

The Next American Economy

Transforming Energy and Infrastructure Investment

**EAST PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA
FEBRUARY 2 & 3, 2010**

Hosted by The Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program and Lazard

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

On February 2 and 3, 2010, the Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program and Lazard will be convening leaders from the public sector, energy, infrastructure, finance and venture capital communities for an in-depth conversation focused on innovative policy and business practices that will help build the next American economy.

The “Great Recession” has dramatically disrupted the lives and livelihoods of tens of millions of our fellow citizens, and the recovery is sure to be long and complicated. There will be no “return to normal,” since what preceded the downturn was anything but normal. At the same time, a confluence of events—an activist President, urgent energy and environmental imperatives, an infrastructure epiphany, brutal fiscal challenges at all levels of government, and structural demographic and social realities—has set the conditions for the kind of historic, national reset we witness only once or twice a century.

What would this reset look like? Top economic thinkers, such as National Economic Council Chairman Larry Summers, believes that the next American economy must be export-oriented, low carbon, innovation-fueled and opportunity rich. In fact, Brookings believes that the next economy should not only be oriented toward these outcomes, but also be metropolitan in nature.

It is with this mindset that Brookings and Lazard are putting together high-level, dynamic sessions that center around the private sector needs for building out the next American economy—and the policy implications for doing so. Specifically, we will focus on how the traditional industry leaders (e.g., utility companies), the new industry leaders (e.g., venture capital investors), and public sector leaders can work together to move our country forward, especially within the metro areas where the resources and networks that drive innovation are rooted.

ABOUT THE BROOKINGS METRO PROGRAM

At its core, the Brookings Metro Program is based on a simple premise: The United States is a metropolitan nation. Metropolitan areas are home to 83 percent of the U.S. population, 85 percent of the nation’s jobs and 92 percent of all college graduates. They are our hubs of research and innovation, our centers of human capital, and our gateways of trade and immigration. They are, in short, the drivers of our economy, and American competitiveness depends on their vitality.

Building on a decade of work, the Brookings Metro Program has established a consistent and reputable track record for promoting practical and innovative policy solutions in the areas of cluster-led economic development, national infrastructure finance, transportation reform, sustainable growth and development, and advanced energy research.

Additionally, the Brookings Metro Program is serving as a regular resource to key players within the Obama Administration and Congress on a wide range of policy initiatives and reforms. These include: regional innovation clusters with the Economic Development Administration, Small Business Administration, and the National Economic Council; energy innovation hubs with the Department of Energy; transportation reform with the Department of Transportation (DOT); and the Sustainable Communities Initiative with DOT, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Environmental Protection Agency, just to name a few.

ABOUT LAZARD

Lazard, one of the world’s preeminent financial advisory and asset management firms, operates from 39 cities across 24 countries in North America, Europe, Asia, Australia, Central and South America. With origins dating back to 1848, the firm provides advice on mergers and acquisitions, strategic matters, restructuring and capital structure, capital raising and corporate finance, as well as asset management services to corporations, partnerships, institutions, governments, and individuals.