

**2010 Expo Shanghai: A Yangtze River Delta (YRD) Megaregion Framework**  
Robert D. Yaro, Sharath Vallabhajosyula  
Regional Plan Association

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Topic: Sharing of the opportunity of the 2010 Expo and magnifying its effect.

Dating back as far as the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the World's Fair, or Expo, is considered to be the third largest international gathering, following the FIFA World Cup and Olympic Games. It is a symbol of innovation, development and progress. The ice cream cone (St. Louis, Missouri, 1904) and lasers (Queens, New York, 1964) were introduced to the world. The Eiffel Tower (Paris, France, 1889) and the Unisphere (Queens, New York, 1964) brought a sense of pride and culture to America and France, respectively. On another level, world's fairs have also been a sign of development and growth for many cities and nations. It is the potential for improving the social, economic and environmental resources that has many nations competing to host the next expo.

World's fairs bring a tremendous amount of attention and long-term benefits to many cities, and are opportunities for economic development – bridges, tunnels, highways and parkways built by Robert Moses in association with the fairs in New York in 1939 and 1964, and the transformation of Flushing Meadows from a landfill to a regional park and sports complex (Arthur Ashe Tennis Stadium and Queens Museum of Science and Industry). Another example of long term economic development resulting from hosting a world's fair is Lisbon's development of new transit links, a new bridge across the Tagus River, and waterfront park and a reclaimed brownfield site that is now a major new mixed use district (Parque Expo).

In this tradition, the 2010 Expo, “Better City – Better Life”, to be held in Shanghai is a very pivotal event for the future of the city, as well as the entire country. As China sprints its way to the top of the economic ladder, this event presents an opportunity to showcase its progress, culture and make its mark in the world. However, it is vital that pre-planning and residual (post-fair) planning are clear. Although infrastructure plans must be considered for the nearly 70 million visitors expected to flood the coastal city during the six months it will

be held, the real gain should be seen in the long term economic benefits if they result in major investments in: infrastructure, amenity, or urban land reclamation and redevelopment.

The following paper will analyze how the Yangtze River Delta (YRD) development for the 2010 Expo presents an opportunity to establish a long-term strategy to organize the region. Vancouver in British Columbia exemplifies one of the most livable and sustainable cities in the world, and is still experiencing significant economic gain from the 1986 world's fair from travel and retail sectors; and Montreal's 1967 Expo experienced tremendous growth in resources and infrastructure and put the city "on the map". The investments in both cities have made a lasting contribution to their development. And plans for Toronto to host the expo in 2015 could bring as much as \$5 billion of infrastructure investments.

Furthermore, in developing a long-term growth strategy for a sustainable and livable Yangtze River Delta, Yaro and Vallabhajosyula will discuss the development of a YRD megaregion and how the 2010 Expo in Shanghai presents a unique opportunity for the city to invest in improvements to shape the region. It is recommended that strategic investments in infrastructure, the environment and other activities can strengthen the links between Shanghai and other cities within the YRD megaregion.

The Yangtze River Delta, comprising of the major metropolitan centers of Shanghai, Jiangsu and Zhejiang, make up the Yangtze Delta Metropolitan Area, the largest in China. This geographical area contains more than 90 million inhabitants, with an estimated 50 million living in urban centers. It is one of the densest regions in the country, with Shanghai alone having nearly 7,700 persons per square mile. The city of Shanghai has added almost 4 million people since 1990, a growth of 26 percent. The economy of the Yangtze Delta contributes more than 20 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), and 29

percent of total foreign trade (also the largest cargo port in the world). Overall, YRD only comprises 2.2 percent of total land area in China and has 11 percent of total population.

This region is comparable to the Northeast megaregion in United States - stretching from Virginia to southern Maine along the Atlantic coast (~ 450 miles) - covering only 2 percent of total land area in the country, nearly 18 percent of the total U.S. population (49.5 million) and generates one-fifth of the nation's GDP. This suggests that these two regions have grown and developed very efficiently from a land use perspective. So there is a real expansion occurring in the YRD region, and thinking about the immediate (2010 Expo) as well as long-term growth and development is critical.

Although these figures suggest a positive outlook for YRD and are motivating, there are still very serious impediments to overcome. The most pressing issue for the region's development prospects is regional division. Development is occurring in silos across the cities and municipalities, and a lack of coordination and vision is only exacerbating the disconnectedness. The Mayor of Jiaxing City, Deputy Chen Derong states that while the YRD is one of the largest metropolitan areas in the world with a booming economy, segmentation within the region's administration is seriously paralyzing the movement of production factors. Regionalism offers a framework for which to organize these impediments and promote equity, mobility, land use and governance - what are now the components of a vision for the Northeast megregion. As such, integration of development efforts in the YRD is critical to sustaining the competitiveness the region has experienced thus far.

In planning for residual development, Montreal, Quebec, Canada provides a good example. The city saw magnificent development from investing in the world's fair of 1967. With over

50 million people visiting and more than 60 nations represented, it is the largest expo in history. Although the metro system in Montreal dates back well before the '67 fair, the event redirected a lot of public funds to expand the system. The event developed additional lines on the main system, as well as a separate rail system that served just the expo, carrying almost a thousand passengers each way. Following the event, the Olympics in late '70s also urged spending to expand the transit system. The main '67 expo land is now used primarily for parks and recreation; parts of the original exhibitions still exist. Although the rail system did not grow rapidly, the use of the expo as a catalyst for economic development in the region allowed for a long-range expansion, making Montreal one of the largest metropolitan cities in the world. Habitat '67, a project designed by Moshe Safdie, symbolized what was then a sense of liberalization. Housing was a main theme at the expo, amongst many others, and Safdie's piece became one of the most visited pavilions during the event. He was able to project the efficiency of modern high density apartment buildings with the sense of diversity and space of living in private homes. Part of the success of Montreal's expo was the investment that allowed the site to be utilized for future development.

If selected by the Bureau of International Expositions (BIE), the main body which regulates world's fairs, Toronto would host the 2015 expo. As much as \$5 billion in infrastructure investments are planned for the event; funds are expected to be allocated for development of buildings, futuristic pavilions, bridges, roads, transit routes, amenities and housing. There are also plans to make this event the most environmentally friendly for the millions that are expected to visit. The city is forecasting a return of \$7 for every \$1 invested, and expecting to add an estimated \$13.5 billion to Canada's economy. The planners of the 2015 expo realize capital does not just generate itself, and that opportunities must be created and secured to see real results. The hurdles currently facing the city are public opposition, and a list of development projects that have been derailed due to expectations by the expo

organizers hopeful of winning the bid. Toronto has contested many years for world's fair and has not succeeded. Even if it wins the bid, it is important that the city plans for development beyond the expo. The growth of a city is dependent on its ability to attract resources, investments, and how it interacts with adjacent areas.

China has been experiencing this sort of growth and has been investing heavily for future development. Planning for the country's future will require investments in developing city clusters within a megaregion framework. As metropolitan giants such as Shanghai, Beijing and Hong Kong expand, smaller satellite cities will require planning to integrate with their regions. City clusters clearly offer the form of urbanization that is healthy for China's growth, particularly the YRD, where much of this growth is already occurring. The main concern for these areas should be to get the management aspect right, and to ensure this, pre and residual planning plays a significant role. The most influential factor in residual planning is the goals set by the host city. Other factors include use type, key players in the development and implementation, and finance. There are many processes, but for YRD, it is important to figure out whether the opportunities of the 2010 Expo are to primarily help the city of Shanghai, or a chance to really integrate the entire region. Traditionally post fair land uses have been directed for civic uses, like Montreal's '67 expo; however, with the rapid expansion of the YRD megaregion, it is vital to attract public and private investments, as well as foreign investments. Although Yangtze Delta region has enjoyed unprecedented growth the last decade from foreign investments, it is more important to link the investments with specific development plans for the entire region, including smaller cities struggling to merge with existing city clusters, that would prevent regional division and promote equity.

Yaro and Vallabhajosyula recommend that planning this development and investment strategy will be more successful if integrated within a megaregion framework. Regional Plan Association has been leading a national effort titled America 2050. The program focuses on the megaregion urban form as a framework to develop a long range national investment strategy. But first, it is important to understand the interactions occurring within the YRD region, and its leading cities – Shanghai, Jianhsu and Zhejiang – as well as identifying the emerging cities to allocate funds that will support their growth. Conducting simple surveys with officials, business leaders and academics can help identify these factors. The result of this process is clearly visible in the case of Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta.

Integration of city clusters throughout the PRD has created a source of economic power that is shared throughout the region. Similarly, YRD must identify key industries throughout the region, specifically any division of labor, to establish long term growth strategies to support their economies. For instance, the institutions and industries amongst the five main metros in the NE megaregion helps identify where development should occur, and where integration and expansion would reap the most benefits. The key to foster this growth and integration within regions is linking the infrastructure investments. Connecting city clusters throughout the YRD will help expand the potential for future interactions, establishes networks and relationships, thereby promoting regional equity of resources and jobs.

A lack of investment at the regional and megaregional scale promotes low density development in the outer rings and leaves centers without the resources to grow. Urban sprawl and low density development near the hinterlands in the Northeast megaregion presents great challenges for its prosperity. Currently the megaregion lacks a robust transit system that connects workforces in far suburbs and rural areas. Within the New York metro region, workforces from northern Connecticut, Pennsylvania and upstate New York all experience extremely long commutes on the region's highways due to a lack of connections

to major commuter rail systems. Simple analysis shows there is a great demand for rail improvements and connections to suburbs and further into rural areas. Shanghai and YRD is experiencing rapid urbanization and development with city clusters, and if it wants to sustain this strong economic growth and spread the benefits throughout its region, investing in infrastructure now, including affordable housing, education, and public health is most essential. Infrastructure investments will foster networks that are critical to providing access to domestic and international markets, supports private development and offers opportunities for citizens such as employment. This is even more important for poor and struggling communities to participate in the economic boom and improve overall quality of life. However, as stated earlier, the most important step is to organize planning efforts around the Yangtze Delta into a larger megaregion strategy.

Establishing a megaregion plan will require a systematic approach, and one that involves incremental steps in implementation. First, cities need to identify themselves as part of a megaregion, and examine how they are connected. Megaregions, according to RPA's definition, traditionally develop around metropolitan areas. The Yangtze Delta has the three mentioned earlier. These are vital engines for the whole "YRD megaregion". So to develop an investment strategy to share the opportunities of the 2010 Expo, it is important to understand how successful current regional planning efforts have been, responses from citizens, and how vested all levels of government have been. Developing a strategy must start at these understandings, as well as the aforementioned surveys of key regional industries, economic centers and interactions. Having an overarching framework that groups these understandings and surveys, especially a political framework, can help coordinate efforts among planning organizations in a region, as well as allocating investments to strengthen existing links.

Administrations cannot act in closed doors and must display openness and transparency. Regional division within the YRD limits the possibilities to promote collaborative governance amongst governments, organizations, the public and private interests. As mentioned earlier, regional surveys will allow cities to identify similar challenges and growth potential, and move away from the zero-sum game of economic competition. Instead, with joint planning efforts, the playing field for attracting investments can be leveled to ensure resources are directed to all cities within a region facing common problems. Next, investments from private and public sectors should be pooled and targeted towards regional programs that offer access to everyone within a megaregion and avoid projects that limit accessibility. Another strategy is to pool projects that promote regional equity, such as transportation and housing programs. For instance, infrastructure projects, such as water and sewer systems clearly have regional and megaregional impacts. These investments can not occur in silos, and need to be managed by a larger governing entity.

Economic growth and sustainability is only improved when investments are allocated in larger regions. The national highway system in America during the early part of the twentieth century is a clear example. As well as Franklin Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration in the '30s that built over 70,000 new bridges and viaducts, and repaired more than 45,000 existing bridges that brought the national infrastructure out of disrepair. A nation's infrastructure is the backbone of its economy, and Roosevelt's strategy allowed the economy to function and eventually expand. In the case for the 2010 Expo, regional governing bodies, planning organizations, civic coalitions and private enterprises need to come together and develop a long-range megaregion framework. With rapid economic growth and urbanization within the YRD, the two most important principles for expo, as well as a long-range plan for the YRD megaregion, should be sustainability and livability.