Incorporating Megaregional Concepts into Long-Range Plans

Scaling Up: Thinking Megaregionally in Long-Range Planning
New Partners for Smart Growth, St. Louis, MO
February 3, 2017

planning.org/nationalcenters/green/megaregions/
Overview

1. The Local Benefits of Megaregional Thinking
2. APA’s Comprehensive Plan Standards for Sustaining Places
3. Local Comprehensive Planning Guidance
The Local Benefits of Megaregional Thinking

- Competitive advantages
- Quality of life improvements
- Grateful neighbors
Competitive Advantages

Andre Gunawan ("Tech in Asia," https://www.techinasia.com, Flickr, CC BY 2.0)
Quality of Life Improvements
Grateful Neighbors
APA’s Comprehensive Plan Standards for Sustaining Places

- 7 Required Principles
- 2 Required Processes
- 2 Required Attributes

planning.org/nationalcenters/green/megaregions/
Required Principles

- Livable Built Environment
  - 11 Best Practices
- Harmony with Nature
  - 10 Best Practices
- Resilient Economy
  - 7 Best Practices
- Healthy Community
  - 7 Best Practices
- Interwoven Equity
  - 9 Best Practices
- Responsible Regionalism
  - 9 Best Practices

planning.org/nationalcenters/green/megaregions/
Required Processes

**Authentic Participation**
- 7 Best Practices

- Citizen Control
- Delegated Power
- Partnership
- Placation
- Consultation
- Information
- Therapy
- Manipulation

**Degrees of Citizen Power**

**Degrees of Tokenism**


**Accountable Implementation**
- 8 Best Practices

- Who?
- Will do what?
- By when?

- Regulations
- Public Investments
- Partnerships

planning.org/nationalcenters/green/megaregions/
Required Attributes

Consistent Content
- 8 Best Practices

Vision
Goals
Objectives
Policies
Fact Base

Coordinated Characteristics
- 9 Best Practices

Consistent with Federal and State Requirements
Consistent with Regional Plans
Compatible with Neighboring Plans
User-Friendly Format

Innovative Plan

planning.org/nationalcenters/green/megaregions/
Local Comprehensive Planning Guidance

• 26 Recommended Practices
• Organized Under the Comprehensive Plan Standards Principles, Processes, and Attributes

planning.org/nationalcenters/green/megaregions/
A Few Highlights

Livable Built Environment

• Plan for interregional transportation access for long-distance commuters.

An Errant Knight ("Directional signs at Salt Lake City Intermodal Hub," Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0)

planning.org/nationalcenters/green/megaregions/
A Few Highlights

Resilient Economy

• Support interregional economies.
A Few Highlights

Consistent Content

- Incorporate interregional considerations into assessments of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

planning.org/nationalcenters/green/megaregions/
Overview

1. The Regional Benefits of Thinking Megaregionally
2. Regional Long-Range Planning Guidance
Regional Benefits of Thinking Megaregionally

• Megaregional/interregional systems
• Competitive advantages
• Environmental stewardship
• Equity considerations
Megaregional/Interregional Systems
Competitive Advantages
Environmental Stewardship

planning.org/nationalcenters/green/megaregions/
Equity Considerations
Regional Long-Range Planning Guidance

Defining Megaregions

Megaregions are networks of metropolitan areas that share economic, environmental, and cultural features, as well as infrastructure and geographic connections. Unlike megacities, which have no legal status or official governance mechanisms in the United States, the concept of megaregions gives researchers and policy makers a framework for analyzing and discussing the increasing interconnectivity and interdependencies among metropolitan areas and regions (Ross 2009).

Figure 1: Megaregions across the United States

The Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development at Georgia Tech identifies nine megaregions across the country (Ross et al. 2008).

planning.org/nationalcenters/green/megaregions/
Regional Long-Range Planning Guidance

- Four key areas for regional planning agencies to engage:
  - Long-range transportation planning
  - Convening
  - Data collection and analysis, forecasting
  - Technical assistance

planning.org/nationalcenters/green/megaregions/
Regional Long-Range Planning Guidance

• Long-range transportation planning
  • Planning guidance based on the scope of the planning process for MPOs as defined in 23 USC §134(h) and 49 USC §5303(h).
• 31 Recommended Practices

Table 1: Planning Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRACTICES</th>
<th>OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Address the concept of megaregions in the plan’s fact base.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2. Coordinate regional proposals within the region and interregionally.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3. Plan for an interregional jobs-housing balance with equitable transportation connections.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

planning.org/nationalcenters/green/megaregions/
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users

2.1. Coordinate interregionally on intelligent transportation systems.

Intelligent transportation systems (ITS) incorporate information and communications technologies into transportation infrastructure, including vehicles. ITS techniques, such as vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-signal communication, can improve safety and reduce casualties associated with vehicle crashes. It can also increase both safety and mobility by providing both motorized and nonmotorized users with real-time updates that can help them make decisions about routes and transportation modes. Coordinating interregionally on ITS may help make user experiences more consistent and predictable over large geographic areas, while also maximizing efficient deployment.

http://www.dot.nd.gov/imgs/its.jpg
5. Protect and enhance the environment

5.2. Protect interregional water resources.
Interregional water resources are water bodies, watersheds, floodplains, and aquifers that cross metropolitan area boundaries or provide source water from one metropolitan area to another. Policies and actions within one region can have negative effects on the water quality and supply of communities in a neighboring region. Taking an interregional approach to the protection of water resources allows for a holistic look at the water resource and how actions in one region may impact neighboring regions.
7. Improve quality of life for the community

7.1. Promote interregional environmental justice.

Interregional environmental justice is characterized by land-use decision making processes for facilities intended to serve multiple metropolitan areas that afford the same level of protection from environmental and health hazards to all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income. Some facilities—such as landfills, incinerators, waste-transfer stations, coal-fired power plants, and intermodal freight hubs—serve customers in multiple metropolitan areas but have negative environmental effects that are often borne disproportionately by lower-income communities of color. Working at the interregional scale to address the land-use policies that increase exposure to environmental risk can improve quality of life for all community members.

planning.org/nationalcenters/green/megaregions/