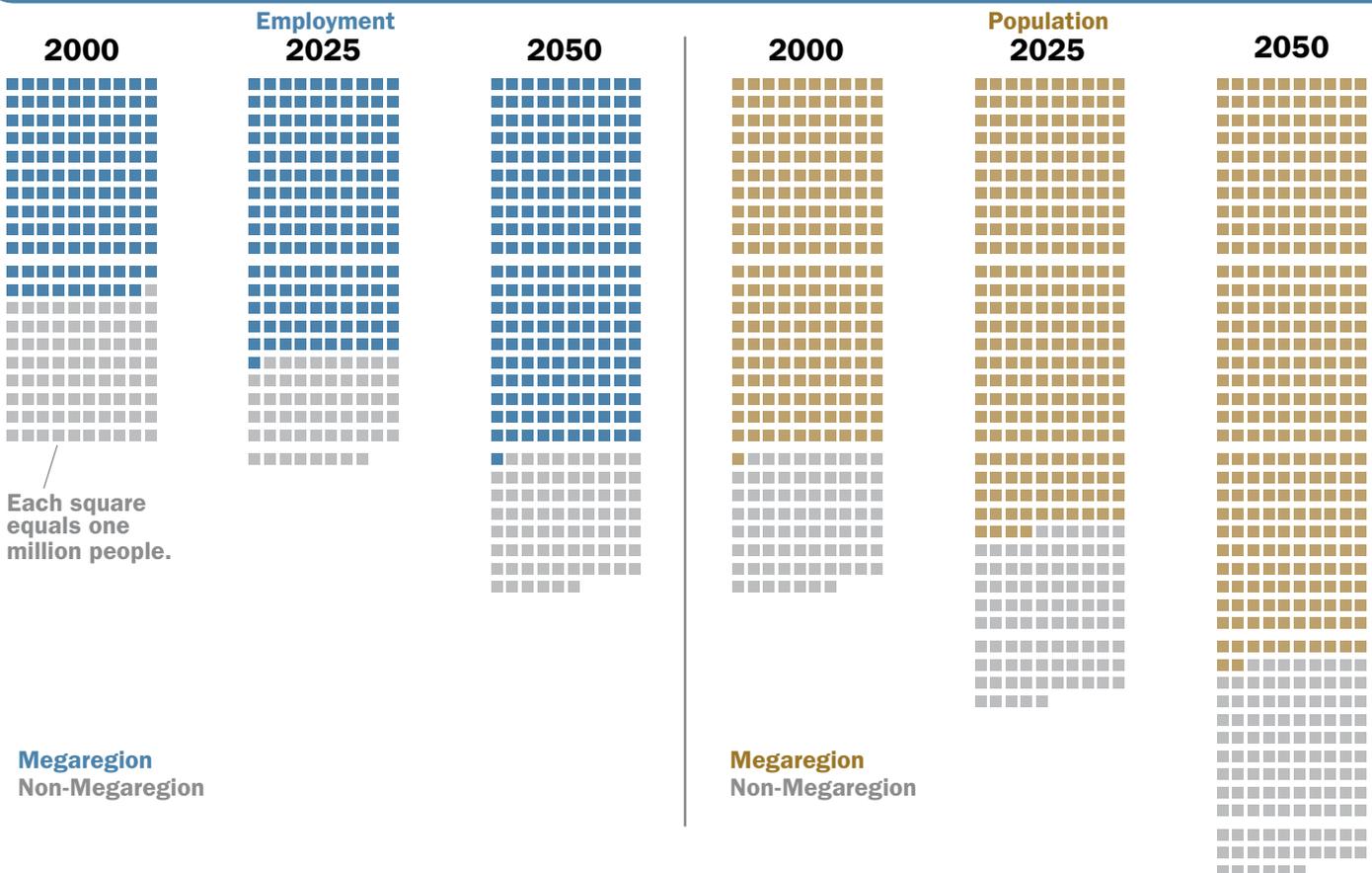
Within these megaregions, the problems of growing highway congestion, overcrowded airports and seaports, loss of open space, and aging infrastructure systems will only be compounded by growing populations and rapidly expanding international trade. These constraints limit economic growth and degrade quality of life, essential parts of attracting and retaining both businesses and knowledge workers in a footloose global playing field.

Meanwhile, the bypassed areas of the nation will continue to suffer from dwindling resource-based economies, population loss, and lack of integration in global markets. A national strategy must address both the pressures of congestion in the growing megaregions and the forces of decline in bypassed places.

The astounding transformation of the global economy we are now experiencing is as significant as the social, economic, and spatial forces that shaped America after World War II. If we are to take advantage of these dynamics of change, our nation must make the critical investments necessary to provide capacity for growth and quality of life for the next half century. Increasingly, these investments and interventions must occur at the megaregional scale, which provides the necessary breadth of resources to grow and compete globally.

→ **Opposite Chicago’s Millennium Park brings the natural world into a dense urban environment. It incorporates green building practices and was financed with public and private dollars.**

Megaregion and Non-Megaregion growth, 2000-2050





America's Future Trends

→ Six major trends will shape America's future by mid-century. Together, they provide the impetus for a national strategy.

- New global trading patterns
- Rapid population growth and demographic change
- Inefficient land use
- Uneven and inequitable growth patterns within and among regions
- The mounting energy crisis and global climate change
- Metropolitan infrastructure that is reaching the limits of its capacity

New Global Trading Patterns

From 1929 to 2005, foreign trade increased from 11 percent of the national gross domestic product to 27 percent, a trend that is only likely to accelerate in the years ahead. The U.S. balance of payments, which measures the flow of commodities in the U.S. economy, has tipped precipitously since the early 1990s towards a reliance on foreign goods. Globalization is creating a new set of winners and losers, not only among nations and industries but also among regions. As global services and trade have replaced manufacturing as the leading sources of growth in the United States, "global gateways" such as Miami, Los Angeles, Seattle, Houston, and New York have gained, often at the expense of traditional manufacturing and agricultural regions in the heartland.

Already, the contours of global trading patterns that we began to adjust to in the 1980s and '90s are changing once more, and America's competitive position depends on keeping pace. Our competitive advantage in high-skill technology and service industries is increasingly threatened by more educated workforces abroad and the greater mobility of capital brought on by the dismantling of global barriers to trade. Competitive advantage will belong to regions that can not only attract high skilled workers and businesses that employ them, but places that provide affordable housing options, a high quality of life, and transportation hubs that act as gateways to the global economy.

Rapid Population Growth and Demographic Change

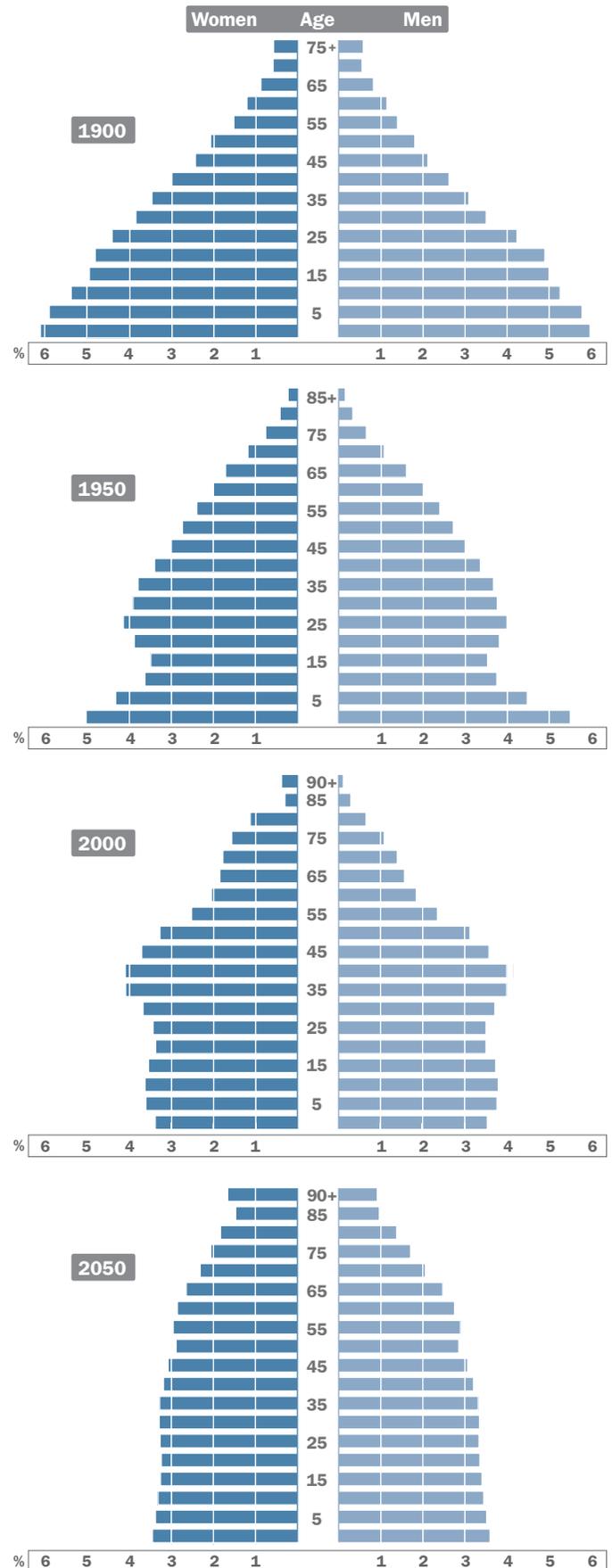
While other industrialized countries, particularly in Europe, face projected population losses in the coming fifty years, the United States is poised for tremendous growth. In a single decade, the population of the United States grew 13 percent, from 248 million in 1990 to 281 million in 2000. The United States Census Bureau estimates that the national population will grow 49 percent from its 2000 level to reach 420 million people by 2050.

Continued population growth will also bring significant demographic changes, with implications for the way we plan our cities, metropolitan regions, and transportation systems. For example, according to Reconnecting America, the swelling cohorts of Baby Boomers and "Echo-Boomers" (aged 24-34), as well as immigrants and non-white populations that are fueling much of America's projected growth, are the same groups that exhibit a preference for urban living in proximity to cultural amenities, jobs, and transit.

Immigrants will fuel much of the nation's population growth in the 21st century.

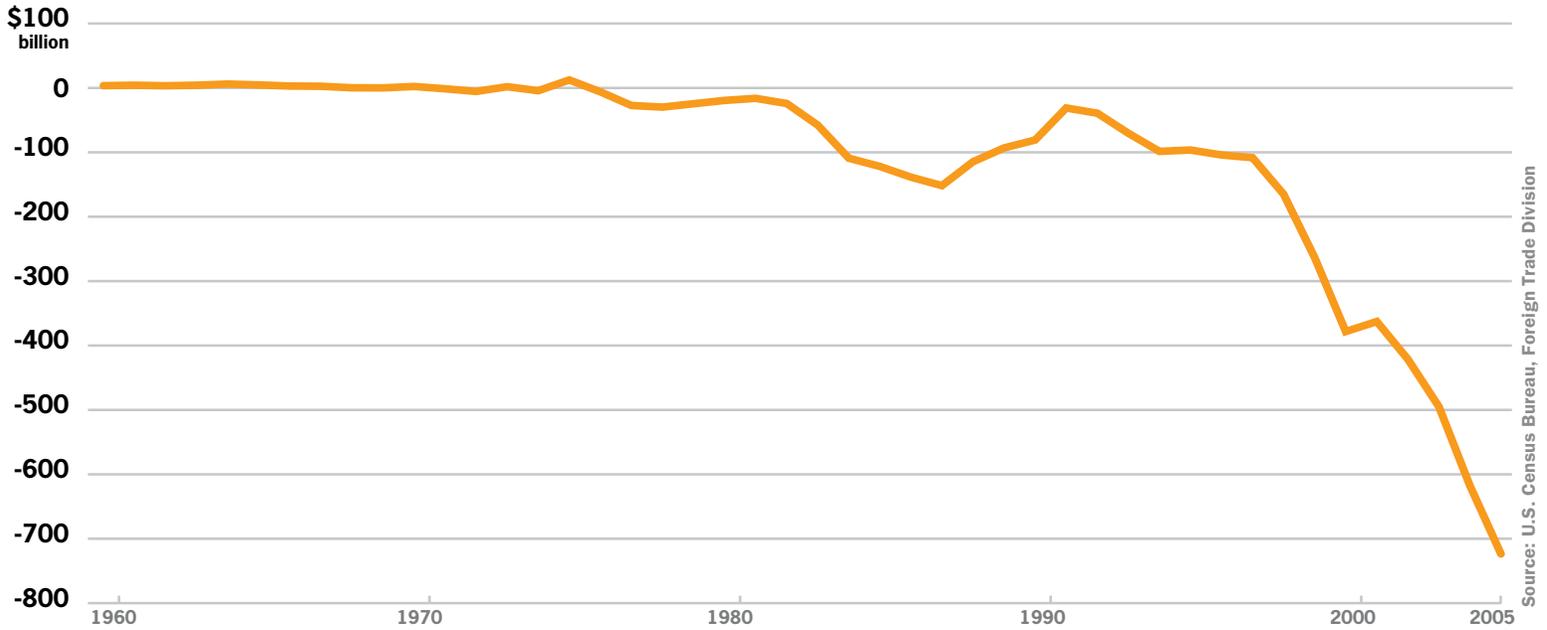


U.S. Population Distribution by Age Cohorts



→ U.S. Trade in Goods and Services, 1960-2005

Balance of Payments Basis, Value in nominal billions of dollars

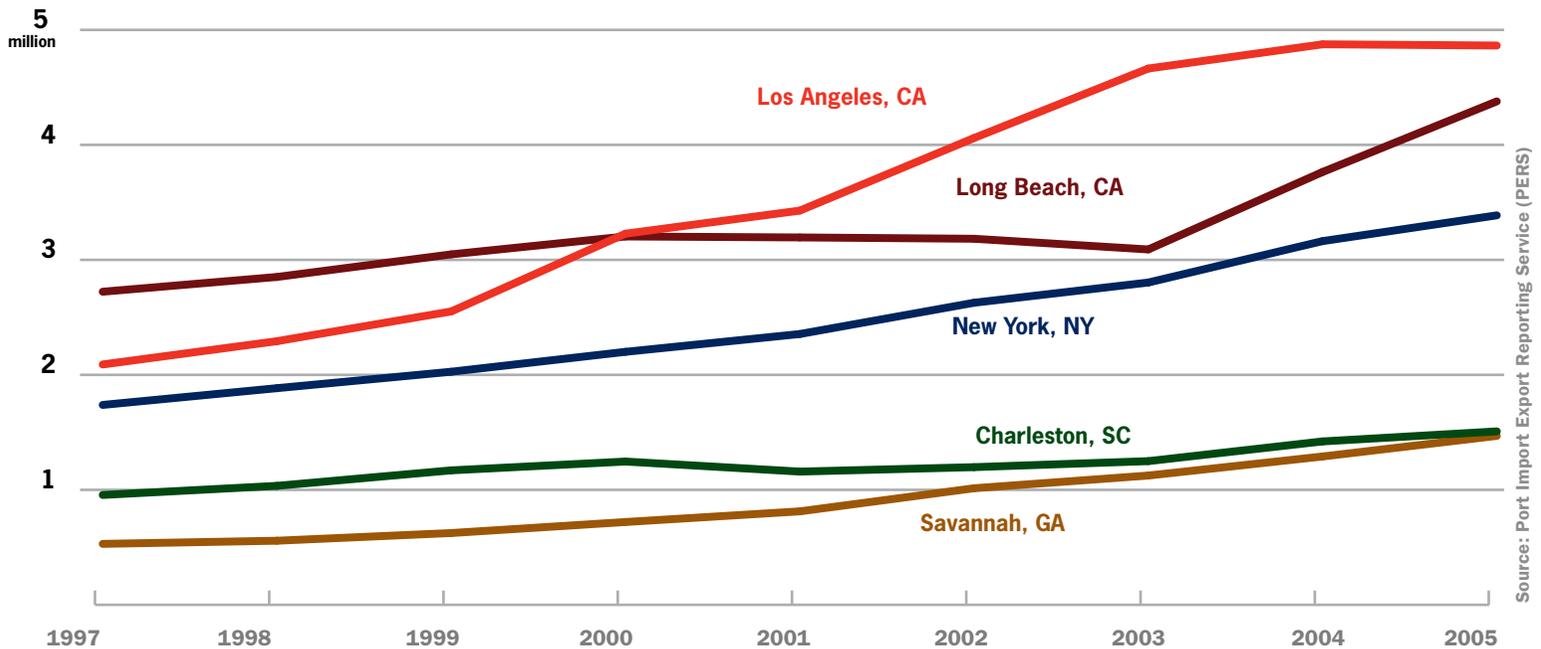


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Division



→ Growth in Top Five U.S. Seaports

Waterborne Foreign Container Trade in Twenty-foot Equivalent Units (TEU)



Source: Port Import Export Reporting Service (PERS)

Inefficient Land Use

Since 1970, virtually all U.S. population and economic growth has taken place in large metropolitan regions, and within these regions, most growth has occurred in the outer suburban rings. Many of these places are now approaching “build-out,” essentially running out of easily developable land or exhausting the service capacity of their municipality. Related concerns are intensifying traffic congestion, rising property taxes, longer commutes, and increasing housing prices, as well as conflicts between development and the green infrastructure that sustains regions, such as public water supplies and wildlife habitats.

While many cities and inner suburbs are now experiencing infill development and revitalization, development at the outermost fringe of metropolitan areas is still the dominant trend in growth. In addition to consuming farmland and open space, sprawling patterns of growth expend energy resources at higher rates, cause air pollution that contributes to global warming, and require greater investments in roads and infrastructure. These effects will hit home as the price of oil continues to rise, people spend more time sitting in traffic, and the resulting air pollution threatens public health. The alternative points instead toward more sustainable and compact forms of development supported by a variety of transportation choices.

The Mounting Energy Crisis and Global Climate Change

The land use patterns described above, along with America’s dependency on automobiles, trucks, and airplanes for both personal travel and goods movement, pose a serious challenge to the nation’s economy and national security in the face of fluctuating oil prices and America’s dependence on foreign oil. As the extent and severity of global climate change becomes evident, a more sustainable future seems less like an option and more like an imperative. America cannot and should not stake its future on the empty promise of continued cheap gasoline. According to the Pew Center on Global Climate Change, one-third of carbon dioxide emissions in the United States are attributable to the transportation sector. To significantly reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, America must adopt a comprehensive strategy that includes maximizing the fuel efficiency of vehicles as well as changing land use patterns that force reliance on personal automobiles.

In the nation’s heartland, cities and inner suburbs are losing population.

→ Above New development on the urban fringe in San Ramon, CA →
Below An abandoned row house in St. Louis, MO



Uneven and Inequitable Growth Patterns

Across America, growth is occurring unevenly, both within regions, between central cities and suburbs, and across major regions of the country. Fast-growing areas of the south and west attract migration from other areas of the country at the same time as many areas of the country are losing population. These trends are expected to continue.

Declining areas, which come in several common forms, each require targeted strategies to address their particular needs. Among these are large rural regions where resource-based economies or ground water reserves are in permanent decline, such as the High Plains, stretching from Montana and the Dakotas to the Texas Panhandle. Declining major and second-tier cities constitute a second category of declining areas, such as many of the nation’s largest urban centers, including Philadelphia, Newark, Baltimore, Cleveland, St. Louis, and New Orleans, which by 2000 had lost a third or more of their populations since 1960 as their economic bases eroded.

A third category is inner cities and inner-ring suburbs. Even as the outer-ring suburbs of most metropolitan regions have grown, many inner cities and inner-ring suburbs have lost residents, tax base, and economic activity, and poverty has become highly concentrated. Many of these places have high concentrations of African-Americans and Latinos, who will be increasingly disadvantaged if economic opportunities in these areas continue to decline.

Metropolitan Infrastructure That Is Reaching Capacity

Much of the country’s metropolitan infrastructure was built in the last half of the 20th century and will reach its capacity limits early in the 21st century. Unless new capacity is created in roads, rails, airports, seaports, and other systems, the nation’s economic potential will be artificially limited. Federal transportation investments over the past decade have largely focused on maintaining the current stock of infrastructure, not on expanding the capacity of these systems. In the absence of a compelling vision for America’s future transportation system, the 2005 SAFTEA-LU transportation bill devolved into an unprecedented number of earmarks for local transportation projects that will do little to meet the needs of the 21st century.





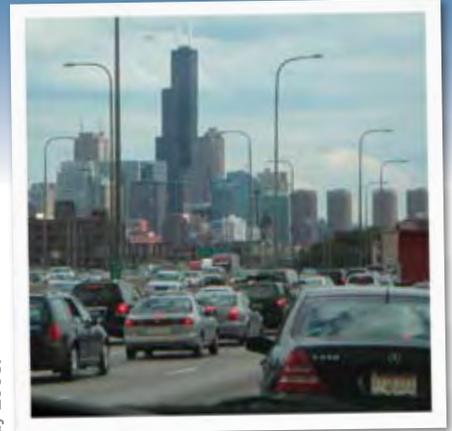
Los Angeles

→ Yes, that traffic is going to get worse.

Traffic congestion is markedly worse today than it was for the last generation. In the early 1980s, Americans clocked 1.5 trillion vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and rush hour congestion added about 3.6 minutes to commutes that normally took 30 minutes. By 2004, VMT had increased 94 percent to just under 3 trillion. Rush hour congestion added 11.1 minutes to a 30-minute drive. Large urban areas are even worse off. In major metropolitan areas in the US, a commute that used to take 30 minutes now takes 44.4 minutes during the peak rush hour, a 167 percent increase since 1982.

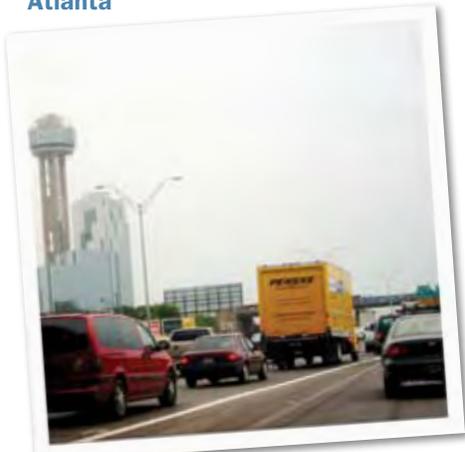
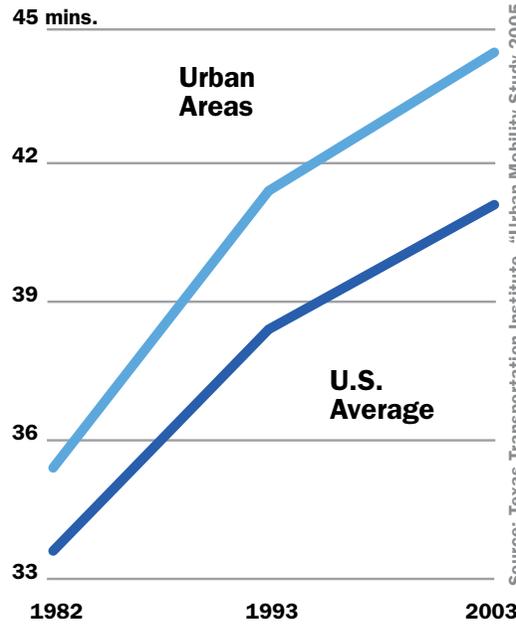


Atlanta



Chicago

How long does a 30-minute trip take during rush hour?



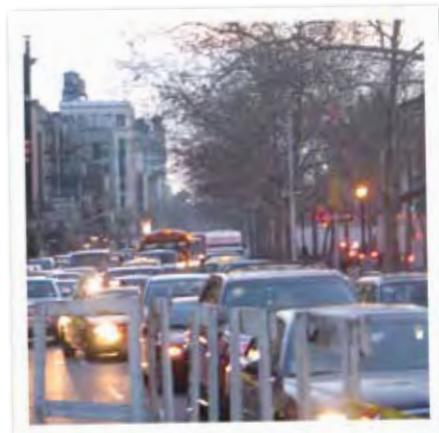
Dallas



Connecticut



Washington, D.C.



Manhattan



Brooklyn

Cascadia

The vision for Cascadia links Seattle, Portland, and Vancouver, British Columbia with high-speed rail, while protecting the area's unique and pristine environment. Other strategies highlight these cities' shared high-tech competencies, commitment to environmental sustainability, and creative clusters in film, music, and green building.

Northern California

The high quality of life, cultural heritage, and environmental assets of the Northern California region make it an attractive – and expensive – place to live. How can sustainable land use strategies be employed while limiting the skyrocketing cost of living?

Southern California

With some of the largest ports in the nation, the economy of Southern California is closely tied to the logistics and goods movement industry. This region is taking aggressive action to build infrastructure that enhances its role as a global gateway while providing opportunities for its fast-growing native-born and immigrant populations.

Arizona Sun Corridor

The Sun Corridor is equivalent to Indiana in size and population but will add another Indiana's worth of residents by 2040. Located in a desert environment, Phoenix and Tucson – the megaregion's biggest metropolitan regions – have instituted water conservation requirements and are promoting the use of desert landscaping. These efforts provide the two metros with enough water for perhaps up to twenty million people, preparing the Sun Corridor for current and future growth.

Texas Triangle

By 2050 about 35 million people, or 70 percent of the population of Texas, will live in the metropolitan areas that compose the Texas Triangle. Three of the nation's 10 largest cities are in the Triangle, including Houston, which has a port that handles more foreign tonnage than any other in the U.S. Cultural cohesion creates the potential for collaboration among the metro regions of the Triangle to address land use, transportation, and environmental concerns.

10 Emerging Megaregions

Great Lakes

The Great Lakes megaregion is exploring ways to grow its economy in face of the shrinking role of the manufacturing sector. The region's assets include the environmental resources and amenities of the Great Lakes and a strong research and cultural tradition tied to its leading public universities.

Northeast

The Northeast is a powerhouse of density and economic output, producing 20 percent of the nation's Gross Domestic Product with 18 percent of the population and only two percent of the nation's land area. Over the next generation, the Northeast will add 18 million new residents. This population growth will demand infrastructure investments and economic growth to accommodate these new residents while preserving quality of life.

Piedmont Atlantic

The low cost of living and high quality of life in the Southeast are two reasons for this megaregion's booming population, which is anchored by Atlanta but stretches east to Raleigh, North Carolina and west to Birmingham, Alabama. The region is facing challenges associated with its growing population, such as increased traffic congestion, runaway land consumption, and inadequate infrastructure, which it hopes to address with sustainable solutions.

Metro Area Population



Gulf Coast

The devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the displacement of victims along the I-10 corridor highlighted the environmental, transportation, and economic links of the Gulf Coast. Despite the recent destruction, the region is expected to grow due to the continued in-migration of retirees from the Midwest.

Florida

The Florida megaregion is one of the fastest growing in the nation and possesses a wealth of diversity, with six of every 10 new residents in the last decade coming from foreign countries. It is both dense and populous, with the major international city of Miami acting as a gateway to Latin America. Regional strategies to protect the Everglades have preserved the natural heritage of the state.

The Emergence of Megaregions

→ **Most of the nation's rapid population growth**, and an even larger share of its economic expansion, is expected to occur in 10 or more emerging megaregions: large networks of metropolitan regions, each megaregion covering thousands of square miles and located in every part of the country.

The emerging megaregions of the United States are defined by layers of relationships that together define a common interest; this common interest, in turn, forms the basis for policy decisions. The five major categories of relationships that define megaregions are:

- Environmental systems and topography
- Infrastructure systems
- Economic linkages
- Settlement patterns and land use
- Shared culture and history



While every megaregion may not share every one of these characteristics, the possession of several indicates a stronger and more cohesive megaregion. For instance, the Northeast Megalopolis, identified as early as 1961 by geographer Jean Gottman, is defined by relationships in each of these categories and, accordingly, is one of the strongest and most easily recognizable megaregions.

Challenges Span Regional Boundaries

Across the nation, community leaders, businesses, and policy makers are confronted by challenges that affect their cities and neighborhoods but which cannot be solved by actions taken solely at the city or metropolitan scale. Protecting public watersheds that span multiple state and regional boundaries is one example of a challenge that requires coordination at the megaregional scale. Another is the challenge of moving goods efficiently from coastal ports through congested metropolitan areas to reach inland destinations; or providing new jobs in the face of major economic restructuring to a post-industrial economy.

The recognition of emerging megaregions enables cooperation across jurisdictional borders to address specific challenges experienced at this scale. One way megaregions can prepare for future population pressures is by marshalling resources to make bold investments in high-speed rail and other mobility infrastructure. But there are others, just as crucial: protecting environmental resources, coordinating economic development strategies, and making land use decisions that comprehend all of these.

Global Integration Zones Are the New Competitive Unit

Our competitors in Asia and Europe are creating Global Integration Zones by linking specialized economic functions across vast geographic areas and national boundaries with high-speed rail and separated goods

movement systems. The increased mobility of workers, business travelers, information, and goods between the networked cities of these megaregions enables greater collaboration, flexibility, and innovation. Efficient mobility is also a competitive advantage in the global playing field, where value is created by time savings.

In the United States, the coupling and chaining of industrial activity to take advantage of “just in time” production and delivery is increasingly critical to the success of our economy. The limited capacity to move goods quickly and “on demand” is a serious obstacle that firms face in congested regions. Efficiently providing these services in a constrained and congested transportation system is among the greatest challenges for businesses trying to compete in the global economy. This challenge can be met with coordinated new investments in infrastructure development at the megaregional scale.

A New Framework for Federal Investments and Policies

The recognition of the megaregion as an emerging geographical unit also presents an opportunity to reshape large federal systems of infrastructure and funding, such as future surface transportation bills, the reorganization of Amtrak, housing and urban development authorizations, and farm policy. Just as the Interstate Highway System enabled the growth of metropolitan regions during the second half of the 20th century, emerging megaregions will require new transportation modes that work for places 200-500 miles across. The key new links in this mobility system are likely to be High-Speed Rail (HSR) lines, which are uniquely suited to trips of this length.

To function effectively, HSR systems must be fully integrated with modernized commuter rail, highway systems, and airports, providing seamless connections between all these modes. The metropolitan legs of the Interstate Highway System will continue to play an important role but must be better managed through smart highway tolling and information systems designed to reduce congestion and increase reliability, speed, and capacity.

In addition, new freight systems will be needed to meet growing goods movement needs, including Truck-Only Toll (TOT) lanes on key interstate highway corridors, linked to improved rail freight systems and airports and seaports. These improvements will create new capacity, making the

nation's goods movement system more efficient and reliable as it becomes increasingly integrated with global markets. This, in turn, will pave the way for a dramatic expansion of the nation's logistics sector, providing new jobs to make up for losses in the ailing U.S. manufacturing sector.

Many defining features of megaregions, like urbanization patterns and landscape elements, are visible from space.

- Left Southern California
- Below The Great Lakes
- Opposite Florida





The America 2050 Strategy

→ **The America 2050 strategy seeks to facilitate the emergence of 10 or more megaregions by focusing on five key objectives:**

- Create capacity for growth.
- Reestablish upward social and economic mobility.
- Protect and reclaim region-shaping natural resource systems.
- Promote new financing and decision-making frameworks.
- Reform the federal role in land use policy.

Create capacity for growth.

The America 2050 strategy is organized around major investments in transportation infrastructure to create capacity for growth, enhance resiliency and redundancy, and promote the cohesion of megaregions through easier movement of people and goods.

Major new investments in transportation infrastructure will facilitate choice by creating intermodal hubs offering the appropriate mode for a range of trips. Just as highways allowed for the formation of metropolitan regions, high-speed rail is the transportation mode that can best enable personal mobility and economic interaction across megaregions. For longer trips of 500 miles or more, air travel provides the most efficient option.

Dynamic pricing, High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes, “smart highway” technology, and Truck-Only Toll (TOT) lanes can help reduce congestion while raising revenues that can be redirected into the transportation system. These new technologies can be implemented on existing routes with low capital investments, immediately generating revenue and increasing traffic flow. The major hurdle they face is political resistance – a challenge that can be overcome by building megaregional coalitions.

These megaregional strategies hit the ground in local communities by coordinating transportation and land use to promote walking, biking, and transit use. Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and smart growth principles should be used to focus development in existing centers where transportation options exist or can be implemented. Encouraging infill development near transportation hubs will help revitalize existing centers and promote housing affordability while preserving vital open space and threatened environmental landscapes.

Reestablish upward social and economic mobility.

By increasing the efficiency, growth capacity, and competitiveness of megaregions, America 2050 aims to provide greater economic opportunity for all members of society. Major investments in multimodal transportation hubs and networks will create jobs and grow new industries, such as the fast-growing logistics sector. The transition from oil to low-carbon alternative fuels provides an opportunity to create new industries that require higher-skilled workers; these industries could bring economic opportunity to vast areas of the country that are still reeling from the decline of the manufacturing and resource-based sectors.

America 2050 aims to reduce concentrations of poverty by encouraging infill development in bypassed city cores and by connecting bypassed cities and regions to strong-market areas with higher-speed commuter rail and “smart” highways. Faster and more reliable connections between metropolitan regions will expand the labor pool and housing options for existing industries while opening new job opportunities to residents of bypassed areas.

Protect and reclaim natural and energy resource systems and promote less land-consuming patterns of growth.

The protection of region-shaping environmental landscapes and coastal estuaries is the complement to America 2050’s investment strategy in transportation infrastructure and the revitalization of center cities. Metropolitan regions, connected by major environmental landscapes and resource areas, can achieve greater success by working together to protect their natural heritage. Natural landscapes and estuaries should be viewed as the green infrastructure that supports quality of life, provides carbon dioxide sinks to reduce greenhouse gas emissions,

and defines the natural boundaries of urbanized areas, concentrating new development in existing cities and suburbs.

Multi-state compacts to reduce carbon dioxide emissions through cap-and-trade programs are starting to gain favor in places like the Northeast and California. These multi-state and statewide programs are effective models for megaregional cooperation to protect air quality and ensure a healthy environment.

Promote new financing and decision-making frameworks.

The megaregional planning approach does not propose establishing new megaregional governments. Rather, strategic partnerships across regional and state boundaries should be forged to meet challenges experienced at the megaregional scale. These partnerships can be tested around individual projects, such as the seven-state Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the Northeast, and later built upon to address other challenges in the megaregion. Partners are motivated by mutual self-interest and shared policy objectives.

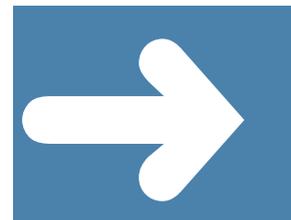
To implement the ambitious set of investments described above, megaregions will need to explore new and innovative financing systems to raise new funds. Public authorities can use their tax-free status to attract private dollars through bond issuances, sales, and lease-back arrangements. New user fees, such as congestion pricing or HOT and TOT lanes on toll roads, link charges to those who benefit the most from new investments, creating new revenue streams. And value recapture models, such as tax increment financing, allow future increases in land values to finance today’s infrastructure investments. To build support for all of these measures, we need new methods of demonstrating the megaregional benefits of major infrastructure investments.

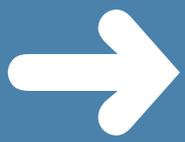
Reform the federal role in land use policy.

Despite the long tradition of local control over land use decisions, the federal government has historically played a strong but silent role in shaping American land use. From the Interstate Highway System to federal flood insurance programs that make housing construction possible in flood-prone areas, the shape of modern America is a result of a series of federal policy decisions with direct impacts on America’s built environment.

Rather than expanding or eliminating the federal role in land use planning, the land use impacts of federal policies should be acknowledged and reformed to support clearly articulated national priorities for growth, sustainability, and economic competitiveness. Former Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt has proposed that the federal government use “conditionality” of federal funding to induce localities to conform to national policy objectives.

Currently, many of the federal agencies that affect land use decisions, such as the U.S. Department of Transportation and Department of the Interior, are unable to collaborate meaningfully with other relevant federal agencies because they are housed in bureaucratic silos. A number of our international competitors, including the United Kingdom and Japan, and some states, such as Massachusetts, have created executive-level coordinators to integrate the activities of multiple agencies responsible for economic development, transportation, environment, and related functions.





The transition from fossil fuels to efficient, alternative energy sources presents an economic opportunity for vast areas of the country.



America 2050 Work Plan

→ The America 2050 initiative is now directed at understanding and strengthening the 10 or more emerging megaregions

of the United States and exploring innovative policies and investment strategies that can bolster their competitiveness and quality of life in the global economy. America 2050 is taking shape as a network of coordinated but self-directed initiatives in emerging megaregions across the nation, where regional leaders are meeting to agree on common policy objectives. Meanwhile, the National Committee for America 2050 is creating a national framework to support megaregional growth and working with bypassed regions to identify strategies needed to rebuild the economic prospects of these areas. The immediate goals of the project are as follows.

Identify emerging megaregions and the relationships that define them.

Coordinated by the National Committee for America 2050, work is underway at universities across the country to complete megaregional “surveys,” – baseline studies with demographic, economic, environmental, land use, and transportation analysis of the 10 emerging megaregions. These studies identify challenges and opportunities encountered in each megaregion and are being shared with megaregional stakeholders to elicit feedback.

Enumerate strategies that address megaregional challenges.

The National Committee for America 2050 is compiling examples of regional planning strategies that address challenges at the megaregional scale, such as coordinated transportation plans, regional environmental commissions, and carbon dioxide emissions cap-and-trade programs.

Test new governance and financing methods.

The America 2050 initiative will foster pilot programs for megaregional governance and innovative financing methods for infrastructure investments at the megaregional scale.

Foster megaregional cooperation.

America 2050 committee members are already convening leaders in their respective megaregions to identify common policy objectives and build political coalitions and collaborative action in support of megaregional investments and strategies.

Develop strategies to regenerate bypassed regions.

Vast areas of the country, from the High Plains and the Mississippi Delta to the Northern Appalachians and the manufacturing region stretching from northeastern Ohio to western New York, have experienced sustained loss of jobs and residents that is projected to continue. The National Committee for America 2050 will work with groups in these regions to identify policies and investments needed to promote new economic activities.

Develop federal goals and policies to support megaregional coordination and planning.

The reauthorization of the 2005 SAFTEA-LU transportation bill should be organized around a framework that recognizes America’s new settlement forms and the emergence of megaregions. This, along with the reorganization of Amtrak, provides the immediate focus for federal efforts in support of megaregional planning.



Outcomes of America 2050

→ **The United States will face a number of critical decisions over the next half century.** Americans will have to decide whether they want America by design or America by default. Our current direction is toward a nation whose competitiveness is threatened by inefficient development patterns, inadequate transportation systems, threatened natural environments, and declining urban and rural communities.

The emergence of megaregions points us in a different direction, one in which urban areas and their surrounding regions can work together to address common concerns and pool their complementary strengths.

National Framework for Prosperity, Growth, and Competitiveness

The existing federal policies that impact land use decisions in the United States will be united and reformed to support a cohesive vision for the nation's prosperity, equity, and sustainability in this century. From the next SAFTEA-LU to flood insurance to FEMA, an overarching federal vision will assist local communities, states, and megaregional collaborations with financing tools and governance arrangements to invest in the capacity for future growth.

World Class Multimodal Transportation System

An expanded and efficient national multimodal transportation system will provide the capacity for America's rapid economic and population growth. America 2050 will pioneer new financing methods that leverage private capital to build strengthened, expanded transportation networks of high-speed rail, improved metropolitan commuter rail, smart highways, seaports, and airports

San Francisco International Airport recently added links to commuter rail and future high speed rail infrastructure, enhancing its multimodal connections.

connected at multimodal transportation hubs. Congestion pricing and user fees will reinvest transportation-generated revenue into maintaining and expanding the systems.

Protected Environmental Landscapes

The protection of the nation's environmental heritage can be achieved through the cooperation of metropolitan regions in megaregions. These protected areas provide the green infrastructure that supplies clean air, drinking water, local agriculture, and recreational opportunities that support a high quality of life.

Economic and Social Opportunities for all Members of Society

The growth of new, sustainable, and competitive industries will provide job opportunities for vast areas of the country that have suffered from the decline of resource-based economies. Major investments in building new infrastructure and expansion of the logistics sector will provide jobs for workers with and without college diplomas. Finally, America 2050 aims to reconnect bypassed cities and inner suburbs with areas of opportunity through improved commuter rail and smart highways, breaking up concentrations of poverty and broadening job markets.

Globally Competitive Megaregions

America 2050 will create regions that work. Cooperation across state and regional boundaries will address challenges at the megaregional scale. New infrastructure systems will provide increased mobility, greater redundancy and resiliency, and less congestion and environmental pollution. Surrounded by protected environmental landscapes and clean coastal estuaries, they will provide a high quality of life and natural amenities in metropolitan regions. Together, America's megaregions will compete as the best places to live and work in the world.



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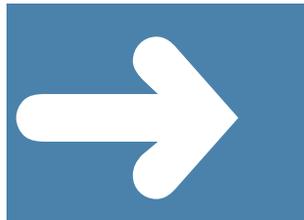
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