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**MEGAREGIONS ARE THE WAY TO PLAN THE FUTURE, BUT FACE  
CHALLENGES, NEW REPORT SAYS**

Transcending borders examined by Lincoln Institute, Regional Plan Association

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. --The planning concept of megaregions – areas with common economic and planning goals that spill over the boundaries of major metropolitan areas and of states as well, like the Boston-Washington corridor or the Pacific Northwest – face challenges in the areas of governance, transportation policy, and shifting economic geographies, according to a new report by the Regional Plan Association and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

The concept of megaregions, a term coined by Armando Carbonell, chair of the Department of Planning and Urban Form at the Lincoln Institute, and Robert Yaro, president of the Regional Plan Association, has become an important new construct in the national planning framework. The challenge is to plan based on larger regions and not state by state – similar to the way planning transcends country boundaries in the European Union, for example.

In a joint venture, the Lincoln Institute and the Regional Plan Association convened researchers and planners at a seminar in Healdsburg, Calif., in April, and produced "[The Healdsburg Research Seminar on Megaregions](#)", available at both the Lincoln Institute ([www.lincolninst.edu](http://www.lincolninst.edu)) and RPA ([www.rpa.org](http://www.rpa.org)). Four major case studies focus on growth management, infrastructure and environment problems in California, transportation planning and existing regional planning organizations in Texas, interregional trading patterns in the Midwest, and the polycentric model in place in Western Europe.

“When it comes to planning infrastructure and large-scale environmental systems, the megaregion concept makes a lot of sense,” said Carbonell. “Particularly in transportation, it’s harder for cities and individual states to go it alone.”

“From Texas to California to the Midwest, we are seeing larger labor markets and industry value chains that spread across multiple states. This trend is expanding our traditional understanding of metropolitan regions and demanding a larger framework for planning decisions,” said Yaro.

More information on megaregions is available at the Web site [America 2050](#). Megaregions also factor into new thinking on national transportation planning and funding mechanism, in another joint publication of the Lincoln Institute and the RPA, "[The National Roundtable on Surface Transportation](#).”

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