



*Conversations about the Future*  
**WHITELAND**  
**2013 Community Interviews**

## **I. Johnson County Community Profile**

**Community Name:** Whiteland

**Date:** April 2013

**Researchers:** Kelley Gilbert, Sue Salamone, and Tiffany Wilson

### **Demographics**

- A. Population as of 2010: 4,169 for Whiteland (U.S. Census Bureau)
- B. Estimated Rate of Growth for the next 10 years: Using the same 5% increase in population that occurred between 2000 and 2010, the estimated increase between 2010 and 2020 would be 4,378.
- C. Growth Indicators: Whiteland's population grew rapidly in the 1990s, before slowing in the previous decade. Demographic shifts, including people waiting longer to start families, have contributed to this decline in growth.

### **Residential Development Projects in Planning or Consideration**

- A. Millstone subdivision
  - Size – Millstone is a 138 lot residential subdivision. Section 2, a 31 lot portion of the subdivision is now being planned. Approximately half of the lots in the subdivision will be developed after section 2 is completed. In 2012, 18 building permits were issued by the city for section 1.
  - Location – Millstone is located near the intersection of Whiteland Road and South Sawmill Road.
  - Developer – Landman Properties, LLC in McCordsville, IN
  - Projected date of completion – Mr. Capozzi stated that home construction of section 2 will probably not begin until 2014.
- B. Brunnemer Ridge subdivision
  - Size – Brunnemer Ridge is a 203 lot residential subdivision that currently has 57 homes and another two under construction.
  - Location – Brunnemer Ridge is located south and west of Millstone subdivision.
  - Developer – Larry Green (Matt Shepard is Mr. Green's representative)
  - Projected date of completion – This development started in 1990 and is a very slow developing subdivision. Mr. Capozzi has not

heard from the developer about the development of any additional sections in the near future.

### **Commercial Development Projects in Planning or Consideration**

#### **A. Develop a Town Center**

Town officials would like to develop a town center, featuring a convenient and attractive mix of shopping, local services and government offices. The town center would give Whiteland a unique identity, provide a public gathering space, and boost the local economy.

#### **B. Business and Industrial Parks**

Several small industrial zones are located in the community, accounting for around one percent of the town land use. Use of TIF districting near I-65 will spur continued economic development.

#### **C. Other Business Districts**

US 31 and Whiteland Road are the two main business corridors in the community. Increased traffic along Whiteland Road as the county expands it into a major east-west corridor will increase visibility for local businesses.

### **Community Bonds - History and Trajectory**

#### **A. The Whiteland Clerk-Treasurer reported that currently, Whiteland has no community bonds outside of utilities.**

#### **B. Outstanding Bonds: Information from Indiana State Website**

- Junior Sewage Revenue Bonds of 2000
- Town of Whiteland Water Works Refunding Revenue Bonds, Series 2004
- Town of Whiteland Indiana Storm Water District Revenue Bonds of 2011

## Community Tax Levies- History and Trajectory

The Certified Levies for Whiteland Town 2007-2013 are as follows:

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
General	\$252,553	\$343,577	\$219,529	\$226,248	\$260,498	\$268,268	\$267,701
Motor Vehicle/Highway	\$99,551	\$22,113	\$94,348	\$165,539	\$141,223	\$145,406	\$147,686
Capital Development	\$47,172	\$46,332	\$35,568	\$33,062	\$32,979	\$147,686	\$54,902

- A. Whiteland has annexed quite a bit of land, but there are no solid plans for what to do with it because it all depends on the economy and if there is money to do something with it.

## Roads and Highway Assessment

Information from Whiteland's Comprehensive Plan 2011

- A. Current Status – Whiteland is located on or adjacent to two major highways – US 31 through the center of town, and I-65 on the east side. The county is continuing to develop Whiteland Road as a major east-west corridor connecting I-65 and IN-37.
- B. Projects Scheduled  
There are no scheduled projects at this time.
- C. Projects in Discussion
- Improvements at I-65/Whiteland Road interchange
  - Implement a median beautification program for US 31 through town
  - Extend and improve access roads and truck routes to ease traffic load on Whiteland Road

## Indicators of Commitment to Quality of Life

- A. Education

The Clark Pleasant school district boasts high graduation rates and test scores, and offers a variety of extracurricular opportunities to students, including athletic and musical programs. The Clark

Pleasant Academy creates educational opportunities for students struggling in a traditional high school program.

**B. Parks and Recreation**

There is an interest in creating one or more public parks, as well as improving the overall walkability of the community.

**C. Cultural Venues**

- Kelsay Dairy Farms Located where rural farm scenes and suburban sprawl collide, Kelsay Farms, LLC is a sixth generation dairy and crop farm. Experiences include tours, live music, magic, dancing, hayrides, and games.
- Whiteland Orchard

**D. Public Gathering Spaces**

- Places of Worship  
Whiteland has a variety of churches, including Whiteland United Methodist Church, Whiteland New Life Church of God, Solid Rock Church Assembly of God, Old Time Whiteland Baptist Church, and St. Thomas Episcopal Church.

The Under the Sun Faith Community Center and Café serves as a restaurant and music venue for Whiteland. Other religious organizations include CBMC, Inc., Christ Fellowship Church of Johnson County, Inc., Christ's Church, Inc., Commissioned Generation, Inc., Crosswinds Church, Inc., Frontier Ministry Group, the General Council Finance and Administration of the United Methodist Church, and Hear Our Prayers Everywhere, Inc.

- Other Gathering Spaces  
Care Net Pregnancy Center of Central Indiana and Carters Wish Foundation are both family service providers in Whiteland. Fraternal and social orders include the Association of Operative Millers, the Johnson County Eagles Lodge, Order of the Eastern Star, and the Jubilee Masonic Lodge. Rascal's Fun Zone and the Whiteland Raceway Park provide family recreational opportunities to Whiteland residents.

#### E. Community Events

None were mentioned by the Clerk/Treasurer of Whiteland. Community events do exist at the above mentioned Gathering Spaces and Cultural Venues, as well as at the Clark Pleasant Branch of JCPL. Local community events can be found through the Greenwood and Franklin Chambers of Commerce websites.

#### F. Volunteer Structures

The Clark Pleasant Branch of the Johnson County Public Library, as well as the various Whiteland and Clark Pleasant schools, offer opportunities to volunteer at those locations. There are no specific community-wide volunteer structures to speak of.

#### G. Libraries

The Clark Pleasant Branch of the Johnson County Public Library serves the residents of Whiteland and New Whiteland. JCPL has a mission to improve the quality of life for all citizens by providing courteous, knowledgeable, and efficient service and access to a broad diversity of information through resources and programs.

### **Neighborhood Groups**

#### A. Homeowners Associations

#### B. Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts and Brownies

#### C. Homeschool Groups

#### D. Others:

- The Pleasant Crossing Elementary PTO
- Honey Creek Youth Chamber Orchestra
- Indiana Invaders (softball and baseball leagues)
- The Green Family Charitable Foundation and the Indianapolis Chapter of CMA Cornerstone Riders are two foundations in Whiteland.
- Interchurch Food Pantry of Johnson County
- Johnson County Banquets

### **Health, Wellness, and Security**

#### A. Major Healthcare Providers

The American Healthcare Network oversees both doctors' offices in New Whiteland. There is no hospital in this community. Residents use Johnson County Memorial Hospital in Franklin, Community Hospital South on County Line Road in Indianapolis, or St. Francis South on Emerson Avenue in Indianapolis. Other healthcare providers include CVS Pharmacy, Linda Armbruster DDS, Little Creek Family Health Center, Family Physicians Johnson County, Jeffrey Fisher DDS, and Joseph Claudy OD.

Major Healthcare providers for Whiteland also include Anthem medical health insurance and Metlife for dental insurance.

#### B. Community/Public Health Events

Community and Public Health events occur at the Clark Pleasant Branch, including CPR Certification, First Aid Certification, healthy cooking, Tai Chi, The Truth about Weight Loss and Fad Diets, Living with Asthma, Stopping Stress, Healthy Snacks for Children, Yoga for Beginners, and Medicare: Answers for Seniors. There doesn't seem to be any other location that hosts health-related events or programs, with the exceptions of local doctors' offices.

#### C. Safety and Security Issues and Perceptions

- Main safety / security concern: the local schools
  - There are 4 schools within their jurisdiction
- Very few other local concerns
  - A few car break-ins
  - Local residents report when they're leaving on vacation and request extra patrols in their area when on vacation
  - Minor issues with youth
  - No major concerns in the local area

## **2. Historic Perspectives**

### **A. Traditional Rural Community**

Many current Whiteland residents that grew up in the area talk about the rural, small town community they lived in as a child. Whiteland has experienced a large population growth over the past 20 years, but now it seems to have plateaued. Many people wish to

maintain the small town, rural community feel as Whiteland continues to grow.

#### **B. Come and Stay Awhile**

The population of Whiteland has grown over the last 20 years due to the abundance of land and inexpensive housing. Whiteland is traditionally seen as a good place to raise a family, with a short commute to work in Franklin, Greenwood, Atterbury, Edinburgh, or Indianapolis. Many people raised in Whiteland return to live here, and people wanting to get away from the Metro area come to stay.

#### **C. Increasing Student Population**

The consolidation of Clark and Pleasant Townships into a combined school district in 1965 and the growing population of the community have increased student enrollment. Many people in the Whiteland community are very happy with the school system, but would like to see more funding provided for the schools. In order to continue to provide quality education for a growing student population, additional funding resources are needed to sustain and grow the Clark Pleasant School Corporation.

#### **D. Local Businesses Disappearing**

The 2008 recession hit small and family-owned businesses hard, forcing some to close or reduce their workforce. Whiteland residents have expressed a desire for these locally-owned businesses to return to the town, such as hometown grocery stores. The disappearance of family-owned local businesses has forced Whiteland residents to use national chain stores or go outside the community to meet their needs.

### **3. Current Facts**

#### **A. Schools as Cultural Hubs**

Within the town of Whiteland, there is currently no community center for the arts, sports, or recreation. The Clark Pleasant Community Schools have filled that need for the student population within the town. Strong arts and sports programs within the schools continue to attract students to participate and hone their talents.



## **B. No Community Identity**

Many people in the town of Whiteland feel that there is no unique identity that sets the town apart. There is no town square to centralize town government and local retail shops like many other towns have that are comparable in size to Whiteland. Plans have been drawn up to create a Town Center that would perhaps incorporate a variety of businesses, Town Hall, cultural arts, and other town entities.

## **C. Aging Infrastructure**

The sewer lines, water treatment plant, and other areas of public works have been in desperate need of attention for the last several years. Budget cuts have been made by the state and tax rates have not been raised. Tax rates may need to be raised or other sources of funding must be secured soon to update and make much-needed improvements to Whiteland's infrastructure.

# **4. Patterns and Themes**

## **A. Remaining Fiscally Sound**

There is an overwhelming concern from governmental, educational, business, and social service entities to spend taxpayer dollars wisely. Because Whiteland's tax rate has been so low for some time, there is a great fear of raising it. The people of Whiteland are very serious about remaining fiscally sound, sometimes at the cost of much-needed amenities for the community as a whole.

## **B. Insufficient Relief for Small Businesses**

In the recovering economic climate, tax abatements are offered to larger businesses that promise to bring jobs to the community. The reality is that the companies that promise a large number of jobs may only end up creating a few jobs, but they still get the money from the abatement. Smaller businesses that support the local community and maintain employment are not seeing any of the abatement money.

## **C. One-Stop Social Services**

Low-income residents in the Whiteland community rely on many social service agencies in Johnson County to help them get back on their feet. Currently, these agencies are spread throughout the county, creating a transportation hardship for the people who need these services the most. A combined housing, food, and employment agency would save people time and transportation costs.

#### **D. Keeping Up with Technology**

Several people in Whiteland noted how fast technology changes, presenting a new body of knowledge every 72 hours. Organizations and businesses are limited with print resources since they become quickly outdated, and more manipulative devices and games are becoming important for a child's education. It is a challenge to keep up with the latest technologies in schools and businesses alike due to the limited number of resources and funding provided; though the latest and greatest is what the community has come to expect.

#### **E. Increased Traffic Interrupts Leisure**

The amount of traffic on Whiteland Road and US 31 continues to increase as people travel to Franklin, Greenwood, and I-65. There are no true bike paths or hiking paths for pedestrians to take outside of their own housing developments. Pedestrian connectivity to the town should be considered in future town plans to help people gain access to surrounding amenities.

#### **F. Small Town Feel with Amenities**

Many people in Whiteland have expressed an interest in attaining a mix of two worlds. There is a call for a return to the "small town" feel of Whiteland, yet keeping today's amenities close by. A yearning exists for the neighborhood grocery stores and small businesses that populated the town years ago, bringing revenue back into the town itself.

#### **G. Whiteland as a Destination**

Currently in Whiteland, there are no parks, no town square, no cultural arts center, and nothing that would draw tourists to visit

from out-of-town. Building a Town Center and establishing cultural arts, parks and other recreational and entertaining amenities within the town would shape Whiteland into a destination to out-of-town visitors. In turn, tourism revenue would be generated and additional businesses would locate to Whiteland.

## **5. Emerging Insights**

### **A. Need for Leadership**

Whiteland residents are expressing the need for new, energetic leadership from county and local government officials, schools, businesses, and non-profits alike. A sense of what the people of Whiteland want for their town seems to be lacking. Stronger leadership is needed to gauge residents' visions, to assess the needs of the town, and to carry out the plans that are made.

### **B. Develop Cultural Spaces**

Currently, the majority of available arts and recreational outlets are found within the Clark Pleasant School Corporation. There are no art galleries, music venues, theatre venues, parks, recreational facilities or dance studios within the town of Whiteland itself. The establishment of the cultural arts, parks, and recreational facilities within the town of Whiteland would greatly improve its quality of life factor and attract more out-of-town residents to its services.

### **C. Reduced-Fee Student Lunches**

Currently, 45% of students in the Clark Pleasant School Corporation are on free and reduced lunches. If the number of students on free and reduced lunches continues to increase, Whiteland may have more at-risk students than once thought. Providing services and assistance to these students and families will need to be reflected into Whiteland's community as well.

### **D. County-Town Partnership**

The current feeling among Whiteland residents is that the County provides little assistance with upkeep to the areas outside the town boundaries. The partnership between the two governmental entities needs to be strengthened to keep the communication lines open

and receptive to town needs. One primary concern is that roads both inside and bordering the town of Whiteland need to be kept in good condition and safe for all Johnson County residents.

### **E. Merging the Towns**

Many people in the town of Whiteland feel that if they were to merge with the neighboring town of New Whiteland, more services could be consolidated. Services that are already shared include the post office, the school system, and the police force. The new emerging town could more easily distinguish itself as a destination and attract more tourism, while growing its population and thriving with a new identity.

## **6. Provocative Possibilities**

### **A. Economy of Scale**

In today's economy, saving money is becoming more and more important to every community. Now more than ever, the library should provide even more free services to the public, both in-house and within the community. Partnerships should be diligently sought after in order to find ways to provide services people may not be able to find anywhere else.

### **B. Town Center Space**

The town of Whiteland has drawn up plans for building a new Town Center. Since its focus is one of mixed-use, restaurants, retail stores, government offices, and social services are potential partners to fill its many proposed spaces. It was suggested that the Clark Pleasant Branch of the Johnson County Public Library may want to consider re-locating to the Town Center, should it be in need of additional space.

### **C. Safe Routes Program**

The "Safe Routes to School" program is considered being implemented in Whiteland. A partnership was suggested between the Clark Pleasant Community School Corporation and the Johnson County Public Library to recruit active senior volunteers as potential drivers for this program. The seniors could also act as drivers for

kids who would want to visit the Clark Pleasant Branch after school who may not have a ride.

#### **D. Community Information Distribution**

The Whiteland Town Council is trying to find new ways of getting community information out to the public. Town meetings could possibly be filmed and posted online, and meeting agendas could be more prominently displayed for people to take notice. It was suggested that the library could help with both of these tasks, with the possibility of sharing town information on both the Town Council and Johnson County Public Library website.

#### **E. Technological Advances**

It was suggested that the library will need to keep up with the latest technologies in order to survive. The local schools and colleges are requiring more online learning, and recreational reading is being done through eBooks and tablets. The library will need to have an even greater focus on technology-based learning to serve its future patrons.

#### **F. Connecting with School Media**

It is important that the Clark Pleasant Branch stays connected with the Clark Pleasant Media Specialists to help provide programs and after school activities for local students. Collections should also continue to be supplemented by the Clark Pleasant Branch to assist teachers with curriculum preparation and students with research projects. A partnership could also be established to share electronic materials, such as eBooks, so that students could access these materials at either location.

### **7. Illustrative Highlights**

#### **A. Great Place to Live**

Many people interviewed commented over and over again that Whiteland is a great place to live and raise a family, populated by caring people, with a wonderful school corporation. They do not want to see Whiteland gobbled up by Franklin or Greenwood.

Residents want to create an outward identity so that it can continue to thrive while also keeping its small-town atmosphere.

### **B. Need for More Money**

The need for additional funding for schools, businesses, social services, town improvements, and repairing infrastructure was a common theme among Whiteland residents. When asked to name three wishes they had for the town, this rated at the top. Additional monies would enable a lot of projects to become reality and move Whiteland towards its goal of creating a stronger identity for itself.

### **C. Local Farms Pushed Out**

Many family farms in the Whiteland area are feeling the growth of the cities. As the cities expand, once rural farmland is taken over for new housing, roads, and businesses. Family farms that have been in the community for generations are facing the hard choice of shutting down or relocating in the face of city expansion.



### **D. Accessibility, Walkability and Bikeability**

Residents have complained that they have nearly been hit when trying to walk to the post office, to the store, or just across the street. There is a great need for additional sidewalks, bike paths, and pedestrian connectivity to many town amenities. While keeping the accessibility to major thoroughfares such as interstates and highways intact, the creation of foot and bike paths is crucial to making public services more easily reached.



### **E. Building a Town Center**

The creation of a Whiteland Town Center seems to be at the heart of so many residents' wish list. This new building is envisioned as the establishment of a central location for local businesses, town government, social services, cultural arts and other town entities to be housed that is accessible to everyone. It is also a key factor in determining an identity for the town of Whiteland.