

# CHAPTER 2

## Corridor Context



During Phase A, Identifying Opportunities, of the *US 15 Smart Transportation Corridor Improvement Plan*, existing functional and physical conditions in the corridor were examined. Previous planning studies were reviewed, data was compiled from various sources, and field investigations conducted in order to document the conditions of the corridor. These conditions are documented in the form of maps, photos, and written descriptions on the following pages.

### Existing Land Use

The Existing Land Use map (Figure 2.1) illustrates how land is currently used in the study area. The predominant land uses along US 15 are residential, commercial, and public. Open space / recreation and agricultural uses occur intermittently. The highest amount of commercial use is primarily in Lewisburg Borough; however, there are scattered commercial parcels at the southern tip of the study area.

The types of commercial businesses that line US 15 include auto repair shops, auto dealers, motels, and fast food restaurants, all of which are very auto-oriented. This is different from the types of commercial businesses that make up the Central Business District of

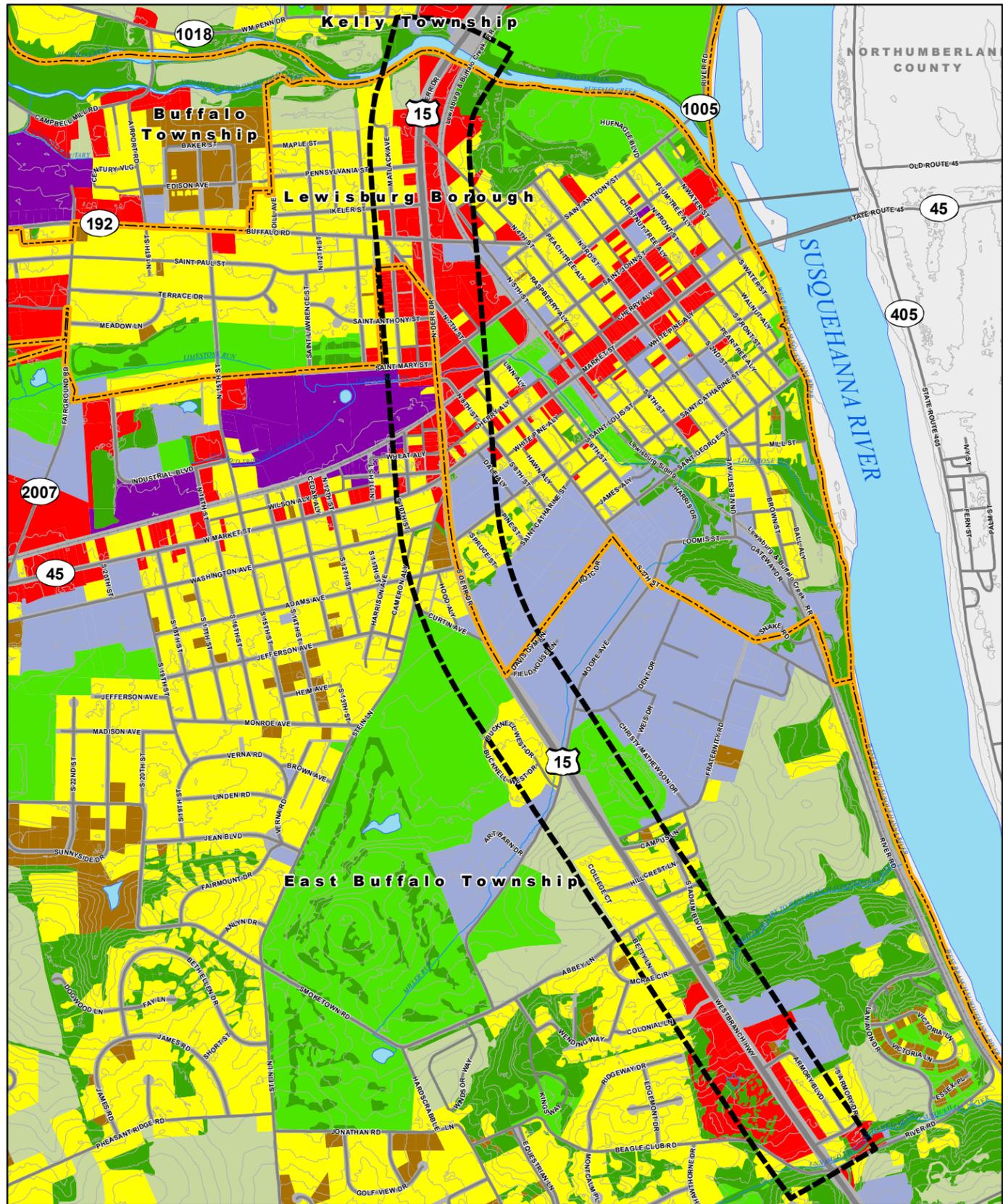
Lewisburg, a quarter of a mile from US 15. In downtown Lewisburg, the commercial corridor is made up of independent local retailers and service providers.

A cluster of industrial/manufacturing parcels is located on the west side of US 15, between Market Street and Saint Mary Street. This is the location of the former Pennsylvania House Furniture parcel, which was closed in 2004 and demolished in 2009.

Bucknell University's campus straddles US 15, and is primarily institutional and open space land use.

There are three primary clusters of residential land use. Two are located in East Buffalo Township, one south of Bucknell University, and the other southwest of the intersection of Market Street and US 15. The other cluster of residential land use is in Lewisburg Borough, on both sides of US 15. The residential areas are primarily single family dwellings in a suburban style urban design pattern.

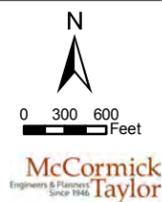
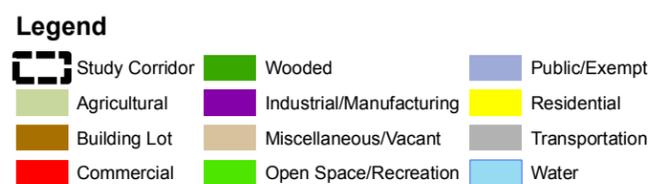




**US 15 Corridor Study**  
**EXISTING LAND USE 2010**

Figure 2.1: Existing Land Use 2010

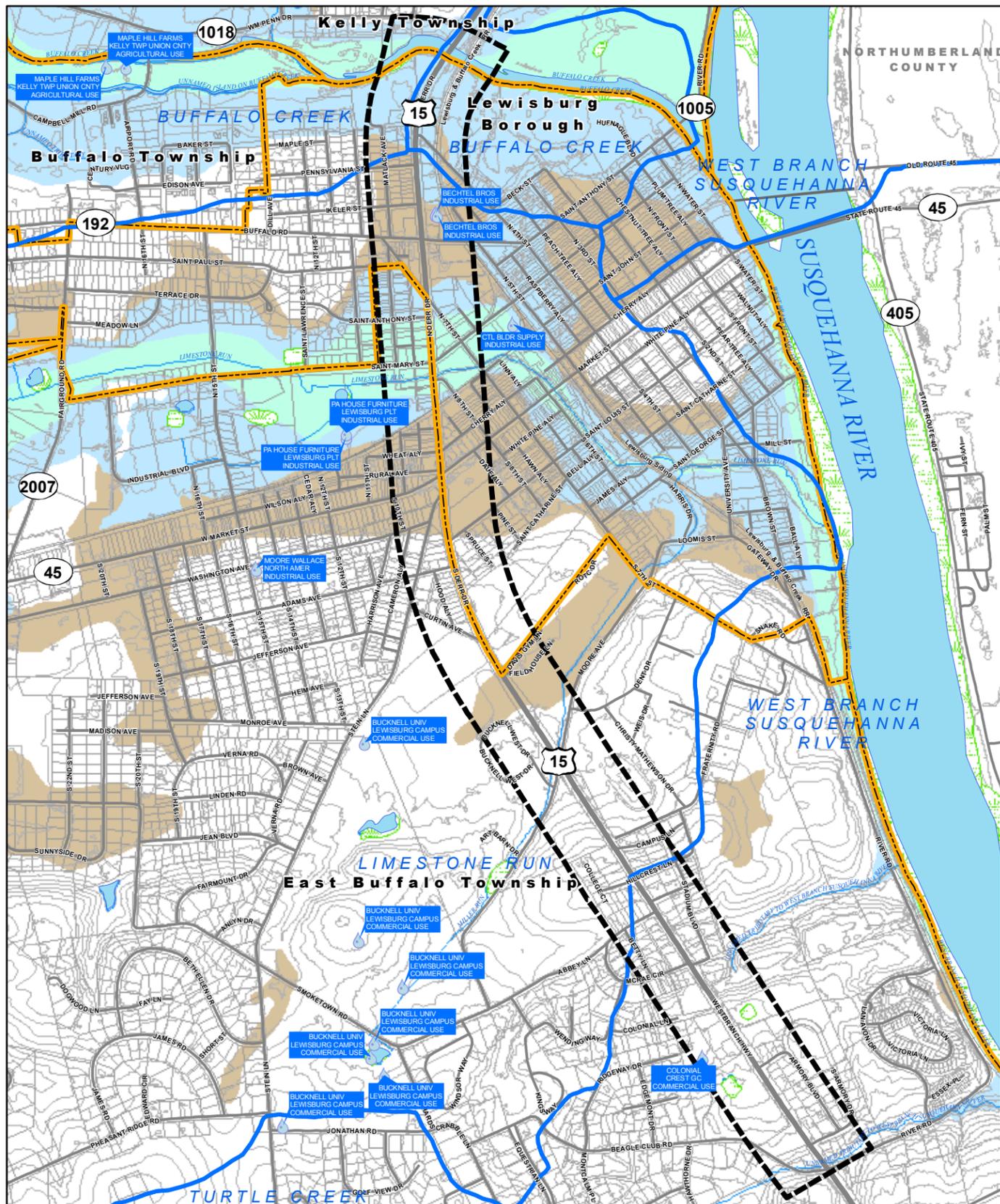
Source: Union County, McCormick Taylor.



The following land use categories have been used to map the use of parcels within the corridor:

- Agricultural
- Building Lot
- Commercial
- Wooded
- Industrial / Manufacturing
- Miscellaneous / Vacant
- Open Space / Recreation
- Public / Exempt
- Residential
- Transportation
- Water





**US 15 Corridor Study**  
**HYDROLOGIC FEATURES**

- Legend**
- Study Corridor
  - Floodway
  - FEMA 100yr Floodplain
  - Water Resource
  - Hydric Soils
  - Watersheds
  - Wetlands

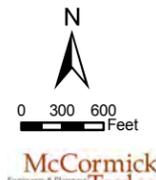


Figure 2.2: Hydrologic Features

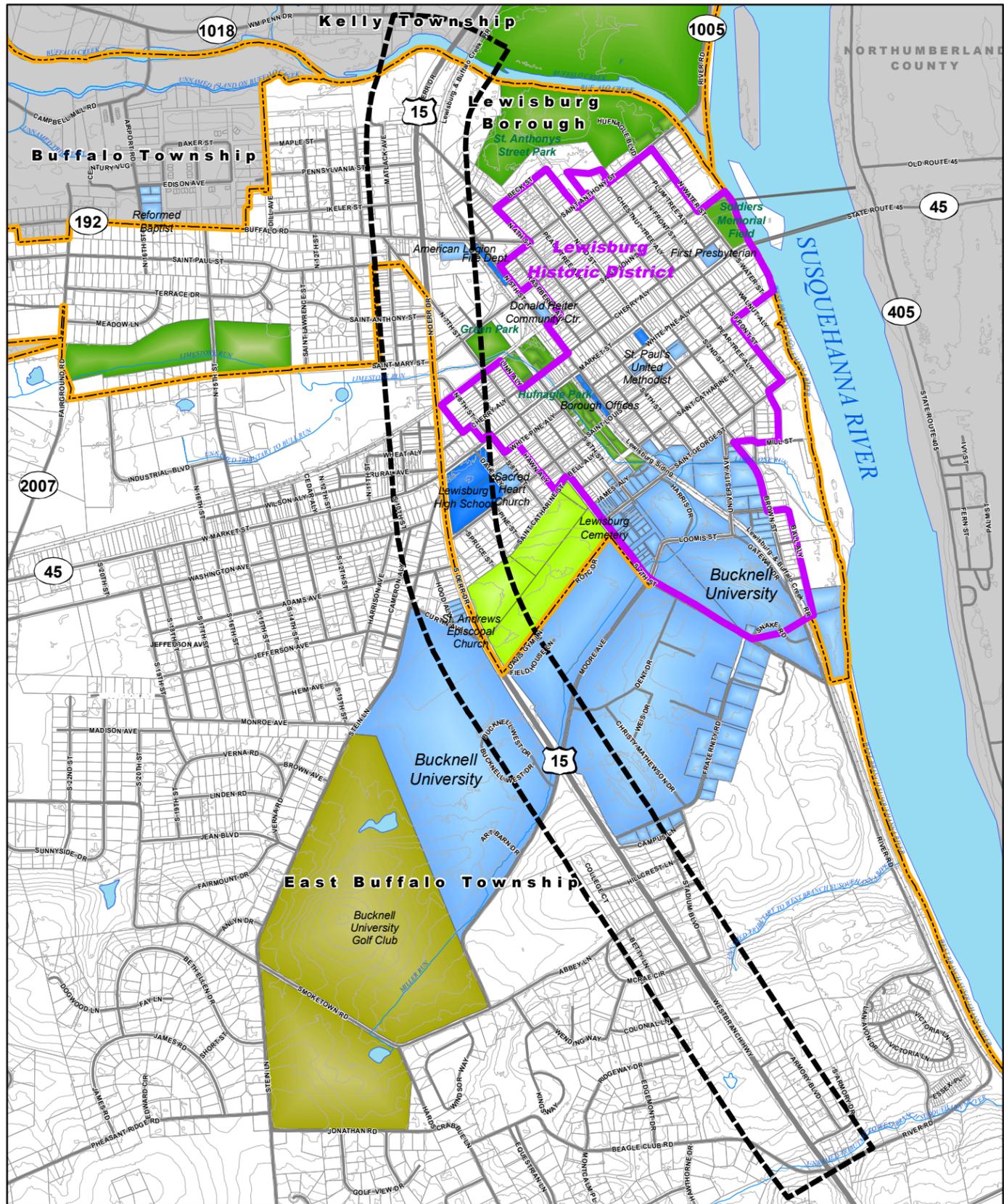
Source: Union County, PASDA, McCormick Taylor.

**Waterways & Floodplains**

The Hydrologic Features map (Figure 2.2) illustrates waterways and their associated floodplains in the corridor area. The presence of these natural features may enhance the ecological value of the area, but may also restrict development opportunities.

Buffalo Creek is at the northernmost section of the study area, running west to east. It creates a very broad floodway that impacts the properties in the northern part of the study area. Near Saint Mary Street is Limestone Run, which flows west to east until it crosses US 15 and travels southeast towards the Susquehanna River. Both Buffalo Creek and Limestone Run are tributaries of the Susquehanna River, and are associated with hydric soils in the entire northern half of the study area. The majority of the study area is in the Limestone Run watershed, except the northern tip, which is in the Buffalo Creek watershed.





### Historic & Community Features

Historic features and community facilities are important cultural elements for the communities along the US 15 corridor. The Lewisburg Historic District as well as community facilities such as schools and churches are identified in Figure 2.3.

Lewisburg Historic District, created in 1985, consists of 871 contributing historic buildings, structures, and sites. Market Street is the main commercial corridor with a mix of local independent retail and service providers fronting the sidewalk, and the surrounding streets include the residential neighborhoods of Lewisburg. Lewisburg Borough also has a series of small park areas on the east side of US 15. However, Lewisburg Area Recreation Park, the Borough's largest recreational space, is located on the west side of US 15, distant from a large portion of Lewisburg residents.

Lewisburg Area High School is currently located on the southeast corner of US 15 and Market Street. Recent discussions that have occurred would entail moving the high school to a new location outside the study area; however, no firm decisions have been reached regarding this issue.

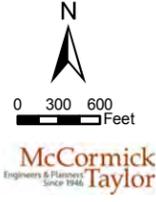
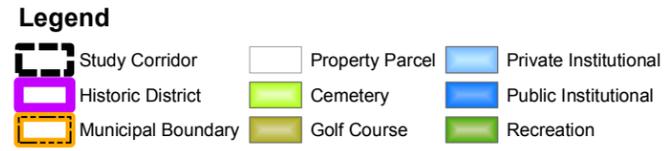
Lewisburg Cemetery is another prominent feature along US 15, abutting the north boundary of Bucknell University. It is approximately 25 acres, bound by US 15, Saint Catherine Street, 7th Street, and ROTC Drive.

Bucknell University's 450-acre campus is primarily on the east side of US 15; however, its sports and athletic fields, student housing, and golf course are on located on the west side of US 15.

### US 15 Corridor Study COMMUNITY FEATURES

Figure 2.3: Historic & Community Features

Source: Union County, McCormick Taylor.



## Visual and Architectural Character of the Corridor

Visually, US 15 is characterized by a diverse mix of land use throughout the corridor. The southern section is largely rural/residential with typical low density buildings and scattered open spaces. The central section of the corridor is dominated by the Bucknell Campus, its buildings and facilities. While none of the campus buildings adjacent to the US 15 is architecturally unique, they do reflect the identity of the Bucknell campus and contribute to the university identity of the Lewisburg area. These views of the campus, buildings, athletic fields and stadium hold special meaning for students, alumni and area residents sharing the university experience.

The northern section of the corridor from Market Street to William Penn Drive is primarily urbanized, with mixed, highway commercial uses. Because this commercial strip is largely auto-oriented and has developed over the last 60 plus years, it has little consistent visual identity or unifying architectural quality. Many buildings have been built or modified to accommodate changing commercial activity, access and parking. Building heights, sizes and shapes vary widely with no specific architectural context. Some buildings support drive-through, fast food establishments while others are vacant and in disrepair. The Penn House parcel has been cleared and awaits redevelopment. Generally this section of the corridor is visually cluttered with signs, varied building setbacks, varied building materials and excessive parking. Most of the buildings and urban form precedes current zoning and development regulations.

There are two notable buildings in the corridor which have been recognized as assets and could be catalysts for new development and redevelopment. These are the Lewisburg High School on the corner of US 15 and Market Street and the Creamery Building on Buffalo Road.



## Transportation Context

The focal point of the study is the US 15 corridor. Historically, this corridor originated as a parent route in the 1926 United States Highway Plan, as initiated by the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO) and formalized by the federally appointed Joint Board of Interstate Highways. The first sections of US 15 were completed from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania to Rockingham, North Carolina. Starting in 1936, the highway was extended from Harrisburg through Union County to Lawrenceville, Pennsylvania. Below is an aerial view of Lewisburg and the alignment of US 15 soon after its construction in 1938. The intersection of US 15 and Market Street is in the center of the photograph.

Currently, US 15 is part of the United States Department of Transportation's National Highway System and the Department of Defense's Strategic Highway Network. US 15 is the only non-interstate roadway in Pennsylvania to be included in this network. According to the Federal Functional Class System, US 15 is classified as a principal arterial, recognizing its importance as a continuous roadway that provides regional mobility for higher volumes of personal and commercial traffic.



## PennDOT Roadway Design Typology

PennDOT’s roadway design process (PennDOT Publication 13M) incorporates a system of typologies that consider both roadway and adjacent land use context when selecting appropriate design criteria. In such a system, the design criteria may change along a continuous route as the context changes.

The roadway typology for US 15 reflects the “Regional Arterial” functional category throughout the Study Area. The roadway typology changes progressively along the corridor as a function of the roadside land use and roadway cross-section. Table 2.1 gives the roadway typologies established for use in the *US 15 Smart Transportation Corridor Improvement Plan*.

Table 2.1 PennDOT Roadway Typologies for Study Area Sections of US 15

Section		Roadway Classification	Land Use Classification	Typology Characteristics
From	To			
William Penn Drive	4th Street	Regional Arterial	Suburban Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open roadway cross-section with wide lanes, shoulders, and median. Regular traffic signals at ~1,300 foot spacing. 45 MPH.</li> <li>Large building set-backs indicative of suburban “big-box” commercial style development.</li> <li>Few access points and managed access to land development.</li> </ul>
4th Street	Market Street	Regional Arterial	Suburban Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compressed roadway cross-section with narrow lanes, curb/gutter, and center turn lane. Regular traffic signals at ~1,100 foot spacing. 35 MPH.</li> <li>Minimal building set-backs indicative of older towns and activity centers with mixed land use.</li> <li>Many access points and minimal management of access.</li> </ul>
Market Street	McRae Circle	Regional Arterial	Suburban Neighborhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open roadway cross-section with wide lanes and shoulders and no median. Turn lanes provided at major intersections. Traffic signals at major intersections, irregular intervals. 45 MPH.</li> <li>Moderate building set-backs indicative of town fringe with residential, small lots and institutional, large-lot land uses.</li> <li>Mixture of managed and unmanaged access.</li> </ul>
McRae Circle	Beagle Club Road / River Road	Regional Arterial	Suburban Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open roadway cross-section with wide lanes, shoulders, and center turn lane. No traffic signals. 50-55 MPH.</li> <li>Mixture of small and large building setbacks indicative of highway commercial development. Many access points with minimal management of access.</li> </ul>

## Transportation Elements of the Urban Form

Surrounding the US 15 corridor is a diverse network of transportation facilities that serve the Lewisburg and East Buffalo Township communities and interact with the US 15 corridor itself. The schematic in Figure 2.4 illustrates the layout of highways, streets, railroads, and waterways that serve the corridor area.

Figure 2.4: Schematic of Transportation Elements



### Highway & Street Systems

The system of streets adjacent to US 15 is generally an interconnected grid, however with strong fundamental differences to the east versus the west. To the east of US 15 and north of Bucknell University, the layout and orientation of the core Lewisburg Borough grid—with a fine-grained layout of streets, sidewalks, and alleys—was established when the town was laid out in the late 1700s, long before the creation of US 15. The grid is interrupted by the active Lewisburg & Buffalo Creek Railroad line between 5th Street and 6th Street.

Market Street (PA 45) is the main street through Lewisburg Borough, with significant cross streets and traffic signals at 7th Street, 4th Street, 3rd Street, and 2nd Street. Most other intersections are stop-controlled. Streets are generally narrow, with on-street parking and sidewalks provided throughout the core of the Borough.

With parking, pedestrian activity, and multi-use/multi-story buildings close to the street, vehicular traffic speeds are slow. Vehicular delay and queues along Market Street are pronounced during peak traffic periods.

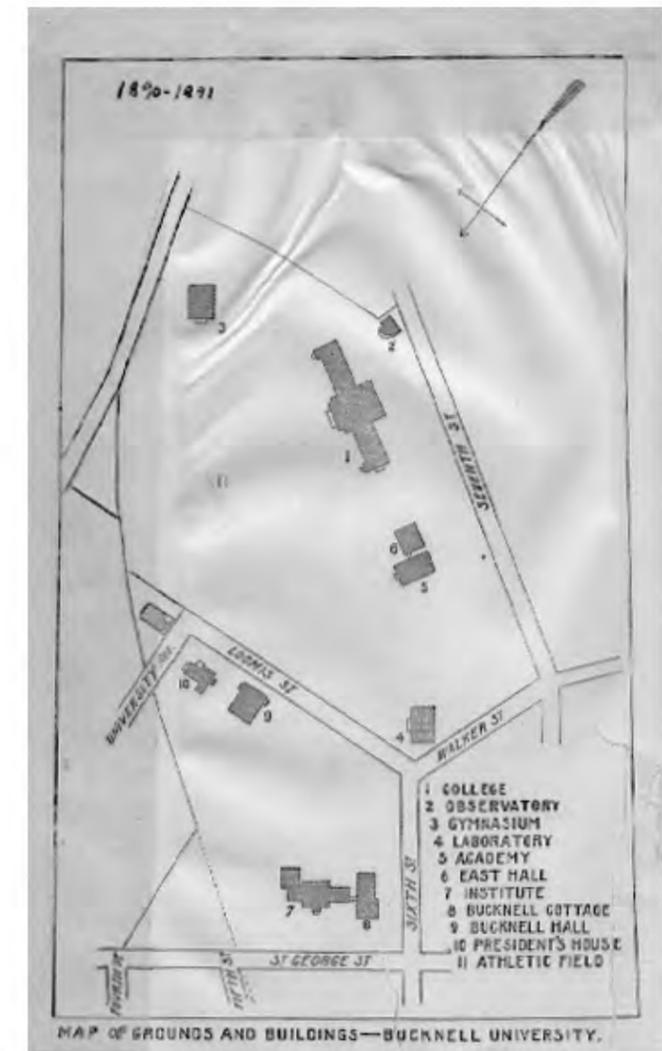
The grid system of Lewisburg ends at Saint George Street, which has been the traditional nexus between the Borough and Bucknell University, since it was founded in 1846. An 1890 map of the Bucknell campus is shown in Figure 2.5. Note the location of Saint George Street at the bottom of the sketch. During the 20th century, the University has expanded both away and somewhat into Lewisburg, with a more pastoral campus environment to the south and a campus network of streets and pathways that is more insular to discourage through traffic and make pedestrian travel

safer. Bucknell University maintains its own system of streets and parking facilities. However, the following streets remain municipal roadways: Moore Avenue, 7th Street, Walker Street, Loomis Street, Malcolm Street, Barton Street, Mill Street, Brown Street, Linn Street and University Avenue.

Much of the land development west of US 15 and south of Bucknell University occurred after 1936, when the corridor was constructed. Along this north-south axis, the grid system was pivoted to be parallel to the US 15 corridor. Except for Linntown along Market Street where the street and alley system was extended, the network east of US 15 consists of larger blocks without alleys or sidewalks. The larger grid reflects mid-century suburban trends and more commercial/industrial land uses that occupy larger parcels south of Saint Mary Street. South of Linntown, neighborhood streets become more curvilinear and less connected, with loop & cul-de-sac systems prevalent south of Abbey Lane.



Figure 2.5: 1890 map of Bucknell University's campus



## Sidewalks, Trails & Pathways

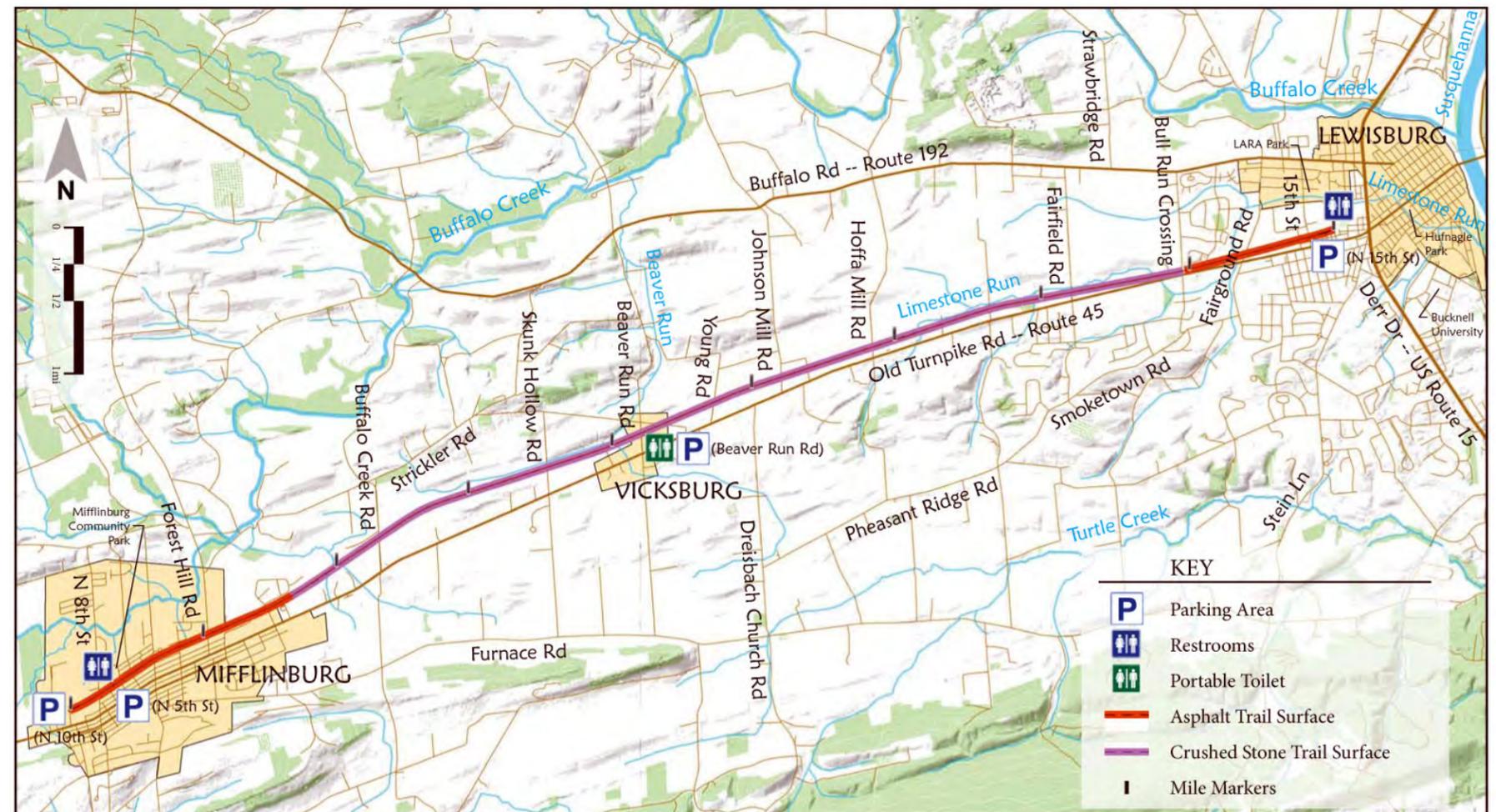
As noted previously, the core area of Lewisburg Borough and the Bucknell Campus are the only two parts of the study area with consistent and continuous sidewalk coverage. Outside of this area, continuous sidewalk does exist along the north side of Market Street, from US 15 to 20th Street. On the south side, sidewalk is present along some properties but is discontinuous. Elsewhere throughout Lewisburg Borough and East Buffalo Township, roadside sidewalk is seldom provided.

The Buffalo Valley Rail Trail (Figure 2.6) parallels PA 45 to the west of Lewisburg, and provides a pedestrian and bike connection on the former West Shore Rail Road right-of-way between Mifflinburg and East Buffalo Township. The Lewisburg Area Recreation Authority has sponsored the development of the trail. Following planning and design activities in 2009 and 2010, 9.2 miles of finished trail, trailheads, facilities and parking areas at both ends, and interpretive signage along the route were completed at the end of October 2011. The potential exists for future phases of rail trail development to cross US 15, go through Lewisburg, and then cross the Susquehanna River to Northumberland County.

## Railroads

The Lewisburg & Buffalo Creek Rail Road is the single active rail line within the Study Area. North of Lewisburg, the track parallels US 15. Within Lewisburg, the track turns to parallel 5th Street, until it crosses Brown Street and continues along the Susquehanna River and River Road south of Lewisburg.

Figure 2.6: Buffalo Valley Rail Trail (BVRT)



## Transit

Currently, no agency sponsored fixed-route transit system exists within the corridor, although the Union and Snyder Counties Fixed Route Public Transportation Feasibility Study (2004) and North Central Pennsylvania Regional Public Transportation Needs Assessment (2011) have investigated the potential need, issues, and benefits of such a system.

On-demand transit services are currently provided by the Union-Snyder Transportation Alliance (USTA). USTA provides free and reduced-fare transportation through the following programs:

- Shared-Ride Program for Seniors (age 65+)
- Shared-Ride Program for Persons with Disabilities
- STEP Program (Welfare-to-Work)
- Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP)

Shared-ride transportation is available to the general public at full-fare prices. USTA also provides contracted transportation services through various local agencies.

Bucknell University currently operates a fleet of shuttles that provides multiple services to students and faculty. A circulator service, called Downtown Shuttle, is provided on a daily loop from campus to the Barnes & Noble bookstore downtown and to the Wal-Mart Plaza in Kelly Township along US 15. Also, at the beginning and end of terms, as well as holidays and breaks, on-demand service is provided to nearby airports, train stations, and bus terminals. Reservations in advance are required. Finally, non-emergency student medical transportation is also provided by the University, through the Student Health Service.

## Parking

Except for the core area of Lewisburg Borough, parking is generally free, and the municipal ordinances specify the amount of parking that is to be provided according to the land use type.

Within the core area of Lewisburg Borough, parking meter zones, pricing, and enforcement schedule have been established by ordinance (§345 35). Parking meters are enforced 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM on all days except Sundays and legal holidays. Maximum parking time is 2 hours.



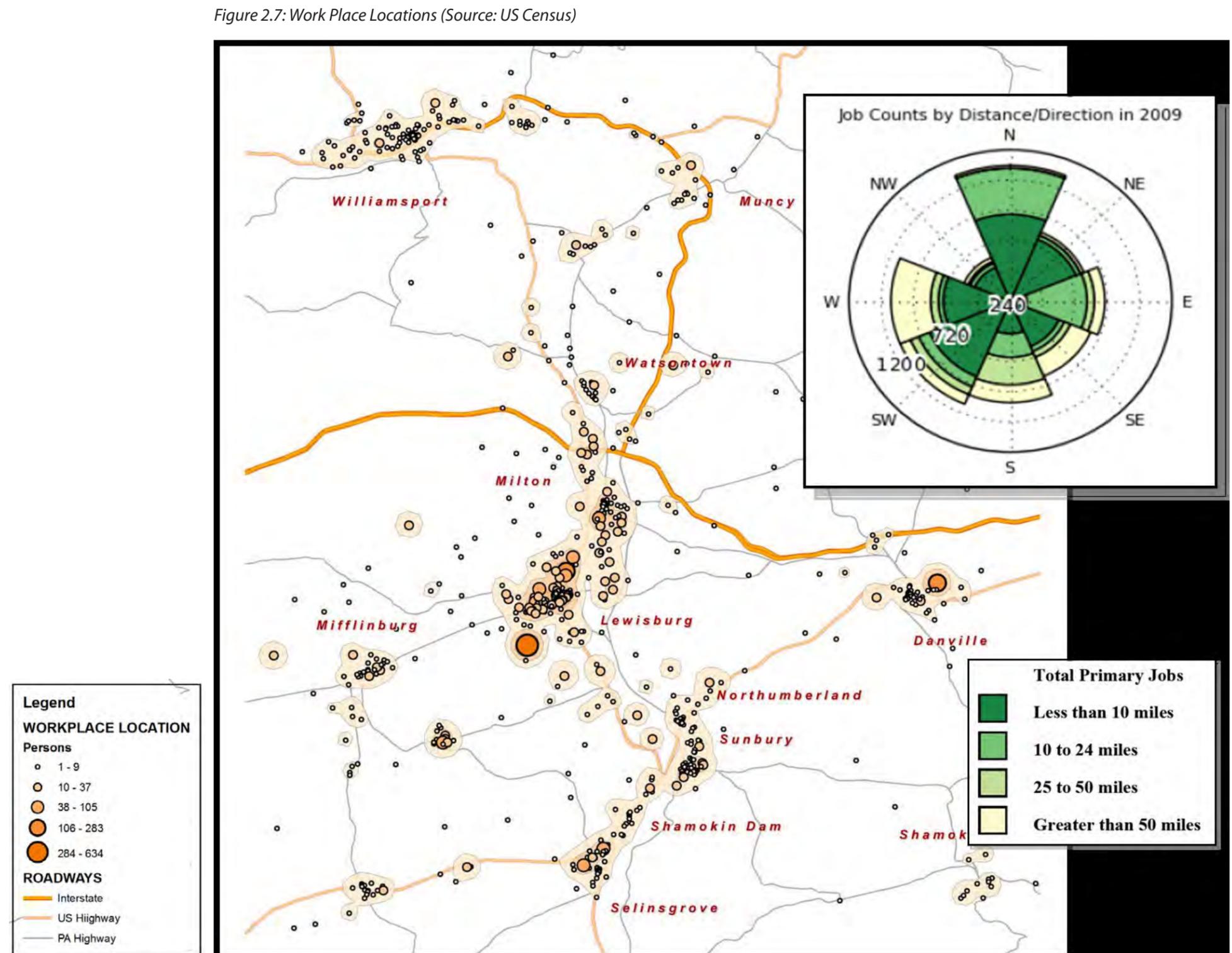
## Travel Activity & Patterns

### Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics (LEHD)

The US Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program combines federal and state administrative data on employers and employees with Census data and other surveys, including the Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI) datasets. QWI is built upon the wage records in the Unemployment Insurance system, which covers over 90% of total wage and salaried civilian jobs.

Information from the 2009 LEHD dataset was extracted to pair workplace location and residential location (both by Census block) to identify travel activity related to commuting patterns. In Figure 2.7, the orange dots and thermals illustrate workplace locations of people who reside in Lewisburg & East Buffalo Township. Concentrations of employment are evident in Lewisburg, Sunbury, Selinsgrove, Williamsport, and Mifflinburg. The directional job count illustrates the relative number of commuters (size of pie slice) according to travel distance (band color). The largest commuting directions are to the north and southwest, most likely relying on US 15 for mobility to reach these places of work. The longest commuting distances are to the west and southeast, perhaps to the State College and Harrisburg/Southeastern PA areas, respectively. About half of Lewisburg and East Buffalo Township residents have a commute less than 10 miles, while about 20 percent accept commutes of 25 miles or more.

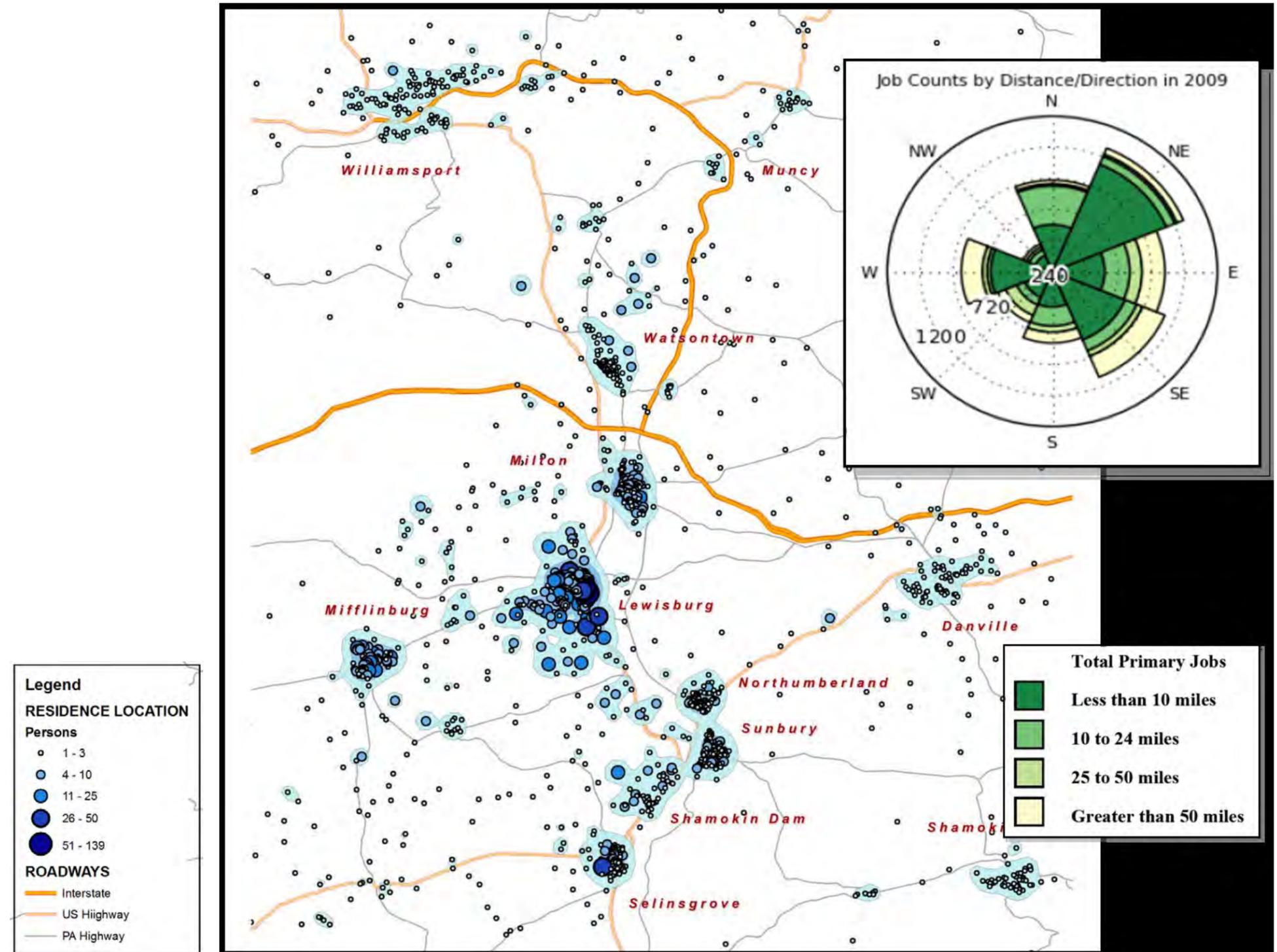
*Note: The large orange dot southwest of the intersection of Route 45 and US 15 collectively represents the job location of Bucknell University.*



*Note: Point locations are intended to be at the "centroid" of the Census geometries (tract, block group, and block). In cases where geometries are irregularly shaped, centroids may appear outside of the particular geometry represented.*

In Figure 2.8, the blue dots and thermals illustrate the residence locations of people who work in Lewisburg Borough and East Buffalo Township. These patterns differ substantially from the previous workplace analysis, both in terms of location and directionality. Concentrations of residences are closer to the workplace, with more than 60 percent of workers living within 10 miles of their workplace in Lewisburg Borough and East Buffalo Township. Concentrations of these workers are noted in Milton, Northumberland, Sunbury, Selinsgrove, Danville, and Mifflinburg. Primary commuting directions are to/from the northeast and southeast.

Figure 2.8: Residence Locations (Source: US Census)



Note: Point locations are intended to be at the "centroid" of the Census geometries (tract, block group, and block). In cases where geometries are irregularly shaped, centroids may appear outside of the particular geometry represented.

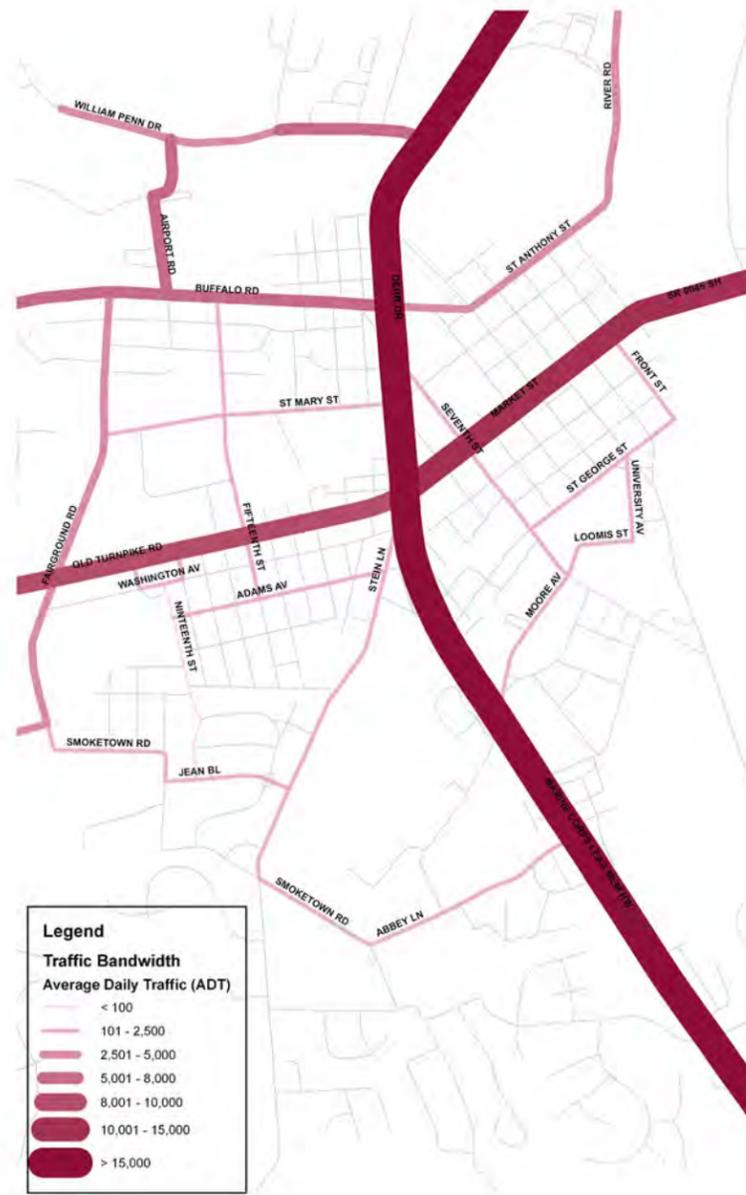
**Daily Traffic Volume Counts**

Daily traffic volume count data from 2007-2010 was provided by PennDOT District 3-0 and charted to evaluate traffic activity trends along US 15 and the network of state routes within the Study Area. Figure 2.9 illustrates these volumes as bandwidths, where the color and width indicate the 24-hour volume of traffic—e.g., average daily traffic (ADT) volumes. Currently, US 15 carries an ADT of approximately 25,000, with about 10 percent of this volume (2,400 vehicles) being heavy trucks. Table 2.2 provides current daily volumes for other roadways in the region.

Table 2.2. ADT Volumes on other Regional Roadways

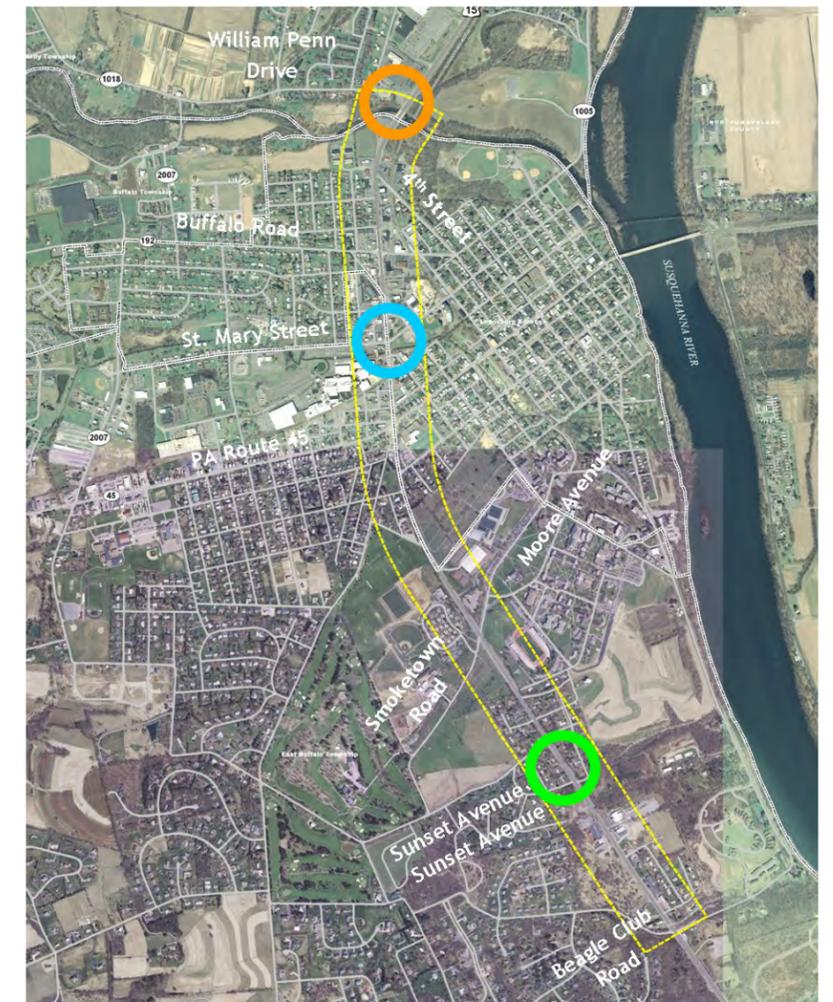
Location	ADT
I-80, at interchange with US 15	27,600
US 15, Shamokin Dam	39,500
PA 45, to the west of Lewisburg	9,900
PA 45, to the east of Lewisburg	13,600
PA 405, at interchange with PA 45	5,000
Airport Road, to the north of Buffalo Road	6,000

Figure 2.9: Average Daily Traffic (ADT) Volumes



Hourly breakdowns of the traffic count volumes at various locations along US 15 (Figure 2.10) were also investigated and charted throughout the day. Figures 2.11, 2.12, and 2.13 illustrate these hourly vehicular traffic volumes—passenger and heavy vehicles—at different locations along US 15 within the Study Area.

Figure 2.10: Location Map for Traffic Count Volumes



In general, traffic volume peaks in the afternoon between 4:00 and 6:00 PM, which is typical for principal arterial routes carrying regional commuter traffic.

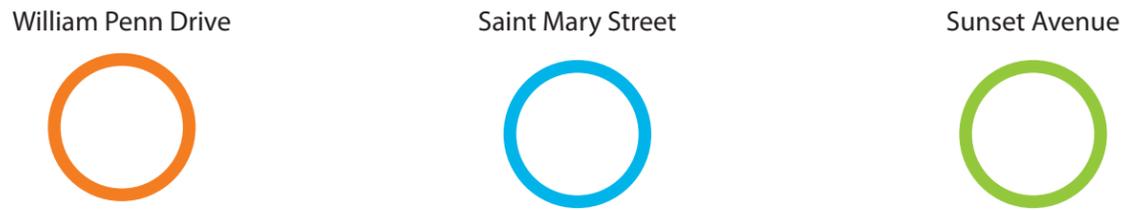


Figure 2.11: Hourly Traffic Volumes on US 15 near William Penn Drive

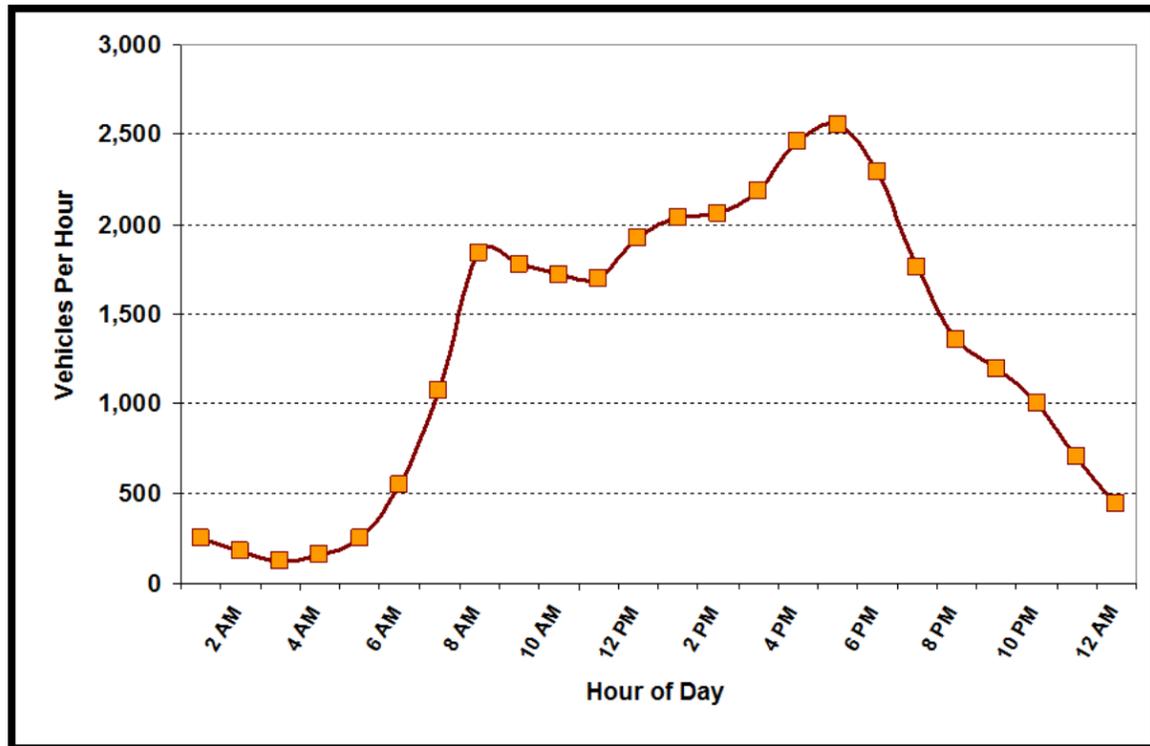


Figure 2.12: Hourly Traffic Volumes on US 15 near Saint Mary Street

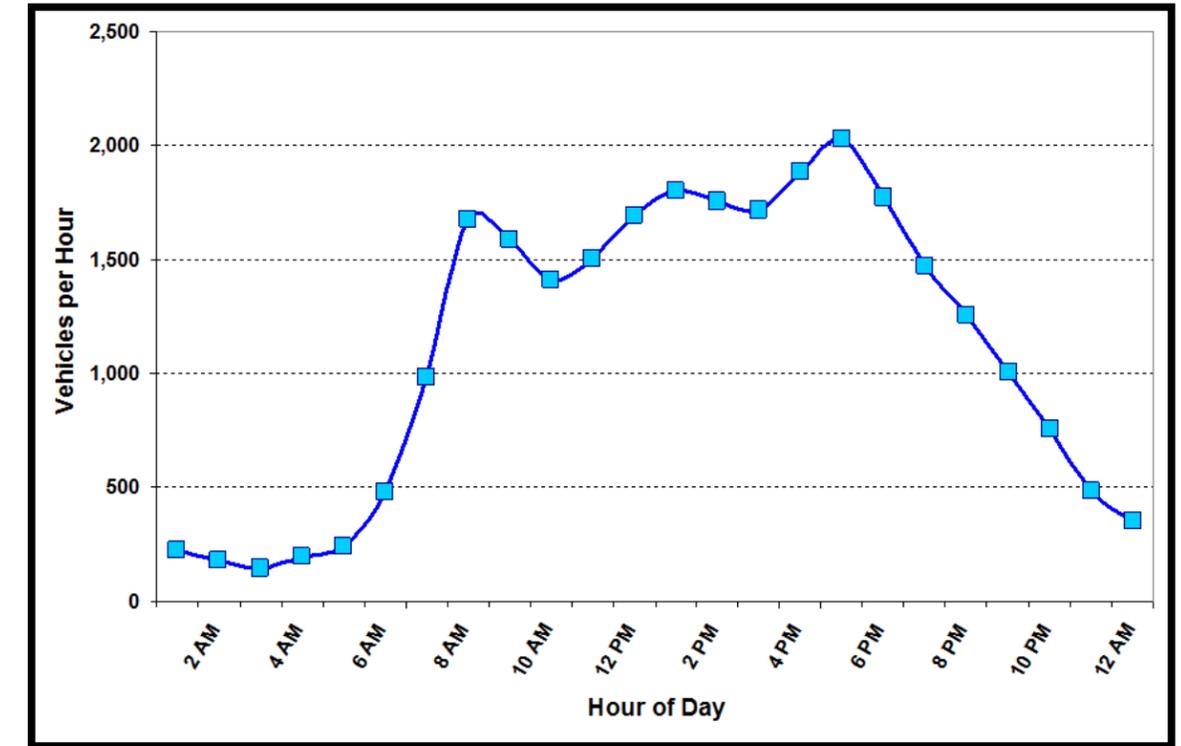
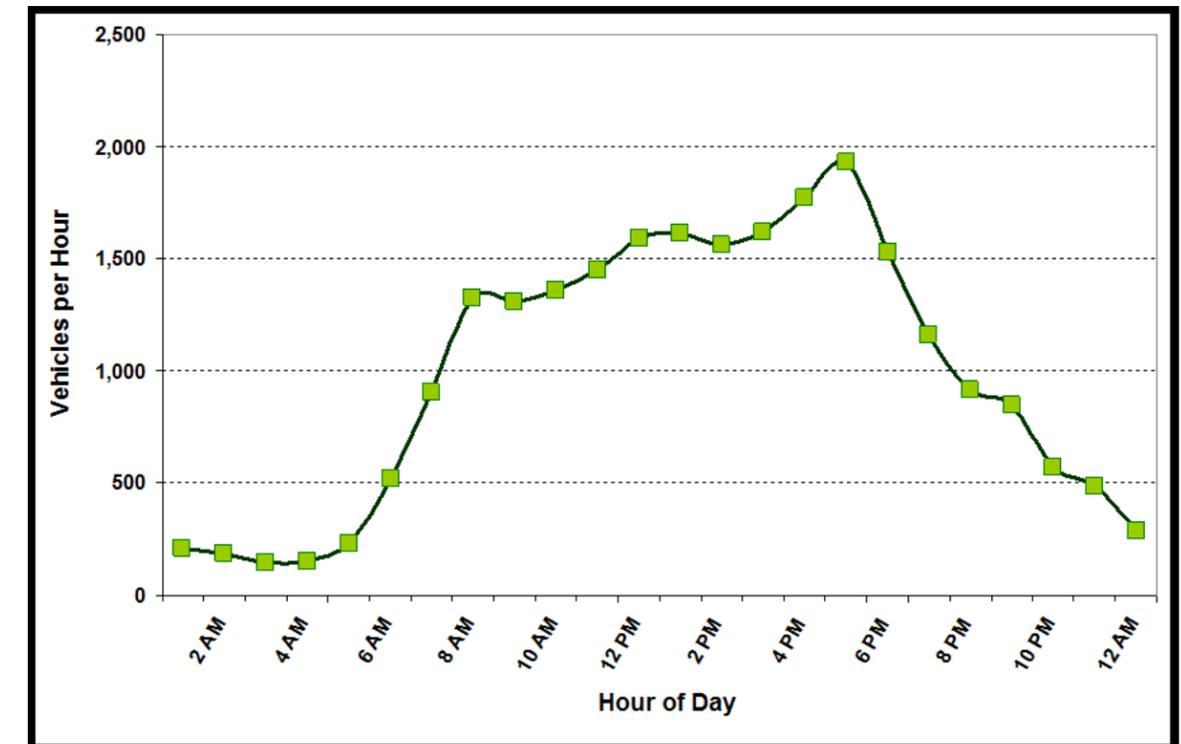


Figure 2.13: Hourly Traffic Volumes on US 15 near Sunset Avenue



**Peak Hour Traffic Volumes**

To complete the analysis of traffic volume, peak hour intersection traffic count data was extracted from various sources, including the Penn House Commons Traffic Impact Study, the Union County Comprehensive Plan, and the US 15 Safety Study. Figure 2.14 illustrates these counts in terms of total vehicles per intersection during the highest peak hour of the day.

The highest intersection volumes were observed at the US 15 intersections with Market Street (PA 45) and Buffalo Road (PA 192). Other intersections along US 15 were also above 2,000 vehicles per hour, indicating the dominant north-south flow of traffic through the study area during the peak hour.

**Network Traffic Pattern Analysis**

Traffic patterns and the directionality of traffic entering the study area were analyzed on a proportion basis by examining intersection turning movement volumes at key points in the network. Figure 2.15 illustrates traffic entering the study area from the east and west on Market Street (PA 45). Significant bypass routes along Airport Road and River Road are indicated, whereas the use of River Road and Fairground Road are subdued, in comparison. Delay and the perception of safety at intersections to the south may influence these patterns. Figure 2.16 illustrates traffic entering the study area from the north and south on US 15. Airport Road is again indicated as a strong bypass route. River Road and Fairground Road also see significant bypassing traffic volume. Bypassing traffic is a strong indicator that delay, safety, and other route perceptions are negative for the area being bypassed. In this case, drivers are avoiding the traffic signals and compressed roadway area along US 15 between Market Street and 4th Street.

Figure 2.14: Total Vehicles per Intersection during the Highest Peak Hour

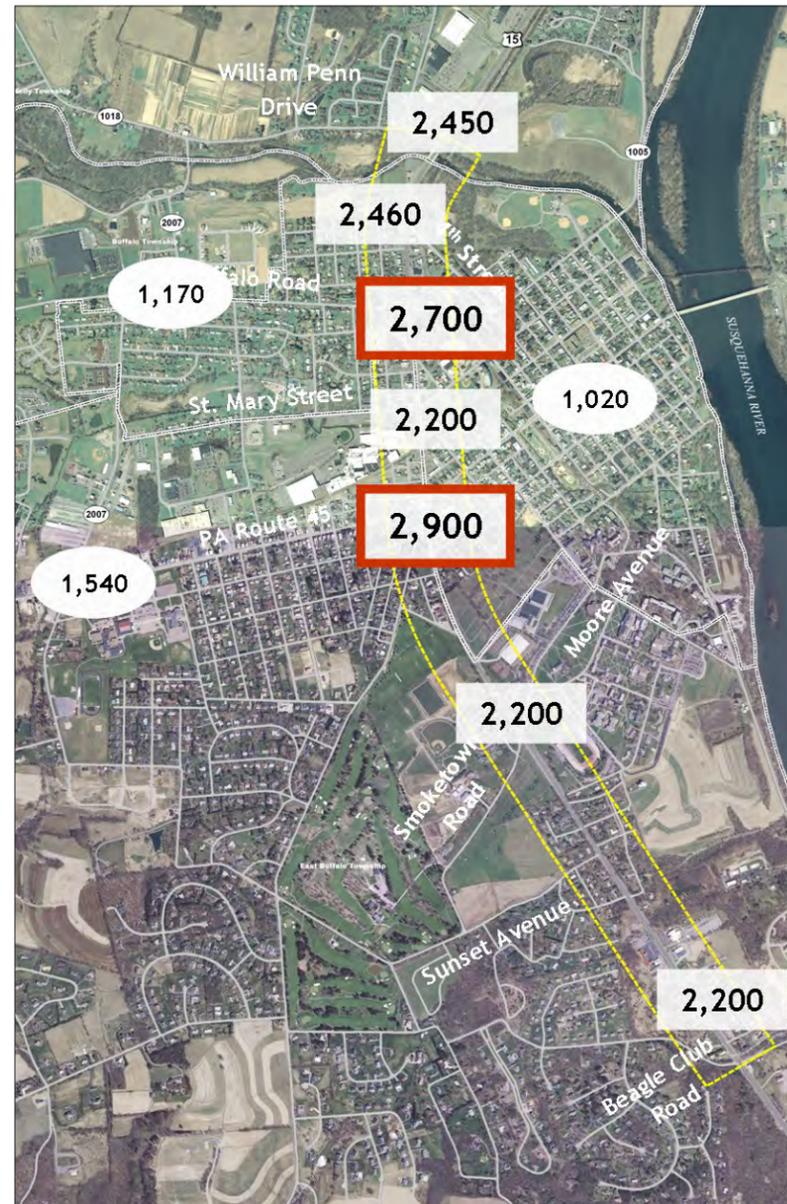


Figure 2.15: East / West Trip Distribution

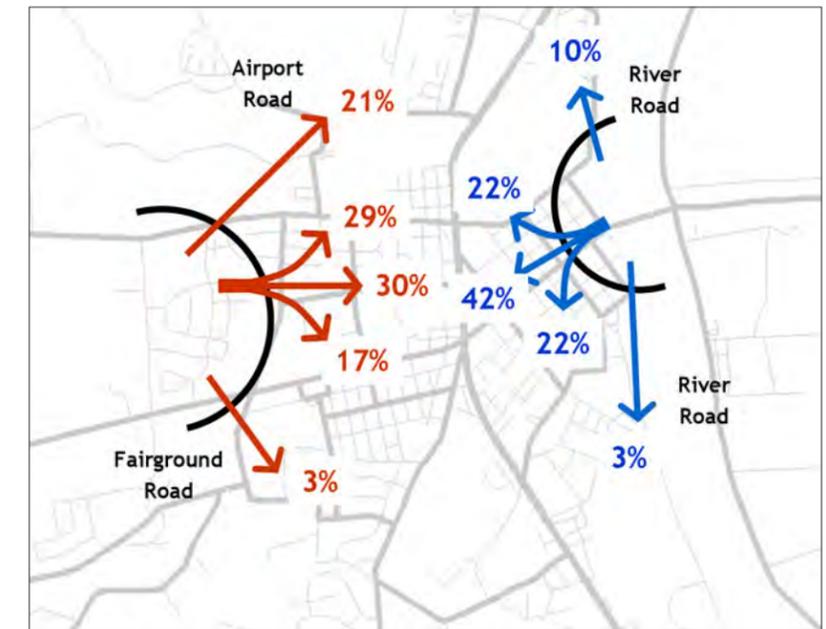


Figure 2.16: North / South Trip Distribution

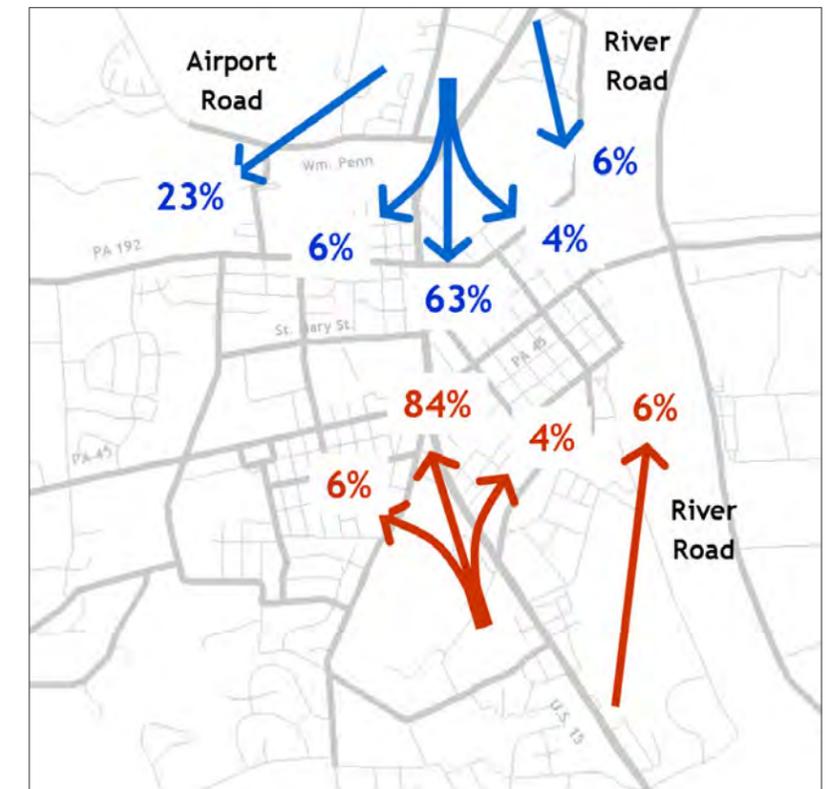
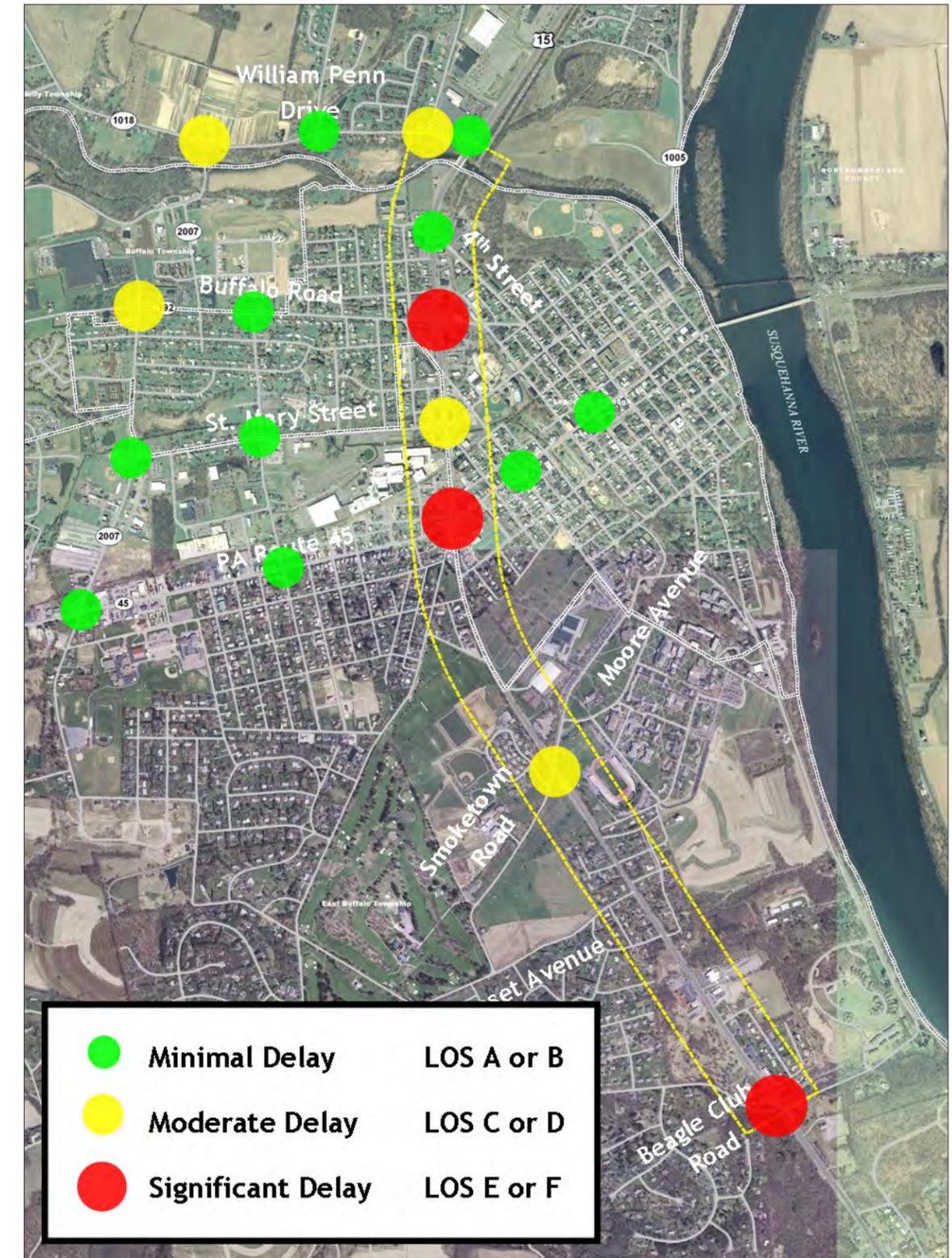


Figure 2.17: Level of Service (LOS)



### **Vehicular Delay and Level-of-Service (LOS)**

Delay analysis evaluates traffic operations in terms of the average delay experienced by vehicles on a roadway facility—in this case, at intersections along US 15 and throughout the broader network. To put the delay estimates into context, letter-grades are given to certain ranges of delay. Level of Service (LOS) A or B represents minimal delay. LOS C & D represent moderate delay. LOS E & F represent significant and, typically, unacceptable levels of delay. Figure 2.17 illustrates levels of service according to the average delay experienced by all vehicles traveling through the intersection. Delay and LOS values were derived from various sources, including the Union County Comprehensive Plan, Penn House Commons Traffic Impact Study, Bucknell University Gateway Study, Giant Food Store/Retail Center Traffic Impact Study, and US 15 Safety Study. All traffic analyses were completed according to the methodology published by the Transportation Research Board in the Highway Capacity Manual.

### Pedestrian & Bicycle Crossings

Figure 2.18 illustrates counts of pedestrian and bicycle crossings during a 4-hour period between 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM in April 2011. This time period was chosen to capture crossings associated with the end of school peak, the peak hour of vehicular traffic, and the peak of evening recreational activity along US 15. The figure indicates the number of persons crossing US 15 (white box) and the number of persons crossing the side streets, parallel to US 15 (blue box). For instance, at Market Street, equal numbers of pedestrians and bicycles cross Market Street and US 15. On the other hand, pedestrians and bicycles tend to use Saint Mary Street and Buffalo Road mostly for crossing US 15. This infers that pedestrians and bicyclists do not walk along US 15. Rather they use the signalized intersections as points to cross US 15.

### Crash Trends

The 10-year crash history from 2000 to 2009 was investigated to identify safety issues within the Study Area. PennDOT District 3-0 provides the reportable crash history. Table 2.3 gives the crash trends on each major roadway in the corridor.

Table 2.3 Reportable Crashes (2000-2009)

State Route	Reportable Crashes
US 15	247
PA 45	135
PA 192	46
SR 1018 (William Penn)	13
SR 2007 (Fairground/Airport)	9
TOTAL	451

Figure 2.18: Pedestrian & Bicycle Crossing Location & Counts

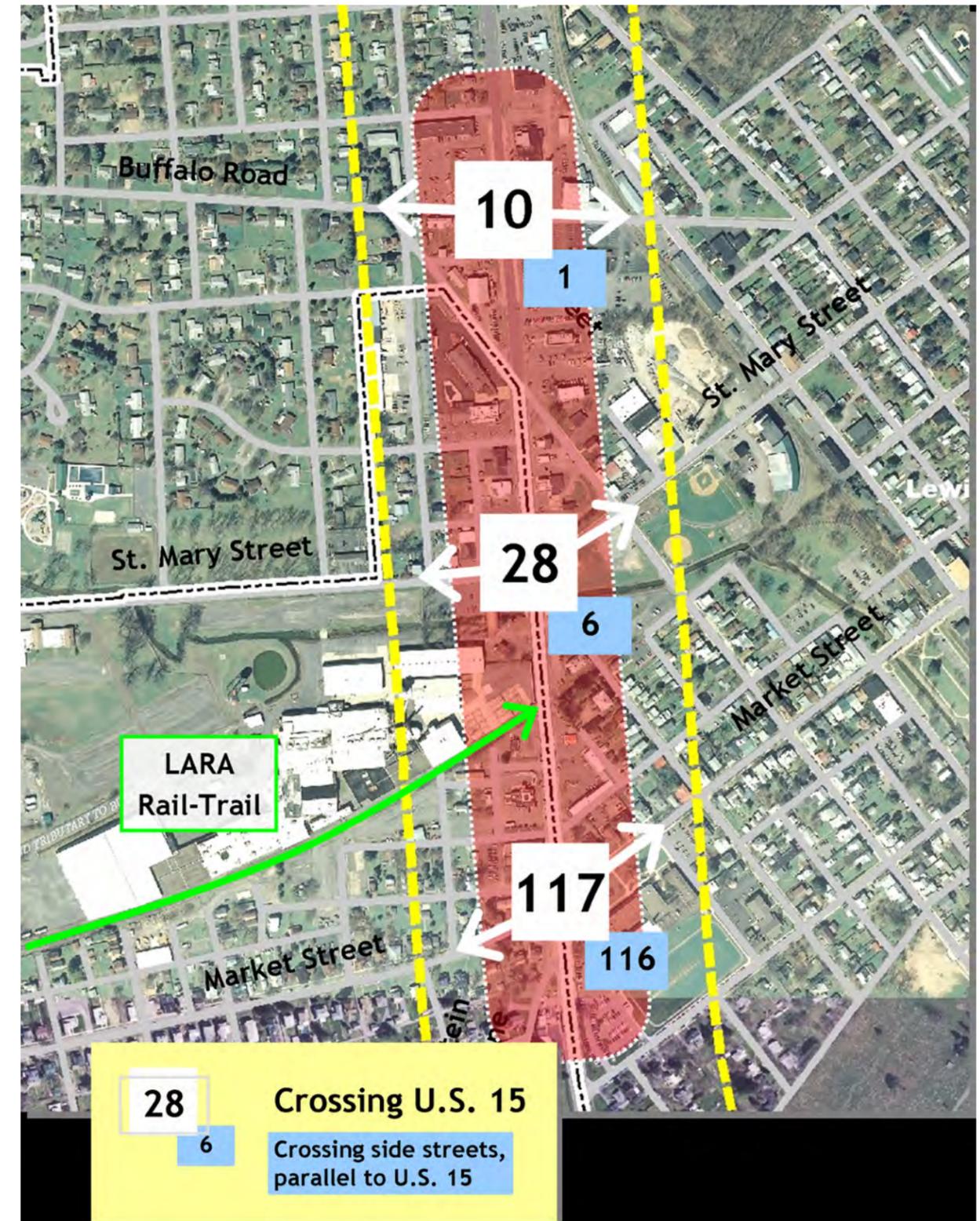
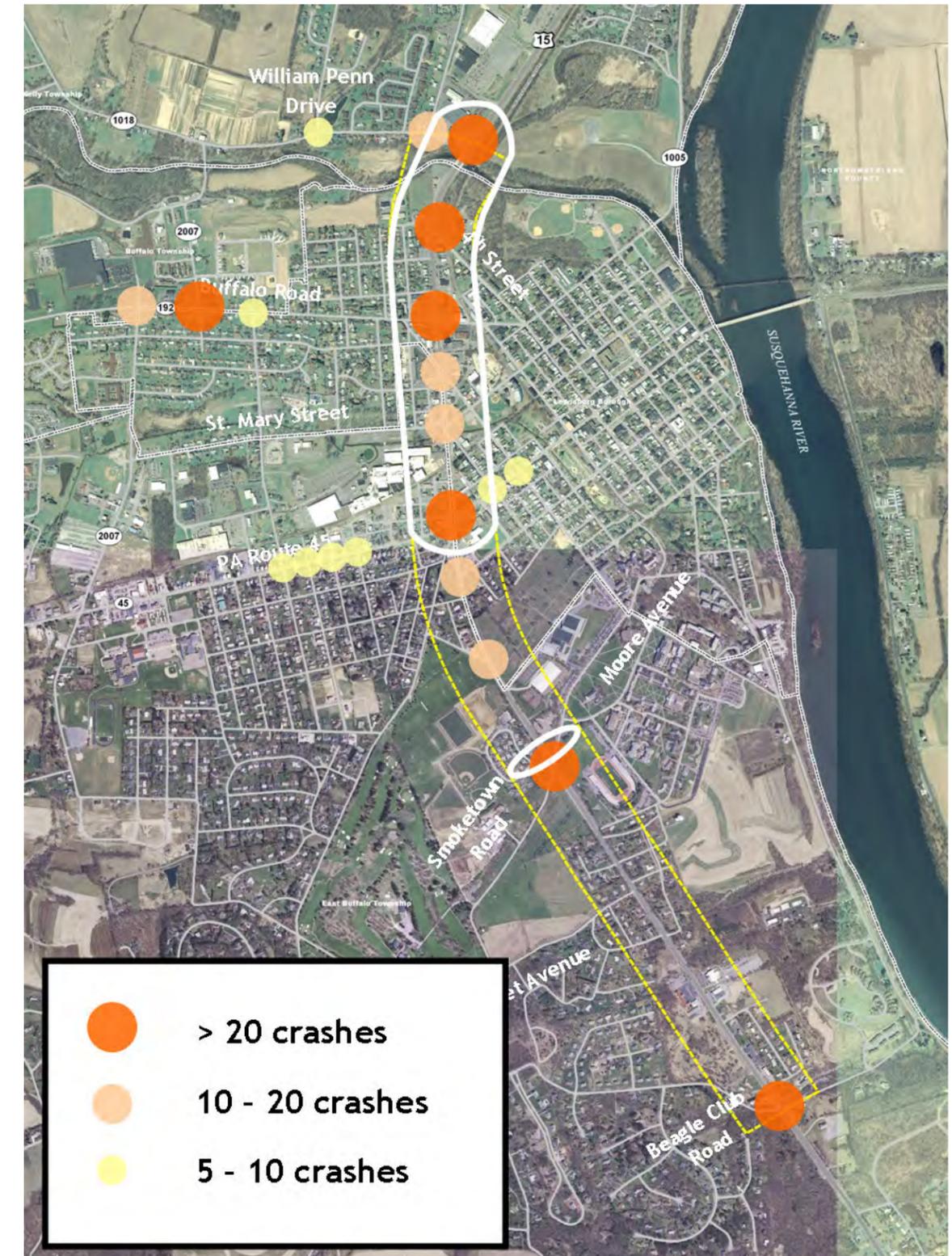


Figure 2.19: Intersection Crash Hot Spots



The following breakdowns of crashes throughout the Study Area were noted:

- **Crash Type:** 183 angle; 152 rear-end; 96 hit “object”
- **Vehicle/Mode:** 30 truck-related; 14 pedestrian-related; 2 bicycle-related; 2 “phantom vehicle”
- **Driver:** 22 DUI; 355 aggressive driving (87 speeding; 70 distracted; 56 improper/careless maneuver)

#### Location

Crashes were also located relative to roadways and intersections to identify hot spots and clusters by location. Figure 2.19 shows the intersection crash hot spots. The following were noted:

- A total of 299 crashes were at intersections, with 114 at intersections with signals and 185 at non-signalized (stop, yield) intersections.
- 152 crashes were located at non-intersection/mid-block locations.
- There was a high intensity of crashes just north of Moore Avenue, which contributes to the hot spot at Moore Avenue.
- Clusters of crashes were noted at both signalized and certain non-signalized intersections from William Penn Drive to Beagle Club Road/River Road.
- Previous systematic evaluations of roadway safety have identified US 15 Segments 120 and 130 (approximately Bucknell Gateway to Beagle Club Road/River Road) as a “Top 25” crash location. This designation would be considered when prioritizing projects for Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding.

## **Regional Influences, Local Development & Redevelopment**

### ***Central Susquehanna Valley Throughway (CSVT)***

There are several planned transportation projects of regional significance that may have measurable beneficial effects on this Lewisburg section of US 15. Chief among these is the Central Susquehanna Valley Throughway or CSVT. This major expressway project along the Susquehanna River has been in planning and design for several decades. With a price tag of approximately one half billion dollars, the project has suffered delays primarily due to shortages of State and Federal funding. This expressway would connect communities and important state highways along the Susquehanna River north of Harrisburg to Interstate 80, providing a much needed north-south expressway connection for through traffic to Interstate 80. Over 50% of the cars and over 90% of the trucks traveling in the Susquehanna Valley do not have an origin or destination within the Valley.

Southern sections of the CSVT were located close to and accessible from communities like Shamokin Dam and Sunbury where the project would reduce truck traffic, moderate congestion and improve safety along the Golden Mile, one of the busiest sections of Routes 11 and 15. The northern section of CSVT would cross the Susquehanna River and follow a route to the east of US 15 essentially providing a bypass of the Lewisburg section of US 15. This would result in significant reductions in traffic volumes including through traffic and trucks traveling to and from Interstate 80 just a few miles to the north.

If and when completed, CSVT has the potential to transform the Lewisburg and East Buffalo Township area by returning US 15 to the highway it used to be 50 years ago when it carried half the traffic

it sees today. The current planning for traffic, pedestrian safety, aesthetic and land use improvements along the US 15 corridor will be greatly facilitated by completion of the CSVT.

### ***Former Pennsylvania House Furniture Parcel Redevelopment***

The parcel formerly occupied by the Pennsylvania House Furniture Company is one of the largest redevelopment projects in the US 15 corridor planning area. Consisting of approximately 42 acres, the site is strategically located adjacent to US 15, the new Buffalo Valley Rail Trail and the Lewisburg Area Recreation Park. Downtown Lewisburg business district and Bucknell University are located nearby. The project would include 200 residential units, about 250,000 square feet of commercial space and will be anchored by a major grocery chain and/or a CVS. The CVS store would be relocated from its current location on US 15 north of Buffalo Road in the Borough. The project is proposed by Meridian Development Corporation. The site plan includes an interconnected street network that provides connections between Market Street and Saint Mary Street. The developer is to construct capacity and operational improvements at the US 15 / Saint Mary Street and US 15 / Market Street intersections.

### ***Lewisburg Area High School Site***

The Lewisburg Area High School occupies 6½ acres at the southeast corner of US 15 and Market Street, at the center of the study area. The School District has an intention to move the high school to a site on Newman Road in Kelly Township, although financial considerations have delayed a decision about when to undertake this move. When the present high school is vacated, however, a relatively large, strategically-located site will then be available for an alternative use. How this site will be used is a key element in the long-term future of the US 15 corridor.

### ***East Buffalo Township (EBT) Municipal Offices and Complex***

The existing Township offices are located on Fairground Road and housed in an older building, which was formerly associated with agricultural operations adjacent to the Union County Fair Grounds. Because the administration building and associated maintenance buildings are substandard and do not meet the current or growing needs of the Township, Township Officials have conducted a needs assessment and feasibility study for a new facility. The new buildings and facility would be located on Township land adjacent to the existing buildings and would include space for the administrative, police and other functions of Township government. Although the area is partially located in a floodplain, the site design and site preparations would raise the building elevations to acceptable levels. Although the new Township building complex was designed and released for construction bids, costs were determined to be in excess of estimates, so the project is on hold.

Although the new Township Complex will be reconsidered at a later time and will be located within the Township boundaries, some Township government functions, such as the police, are being considered as a shared operation with other local jurisdictions. For instance, the regional police department has leased office space along the south side of SR 0045 in East Buffalo Township, between West Milton State Bank and the US Postal facility, east of Fairground Road.

### ***Bucknell University Campus Planning***

The Bucknell campus consists of extensive property and facilities on the east and west side of US 15. Generally, administrative, academic and student buildings are part of the campus area adjacent to Lewisburg Borough on the east side of US 15. Property west of US 15 is primarily reserved for sports, athletics and open space including

the golf course. One major exception is the student residential area known as the “mods”. These residential structures were built in the 1970s as temporary student housing. Bucknell is currently in the process of a campus building program which includes plans for new student housing on the east side of US 15. Completion of this new housing will allow for the ultimate demolition or re-use of the mods.

Another important capital project for the University involves the relocation and reconstruction of the Moore Avenue / Smoketown Road intersection with US 15. This signalized intersection is the primary access point for the campus and it is situated at the bottom of a steep grade on US 15. Safety concerns have been prompted due to the vehicular speeds and the high volume of trucks traveling US 15. In inclement winter weather trucks have failed to stop at the intersection and on occasion have been involved in accidents at this location. The presence of students crossing at this location has increased concerns about safety. A pedestrian underpass has been constructed for students crossing US 15 in this area, but some students, bicyclists, runners and joggers continue to cross at-grade and travel along the shoulders of US 15.

Plans include relocation and redesign of the intersection, which would move it approximately 500 feet to the north and away from the steep grades on US 15. The design would include better signals and crosswalks for pedestrian safety, new landscaping and other improvements. All necessary funding is not available; therefore, no timetable for construction has been established.

### ***Kelly Township Commerce***

Kelly Township, through which US 15 travels north of Buffalo Creek, was largely rural until about 20 years ago, but since that time has

had a number of significant commercial and institutional land developments occur on the west side of the highway. The character of this part of US 15 is different than that south of Buffalo Creek, with the former consisting of development parcels of 10 acres (or more), large-footprint buildings often set 500 to 600 feet back from the right-of-way, and a view from the road that is dominated by off-street parking lots and satellite fast food and retail establishments.

Kelly Township’s businesses represent strong competition for those on US 15 south of Buffalo Creek as both areas seek to draw customers from Lewisburg Borough and East Buffalo Township and from visitors and pass-through traffic. One of the challenges for the latter municipalities is to protect their economic base in commerce along US 15, an area that has its roots in the more traditional form of highway commercial activity, including multiple, small-lot businesses with buildings sited close to the road, and frequently with cramped on-lot vehicular circulation and parking.

### ***Former Giant Foods Site***

The Giant Foods site occupies a 15 acre, commercially zoned parcel located near the southern end of the study corridor. This vacant parcel has been the topic of discussion during the steering committee meetings and development of the corridor plan. The site was previously proposed for development of a Giant Foods store in 2001. New access to the site was problematic resulting in the denial of the PennDOT highway occupancy permit. After litigation, the development application was withdrawn. The site continues to be of interest because it is one of the largest commercially zoned parcels in East Buffalo Township representing a potentially significant traffic requiring access and egress on US 15. Its future development is likely under stronger economic conditions.

### ***Zoning Discrepancies***

The boundary between East Buffalo Township and Lewisburg Borough runs down the centerline of US 15 from 7th Street to the Bucknell campus, including the intensively developed commercial areas from 7th Street to Market Street. Each municipality has its own zoning designation for lands on its side of the line (H-C for East Buffalo Township and C-H for Lewisburg Borough) and development standards under the respective designations. The lack of consistency in standards between one side of the road and the other may contribute to a lack of a consistent, high-quality character for this portion of the corridor. Certainly, one way to approach gaining a more high-quality character for this portion of the corridor may be to enact development regulations that are the same for both sides of the street.

