

THE US 62 CORRIDOR

The US 62 Corridor

The US 62 Corridor is an east-west corridor serving central Mercer County. US 62 is the primary transportation feature in the corridor and provides an important link between the Valley communities with the county seat of Mercer. The corridor is approximately 15 miles in length and includes the municipalities of: Hermitage, Lackawannock Township, Jefferson Township, East Lackawannock Township and Mercer Borough.

The MPO has functionally classified US 62 as a rural minor arterial. It provides connections to US 19, PA 18, PA 58, PA 158 and PA 258. Within the City of Hermitage, US 62 is classified as an “urban other principal arterial.”



CORRIDOR PROFILE ►



Hermitage
Jefferson
Lackawannock
East Lackawannock
Mercer

Before 1926, the portion of US 62 between the Ohio state line and Mercer Borough was commissioned as PA 55. The US 62 Corridor is part of a longer corridor extending from the Ohio state line through Mercer to Oil City and Warren.

The corridor is tangential to BicyclePA Route A, which runs north-south through Mercer Borough. PennDOT signed the 180-mile bicycle route in 2001. It is designated as one of several corridors statewide in serving intra-state bicyclist travel.



Key Findings & Corridor Highlights

- The US 62 roadway is a commuter corridor with many driveways and other local ingress and egress points. This abundance of access leads to potentially dangerous conditions and increases in traffic volume.
- Turning movements at the intersection of US 62 with US 19 in Mercer Borough is a concern because of inefficient roadway operation.
- The county's comprehensive plan targets the Village of Charleston in the center of the corridor as a growth target area. The village is being considered for extended residential growth with village-scale business possibilities. Most of the other corridor segments are designated as Rural Residential in the county plan's future land use map.
- Corridor workers are dependent on the private automobile, with many commuting alone (in Jefferson Township, the rate is nearly 90 percent) and growing travel times (in Jefferson, the rate of people traveling longer than an hour to work has more than tripled since 1990).
- Nearly half of all resident corridor workers are employed in either Sharon or Hermitage.
- Total corridor population is growing, led by gains in Jefferson and East Lackawannock Townships.
- The corridor is more racially homogenous than the county as a whole.
- Unemployment rates in the corridor are lower than countywide rates.
- There are 7 TIP projects programmed for the corridor; all are in the City of Hermitage.

Recommendations for the US 62 Corridor:

This section outlines some suggested draft actions, based on the results of public involvement, data collection efforts from county and multi-municipal comprehensive plans, and the Census data.

- **Pursue designation for inclusion in the Congested Corridor Improvement Program.** As a commercial corridor, the US 62 roadway should be considered for placement as part of PennDOT's Congested Corridor Improvement Program (CCIP). As a growing commuter corridor, the US 62 roadway should be studied to identify and recommend spot safety improvements such as passing lanes and turning lanes.
- **Identify other potential improvements to improve flow and increase the operating efficiency and safety of the corridor.** Ingress and egress points should be further evaluated to produce roadway enhancements to mitigate future accident locations.



Traffic Volumes

Table 1 shows the average daily traffic (ADT) for segments along the US 62 Corridor in 2003. The heaviest volumes are in the western part of the corridor in Hermitage. Average daily traffic drops below 10,000 east of the Hermitage/Jefferson Township line and averages 8-9,000 through Jefferson and East Lackawannock Townships.

**Table 1: Average Daily Traffic (2003)
THE US 62 CORRIDOR**

LOCATION	2003
PA 18 to Keel Ridge Road	14,804
Keel Ridge Road to Neshannock Road	10,353
Neshannock to Horvath Farm Road	9,898
Horvath Farm Road to Valley Road	9,898
Valley Road to Bestwick Road	8,025
Bestwick Road to PA 258	7,630
PA 258 to PA 158	8,896
PA 158 to US 19	9,136

Mode Split

Workers within the US 62 Corridor are more dependent on the private automobile as a means of getting to work than elsewhere throughout the county. Nearly 94 percent of workers use a private automobile, and 86 percent of this total drive alone. In rural Jefferson Township, the rate is 90 percent. Table 2 and the bullet points below describe corridor mode split in more detail:

**Table 2: Mode Split (in percent) – 2000
THE US 62 CORRIDOR**

LOCATION	SOV	CARPOOL	TRANSIT	WALK	BICYCLE	OTHER MEANS	WORK AT HOME
HERMITAGE	88.1	7.6	0.2	1.3	0.1	0.2	2.5
JEFFERSON	89.7	5.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	4.4
LACKAWANNOCK	81.4	8.8	0.2	2.9	0.0	1.3	5.2
EAST LACK.	82.1	8.7	0.0	1.7	0.0	0.7	6.9
MERCER	75.3	9.4	0.7	8.7	0.0	0.3	5.8
CORRIDOR	85.9	7.7	0.2	2.1	0.0	0.4	3.6
MERCER COUNTY	83.2	9.2	0.3	3.2	0.1	0.7	3.2

- Workers in Mercer Borough had the lowest dependence on the private automobile, with only 75 percent driving alone to work. The rate of corridor workers carpooling to work is also highest in Mercer Borough.
- Nearly 9 percent of workers in Mercer Borough commute to work on foot – the highest rate in the corridor.



Travel Time to Work

Table 3 and Table 4 show how overall travel times to work have changed in the corridor over the past decade. Travel time to work for resident corridor workers is generally consistent with those countywide. Table 3 and 4 and the accompanying bullet points below provide more detail:

**Table 3: Travel Time to Work (in minutes by percent) – 2000
THE US 62 CORRIDOR**

LOCATION	< 15	15-29	30-59	60-89	90+
HERMITAGE	50.7	30.4	12.6	2.2	1.7
JEFFERSON	21.8	55.2	14.1	2.7	1.8
LACKAWANNOCK	23.3	49.9	19.4	1.5	0.7
EAST LACK.	31.4	41.1	16.2	2.5	1.9
MERCER	45.0	32.3	12.3	3.4	1.2
CORRIDOR	43.3	35.6	13.6	2.3	1.6
MERCER COUNTY	43.6	32.4	16.7	2.5	1.6

**Table 4: Travel Time To Work (in minutes by percent) – 1990
THE US 62 CORRIDOR**

LOCATION	< 15	15-29	30-59	60-89	90+
HERMITAGE	53.7	29.3	11.7	2.0	0.8
JEFFERSON	16.8	55.4	17.5	1.4	0.0
LACKAWANNOCK	21.8	49.7	16.0	5.4	0.6
EAST LACK.	34.3	34.8	19.5	3.4	0.3
MERCER	48.5	26.2	19.5	1.1	0.0
CORRIDOR	45.3	34.1	14.1	2.3	0.6
MERCER COUNTY	46.9	32.1	15.2	2.0	0.6

- During the 1990s, every corridor municipality saw the percentage its workers who commute 90 minutes or greater increase. Corridor-wide, the rate more than doubled.
- Workers in the City of Hermitage typically have the corridor's shortest travel time to work, with over half requiring less than 15 minutes.

Commutation Patterns

Approximately 80 percent of corridor residents work in one of the top ten employment destinations as shown in Table 5.

- Two of the top destinations in 2000 were out of state in Trumbull and Mahoning Counties, Ohio.
- Approximately 50 percent of corridor workers have jobs within Hermitage or Sharon.
- Hermitage and Mercer employ the greatest percentage of resident workers, at 35.8 and 33.1 percent, respectively.



**Table 5: Top Commuter Destinations – 2000
THE US 62 CORRIDOR**

MUNICIPALITY	PERCENTAGE SHARE - 2000
1. HERMITAGE CITY	32.6
2. SHARON CITY	17.3
3. TRUMBULL COUNTY, OH	8.3
4. MERCER BOROUGH	7.2
5. FARRELL CITY	4.0
6. GROVE CITY BOROUGH	3.7
7. MAHONING COUNTY, OH	3.5
8. WHEATLAND BOROUGH	2.7
9. SHARPSVILLE BOROUGH	2.4
10. SHENANGO TOWNSHIP	2.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

Population Trends

After experiencing population loss in the 1980s, corridor population growth rebounded during the 1990s. The corridor had moderate population growth during the 1990s, led by Jefferson and East Lackawannock Townships, which both recorded increases in excess of 5 percent. The City of Hermitage also posted moderate population gains during the last decade. Population growth trends in the corridor have run counter to the population losses being experienced countywide.

- Hermitage City's total population increased by 5.6 percent during the decade from 1990 to 2000.
- Among corridor municipalities, Jefferson Township observed the greatest population increase during the 1990s, at 17.3 percent.
- Lackawannock saw its population decrease by 4.5 percent during the past decade.
- Overall the corridor saw its population increase by 1,201 people during the 1990s.

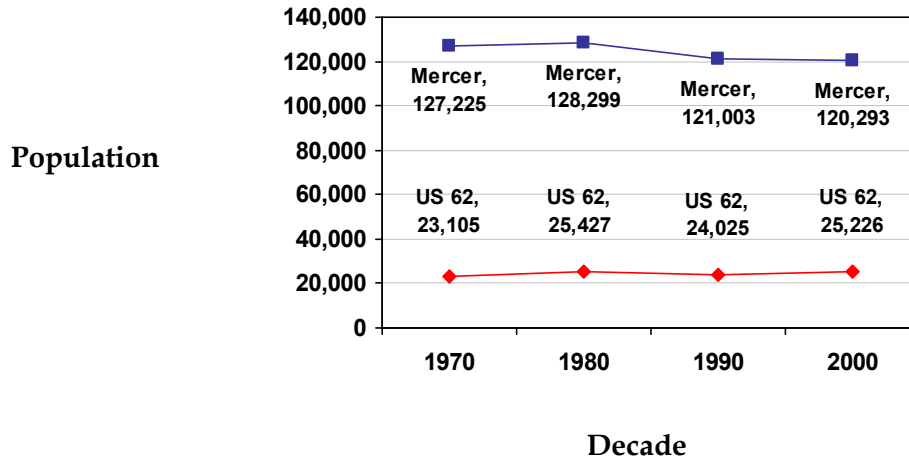
Table 6 shows the total population figures for the five corridor municipalities. Diagram 1 shows the corridor's populations trend line from 1970 to 2000.

**Table 6: Population Trends
THE US 62 CORRIDOR**

LOCATION	1970	1980	1990	2000	% CHANGE 90-00
HERMITAGE	15,421	16,365	15,300	16,157	5.6
JEFFERSON	1,623	2,007	1,998	2,416	17.3
LACKAWANNOCK	1,974	2,814	2,677	2,561	(4.5)
EAST LACK.	1,314	1,709	1,606	1,701	5.9
MERCER	2,773	2,532	2,444	2,391	(2.2)
CORRIDOR	23,105	25,427	24,025	25,226	5.0
MERCER COUNTY	127,225	128,299	121,003	120,293	(0.6)



**Figure 1
Mercer County and US 62 Population Trends
1970 - 2000**



Age Group Distribution

Contributing to the corridor’s moderate population growth has been a significant increase in both working age and elderly populations.

Table 7 and the bullet points below provide more detail on the age group distribution within the corridor and its municipalities.

**Table 7: Percent Change by Age Group – 1990 - 2000
THE US 62 CORRIDOR**

LOCATION	Total	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+
HERMITAGE	5.6	36.2	(14.2)	(8.5)	60.9	44.8
JEFFERSON	20.9	22.8	29.0	19.0	58.1	26.3
LACKAWANNOCK	(4.3)	12.3	25.3	(0.6)	45.7	85.7
EAST LACK.	5.9	31.7	10.6	(7.8)	43.5	89.7
CORRIDOR	5.8	31.3	(5.7)	(6.0)	58.8	48.9
MERCER COUNTY	(0.6)	32.2	(9.4)	(10.0)	24.2	28.1

- During the 1990s, the corridor experienced an increase in those aged 75-84 and 85 and over – 58.8 percent and 48.9 percent, respectively.
- Jefferson Township was the only corridor municipality that experienced population growth in all age groups over age 45.
- The corridor’s change in total population age 65-plus (20.4 percent) slightly exceeded that observed countywide (18.1 percent).
- Lackawannock was the corridor’s “youngest” municipality in 2000 with over 37 percent of its population under 25 years of age.
- Hermitage was the oldest corridor municipality in 2000 with only 27.2 percent under age 25. Hermitage also had the largest percentage of residents over 65 years of age in 2000.



Hermitage, however, saw its percentage of residents 14 years of age or younger increase from 17.2 percent in 1990 to 17.7 percent in 2000.

Racial Composition

The population of Mercer County as a whole is predominantly Caucasian (93.1 percent), and the US 62 Corridor roughly mirrors countywide averages. According to the 2000 Census, the corridor's most racially homogeneous municipality was Lackawannock Township, which is over 98 percent White. Hermitage has the corridor's highest percentages of minority populations.

Table 8 provides information on racial composition within the corridor against countywide averages.

Table 8: Racial Composition – 2000 (in percent)
THE US 62 CORRIDOR

LOCATION	TOTAL	WHITE	BLACK	INDIAN	ASIAN	OTHER
HERMITAGE	16,130	93.8	3.0	0.2	1.7	1.3
JEFFERSON	2,416	97.4	0.9	0.0	0.5	1.3
LACKAWANNOCK	2,561	98.3	1.2	0.0	0.1	0.4
EAST LACK.	1,701	98.1	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.4
MERCER	2,391	95.8	1.9	0.2	0.4	1.7
CORRIDOR	25,199	95.1	2.4	0.1	1.2	1.2
MERCER COUNTY	120,293	93.1	5.0	0.1	0.6	1.2

Per Capita Income

In general, the municipalities that comprise the US 62 Corridor exceed countywide averages for per capita income. The percentage of households that exceeded the countywide average for income over \$50,000 was greater within the corridor, and only Mercer Borough exceeded the countywide average for percentage of households that earned less than \$25,000. Hermitage is the corridor's wealthiest municipality, with 17.5 percent of households earning more than \$75,000 a year.

- Hermitage, the corridor's population center, also led the corridor in percentage of households that earned more than \$100,000 in 2000: 8.74 percent. This figure also greatly exceeded what was observed countywide and is consistent with their standing as one of the county's wealthiest municipalities.
- Mercer Borough led the corridor with the percentage of households earning less than \$25,000: 38.42 percent. This also exceeded the countywide average of 34.88 percent.

Table 9 below provides more information concerning per capita income in the US 62 Corridor.



Table 9: Per Capita Income (2000)
THE US 62 CORRIDOR

LOCATION	Households	< \$25,000	\$25-49,999	\$50-74,999	\$75-99,999	\$100,000+
HERMITAGE	6,797	28.9	34.6	18.9	8.8	8.7
JEFFERSON	966	28.9	41.4	18.5	8.6	2.5
LACKAWANNOCK	911	33.9	34.4	17.7	7.2	6.7
EAST LACK.	588	28.9	30.4	24.3	9.5	5.8
MERCER	1,028	38.4	27.7	20.4	7.9	5.5
CORRIDOR	10,290	30.3	34.3	19.3	8.6	7.5
MERCER COUNTY	46,755	34.4	34.8	18.5	6.9	5.5

Economic

The next three tables demonstrate the composition of the corridor across a variety of economic indicators, including labor force characteristics, employment by occupation, and employment by industry by place of residence.

- Overall the municipalities that comprise the corridor show a slightly higher percentage of management and professional and sales jobs than the county as a whole and a slightly lower percentage of service, construction and transportation-related jobs.
- Unemployment within the corridor is lower than was observed countywide by the 2000 Census.
- Overall labor force participation in corridor municipalities is slightly higher than the county as a whole.

Table 10: Civilian Labor Force Characteristics – (2000)
THE US 62 CORRIDOR

LOCATION	Total	Not In Labor Force		Labor Force		Civilian Labor Force				In Armed Forces	
		#	%	#	%	Employed		Unemployed		#	%
						#	%	#	%		
HERMITAGE	13,058	5,564	42.6	7,494	57.4	7,183	95.8	397	4.2	9	0.0
JEFFERSON	1,875	768	40.1	1,107	59.0	1,083	97.8	24	2.2	0	0.0
LACKAWANNOCK	1,897	705	37.2	1,192	62.8	1,178	98.8	67	1.2	0	0.0
EAST LACK.	1,302	527	40.5	775	59.5	747	96.3	26	3.6	2	0.2
MERCER	1,929	698	36.2	1,231	63.8	1,185	96.2	46	3.8	0	0.0
CORRIDOR	20,061	8,262	41.2	11,799	58.8	11,376	96.4	560	3.6	11	0.1
MERCER COUNTY	95,564	40,113	41.9	55,551	58.1	52,142	93.8	3,353	6.2	56	0.1

Employment by Occupation

- The US 62 Corridor exceeds county averages in the percentage of workers employed in management and professional occupations. Among corridor municipalities, Hermitage has the highest percentage (37 percent) of workers.



- Lackawannock leads the corridor in the number and percentage of those employed in Farming, Fishing and Forestry occupations, with 45 percent of the corridor's and 8 percent of the county's jobs for this sector.

**Table 11: Employment by Occupation - (2000)
THE US 62 CORRIDOR**

LOCATION	Total	Mgmt./ Professional. & Related		Service		Sales/Office		Farming, Fishing & Forestry		Construction, Extraction & Maintenance		Production/ Transp. & Material Moving	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
HERMITAGE	7,088	2,617	36.9	978	13.8	2,046	28.9	12	0.2	447	6.3	988	13.9
JEFFERSON	1,083	208	19.2	157	14.5	293	27.1	9	0.1	137	12.7	279	25.8
LACKAWANNOCK	1,125	293	26.0	129	11.5	268	23.8	28	2.5	154	13.7	253	22.5
EAST LACK.	747	230	30.8	118	15.8	158	21.2	9	1.2	92	12.3	140	18.7
MERCER	1,185	404	34.1	214	18.1	316	26.7	4	0.3	71	6.0	176	14.9
CORRIDOR	11,228	3,752	33.4	1,596	14.2	3,081	27.4	62	0.6	901	8.0	1,836	16.4
MERCER COUNTY	52,142	14,392	27.6	9,001	17.3	13,203	25.3	319	0.6	4,281	8.2	10,946	21.0

Percent Employment by Industry

- Corridor employment rates by industry are generally consistent with county averages. Some anomalies among corridor municipalities include:
 - Agricultural employment in both Lackawannock and East Lackawannock are more than double county rate of 1.6 percent.
 - The percentage of agricultural-related jobs is lower in the corridor than the countywide average due to the low percentage of agricultural-related jobs in Hermitage, the corridor's overwhelming economic center.
 - The Educational sector is a strong job category for corridor municipalities, especially Hermitage and Lackawannock.
 - Mercer Borough has an unusually high percentage of those employed in the Arts and Entertainment sector, at nearly 17 percent.



**Table 12: Employment by Industry by Place of Residence - (2000)
THE US 62 CORRIDOR**

LOCATION	Agricultural	Construction	Manufacturing	Wholesale Trade	Retail Trade	Transportation	Information	FIRE	Professional, Scientific, Mgmt	Educational	Arts & Entertainment	Other	Public Administration
HERMITAGE	0.5	3.5	18.0	3.2	14.5	3.5	2.8	6.8	5.6	26.1	6.4	4.9	4.2
JEFFERSON	2.4	8.2	21.2	2.6	14.4	11.3	1.0	4.2	2.7	17.5	5.2	4.2	5.3
LACKAWANNOCK	3.2	6.9	23.0	7.0	11.2	5.2	1.8	2.8	4.7	23.3	3.4	5.2	2.3
EAST LACK.	3.6	7.5	18.1	4.3	10.7	6.2	1.6	3.2	4.4	22.1	8.8	5.2	4.2
MERCER	0.3	3.5	14.2	4.3	15.1	5.0	1.4	2.2	6.4	20.7	16.7	5.2	5.0
CORRIDOR	1.1	4.6	18.4	3.7	14.0	4.7	2.3	5.4	5.2	24.2	7.2	4.9	4.2
MERCER COUNTY	1.6	5.1	20.1	3.8	13.4	5.0	1.6	4.2	4.7	23.7	7.7	5.0	4.2

2005 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Of the five corridor municipalities, only Hermitage has projects programmed as part of the 2005 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). (Improvements to US 62 in Sharon are identified in the Corridor 5 - US 62 analysis that focuses on the Sharon to Heritage segment of US 62.) The MPO has programmed over a half dozen projects totaling nearly \$13 million.

Table 12 below provides more information on the composition of the region's TIP as it relates to the US 62 Corridor.

**Table 13: 2005 -- 2008 TIP Projects
THE US 62 CORRIDOR**

Municipality	Project/Description	Year				Total
		05	06	07	08	
HERMITAGE	Highland (SR 3014) Ph 1	900	1,000	2,000	0	3,900
HERMITAGE	Highland (SR 3014) Ph 2	0	200	500	500	1,200
HERMITAGE	Hogback Rd bridge repl	350	0	0	0	350
HERMITAGE	Trout Island Trail	180	0	0	0	180
HERMITAGE	SV Bike/ped Sys. Ph 1	210	0	0	0	210
HERMITAGE	Pine Hollow Run	4,250	2,500	0	0	6,750
HERMITAGE	Kelly Rd Brs T-388 (Dual)	25	0	0	0	25

Source: PENNDOT District 1-0