

Overview of Strategic Action Plan

The goal of the strategic action plan is twofold – first, create a mega-regional collaborative process to address priority workforce and infrastructure challenges – this is a necessary step if the initiative is to live beyond the critical first year. And second, help with mega-regional buy-in. Though the long-term goal is to create a mega-regional brand and marketing strategy, success requires cooperation from many key public- and private-sector stakeholders who are not necessarily involved in the marketing process. The industry workforce and infrastructure assessments and strategic action planning process are designed to help bring in these stakeholders and gain their long-term commitment.

Long-Term Goals (20-25 Years)

The long-term goals found below are the combined categories from the two assessment sessions, creating three broad long-term goals for both workforce and infrastructure. These, in effect, provide a vision of what the mega-region will look like in a long-term time horizon of 25 years.

Workforce

1. Mega-region will have a series of bi-national standards for education levels with an emphasis on STEM education and include licensing and certification that would be equivalent throughout the region.
2. Mega-region will have a globally competitive workforce in terms of education, skills, and language for high-tech, high-wage industries.
3. Mega-region will be seen as a safe, desirable place to work with a high quality of life to sustain and attract a high-valued workforce.

Infrastructure

1. Mega-Region will be a global hub for sustainable energy.
2. Mega-region will have a seamless, efficient and secure integrated system for transporting goods and people throughout the mega-region.
3. Mega-region will satisfy energy needs and be a model for sustainable procurement and use of water.

Short-Term Action Plan (Five-Years)

The short-term, five-year action plan will be created from the strategic action planning session's action items. The action items are selected from the top items that received the most support, ensuring they fit into the larger long-term goals, and distilled into three

workforce and three infrastructure actionable projects designed to be realistically achievable in a short amount of time, achieve short-term successes, and satisfy the need to figure out how to do bi-county, bi-national, (mega-regional) planning and implementation on a small scale, before tackling the larger-scale, more ambitious items.

Participants will take each action item and answer the following questions:

- What steps are necessary for implementation?
 - How do we create a series of smaller targets designed to learn how to collaborate on a mega-region basis?
 - How can we achieve important short-term successes?
- What are the resources necessary for implementation?
- What is a reasonable time line?
- Who are the champions who can lead and the stakeholders that must be involved to achieve success?

Workforce

1. Align educational systems, accreditation and career guidance, emphasizing high-tech and cleantech, with input from industry
2. Reform immigration policies including short- and long-term work visas
3. Create a mega-region biotech center

Infrastructure

1. Create coordinated plan for sustainable energy and water development
2. Make border crossings more secure and efficient (including supporting Smart Border 2010)
3. Coordinate air, road, rail and maritime transportation planning to improve movement of goods

Are we missing anything that you believe is critical to the mega-region?

What action item(s) are you most interested in being a *champion* for?