



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

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

**Community Name:** New Whiteland

**Date:** April 2013

**Researchers:** Jen Hoffman, Kelly Schmidt, and Tiffany Wilson

### **Demographics**

- A. Population as of 2010: 5,472 (U.S. Census Bureau)
- B. Estimated Rate of Growth for the next 10 years:  
Using the same 19.5% increase in population that occurred between 2000 and 2010, the estimated increase between 2010 and 2020 would be 6,539.
- C. Growth Indicators: Factors such as new housing development projects and an increased number of households plays a large role in New Whiteland's population increase, much like Whiteland Town.

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

- A. The New Whiteland Planning Commission Office stated that there were no pending residential projects in planning or consideration.
- B. A number of Realtors were contacted, but none seemed to know of any residential development projects in planning or consideration.

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

The New Whiteland Planning Commission Office stated that there were no pending commercial development projects in planning or consideration.

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

- A. Outstanding Bonds:
  - Tracy Road Bonds 1997
  - WWTP Expansion (SRF) 1998
- B. Clark-Pleasant Community School Corporation:
  - Clark-Pleasant School Severance Bonds Sr 2005
  - Clark-Pleasant Community School Corporation School Severance 2012

### **Community Tax Levies- History and Trajectory**

- A. The Certified Levies for New Whiteland Town 2007-2013:

2007: General: \$619,887 Cum Fire Spec: \$25,429  
2008: General: \$631,425 Cum Fire Spec: \$24,987  
2009: General: \$654,663 Cum Fire Spec: \$19,674  
2010: General: \$689,906 Cum Fire Spec: \$18,484  
2011: General: \$703,961 Cum Fire Spec: \$18,476  
2012: General: \$730,490 Cum Fire Spec: \$18,272  
2013: General: \$727,924 Cum Fire Spec: \$17,886

## **Roads and Highway Assessment**

Current Status: John Perrin from the New Whiteland Town Council stated that at the current time, there are no road projects planned in the immediate future. The only things that will be done will be routine maintenance.

## **Indicators of Commitment to Quality of Life**

### **A. Education**

Clark-Pleasant Community Schools have outstanding facilities and programs for students from elementary school through high school. Athletic opportunities are available in a variety of sports, and students of all abilities are encouraged and supported in the available programs. Whiteland Community High School has opportunities for the performing arts as well, including Rhythm Masters, a contemporary girl's choir, concert choir, the Expressions girl's choir, and the WCHS band. The schools are also a participant in the Central Nine vocational program in Greenwood. Opportunities like these need to be promoted to people considering Whiteland as a place to raise their family.

Whiteland Community High School consistently has one of the highest graduation rates in the county and frequently ranks near the top of county schools for SAT composite scores for college-bound seniors. Whiteland Community High School facility includes athletic fields.

Whiteland Elementary School is located on Center Street, as is the Clark-Pleasant School Corporation administrative building. These facilities are adjacent to the Whiteland Community High School campus.

Clark-Pleasant Academy is an alternative high school for students striving to meet graduation requirements for the state of Indiana. The Academy is part of a partnership with the Simon Youth Foundation.

B. Parks and Recreation

- Country Gate Park
- East Park
- Tot Park
- Tracy Commons Park (Tracy Commons Subdivision)
- West Park
- Proctor Memorial Park

C. Cultural Venues

- None per Town Hall Office

D. Public Gathering Spaces

The New Whiteland Post of the VFW is located just north of the Clark Pleasant Branch of the Johnson County Public Library. The Grand Council Cryptic Masons of Indiana, Jobs Daughters, Order of the Eastern Star of Indiana, the Order of the White Shrine of Jerusalem, the VFW Ladies Auxiliary, and the Society of Broadcast Engineers Regional Chapter 25 are other social and fraternal orders in New Whiteland.

The Family ACTION Center, Children's Bureau in New Whiteland offers Child Care Development, Family Preservation and Home Based Casework, Fatherhood Engagement services, and Parent Education. Angelcare Inc. is a local family violence shelter. Literacy Quest International, Inc. is a local Adult Education facility.

Gracepoint Church and the Liberty Tabernacle are two places of worship in New Whiteland.

E. Community Events

None mentioned by the Clerk/Treasurer of New 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. The Family ACTION Center, Children's Bureau, Inc. also offers opportunities to the community to volunteer. 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:

- Country Gate HOA
- Hilltop Commons HOA
- Tracy Commons HOA
- Tracy Ridge HOA

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

#### C. Homeschool Groups

#### D. Others:

- Proctor Park Partners
- Casa del Toro Bully Breed Education and Rescue (Animal Protection)
- Central Indiana Tang Soo Do Black Belt Club, Inc
- Daughters of the American Revolution

### **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 Parkview Dental and Curves.

**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**

- No major concerns in the area
- As far as schools go, they only have 2 schools in their jurisdiction: Break-O'-Day Elementary and Sawmill Woods Elementary.
  - New Whiteland Police have long had a policy of being visible in these 2 schools every day as long as they have the man-power, walking the halls of both schools once or twice a day every day and being visible, so these two schools are maintained as very secure and safe.

## **II. Historic Perspectives**

**A. Area Population Growth**

Many community members commented on the steady population growth in the New Whiteland area. Overall, this growth is seen as a good thing, particularly for small business owners and area churches seeking to increase their clientele and congregations. Others mentioned that while new housing construction in New Whiteland has slowed in recent years, they believe it is beginning to pick up again as the economy begins to recover.

**B. Long Term Community Members**

Many members of the community have resided in the area for twenty years or more. This gives them a unique perspective on how the town population has grown and families and values have changed over the past few decades.

C. Shifting Community Values

Community members have noticed that with population growth and a more diverse community, the overall values of the area seem to be shifting from a more conservative viewpoint to that of a more liberal mindset. The community is more open and accepting to all types of families and social groups than in the past.

D. Urban Fringe Community

Residents talk about New Whiteland having a small town feel that is ideal for raising a family and is also within close proximity to urban areas for shopping, dining, and entertainment. Nearby towns such as Franklin and Greenwood are also growing and the sprawling nature of these communities are bringing amenities closer and closer to residents of New Whiteland.

E. Educational Shifts to Meet Needs of Growing Population

Many New Whiteland residents noted Clark Pleasant schools and teachers as being one of the best assets of the community. The Clark Pleasant School Corporation is one of the fastest growing school districts in Indiana. As a result, some elementary schools are at capacity and school district officials are facing plans for redistricting in the 2013-2014 school year.

### **III. Current Facts**

A. Popular to Commute

Since New Whiteland is very close to bigger cities like Greenwood, Franklin and Indianapolis, many members of the community commute to jobs outside of New Whiteland. There are also a lot of people who commute to work in New Whiteland but live in Greenwood or Franklin, making New Whiteland a commuter town on both ends of the spectrum.

B. Increased Reliance on Technology

Many business owners in New Whiteland attribute growth of their businesses to the increasing importance of using technology on a daily business. Social media has made the biggest impact with businesses, especially those who rely on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest to promote and advertise their offerings. Also important to businesses are Web sites and Web based resources, which helps them connect to the community and provides important training/learning materials.

#### C. Crime Rate Fluctuation

Members of the community have noticed a recent crime rate fluctuation in New Whiteland in the past year. While residents of New Whiteland still feel like it is an excellent area to live and raise a family, there is some concern about the recent increase in break-ins and robberies. Members of the community are not sure what has caused the fluctuation, but believe that it will go back down again in the future and is not a long-term increase.

#### D. Families Face Economic Hardship

The rate of Clark Pleasant students receiving free and reduced-price lunch is on the rise. Some schools in the district are partnering with social service agencies to help these low-income families with food resources. It is thought that the economic downturn is to blame for the increased need for low-income families.

#### E. Future Infrastructure Development

Greenwood and Whiteland are planning on developing two roadways that will likely change the flow of traffic in the New Whiteland area. Construction of a new interchange at I-65 and Worthsville Road will begin in 2013, making the road a major passageway into Greenwood's south side. The town of Whiteland is also looking at plans to develop Whiteland Road near I-65. Community members generally see this development as positive and believe it will encourage new business and employment opportunities as well as improve traffic flow in the area.

### **IV. Patterns and Themes**

#### A. Consolidation of Town Government



Many community members believe the towns of Whiteland and New Whiteland would be more effective if they were merged. Several people commented that a consolidated government structure could lead toward a united development plan, infrastructure improvements, and strengthened public services such as police and fire. Residents commented that the current duplication of services doesn't make sense given New Whiteland and Whiteland's small geographic area.

**B. Desire for New Parks**

Although community members think New Whiteland is a wonderful place to live and raise a family, several residents commented on the lack of parks and green spaces in the community. Residents believe that parks are important additions to a well-rounded community and that more parks could provide much needed spaces for recreation. Some residents mentioned visiting Proctor Park on a regular basis, while others simply drive to Greenwood to use their parks.

**C. Better Shopping/Grocery Options**

Residents often mentioned the lack of shopping, grocery, and sit-down dining options in the New Whiteland area. They feel that these types of establishments could bring employment to the area and that it would promote New Whiteland as a destination, rather than a drive through town. People also feel that while the new Kroger store on US 31 and Worthsville Road is very nice, they would also like a small local market in town where people could walk or bike to purchase groceries.

**D. Traffic Flow Improvements**

While members of New Whiteland are excited for the potential growth that the construction on Whiteland Road and Worthsville Road should bring, they feel that there are also improvements that could be made along US 31. They feel that adding a few more stoplights, especially in front of Whiteland High School, would help traffic flow and bring more customers to the businesses located along that stretch of the highway. Members of the community feel

that often times, New Whiteland is just a place that people who live outside the area drive through but don't really have a reason for stopping. Members of the community also feel that a few added stoplights will make the highway through the town safer.

#### E. Numerous Charitable Resources

Over the past several years, members of the community have noticed an increase in the number of charitable resources available to those who need help. Food banks, charities that offer home goods, and career counseling services have really stepped up to help area organizations who rely on some of those services in their work with people in need. Members of the community see this as a valuable resource that New Whiteland and Johnson County have to offer.

### **V. Emerging Insights**

#### A. Underlying Economic Struggle

While the nation's economic downturn is beginning to abate, it is clear that some New Whiteland families are still struggling financially. Increasing numbers of students in the Clark Pleasant School district are receiving free or reduced-price lunches, and some local churches are aiding those out of work by providing job searching and resume writing workshops. While there are several resources in the community to help those in need, it is important for library staff to be trained in connecting people to these vital services.

#### B. Lack of Community Hub

Many residents expressed that the town of New Whiteland lacks a place for everyone in the community to gather. There is no downtown area or community center. Residents would like to see growth in a downtown area as well as added parks with community buildings where they could gather. Some feel that the lack of a community hub also contributes to the fact that people don't stop in

New Whiteland when they are passing through but may if there was something to draw them in off the highway.

C. Small Town Atmosphere

Many community members say they enjoy living and working in New Whiteland because of its small town feel. People commented that they enjoy the area's local businesses and running into people they know at the post office or library. They also feel like the community is safe compared to a more urban area, making it a wonderful place to raise their children.

## **VI. Provocative Possibilities**

A. Technology Literacy Training

Many small businesses and churches in the area send office staff to technology training classes to keep staff current on computer programs and software. The library could provide technology training for small, outside organizations on tight budgets through computer classes or book-a-librarian sessions.

B. Form New Outreach Partnerships

In addition to the homebound outreach services, the library could also partner with social service organizations. In addition to providing materials to these organizations through outreach visits and special library programs, we could also partner with them through the volunteer program.

C. Increased Community Engagement

Many businesses and organizations in the community do not realize where the library is located in the community or the resources the library has to offer. The library should look for ways to reach out to the surrounding community to raise awareness of our resources and location.

D. Unique Collaborations with Schools

Many school libraries within the community are facing dwindling materials budgets combined with larger class sizes. Several teachers use the public library as a resource but some have expressed frustration with the hard-line stance on fees for late or

missing items. The library could look for creative ways to work with teachers in order to share the library's up-to-date collections and resources.

## **VII. Illustrative Highlights**

### **A. Multi-Generational Customers**

One longtime local business owner commented on the close-knit nature of New Whiteland and how they've had the privilege of getting to know multiple generations of families. This has not only helped their business grow over the years, it has also deepened the value of these interactions. Although this business is low tech—they do not have a website and don't even accept credit cards—they feel that the friendships with their customers have played a huge role in the strength of their business.

### **B. Customers as Friends**

One local business owner coined the term "Friendstimers" for their customers who also become their friends. New Whiteland's small town attitude and size brings in many of the same people on a regular basis. Business owners get to know the customers personally and they not only help keep the doors open, but they become their friends too.

Regulars give them feedback on their products and help spread the word about the business, especially through positive interactions on social media sites.

The business owner stated that their customers have no idea how much of a positive impact they have both personally and professionally. They owe much of their success to their "friendstimers!"

### **C. Community Building Through Skill Sharing**

One local church described the ways in which they are trying to serve not only the spiritual needs of their parishioners but their practical needs as well.

One pastor talked about knowing several families that are struggling financially or otherwise and how the church is offering resources and opportunities to help them. The church holds workshops on job searching and resume writing and hopes that this will give families practical skills they can use to improve their quality of life. They also offer mentoring for younger members whose families may need extra support at one time or another.

The pastor believes ministering to people's needs builds community and equips people with skills to improve their lives.