



## **SECTION 4: INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

As this document represents an update to the 1995 Whitehouse Comprehensive Plan, a full analysis of community facilities has not been funded. However, some description of facilities and infrastructural capacity will be provided in a very abbreviated format in order to provide for a more complete understanding of the community's conditions.

### **Sanitary Sewer System**

The City recently conducted studies of infrastructure capacity; therefore, those efforts will not be duplicated within this Plan. The City provides sanitary sewer throughout its incorporated area. Agreements are made regarding the timing and funding sources for extension of the sewer system when landowners request annexation into the City.

The municipal wastewater treatment plant is located in the southwestern quadrant of the City, where the general elevation of the community allows for gravity flow of effluent in most cases. The plant utilizes an active sludge process capable of handling 1.5 million gallons of wastewater per day. At present, the plant has excess capacity and currently averages treatment of only 0.5 million gallons per day.

### **Non-Municipal Water Districts and Certificate of Convenience and Necessity (CCN) Rights**

Whitehouse holds the rights to provide water service to land within the City Limits and portions of the ETJ. The Walnut Grove water district holds the rights for some portions of the western and southern ETJ. Southern Utilities is another CCN holder for portions of the eastern and southern ETJ.

Non-municipal water districts sometimes lack the necessary capacity to support intense urban development. While this may or may not be the case within the



Whitehouse study area, some portions of the Future Land Use Plan may require negotiation between the City and Water Districts in order to provide adequate fire protection and drinking water needs.

## Municipal Water System

The City acquires, maintains, and delivers potable drinking water throughout its CCN. At present, water is purchased from the City of Tyler which also provides initial water conditioning.

Three elevated storage tanks are maintained by the City both in and out of the City Limits, resulting in sufficient water pressure for urban development and fire protection. These facilities have a combined capacity of just under 1 million gallons. Three ground storage tanks are also maintained by the City with a combined



**Image 4.1:** The City's primary elevated storage tank as viewed from Main Street (above) and State Highway 110 (right). Whitehouse maintains two other elevated tanks located in the northern and southern portions of City's CCN area.



capacity of 1.1 million gallons. In order to diversify the City's options for water sources several exploratory wells have been drilled. It is anticipated that one of these wells will have a flow rate of 300 gallons per minute, with the other estimated at 200 gallons per minute. Under current conditions, this flow rate is capable of providing for the City's water needs during non-summer months. The City will need to construct a water treatment plant and upgrade water lines leading from the well sites. Total construction costs could approach \$3 million. If the wells perform as anticipated the City could save significant amounts of money over the present costs of purchasing water from the City of Tyler.



## **Fire Protection**

### **Department Classification, Staff, and Service Area**

The Fire Department is classified as a "mostly volunteer" department consisting of 30 firefighters. Five of these are career firefighters, and are paid a salary by the Department. These firefighters work part-time for Whitehouse and also serve with departments from surrounding communities and cities. The Department services all areas within the City Limits as well as unincorporated land within the ETJ. The Department also services land within the Whitehouse Independent School District not found within the City Limits of Tyler or Whitehouse.

Several members of the Department are certified as EMT/paramedics. The Department also has some firefighters who have received certification by the National Weather Service to act as storm spotters during severe weather. A few of the firefighters also have achieved SCUBA diving certification, and participate in the Smith County Combined Joint Dive Team. The Department conducts ongoing training and education on a monthly basis. Members also participate in training exercises throughout the region and State, including the Texas A&M University Municipal Fire Training School, Tyler/Smith County Annual Training School, and through the East Texas Medical Center EMS Program.

### **Rolling Stock**

The Department utilizes and maintains seven primary trucks. Four of these are pumper trucks or tankers with the remaining vehicles used for brush fires or rescue. The newest vehicle is a 2005 model Kenworth 3,000 gallon Supertanker.

### **Anticipated Capital Costs and Upgrades**

The Department conducts ongoing staff and facilities evaluations in order to determine both long and short-term needs. It is likely that a second station and associated rolling stock will be required within the life of this Plan. However, no



decisions have been made regarding the location or timetable for such a project. According to staff, the next likely addition to the rolling stock fleet will be a new pumper truck or an aerial apparatus/ladder vehicle. Decisions regarding new equipment have yet to be finalized, and are currently subject to change.

**National Standards and Benchmarks**

The Department complies with all National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards. Furthermore, the City has adopted the fire protection portion of the International Building Code (IBC) for all structures permitted within the City Limits.

Table 4.1 compares national standards for fire protection equipment and facilities with comparable

	<b>Pumper Trucks Per 1,000 Residents</b>	<b>Aerial Apparatus Per 1,000 Residents</b>	<b>Fire Stations Per 1,000 Residents</b>
National	0.26	0.02	0.18
Whitehouse	0.29	none	0.14

**Table 4.1:** Fire protection levels in Whitehouse compare favorably to national standards. National standards are taken from Community Benchmarks.

Whitehouse facilities. The comparisons rate the number of facilities divided by municipal population in thousands. The Department currently exceeds national



**Image 4.2:** Engine #1 was the first truck used by the Whitehouse Volunteer Fire Department and is still driven for special events such as YesterYear and at the Christmas parade.

standards with 0.29 pumper trucks per 1,000 residents. Vehicles equipped with aerial apparatus are not frequently found in cities the size of Whitehouse. The Department does not currently utilize such a vehicle, but is considering such equipment as a part of a future purchase. Whitehouse is slightly below the national average for number of fire stations; however, given the City's land use characteristics a single fire station is appropriate for current conditions.



## Other Services

The Fire Department actively participates in educational and outreach programs. Firefighters frequently speak at schools, churches, and other organizations on the topic of fire safety and prevention. The staff also conducts home safety inspections and installs smoke detectors for citizens upon request.

## Senior Center

Whitehouse has partnered with a private organization to provide specialized services to senior citizens living within the community (Image 4.3). The Bobbie and Acker Hanks Senior Center provides a common location for retirees to socialize with each other. Seniors play bingo and dominos at the facility, as well as



Image 4.3: Bobbie and Acker Hanks Senior Center

celebrate special occasions. The center also operates as a Meals on Wheels hub. Over 500 meals are served at the facility on a monthly basis, with approximately the same number delivered to homebound individuals.

## Recycling Center

The City currently operates a recycling center which accepts unsorted post consumer waste including: cardboard, newsprint, mixed paper, aluminum, steel, and several types of plastic (Image 4.4). In addition to recycling, the center also processes yard waste and wood chips for composting. This product is available for free to citizens of the City. Once



Image 4.4: City of Whitehouse Recycling Center

processed, any recyclable material is sold to paper mills and larger recycling



operations. The Recycling Center operates on Wednesdays and the first and third Saturdays of each month for drop-off by the public. Currently curbside recycling is not offered. The center averages over 150 cars per week when it is open on Saturdays, and over 50 cars on any given Wednesday. The center processes approximately four million pounds of material per year.

Two City staff members operate the center as a part-time component of their jobs. These staffers are augmented by volunteers from Keep Whitehouse Beautiful and community service appointees. The combined staff ranges between six and fifteen people depending on the anticipated drop-off volume.

## Police Protection

### Staffing

The City of Whitehouse maintains a full-time Police Department. The Department is currently staffed by 16 sworn officers (Table 4.2). Because of the Department's size, many officers join the Department early in their careers and are subsequently recruited by larger cities and law enforcement agencies. As a



**Image 4.5:** Police Department group photograph (Back Row: Motorcycle Officer Jeff Fite, Chief Rick Waller, Lt. Lee Long, Sgt. James Stewart and Reserve Officer Johnnie Brown; Front Row: Reserve Officer David Smith, Reserve Officer Curtis Philpot, Sgt. Darryl McCartney, Sgt. Stephen Snyder (no longer with the Department) and Reserve Officer Chris Fite, several other officers not pictured)

result, the Department in Whitehouse has focused on providing high-quality ongoing training for its officers. The Department has also expanded its support staff in terms of dispatchers and administrative assistants. In 2005, a total of 25

	2003	2004	2005
Sworn Officers	16	16	16
Communications Staff	4	4	6
Animal Control	1	1	1
Administrative Supervisor	1	1	1
Administrative Clerk	n/a	n/a	1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>25</b>

**Table 4.2:** Police Department staffing levels for 2003, 2004, and 2005

individuals were employed by the Department including both sworn officers and administrative/support staff. National benchmarks, part of the FBI Uniform Crime Reports,



recommend that between 2.3 and 3.2 sworn officers be available for each 1,000 residents within a city. For smaller communities such as Whitehouse the officer to resident ratio is pushed toward the higher end of the recommended range. Under these benchmarks a city the size of Whitehouse should provide 22 sworn officers. Despite this understaffing, the Department's proactive approach to law enforcement has contributed to a lower per capita crime rate than is observed within Smith County and surrounding communities (Table 4.4, Page 44).

### Facilities and Fleet Levels

The City has recently constructed a new municipal building which houses typical "City Hall" functions in addition to the Police Station. These improvements have allowed for expansion of the Department's activities as well as an increase in staff efficiency

Unit Type	Year Model	Make	Model
Animal Control	2005	Ford	F250
Climate	1985	Chevrolet	K5 Blazer
Detective Unit	2003	Ford	Crown Victoria
K-9 Patrol Unit	2002	Ford	Crown Victoria
Lieutenant's Vehicle	1994	Chevrolet	Impala
Patrol Unit	2006	Ford	Crown Victoria
Patrol Unit	2005	Ford	Crown Victoria
Patrol Unit	2005	Ford	Crown Victoria
Patrol Unit	2004	Ford	Crown Victoria
Patrol Unit	2004	Ford	Crown Victoria
Patrol Unit	2002	Kawasaki	Motorcycle
Patrol Unit	1996	Yamaha	Golf Cart
Sergeant's Vehicle	2006	Ford	Crown Victoria
Warrant Vehicle	2006	Ford	Crown Victoria
Warrant Vehicle	2001	Ford	Expedition

Table 4.3: Police Department fleet list

and technology. A total of 15 vehicles are included in the Department's fleet (Table 4.3). The majority of these vehicles were purchased within the last three years. In addition to standard patrol vehicles, the Department uses a climate weather vehicle, K-9 unit, motorcycle, animal control unit, and vehicles for warrant officers, detectives, and lieutenants.

### Crime Rate

One of the agencies charged with compiling statistics on criminal offenses throughout the State of Texas is the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS). The DPS publishes an annual report detailing criminal statistics for jurisdictions including Whitehouse, Smith County, and each surrounding city. Table 4.4 (Page 44) illustrates the number of reported offenses in seven broad categories for the



most recent report year (2004). Statistics for the City of Whitehouse, the City of Tyler, and Smith County are listed in both unadjusted totals and in terms of offenses per 1,000 residents. Reports for Tyler include not only the Tyler Police Department, but also offenses handled by police departments on campuses for the Tyler Independent School District, Tyler Junior College, and the University of Texas at Tyler. These agencies are listed separately in the DPS report. The consolidation here is necessary for comparison sake because the Whitehouse Police Department statistics already include offenses occurring on school campuses. Reports for Smith County represent cases filed by agencies outside of

Agency	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated Assault	Burglary	Larceny	Auto Theft
Whitehouse (raw)	0	3	2	5	22	46	2
Whitehouse (offenses/1,000 pop.)	0.0	0.4	0.3	0.7	3.3	7.2	0.3
Tyler (raw)	6	50	134	355	1,091	3,823	231
Tyler (offenses/1,000 pop.)	0.1	0.6	1.5	4.0	12.1	42.6	2.6
Smith County (raw)	3	42	29	237	700	1,028	193
Smith County (offenses/1,000 pop.)	0.0	0.5	0.4	2.9	8.5	12.4	2.3

**Table 4.4:** The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) 2004 crime report details offenses reported by police departments throughout the State. Offenses reported for "Tyler" include statistics generated by the City's police department as well as agencies responsible for policing the Tyler Independent School District, Tyler Junior College, and University of Texas at Tyler campuses. Offenses reported for "Smith County" include only those cases occurring outside of the municipal boundaries of cities within the County. Population sizes for per capita statistics are taken from the crime report and may or may not be consistent with other population estimates.

the jurisdiction of city police departments and therefore should not be confused with an overall county level.

Assuming that reporting and crime awareness rates are uniform across all jurisdictions, citizens of the City of Whitehouse were exposed to less crime than residents of other listed communities in terms of both overall and population adjusted levels. It is likely that this is a result of both the population characteristics of the community (socioeconomic status, educational achievement, "small-town mentality," etc.), as well as the effectiveness of the City's police force in both reactive enforcement activities and proactive/educational policies and programs.

**Outreach and Public Education**

The Police Department is involved in ongoing outreach and public education efforts with community groups and the Whitehouse Independent School District. These activities include the "Shattered Dreams" project meant to address





underage alcohol and drug related deaths. In 2004, the most recent year in which full statistics were available, alcohol and drug related cases accounted for one third of the juvenile arrests made by the Department.

### Department Growth and Expansion

The Police Department routinely monitors growth within the community in order to plan for additional needs. While any population change will impact the Department's needs, annexation of land near Lake Tyler may require significant increases in staff levels and equipment due to the recreational nature of lakefront property. The Department also supports WISD campuses, and must account for changing traffic patterns and student growth as a result of campus construction.

## Whitehouse Community Library

### Library Facilities

The Whitehouse Community Library is located on land adjoining the City Park on Main Street, the City Hall complex, the YMCA, and other community facilities. The structure itself is a geodesic dome with just over five thousand square feet of usable space allowing for efficient staff operations and patron



**Image 4.6:** The library's geodesic dome design affords a potentially small staff maximum visibility throughout the facility and allows for increased space efficiency (left). Due to the collection's size, library stacks have been placed throughout the facility in order to maximize space. An additional room on the ground floor not contained within the dome is utilized for children's books and as a meeting space for reading programs targeted at the community's youth (top).



usage (Image 4.6, Page 45). The Library has a capacity of 25,000 volumes with approximately 20,000 borrowed on an annual basis. The facility is open approximately 30 hours per week.

### Library Funding and Relationship to the City

The Library is operated as a nonprofit corporation and is supported by an additional corporation called the "Friends of the Whitehouse Community Library Inc." The City and Library do not have a direct partnership; however, the Library does receive an annual grant from the municipal government which is used to partially fund staff salaries and other expenses. Although municipal and nonprofit support covers some of the Library's expenses, the staff members regularly work unfunded hours as volunteers.

### Outreach Programs

In addition to providing typical services, the Library also conducts several special programs benefiting community members.

These programs are targeted at a

wide variety of library patrons including young children and senior citizens. The Staff also participate in various community activities such as parades and Keep Whitehouse Beautiful. In addition to the existing summer reading program, the



**Image 4.7:** Former First Lady Barbara Bush participated in a fund-raising campaign organized by the Whitehouse Community Library's librarian. Schoolchildren within the community competed with each other for the chance to listen to Mrs. Bush read several books at library. Proceeds from the competition's various fund-raising efforts were utilized to benefit several community programs.





Library has plans for additional summer projects targeting a wider variety of patrons. Other program examples for adults include computer literacy and genealogy research courses.

### Library Facilities Expansion and Growth



**Image 4.8:** The library's original dome (under construction above) was intended to be the first of three such structures. In order to serve a growing community the library will need to physically expand its facilities proportionate to the City's population growth.

At present the Library is exhibiting between 22 and 23 thousand volumes. The building's design will only allow for minor growth of the collection. As a result of the anticipated community growth, physical expansion of the facility, and the addition of new educational programs by the Library within the life

of this document will be needed in order to continue to provide current and/or improved levels of service. Community growth and diversification will necessitate these structural and programmatic expansions.

### Public Education

#### District Achievements

The Whitehouse Independent School District (WISD) has been an award-winning and highly regarded organization for more than a century. The District was awarded the "Best Public School in East Texas" award for the 2004-

School	Grades	Professional Staff	Students
Gus Winston Cain Elementary	K-1	46	638
Mozelle Brown Elementary	2	26	336
H. L. Higgins Intermediate	3-4, PK/EC	52	750
J. W. Holloway Middle School	5-6	47	673
Whitehouse Junior High School	7-8	48	644
Whitehouse High School	9-12	93	1,172

**Table 4.5:** WISD campus statistics and student population distribution for the 2005-2006 school year (source: WISD State of the School report 2005)

2005 and 2005-2006 school years by BScene Magazine. The Association of



Community Schools also ranks WISD 17th out of all of the 4A schools in terms of academic effectiveness. The District is presently comprised of six campuses (Table 4.5), serving Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade students. Beyond academic success, the District is often credited as being the primary driving force behind the City's population growth.

### **District Campuses**

#### *Gus Winston Cain Elementary School*

Cain Elementary School currently serves Kindergarten and first-grade students (Image 4.9). The campus is named for influential principal Gus Winston Cain. Several programs offered on campus include intensive and accelerated programs in reading and math, summer reading and math instructional programs, computer education, and English as a Second Language (ESL) certified instructors.



**Image 4.9:** Gus Winston Cain Elementary School houses Kindergarten and first-grade students.

#### *Mozelle Brown Elementary School*

Brown Elementary serves second-grade students and is located on the site which was originally occupied by the "white house." The school is named in honor of Mozelle Brown who taught young children early in the District's history.

#### *H. L. Higgins Intermediate School*

Higgins Intermediate School serves third and fourth grade students as well as Pre-Kindergarten classes. The campus is named in honor of Harold Higgins an influential school superintendent who worked in the District during many of its early years.



### *J. W. Holloway Middle School*

Holloway Middle School serves fifth and sixth grade students. During the most recent school year, 675 students were enrolled on campus. Students attending classes at Holloway Middle School have recently been recognized for their academic and extracurricular activities by the University Interscholastic League (UIL). The campus is named in honor of J.W. Holloway, who was the principal at Stanton High School. Stanton was attended by African American students prior to integration with the rest of WISD. Mr. Holloway, and other teachers from Stanton, went on to teach and serve in the integrated schools for many years.

### *Whitehouse Junior High School*

Whitehouse Junior High School serves seventh and eighth grade students with a campus enrollment of 644. The campus offers a wide variety of academic and extracurricular activities, including National Junior Honor Society, Student Council, Band, Choir, Theater, and boys and girls athletics programs.

### *Whitehouse High School*

Whitehouse High School serves ninth through twelfth grade students. The school is the District's newest campus and includes modern facilities for both academics and a wide range of extracurricular disciplines (Image 4.10). During the 2005-2006 school year the fine arts



**Image 4.10:** Whitehouse High School

program has continued its long-term success including All-State band and choir members, award-winning one-act plays, and honored dance and cheer squads.



Several athletic teams and individuals have been recognized including State Champions in tennis and swimming. Academic performance has also excelled including several UIL academic championships.

**District Growth**

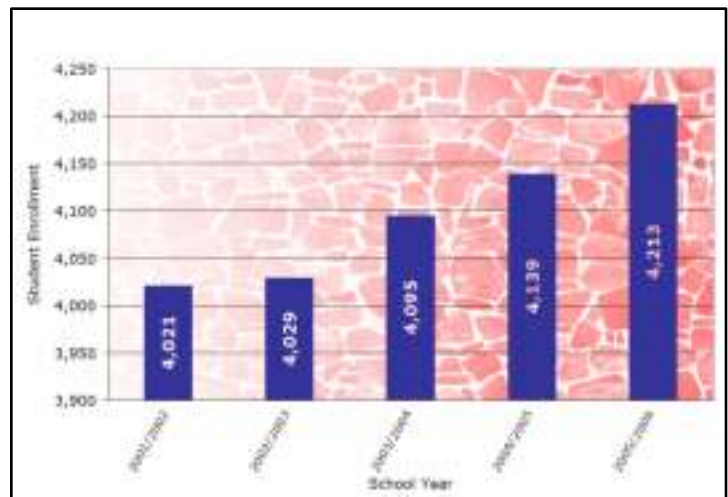


Table 4.6: WISD student enrollment

The District conducts ongoing growth and demographic analysis of its entire jurisdiction in order to determine current and future facilities and staff needs. Student enrollment has experienced steady and consistent growth since the post-World War II era. During

the 2004-2005 school year, approximately 4,100 students were enrolled; with just over 4,200 students enrolled during the 2005-2006 school year (Table 4.6).

At present the District practices a policy which groups all members of a particular grade onto the same campus. This policy presents several advantages; however, it does result in some inefficiency due to inconsistency in grade distribution. This campus

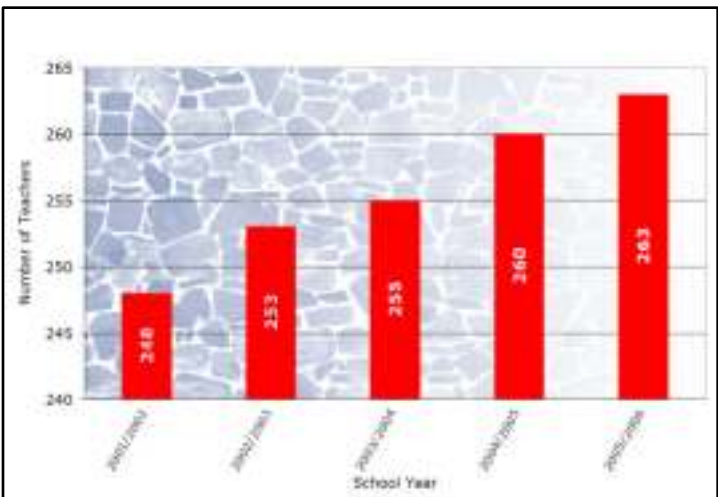


Table 4.7: WISD teachers on staff

configuration also results in more traffic congestion from parent drop off. The District is exploring other options and configurations for facilities in future school years. Demographic projections indicate that the District will need to expand its current facilities within the near future to accommodate projected growth.