Preliminary Problem Statement

Based on the initial input from the various stakeholder groups a preliminary problem statement has been developed for Making Connections: Land Use, Transportation, and the Future of Western Montgomery County. The problem statement is described below along with a brief history of the study, a description of the study area, and purpose of the study.

The Problem

Transportation networks have long been recognized as regional in nature. Goods and people travel within, between, and through jurisdictions requiring a regional effort to plan appropriately for transportation needs. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the relationship between land use and transportation. Where and how development takes place impacts traffic patterns, congestion, and the ability to provide public transit or promote alternatives modes of transportation. Similarly, where and how transportation investments are directed impacts settlement patterns. Increasingly, government entities are seeking to coordinate land use and transportation to encourage rational infrastructure investments and public policies that support prosperous communities and good quality of life.

Currently, a coordinated land use and transportation plan does not exist for Western Montgomery County, Ohio. The absence of such a plan may be causing or exacerbating transportation and land use problems in the study area. For example, without a regional plan in place:

- The Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) is challenged in properly planning for and prioritizing future regional transportation projects that best meet the infrastructure needs in the planning area;
- Development may be occurring in locations unable to meet the increased demands on the transportation network;
- Transportation and utilities infrastructure may not be provided concurrent with development;
- There is limited guidance for the development community in identifying logical areas for locating new development;
- There is limited ability to achieve a rational transportation network in the study area that ties well into the regional system; and
- Funds are spent based upon local interests without an understanding of larger regional needs or goals.

Study History

The Western Montgomery County Transportation and Land Use Study was originally recommended as an outgrowth of the Austin Pike Area Transportation/MIS/Environmental Impact Study. The Major Investment Study (MIS) did not recommend the freeway alternative and MVRPC removed it from its Long-Range Transportation Plan. However, as part of that recommendation, the MIS stated a need for the "performance of a comprehensive needs analysis of the Western Montgomery County local roadway system as input into MVRPC’s Long-Range Transportation Plan update."

Realizing the need for a coordinated land use-transportation effort within the multi-jurisdictional study area, MVRPC added a land use element to the study requirement. Preliminary meetings held regarding the study showed the involved jurisdictions open to a cooperative effort to develop an overall consensus framework land use plan. Land use, transportation and utility infrastructure relationships, along with market factors, will be considered before reaching the consensus plan.
The Study Area – Western Montgomery County

For the purposes of this study, Western Montgomery County is bounded on the east by the Great Miami River, Gettysburg Road, Salem Ave./SR 49, Hoke Road, US 40 and the Clayton/Clay Township line. The remaining boundary is formed by the Darke County, Preble County and Butler County lines. The study area also includes two additional corridors: US 35 West through Preble County terminating at I-70 and State Route 49 northwest into Darke County ending at Greenville. These corridors have specific needs and have impacts on the study area. The study will focus on the major roadways in the study area, approximately comprised of roads classified as rural major collectors or higher classifications and refined based on stakeholder input.

The Study – Making Connections: Transportation, Land Use, and the Future of Western Montgomery County

The purpose of Making Connections will be to perform a comprehensive needs analysis of the Western Montgomery County Transportation network, resulting in preferred alternatives. There is a land use component of the study to ensure compatibility between transportation infrastructure improvements (including transit service, railroad safety, and alternative modes), utility services, and the desired land use patterns in Western Montgomery County. The outcome of this study will be to recommend and prioritize a set of preferred alternatives for further investigation/study and for inclusion in MVRPC’s long range transportation plan.