



Transportation and land use
across US and Mexican cities and
megaregions (#CM2-30 & 43)

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Project Information Form:
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TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE US & MEXICAN CITIES AND MEGAREGIONS

Megaregions inherently cross borders, often national ones. Of the eleven emerging US megaregions identified by the Regional Plan Association in its seminal work, three include Mexican cities (Figure 1). Moreover, cross-border commutes, tourism, and economic flows are important components of local and metropolitan economies and cultures in places like San Diego, Tijuana, El Paso, and Juarez. According to the 2015 Intercensus (INEGI 2015), around 5-10% of Mexican commuters from border cities and municipalities work in the United States (Figure 2). Even in many central parts of Mexico, a sizable fraction of the workforce commutes to the United States.

Studying the relationship between land use, socioeconomic, and commute behavior across multiple regions in multiple countries can help shed light on not just on the strength and relative importance of different relationships, but also their consistency and the role of regional and social context. Of particular interest will be questions about the relative importance of transportation supply, household income, and the built environment in determining the radically different commute patterns seen on each side of the border.

For example, Mexican cities are highly multimodal with substantial and continuous variation in modal importance. Even in the most car-reliant city, La Paz, 40% of commuters walk, bike, or take transit. In the US, by contrast, nearly everyone drives to work, with just a few individual cities that have less than 90% of commutes by car. Income almost certainly plays a role. Mexican commuters have average household incomes that are around 8 times lower than American commuters. So does the built environment. Average metropolitan population densities are an order of magnitude higher in Mexico than in the US.

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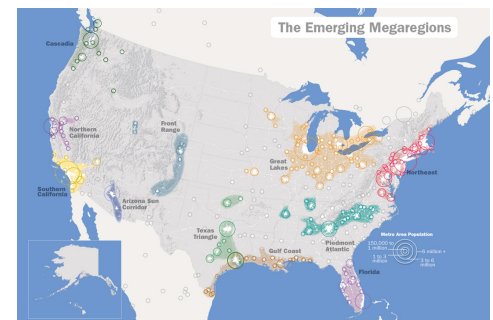


Figure 1. Regional Plan Associations map of emerging megaregions

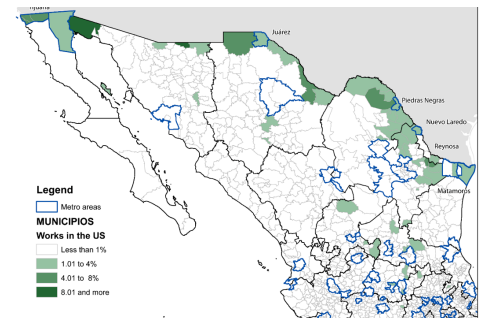


Figure 2. Percent of commutes to the United States by Municipality