



Merced may become part of a mega-region

- *Would be one of 21 counties centered on Silicon Valley*
- *“It’s not just about creating a bedroom community here”*

A 21-county mega-region, centered on Silicon Valley, would incorporate many northern Central Valley counties and perhaps mean one of the biggest economic boosts to the Valley in its history.

“Today we are focusing on the economic potential of building greater interconnectedness, which would have major benefits to both regions,” says University of California, Merced Chancellor Dorothy Leland. “It’s not just about creating a bedroom community here. We will be attracting businesses and industries that will help lift Merced, the Valley and the state.”

The proposed Northern California “mega-region” would connect the Central Valley to the Bay Area and Silicon Valley, according to Bay Area Council President Jim Wunderman. In all, 21 counties would be grouped into four regions: Bay Area, Sacramento Area, Norther San Joaquin Valley and Monterey Bay Area.

The mega-region would possess one of the fastest-growing economies in the nation and allow for more interconnectivity and innovation, he says.

Mr. Wunderman says projects like high-speed rail would help create stronger and more profitable partnerships for the entire mega-region.

“When you look at the Central Valley and the Bay Area, you think of separate places that are far away,” Mr. Wunderman says. “Once that transportation connection is complete, the game is going to change.”

He cited Merced as a potential hub because of its proximity to where the proposed high speed rail line would connect from north and south to the Bay Area.