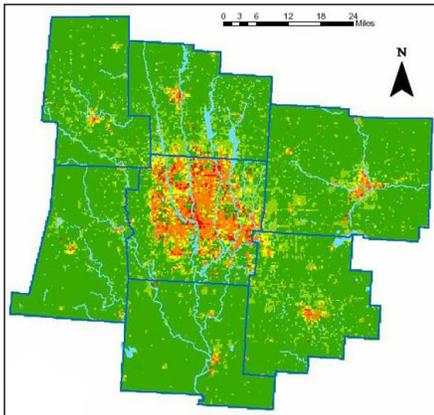


**Mission Statement for
Regional Connections:**

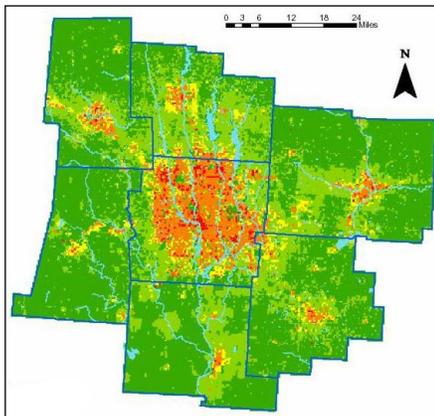
Create a **common understanding** of the significant change anticipated for the central Ohio region over the next 20 to 30 years. With this understanding, **shape an approach** to growth and development for the seven county regional community that enhances the quality of life.



Land use – Today



Land use – Continuing the trend



Source: ACP-Visioning & Planning, Ltd.

Executive Summary

Regional Connections offers a bold vision for the future of the central Ohio region with a clear framework for implementation to steadily turn the vision into reality.

There are 203 political jurisdictions the central Ohio region—the seven county region of Franklin, Delaware, Licking, Fairfield, Pickaway, Madison and Union counties. Additionally, the region contains hundreds of special purpose governments including school districts, library districts, park districts, and many others that are impacted by the growth of the region. This regional perspective on the future is sorely needed. Dramatic changes will occur in the central Ohio region in the next 25 years. **Nearly 500,000 new people are expected to move into the region, raising the total number of residents to almost 2.2 million by 2030.** These figures imply significant change for all communities of the region in the coming years.

While growth presents substantial benefits, fueling a strong local economy and important economic and job opportunities, it carries negative consequences: increasing traffic congestion, longer travel times, sprawling development patterns, and the loss of open space and any sense of uniqueness in the built environment. Growth has also brought fiscal stress to local municipalities.

Regional Connections examined growth comprehensively. Regional trends were identified, analyzed, extrapolated and, especially, considered in terms of impact on citizens of central Ohio. A Land Use model was used to create the scenarios that reflect the existing land use and plans for all communities in the region. The scenarios depict a range of potential futures—from “continuing the trend” to aggressive inward growth.

A specific analysis was also undertaken to provide an overview of the fiscal implications of development policy and land use decisions in central Ohio. The analysis illustrated how fiscal impact analysis can be a powerful tool for examining costs and benefits of various land uses, for prioritizing projects and infrastructure investment, and for assessing development alternatives. It also illustrates that not all development pays for itself.

This technical data was used as the basis for an intensive, inclusive, and “hands-on” public involvement process—one involving 203 jurisdictions. When the technical data and intuitive ideas were combined, common threads emerged and accumulated into a solid foundation of shared goals for the future.

The Vision

Four statements—Place, Prosperity, People, and Leadership—were developed to address critical aspects of a comprehensive vision for central



Citizen input formed the core of the regional growth policy.

PRIORITY STRATEGIES

Sixteen strategies were identified for priority implementation:

Vision for Place

- Create a Model Comprehensive Plan Program for Central Ohio Communities
- Conduct Regional Cost of Development Analysis.
- Create Fiscal Impact/Cost of Community Service Tool.
- Update Land Use Model.
- Continue to Update Regional DataPort.
- Continue to refine Conceptual Development Framework/Matrix.

Vision for Leadership

- Establish a Regional Leadership Institute.
- Create a best practice set of procedures to guide the formation and implementation of multi-jurisdictional agreements.
- Build on and leverage existing efforts of multi-jurisdictional cooperation.
- Establish a Regional Development Sub-Committee.
- Cooperate with the Regional Policy Roundtable.
- Facilitate sub-regional working groups to address local issues.
- Advocate to State and Federal representatives and partner agencies.
- Advocate to local governments and quasi-governmental entities.
- Conduct ongoing analysis of regional issues.
- Provide un-biased guidance, support, resources and technical support to local governments to increase the chance of success.

Ohio. Together these visions, stated below, point to a region that wants to use land resources more efficiently in an expanded climate of regional cooperation.

- **Place** – A physical environment that accommodates future growth efficiently and is distinguished by high quality neighborhoods and communities and careful stewardship of natural resources and agriculture land. Integrated-uses and more intensive utilization of land in neighborhoods and communities are evident throughout the region. Development occurs concurrent with the extension of appropriately-sized utilities and roads and development policies are based on an understanding of the economic impacts to affected local governments. Places are connected by a range of transportation choices, including roads, public and private transit, and paths for walking and biking.
- **Prosperity** – A diverse, healthy economy that provides job opportunities for residents and revenues to government to support the provision of quality community services and facilities, including infrastructure. Approaches to economic and community development that respect the natural environment and strike a balance of regional and local needs through cooperation and sharing of costs and benefits.
- **People** – A diverse and civically engaged population that enjoys a healthy environment and has access to affordable housing, a range of employment choices, recreational and cultural amenities, spiritual institutions, and life-long learning opportunities. Residents of the region have accessibility to civic life and more housing choices near jobs.
- **Leadership** – Leadership and governance that is defined by shared understanding and aligned decision-making among all levels of government. Plans, policies and decisions related to growth, development and major infrastructure investments are made with a regional perspective, desire for improved efficiency of service delivery, and sense of mutual responsibility for providing services and protecting environmental resources. Residents and stakeholders are involved and well-informed about regional issues.

A Conceptual Development Framework was developed to provide a graphic depiction of the Vision for Place. The Framework Map describes a preferred future growth scenario for 2030 and identifies six generalized land use typologies: Protected Open Space; Unprotected Open Space, Limited Growth; Encouraged Growth; Intended Growth; and Infill and Redevelopment. A matrix was also prepared to communicate the types of development—with respect to use and form—preferred in each typology.

To help demonstrate the intent of the Conceptual Development Framework, three sites were identified and illustrative development concepts

were prepared. These Target Area Plans were an essential aspect of the continuing effort to communicate and educate regional stakeholders about development policy choices.



Target Area Concept.

Source: ACP–Visioning & Planning, Ltd.

Implementation

Accomplishing the *Regional Connections* vision is a broad and ambitious undertaking that will require the extended effort, talent, and cooperation of many people throughout the region. These strategies will provide tangible benefits to the region and will strengthen central Ohio for generations to come.

Regional Connections was commissioned by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) and led by a 60-member Steering Committee of public and private leaders from the region. ACP–Visioning & Planning, Ltd. designed and facilitated the *Regional Connections* effort.