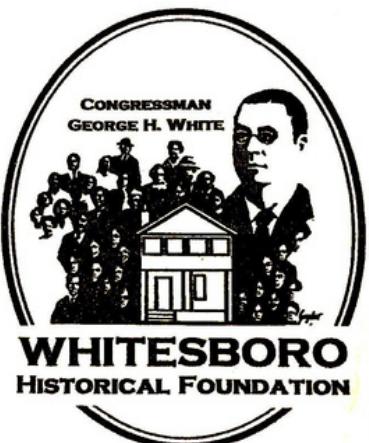


WHITESBORO HISTORIC DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN



SUBMITTED TO
THE NEW JERSEY
NRTC PROGRAM
JUNE 2025



Content

SECTION 1: COVER PAGE

SECTION 2: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: PAGE 04

SECTION 3: ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION: PAGE 06

SECTION 4: ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY & EXPERIENCE: PAGE 09

SECTION 5: NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION: PAGE 16

SECTION 6: NEIGHBORHOOD ASSETS & INVOLVEMENT: PAGE 52

**SECTION 7: PROPOSED VISION, STRATEGIES,
ACTIVITIES, & OUTCOMES: PAGE 65**

SECTION 8: PARTICIPATORY PLANNING PROCESS: PAGE 89

June 10, 2025

**The Whitesboro Historic District Neighborhood Plan,
prepared and submitted by:**

Whitesboro Historical Foundation

46 Oyster Road, Cape May Court House, NJ 08210

(609) 465-3960

Neighborhood planning services on this project were provided by:

Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation

8211 Tamarron Drive, Plainsboro, NJ 08536

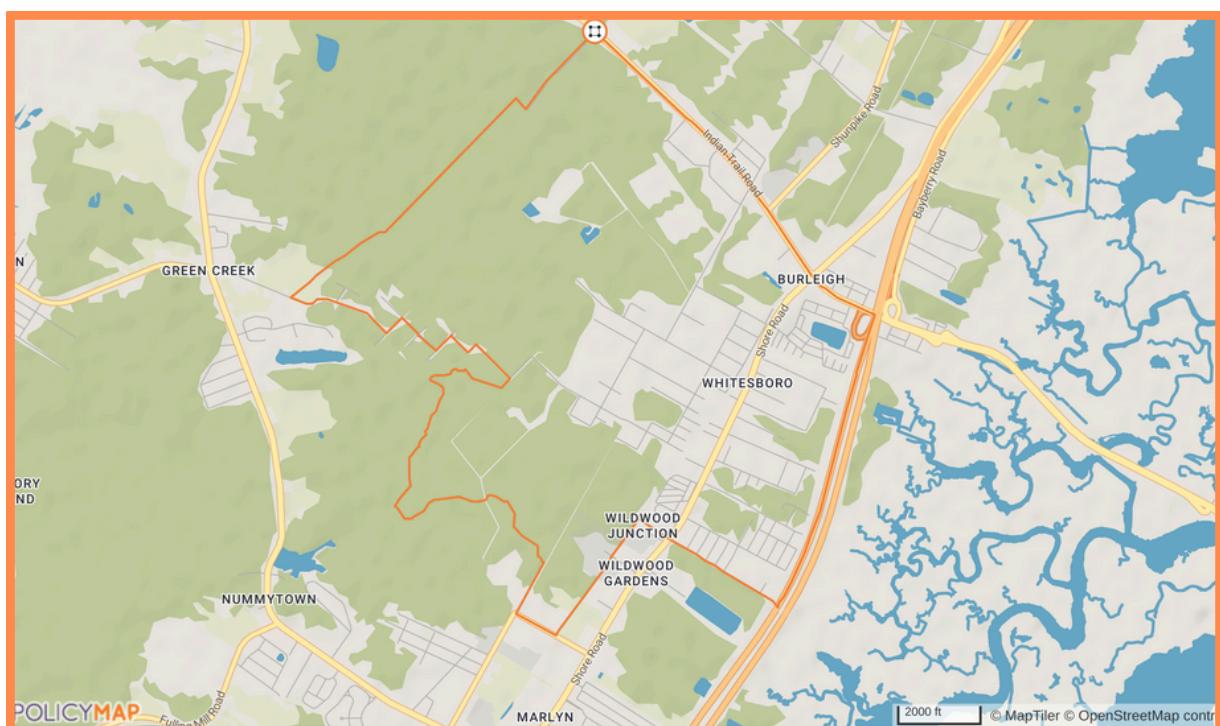
www.eoministryfoundation.org

Proper Foundation

115 Dewitt Avenue, Asbury Park, NJ 07712

www.feliciasimmons4asburypark.com

Whitesboro Historic District Neighborhood Map



Section 2

Executive Summary

The Whitesboro Historic District Neighborhood has been in existence since the late 1800s, when, the Colored American Equitable Industrial Association, Spearheaded by influential leaders such as Former U.S. Congressman George H. White, Booker T. Washington, and Paul Laurence Dunbar, Aletha Gibbs, and others began acquisition of over 3500 acres of land in Cape May County, New Jersey. By the 1900s, Whitesboro had grown into a self-governing town with its own post office, train station, schools, firehouse, constable, thriving businesses, and prosperous homeowners.

Since 1998, WHF has stood as a beacon of resilience and heritage in Whitesboro. Inspired by Whitesboro's renowned ancestors and Cape May County's deep ties to the Underground Railroad. WHF's strives is to display Whitesboro's history in a unique and informative way. Harriet Tubman, renowned for her courageous missions to liberate enslaved people, utilized Cape May as a base for her operations. Additionally, William Still, the father of the Underground Railroad, aided over 800 enslaved individuals on their journey to freedom.

The WHF exemplifies a model of resilience and self-autonomy, demonstrating the power of community involvement and creative solutions in the face of adversity. With strong partnerships and a shared vision for the future, Whitesboro is poised to reclaim its legacy and build a sustainable, thriving community for generations to come.

In 2001, the WHF was established in the Hill House, the former residence of Levi Matthews Sr., the community's second constable. This historic building now serves as a museum and cultural center, preserving artifacts and stories that highlight the community's rich history and contributions. Under the leadership of Shirley Green, the WHF has become a vital institution, offering exhibits, educational programs, and community events that celebrate and sustain the legacy of Whitesboro.

In 2023, WHF initiated the Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project (WHPP) to honor Whitesboro's rich history while addressing contemporary challenges. Unlike many revitalization efforts, the WHPP is deeply rooted in community engagement and empowerment. Through a comprehensive, community-driven planning process, the project has engaged residents of all ages, fostering a renewed sense of pride and excitement about the future. This inclusive approach has resulted in the development of strategies across five key focus areas:

1. Social, Environmental, & Civil Justice
2. Economic & Workforce Development
3. Infrastructure & Housing Development
4. Historic & Cultural Preservation
5. Family & Youth Development

This planning process included over 30 monthly community meetings, more than 20 special events, a neighborhood-wide survey, and collaborative sessions with local, state, and federal officials, as well as various community development organizations. This extensive engagement has culminated in the development of a comprehensive neighborhood plan, supported by a planning grant from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs through the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit (NRTC) program.



Whitesboro residents and community partners at the July 2023 Whitesboro Community Listening Session. (Figure 1)

Section 3

Organization Information

Lead organization: Whitesboro Historical Foundation

Partner organizations: Proper Foundation, Essex Community Land Trust, Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters, New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance, Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The Whitesboro Historic Foundation (WHF) is a fiscally stable and financially sound organization, with a well-established history of meeting and often exceeding our revenue goals. Year after year, we maintain our ability to cover all operating and programming expenses without disruption or compromise.

We take this financial stewardship seriously, as our role extends beyond program delivery. WHF provides leadership on some of the most pressing social challenges facing the town of Whitesboro, including capacity building and long-term revitalization efforts. In that light, strong financial health is not just a point of pride, it's a responsibility we uphold with consistency.

WHF is well-positioned to lead a Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit (NRTC) initiative. We have both the experience and infrastructure to manage such an effort effectively and responsibly.

Our annual budget currently stands at \$100,000, in line with previous years. In our most recent fiscal year, 52% of our revenue was sourced from government agencies, 25% from institutional partners, and the balance from individual contributions and fundraising events.

Our funding sources include:

- Above \$50,000: New Jersey Division of Community Affairs – NRTC Program
- Between \$1,000 and \$10,000: Eastern Atlantic Regional Council of Carpenters, Essex Community Land Trust, New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance, Cape Resorts, and Cape May County Culture & Heritage Division.

In terms of spending, WHF remains highly mission-focused: 80% of our expenditure goes directly toward programs and services, with only 20% allocated to general and administrative costs.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) has proudly served as the lead organization of the Whitesboro Historic District Neighborhood revitalization plan since spearheading the preliminary neighborhood planning process in 2023. Since then, WHF and its partners have reinvigorated the entire community of Whitesboro and elevated its remarkable history to federal, regional, state, county, and local leaders and organizations. WHF has firmly rooted community participation and leadership as the cornerstone of the Whitesboro Neighborhood revitalization project.

Since the project's formal launch in 2023, more than 1,000 residents have actively participated in project events, meetings, and initiatives. These community members are not just participants; they are decision-makers who shape the project's direction through consistent engagement in monthly meetings and specialized forums addressing key issues and opportunities.

All of WHF's outreach efforts have been intentionally resident-led, with a dedicated outreach team of neighborhood members conducting door-to-door engagement and making their presence known at community events. Over the past year, WHF has deepened its commitment to empowering local leadership by establishing formal project membership for residents, local organizations, and external partners. Through our project members, WHF has built a robust network of community development institutions and service agencies that extend its reach and impact.

A pivotal relationship in this network is WHF's collaboration with the Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation (EOMF), a statewide, justice-centered community service ministry that's had an active presence in Whitesboro since 2022. EOMF has taken the lead on external affairs for our project, forging strategic alliances with organizations such as the People's Organization for Progress, New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, FBI Newark Citizens Academy, Peace Islands Institute New Jersey, and the New Jersey Army National Guard.

WHF also maintains a close partnership with Proper Foundation, an organization dedicated to delivering information, connections, and actionable solutions to communities across New Jersey's rural, suburban, and urban towns. In partnership with WHF, Proper Foundation has cultivated key relationships with institutions including the Eastern Atlantic Regional Council of Carpenters, Essex Community Land Trust, 4 Asbury Park CPC, Wcc Historic Renovation Association, New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance, Build One America/New Jersey, National Action Network, New Jersey Black Physicians Association, and many more.

WHF's network also includes numerous local businesses such as Green Forest Alkaline Water, Black Kulture Incorporated, Brown's Cleaning Crew, and Dawn's Delight. These business leaders and many others have come together in solidarity to discuss shared concerns, serve on our project's leadership committee, and support community advancement efforts.

Finally, WHF enjoys longstanding relationships with a number of local churches, Cape Community Church, First Baptist Church of Whitesboro, and Christ Gospel Church, to name a few. Through its faith-based allies, WHF conducts vital outreach and promotes awareness of project events and initiatives throughout the community.

Section 4

Organizational Capacity

and Experience

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) is a deeply rooted, community-based nonprofit organization that has proudly served the Whitesboro community since 1998. Today, WHF collaborates with a powerful network of over 50 community agencies and engages thousands of individuals in efforts to enhance the quality of life for all Whitesboro residents. This longstanding community trust and expansive reach uniquely position WHF to lead a comprehensive range of initiatives that foster self-reliance and strong local governance.

As the designated lead agency for revitalization efforts within the Whitesboro Historic District Neighborhood, WHF brings both vision and proven expertise to managing the Whitesboro NRTC revitalization project. The Foundation has consistently demonstrated the capacity to implement and sustain transformative projects that deliver tangible, lasting benefits to the community.

WHF is a well-established and resilient organization, recognized for executing a balance of innovative strategies and time-tested practices to drive the social and cultural revitalization of the Town of Whitesboro. Backed by robust financial oversight and administrative systems, WHF operates with a sound \$100,000 annual budget and the internal controls necessary to responsibly manage NRTC grant funds. This institutional stability ensures WHF is fully prepared to meet the responsibilities and challenges of leading this important initiative.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

WHF provides bold and visionary leadership in developing programs and initiatives that directly benefit the people of Whitesboro. As both a convener and a catalyst for community action, WHF, together with its partners, mobilizes local and external stakeholders to participate in –

a diverse range of impactful programs. Once key issues are identified, WHF's dedicated staff and partners conduct research, lead program development, and carry out critical administrative functions to ensure each project is strategically implemented. In addition, WHF staff manage all fiscal operations and collaborate with independent evaluators to rigorously measure program outcomes and community impact.

Program Initiatives in Progress:

Whitesboro Moment in Time Celebration: This dynamic celebration brings together residents of all ages to reflect on and honor their contributions to Cape May County, New Jersey, and American history. The event features engaging historical reenactments performed by local youth and adults, vividly portraying Whitesboro's journey from 1901 to the present day.

Whitesboro Intergenerational Field Trips & Mentorship: This inspiring program connects local school-age children with elders in Cape May County nursing homes, where youth share Whitesboro's unique and powerful history, building bonds across generations while deepening community pride. WHF also mentors local Whitesboro school children as a work-study site.

Whitesboro Historical Bus Tour: This signature program offers curated tours for residents, guests, and visitors, providing them with a meaningful and educational experience of Whitesboro's historic landmarks and celebrating the rich cultural legacy of the community.

Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project: This flagship initiative provides a welcoming and empowering space for residents, community organizations, and external partners to come together, collaborate, and address local challenges while working collectively to enhance the quality of life in Whitesboro.

DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY CAPACITY

WHF has proudly led revitalization efforts in the Whitesboro Neighborhood since the launch of the Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project (WHPP) in 2023. Since initiating this transformative work, WHF and its partners have successfully completed a two-year planning grant funded by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs NRTC Program. The effectiveness and impact of this planning process have drawn significant interest from some of the most respected community development financial institutions (CDFIs) –

in the region, including New Jersey Community Capital, The Reinvestment Fund, and LISC New Jersey. The engagement of these premier CDFIs, alongside WHF's broad and dynamic consortium of community revitalization partners, demonstrates WHF's proven ability to achieve measurable outcomes, coordinate diverse stakeholders, and sustain a high-functioning team. This NRTC Plan represents the natural and strategic evolution of work already underway through the WHPP. It is not a new departure, but a deepening of the same kind of work, only on a larger and more ambitious scale.

The WHPP operates as a formal collaborative anchored by trusted partner organizations such as Proper Foundation, Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation, Essex Community Land Trust, Eastern Atlantic Regional Council of Carpenters, New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance, and many more, all of which are deeply engaged in the current NRTC planning and implementation efforts. These longstanding partnerships reflect a shared commitment to revitalization and the operational strength required to execute it.

Regarding staffing, WHF has secured the services of Minister Elorm Ocansey and Felicia Simmons as Co-Coordinators of the WHPP since September 2023. Both bring extensive expertise in grassroots mobilization and community organizing, with a combined 20 years of experience working with leading institutions such as New Jersey Community Capital, Fair Share Housing Center, NAACP, and the National Action Network. WHF's Executive Director, Shirley Green, is a lifelong Whitesboro resident with over four decades of experience. Her professional background includes real estate contracting, museum curation, and historic preservation, skills directly aligned with the goals of the Neighborhood Plan.

The WHF team also includes seasoned staff such as Michelle Brown, Program Coordinator since 2010, who is also a founding board member and lifelong resident, and Dahshauyn Staten, Inventory Management Director since 2018, a well-known local artist and musician who brings creative vision and logistical expertise to the team.

In addition to its staffing strengths, WHF has effectively leveraged philanthropic and institutional partnerships to fund its work in the Whitesboro Neighborhood. Major supporters include the Eastern Atlantic –

States Regional Council of Carpenters, Cape Resorts, New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance, and Essex Community Land Trust.

Additional funding and in-kind support have come from Wcc Historic Renovation Association Inc., Transformation Homecare, and the Cape May County Culture & Heritage Division.

Perhaps WHF's most defining strength is its unmatched ability to foster deep and sustained community engagement. Since the WHPP's inception in 2023, more than 1,000 residents have participated in its events, meetings, and initiatives. In 2024 alone, WHF organized over 20 community-driven activities, including neighborhood clean-ups, public forums, and civic engagement events- that drew over 700 unique participants and generated approximately 3,000 volunteer hours. This extraordinary level of local participation has been foundational to WHF's successful record in community development.

Among WHF's most notable accomplishments are:

- Designation of over 20 acres for permanent preservation within the Essex Community Land Trust, prepared for future affordable housing development.
- Rehabilitation of a community resource center, now serving as a hub for apprenticeship programs and workforce development.
- Inauguration of the Whitesboro Black History Gala at Congress Hall, the first formal Black History celebration since 1816.
- Collaboration with the New Jersey State Police to implement Operation Rise, a statewide substance use recovery support initiative.
- Environmental justice partnership with NJEJA, bringing local issues to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Environmental Justice Advisory Council.
- Launch of the NJ Board of Public Utilities Community Solar Program, through partnership with Solar Landscape.
- Support for over 40 local vendors and micro-entrepreneurs, facilitated through community-based flea markets and pop-up events.

Together, these outcomes reflect WHF's proven track record and institutional readiness to carry out initiatives of this type and scale, backed by a capable team, strong partners, and a deeply committed community.

PARTNERS

Since its founding, the Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) has built its identity and strength on forging purposeful, mission-driven collaborations that tackle the most pressing challenges facing the Town of Whitesboro. WHF operates on the core principle that empowering its partners, through support, shared leadership, and capacity-building, yields the greatest and most lasting impact. To that end, WHF brings extensive experience in managing collaborative agreements, including Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), and has consistently demonstrated its ability to facilitate complex, multi-partner initiatives. Every WHF program and initiative is rooted in collaboration.

Leveraging this foundational strength, WHF has deliberately cultivated strategic partnerships to support the Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project (WHPP) and the implementation of the NRTC Neighborhood Plan. Each partner brings distinct but complementary expertise, along with a deep, demonstrated commitment to the success of the neighborhood. These partners were integrally involved in the NRTC planning process, serving on the leadership committee, and all contributing valuable insight, time, and energy. WHF has formal, contractual relationships with all listed partners, many of which span years, positioning WHF to confidently and seamlessly assume oversight responsibilities throughout the Neighborhood Plan implementation.

The partners in the Whitesboro revitalization effort are as follows:

The following five organizations: Proper Foundation, Essex Community Land Trust (ECLT), Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation (EOMF), Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EASRCC), and New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA) form the core partners of the WHPP.

Together, this team embodies a new era of collaborative strength, expanding both the capacity and visibility of these organizations in driving long-term, sustainable revitalization in Whitesboro:

1. Proper Foundation

Proper Foundation is a statewide community development firm focused on equipping residents with tools to overcome systemic barriers in employment, housing, education, mental health, and more. Under the visionary leadership of Executive Director Felicia Simmons, Proper Foundation has played a key role in supporting Whitesboro's preservation and development efforts over the past three years. In partnership with WHF and others, Proper Foundation will lead the implementation of all NRTC focus areas and associated strategies. Having actively participated in the NRTC planning process and led dozens of community events since 2023, Proper Foundation's track record reflects a deep commitment and strong operational capacity.

2. Essex Community Land Trust (ECLT)

Founded in 2011 by Britnee Timberlake and Harold Simon, ECLT is a respected nonprofit committed to creating permanently affordable housing, defending land rights, and preventing displacement throughout New Jersey. In Whitesboro, ECLT is driving long-term land preservation and public education efforts to elevate land trust models as vehicles for community empowerment. In coordination with WHF and its partners, ECLT will lead the implementation of Focus Area 3. ECLT has actively engaged in the NRTC planning process and contributed meaningfully to neighborhood events since 2024.

3. Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation (EOMF)

EOMF is a statewide community development and pastoral care organization founded by Minister Elorm Ocansey. The organization brings a unique blend of community organizing, faith-based advocacy, and social leadership to Whitesboro's revitalization work. Over the past three years, EOMF has worked closely with WHF to preserve and develop the Historic District. As a leader in the WHPP, EOMF will help implement all NRTC focus areas and strategies. Its contributions to planning and community engagement since 2023 have been essential to the initiative's momentum and credibility.

4. Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EASRCC)

Representing more than 43,000 skilled professionals across various trades, EASRCC brings a powerful workforce and training infrastructure to the revitalization effort. Under the leadership of Assistant Executive Secretary-Treasurer Anthony Abrantes, EASRCC is supporting Whitesboro residents in accessing union careers while also contributing labor expertise to infrastructure redevelopment. In partnership with WHF, ECLT, EOMF, NJEJA, and Proper Foundation, EASRCC will implement Focus Area 2. Their active role in the NRTC planning process, including sponsoring the inaugural Whitesboro Black History Gala in March 2025, reflects their enduring commitment.

5. New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA)

NJEJA is a statewide coalition dedicated to eliminating environmental injustices that disproportionately affect communities of color and low-income neighborhoods. Under the leadership of Executive Director Melissa Miles, NJEJA is working to elevate Whitesboro's environmental quality and resident health. In close partnership with WHF and the other core agencies, NJEJA will lead the implementation of Focus Area 1 and its strategies. Their active engagement in the planning process and leadership in several 2024 community events underscore their operational strength and alignment with WHF's goals.

Together, these partners form a robust, highly capable network with demonstrated experience in project implementation, public engagement, and inter-organizational coordination. WHF's longstanding collaborative approach, formal agreements, and proven oversight infrastructure ensure it is fully equipped to supervise, monitor, and guide partner-led activities in full alignment with the NRTC Neighborhood Plan.

Section 5

Neighborhood Description

and Statement of Need

INTRODUCTION

The Whitesboro Historic District Neighborhood is home to approximately 3,000 residents in Middle Township, distinguished by its rural charm and deeply rooted community identity. The neighborhood is predominantly made up of Black, White, and Hispanic families, reflecting a rich and diverse cultural fabric.

While challenges such as stagnant incomes for some households, increasing poverty rates, aging yet increasingly valuable housing stock, pressures of gentrification, and concerns over displacement underscore the need for thoughtful revitalization, the neighborhood's inherent strengths point to its powerful potential for transformation.

Whitesboro boasts high rates of educational attainment, a vibrant spirit of entrepreneurship, deep historical pride, strong civic engagement, and remarkable social cohesion among residents. Its location within Cape May County, a region known for its scenic shorelines, thriving tourism, historical landmarks, and cultural amenities, further amplifies Whitesboro's strategic position for long-term, community-driven revitalization.

Data Note: All statistics cited in this Section come from the U.S. Census Bureau (2023) American Community Survey 5-year estimates, unless otherwise noted.

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

Geography & Community Assets

The Whitesboro Neighborhood spans approximately 3.5 square miles within the Township of Middle, the county seat of Cape May County, NJ. Its boundaries are clearly defined: beginning at the northwest tip at Indian Trail Road and Fishing Creek Road, extending to the northeast tip at the intersection of North Wildwood Boulevard and the Garden State -

Parkway, continuing to the southeast tip at the intersection of the Garden State Parkway and East Edgewood Avenue, and reaching the southwest boundary at Burleigh Road and a no-outlet paper street known as Right of Way. The neighborhood comprises the entire Whitesboro Census-Designated Place (CDP) and is located in the southwestern region of Middle Township, Cape May County, within U.S. Census Tract 221.02. (Figure 2)

Despite being a close-knit and culturally rich community of nearly 3,000 residents, the Whitesboro Neighborhood continues to face a historic lack of foundational infrastructure when compared to neighboring communities like Cape May Court House and Rio Grande. Within its borders, Whitesboro has limited fresh food grocery stores, healthcare facilities, public schools, laundromats, or convenience stores. As a result, residents often rely on services and resources located outside the neighborhood to meet their daily needs.



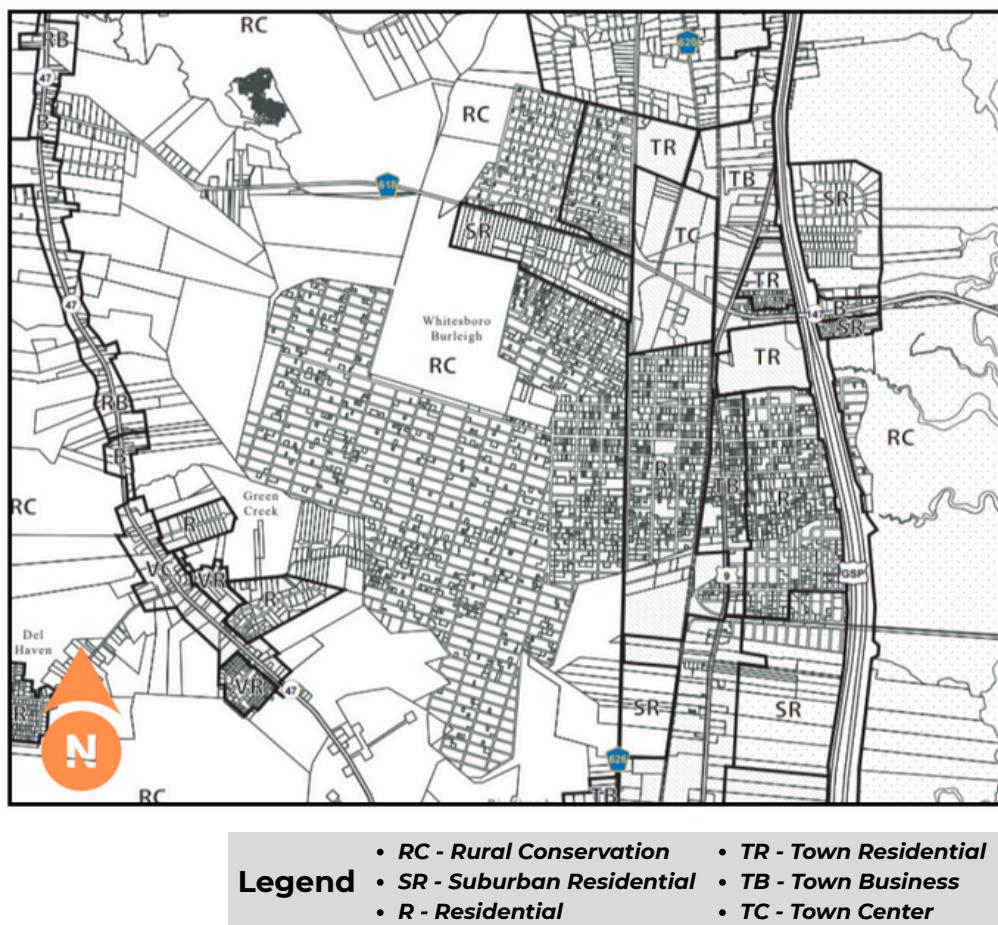
Map of Whitesboro Neighborhood (Figure 2)

Land Use

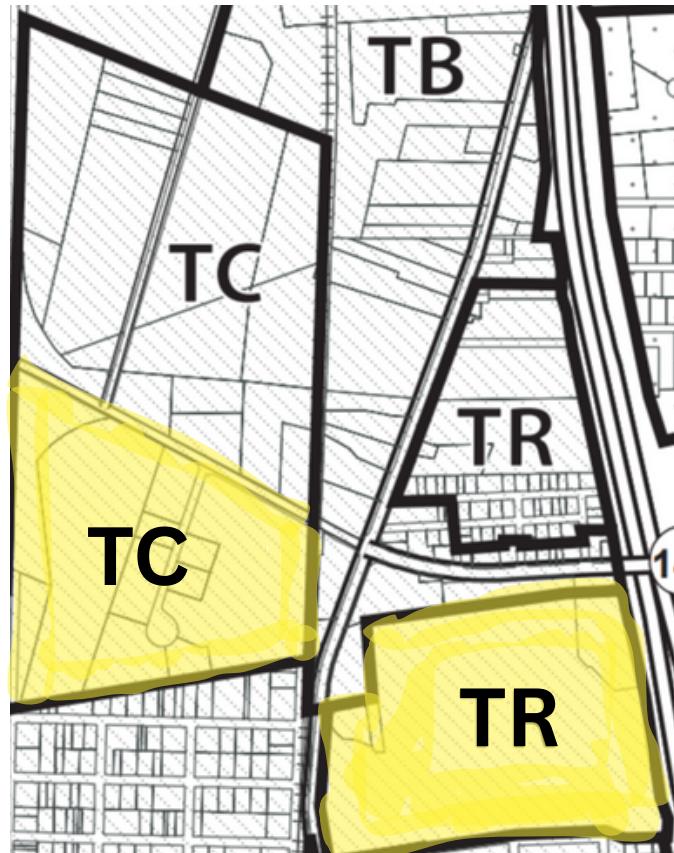
The Whitesboro Neighborhood, founded over a century ago as a safe haven for Americans seeking freedom and opportunity, now finds itself boxed in—betrayed not by chance, but by deliberate and discriminatory land-use policy. Zoned across six categories—RC (Rural Conservation), SR (Suburban Residential), R (Residential), TR (Town Residential), TC (Town Center), and TB (Town Business)—Whitesboro’s land is governed by rules that systematically strip the community of any meaningful opportunity for growth, reinvestment, or equity (Figure 3).

Middle Township claims to support affordable housing. In response to advocacy from organizations like the Fair Share Housing Center, the township has adopted a 20% affordable housing set-aside for new residential developments of five or more units in the Town Center (TC) and Town Residential (TR) zones. On paper, this sounds progressive—twelve units per acre, multi-family developments up to three stories high. But in practice, for Whitesboro, it is nothing more than a hollow promise.

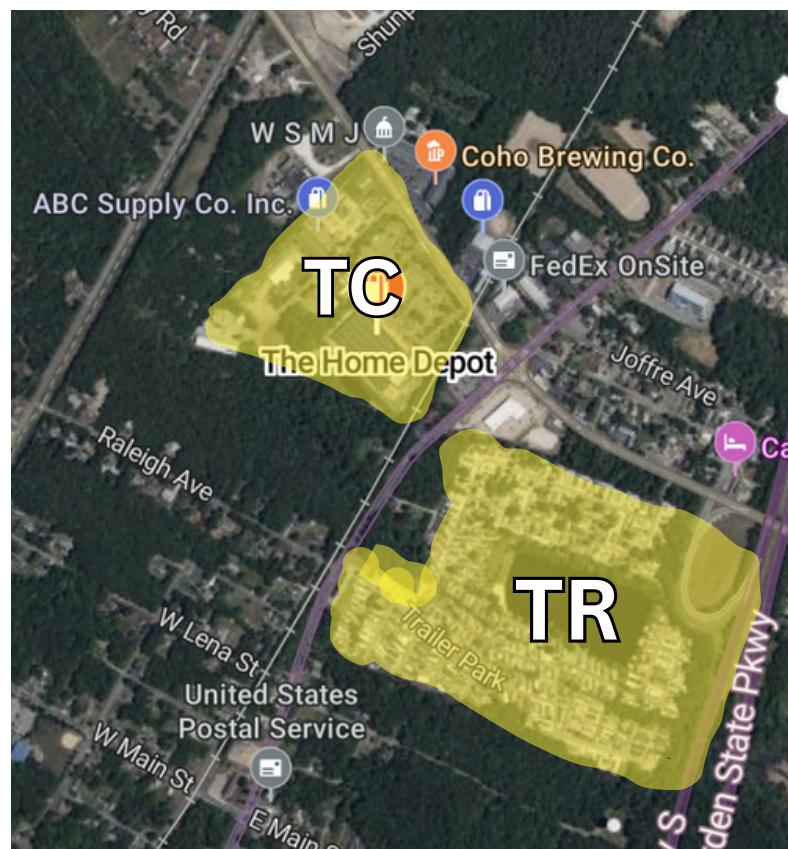
Why? Because Whitesboro has been zoned out of fairness.



Current Zoning of Whitesboro Neighborhood (Figure 3)



Town Center and Town Residential Zoning in the Whitesboro Neighborhood (Figure 4)



Home Depot Zone (Town Center) and Garden Lake Zone (Town Residential) in the Whitesboro Neighborhood (Figure 5)

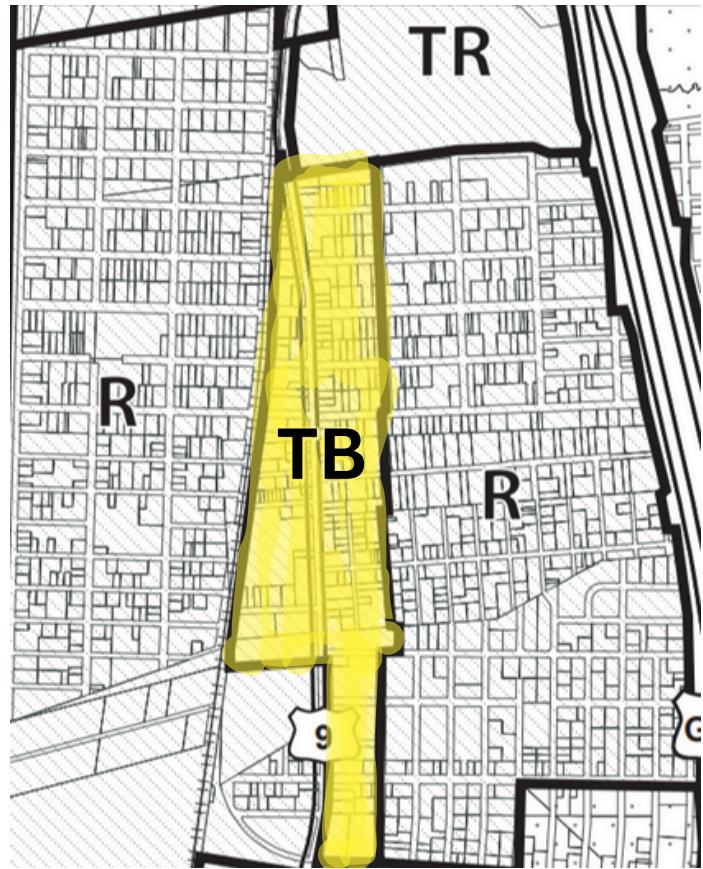
The TC zone in Whitesboro is not available for housing, it's already occupied by long-standing commercial and industrial businesses like Home Depot, ABC Supply, and other mid-size enterprises (Figures 4–5). There is no room for residential development there. The TR zone fares no better: it is entirely taken up by Garden Lake Park, a 55+ manufactured housing community with 350 units. That's the extent of Whitesboro's inclusion in the township's "affordable housing" zones—zero.

The one remaining area with potential—the Route 9 corridor in the TB (Town Business) zone—could serve as the foundation for a 21st-century community hub, offering mixed-use development, affordable homes, and economic uplift (Figures 6–7). But even here, Middle Township's zoning code tightens the belt. The rules allow only apartments above commercial spaces, capped at two units per property and restricted to 2,000 square feet each. That's not planning. That's containment. Worse still, the affordable housing set-aside—Middle Township's supposed commitment to equity—doesn't even apply to the TB zone. Whitesboro, once again, is left out.

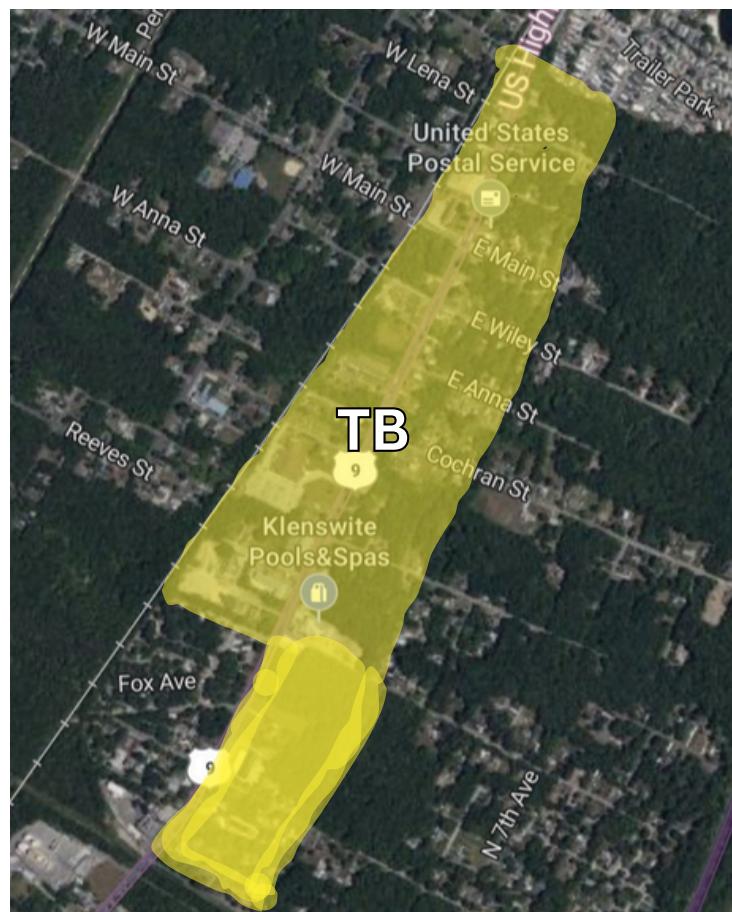
The rest of the neighborhood—zoned RC, SR, and R—is effectively non-developable. These zones permit only low-density, land-hungry uses: single-family homes, two-family dwellings (but only if sewer is available), and agricultural uses on sprawling tracts of 10, 25, even 50 acres. Golf courses. Horse farms. Kennels. These are not policies for a thriving residential community; they are tools of exclusion, dressed up in the language of planning.

Let's call this what it is: structural discrimination, codified in zoning regulations. Middle Township has made room for affordable housing everywhere except in the heart of its historic Black community. It has created pathways to growth for other neighborhoods while locking Whitesboro in a state of artificial stagnation, through zoning policies that are outdated at best and oppressively strategic at worst.

Until these injustices are acknowledged and dismantled, Whitesboro will continue to be treated as a second-class community within Middle Township, denied access, denied investment, and denied the dignity of equitable treatment.



Town Business (TB) Zoning in the Whitesboro Neighborhood (Figure 6)



Town Business (TB) Route 9 South Corridor in the Whitesboro Neighborhood (Figure 7)

People & Conditions

There are approximately 2,946 people living in the Whitesboro Neighborhood across 1,987 households. The most representative household in Whitesboro is a married couple with one young child, reflecting the neighborhood's strong family-oriented character. Whitesboro is a racially and ethnically diverse community with a deep-rooted cultural heritage.

Approximately 49% of the population are Black or African American or Hispanic (of any ethnicity), with, 22% as Black or African American, and 27% as Hispanic (of any ethnicity), 44% of residents identify as White, and other racial or minority groups are represented in smaller proportions, with less than 5% identifying as two or more races and about 1% identifying as Asian. This demographic blend contributes to the neighborhood's unique identity and cultural vibrancy.

Race	% of Population
(Black or African American)	22%
Hispanic (of any ethnicity)	27%
White	44%
Black or African American and Hispanic (of any ethnicity)	49%
Asian	1%
Two or more Races	5%

Since 2013, the Black or African American population in Whitesboro, once the heart and soul of this historic community, has declined by nearly 8%. This is more than a statistic; it is a signal that the legacy of Whitesboro's founding families is being quietly diminished.

This trend cannot be ignored. Without deliberate action, the very community that gave Whitesboro its identity risks being pushed to the margins. Preserving and empowering the population is not only a matter of honoring history; it is a necessary step toward ensuring an equitable and inclusive future. The legacy of Whitesboro must not be treated as a footnote to development. It must be protected, celebrated, and centered in all revitalization efforts moving forward.

Households

In Whitesboro, approximately 61% of residents are between the ages of 18–64, with a median age of 38, reflecting a younger, working-age population compared to the broader Cape May County median age of 52. While 31% of the county's population is aged 65 and over, only 12% of Whitesboro residents fall into that category, underscoring the neighborhood's relative youth and potential workforce strength. By comparison, 18% of New Jersey's population is over 65. Approximately 53% of Whitesboro households are married couples, and 31% have children under 18, demonstrating a strong family presence. The neighborhood's fertility rate is 5.4%. Among non-family households, 37% are female, of whom 32% live alone, while the remaining 63% are male, all of whom live alone.

Income

As of 2022, the neighborhood's median income stood at approximately \$62,273, reflecting the economic resilience of a working-class community. However, income disparities persist along racial lines: the median income for Black or African American residents was \$35,246, compared to \$61,364 for their White counterparts. Non-family households have a median income of \$37,635, with males living alone earning \$38,500 and females \$26,615. The median income for residents aged 16 and over working full-time, year-round was \$47,132, compared to Cape May County's median of \$62,345 and the New Jersey median of \$70,215, highlighting both the challenges and the opportunities for targeted economic development and workforce investment in the neighborhood.

Low- and Moderate-Income Households

As of 2022, approximately 50% of households in the Whitesboro Neighborhood earn less than 80% of the region's (Cape May, Salem, Cumberland, and Atlantic) median income, which stands at \$57,520 for a one-person household, based on the New Jersey Housing Mortgage Finance Agency's Uniform Housing & Affordability Controls 2025 Income Limits. Roughly 30% of neighborhood households earn under \$35,000 annually, which places them below 50% of the regional median income threshold of \$35,950. These statistics highlight the pressing need for housing affordability, while also affirming the importance of strategic, equity-focused investment in the area's economic future.

Education

Adults in the Whitesboro Neighborhood demonstrate commendable levels of educational attainment. As of 2023, 92% hold a high school diploma and 19% have earned a bachelor's degree, figures that underscore the neighborhood's strong foundation in educational achievement and its potential for continued upward mobility. Of the approximately 509 school-aged children, 100% are enrolled in the public Middle Township School District. Similarly, all nursery and pre-school-aged children in the neighborhood attend local public schools, reinforcing the community's commitment to accessible early childhood education.

According to U.S. News & World Report, 36% of Middle Township elementary students scored at or above proficient in reading, with 31% doing so in math. Among middle school students, 39% reached proficiency in reading and 25% in math. At the high school level, 40% of students met or exceeded reading proficiency standards, while 51% did so in math. Middle Township High School is ranked 269th in New Jersey and has a total minority enrollment of 37%, with 36% of students identified as economically disadvantaged. Notably, 28% of students participate in the Free Lunch Program under the National School Lunch Act. Among Black, Hispanic, and economically disadvantaged students, 19.3% achieved proficiency or higher in state assessments for math, reading, and science, compared to 35.5% of their non-underserved peers. These figures underscore ongoing disparities, but also speak to the resilience of the student body and the urgency of continued support for educational equity.

Employment

As of 2023, 64.4% of Whitesboro residents aged 16 and older participate in the labor force, with an employment–population ratio of 51.1%. The neighborhood’s unemployment rate stands at 7.3%. By comparison, the March 2025 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports a countywide unemployment rate of 11.2% for Cape May County, as published by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. Approximately 57% of Whitesboro’s adult population is actively employed in the civilian labor force, while 36% are currently not participating. These figures highlight both the determination of Whitesboro’s workforce and the community’s resilience amid broader economic challenges affecting the region.

Employment Sector	% of Whitesboro Workers Employed in Sector
Manufacturing Industry	4.60%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	5.80%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodation and food services	24.4
Construction Industry	5.70%
Wholesale Trade Industry	5.30%
Retail Trade Industry	9.00%
Educational services, health care, and social assistance,	16.70%
Other Services Industry Employment	6.30%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	8.20%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Rental, and Leasing	2.20%
Public Administration	11.80%
Other	6.30%

Whitesboro residents contribute significantly to the region’s economy, with approximately 41% of the local labor force employed in the arts, entertainment, and recreation, accommodation, and food services –

educational services, health care, and social assistance sectors. These industries reflect the neighborhood's dependence on Cape May County's tourism and service economies.

Key employers in the broader Cape May region include the Middle Township School District, Woodbine Developmental Center, Cape May United States Coast Guard Training Center, Cooper Hospital, Morey's Piers, and Cape Resorts. While these institutions are central to the area's employment landscape, they currently lack formalized workforce development partnerships with Whitesboro-based organizations. This gap presents a prime opportunity to establish collaborative training and recruitment pipelines that empower local residents and strengthen the regional workforce.

Housing Units

Whitesboro contains approximately 1,410 housing units, with an 84% occupancy rate and a 16% vacancy rate. Of the occupied units, 90% are owner-occupied, demonstrating a strong base of long-term residential investment, while 10% are renter-occupied. Housing stock is predominantly composed of single-family homes (69%), with multi-family units making up 3%, and mobile homes comprising 28%. This residential composition underscores the neighborhood's traditional character and its potential for targeted housing revitalization efforts that honor community preferences while addressing emerging needs.

Type of Residential Structure	% of Units
Single-Family Detached	65.20%
Single-Family Attached	3.70%
2-Unit Homes and Duplexes	3.40%
Mobile	27.70%
Apartment Buildings (10-19 Units)	0%
Apartment Buildings (20-49 Units)	0%
Apartment Buildings (50+ Units)	0%

Multi-family apartment buildings with 10 or more units are absent, reflecting the area's traditionally residential, small-town character.

The neighborhood's housing stock reflects its deep historical roots, with nearly 71% of all units constructed in the 1980s or earlier. Notably, 29.5% of homes were built before 1940, and approximately 67% before 1960. The median value of an owner-occupied home stands at \$242,000, and nearly 65% of these homes are valued at \$300,000 or less, making Whitesboro one of the more affordable communities in Cape May County. About 66% of owner-occupied homes carry a mortgage, while 34% are mortgage-free. However, Cape May County's increasing popularity as a resort destination has led to rising real estate values and property taxes.

According to the Cape May Herald, Middle Township's 2025 general fund budget introduces a 4.7% increase in the local tax rate. For a home assessed at the township average of \$250,000, this means an additional \$70 in annual local property taxes. These rising costs disproportionately affect Whitesboro's low- and moderate-income homeowners, many of whom are at risk of displacement. As of December 1, 2023, Middle Township's tax sale list included 942 properties totaling over \$1 million, underscoring the urgent need for equitable housing support and proactive measures to protect long-term residents.

Neighborhood Needs

Public Safety

Whitesboro stands at a crossroads, not only in its fight for equitable development but also in its battle for safety, justice, and accountability. As a designated unincorporated community, Whitesboro exists in a dangerous blind spot, a place where crime is felt, but rarely counted; where public safety is compromised, but rarely scrutinized.

Middle Township, the New Jersey State Police (NJSP), and even the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) are under no obligation to collect crime data specific to Whitesboro. This bureaucratic omission has left the community statistically invisible—and therefore politically neglected. While families feel the impact of rising drug activity, youth violence, and property crimes in their daily lives, no one is officially measuring what is happening here. What isn't measured, isn't managed—and what isn't acknowledged, isn't addressed. Yet the broader numbers paint a disturbing picture.

According to FBI Uniform Crime Reports, in 2022, Middle Township saw:

- 307 violent crimes, with a rate of 193.45 per 100,000 residents
- 379 property crimes, with a rate of 1,818.18 per 100,000 residents

And the crisis runs deeper. Drug-related harm is ravaging Cape May County:

- 44 drug-related deaths were reported in 2022
- 176 naloxone (Narcan) administrations—a life-saving intervention for overdoses—were recorded, with a staggering 87% concentrated in just six communities
- In 2024, suspected drug deaths in Cape May County rose 39% in just the first half of the year, according to NJ Monitor
- As of January 2025, more than 11,000 opioid prescriptions were dispensed in the county

Whitesboro is surrounded by crisis. Yet we are denied the tools to defend ourselves—data, oversight, and a voice. In a community historically founded to be a safe haven for Black Americans, today's silence from law enforcement and public officials rings as a bitter irony.

This is not acceptable.

Whitesboro urgently needs greater engagement from federal and state law enforcement agencies, not as an occupying force, but as collaborative partners in building real safety. We need comprehensive, neighborhood-specific crime data collection. We need support for community policing and violence interruption strategies. And most importantly, we need a Civilian Oversight Body—one with real investigative and disciplinary authority—to hold local law enforcement accountable to the public they are sworn to protect. Without accountability, justice is a myth. Without data, safety is an illusion. And without respect for the lives of Whitesboro residents, trust in law enforcement will remain broken.

Whitesboro is no longer asking. We are demanding what every American community deserves: the right to be safe, to be seen, and to be heard.

Public Mail

Since 2001, the United States Postal Service (USPS) has failed to provide the residents of Whitesboro, New Jersey, with a fully functional post office. Despite holding its own ZIP code, 08252, this historic, predominantly Black community has endured over two decades without basic mail service infrastructure. This is not merely bureaucratic negligence; it is a clear, persistent act of institutional disregard.

For generations, Whitesboro's mail was sorted and distributed with care by beloved local postmaster Jeanette Richardson, who operated the neighborhood's mail service out of her home. Residents could pick up their mail freely and reliably, a grassroots system that served the community with dignity. But in 2001, after 34 years of service, Richardson retired. The USPS responded not by building a modern facility, but by installing a temporary trailer in the parking lot of the Martin Luther King Center on Main Street, an interim solution that became indefinite.

According to then–Middle Township Administrator James Alexis, the USPS had twice committed federal funding to construct a new post office for Whitesboro. But each time, the funding was withdrawn. Alexis cited the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005 as the two national events that derailed the promised investment. Yet while Whitesboro was left waiting, Middle Township demonstrated it had the capacity to act, just not on behalf of Whitesboro.

At the very same time these negotiations for Whitesboro stalled, Middle Township allegedly prioritized Cape May Court House, quietly securing a far more favorable deal with the USPS. The Township secured a former car dealership adjacent to Clary's Kountry Korner on Route 9 and paved the way for a fully equipped, fully functional post office, complete with delivery routes, full staffing, and comprehensive services. While that facility moved forward with decisive investment and support, Whitesboro was left with trailers, delays, and broken promises.

The timing and disparity between these two outcomes raise serious questions. Why was Cape May Court House able to move forward, while Whitesboro was left behind? Why did federal funding vanish twice for a neighborhood with its own ZIP code and urgent needs, while another community in the same township saw its postal infrastructure thrive? Whether by oversight or intentional disregard, the effect is the same: Whitesboro was denied the services it rightfully deserves, and the community continues to bear the burden of that failure. In 2020, after years of inaction, a small post office finally opened on Route 9 South and East Main Street in Whitesboro.

But the facility is a post office in name only. It cannot receive, sort, or deliver mail. There is no appointed postmaster, no one to serve the community in the spirit of Jeanette Richardson. Residents were told that if they wanted their mail delivered to their homes, they would need to change their mailing addresses to those of neighboring towns, Cape May Court House (08210) or Rio Grande (08242). In effect, this erased the ZIP code of an entire community and hollowed out its presence on the official map.

The consequences of Whitesboro's postal neglect are not merely bureaucratic, they are life-threatening. Emergency medical services have been delayed, misrouted, or outright lost, simply because the system has thrown the neighborhood's identity and addresses into disarray. By forcing residents to change their mailing addresses to neighboring towns, Cape May Court House or Rio Grande, the USPS has created a dangerous geographic ambiguity. When a resident dials 911 and gives their assigned mailing address, dispatchers may send emergency vehicles to the wrong town entirely. In cases where seconds matter, this confusion has already proven costly. In the absence of a clearly recognized and serviced ZIP code, Whitesboro exists in a kind of administrative limbo, forgotten on paper and left vulnerable in practice.

This is more than a postal oversight, it is a public health crisis, and one with racial and economic implications. While other communities enjoy seamless access to emergency services, home deliveries of prescriptions, and unambiguous healthcare routing, Whitesboro residents are navigating a broken system that refuses to even acknowledge their rightful place on the map. The lack of a fully operational post office has directly compromised the ability of Whitesboro residents to receive timely care, access health-related communications, and be located quickly in times of crisis. In doing so, it has denied them the very foundation of equitable healthcare access: being seen, being served, and being safe.

In 2025, Congress passed legislation to rename the post office in Whitesboro in honor of George Henry White, the town's namesake and the last African American Congressman of the Reconstruction era. While this symbolic act was celebrated, it fell far short of the structural change the community desperately needs. Today, Whitesboro residents who choose to maintain their rightful ZIP code must pay out-of-pocket for a P.O. Box at the new George H. White Post Office. The facility is open for limited hours, Monday through Friday, 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to noon, further complicating access to a basic service Americans elsewhere take for granted.

Public Transit & Infrastructure

The only public transit available in the Whitesboro neighborhood is the NJ Transit 552 bus line, connecting Cape May to Atlantic City. Along Route 9 South, the corridor that runs through Whitesboro, bus stops are dimly lit, lack streetlights, and only one features a basic shelter for passengers during inclement weather. This corridor isn't just inconvenient, it's dangerous. There are no alternate routes or detour options when traffic is disrupted by an accident or emergency, leaving residents and first responders with no way in or out.

The danger doesn't stop at the roadway. Many parts of Whitesboro still lack essential infrastructure: there are no sewers, no stormwater systems, no sidewalks, no streetlights, and in many areas, no fire hydrants. This leaves entire blocks vulnerable to catastrophe. The inactive railroad tracks running through the area, once a symbol of connectivity, now stand as a stark reminder of decades of planning indifference and systemic disinvestment by local, county, state and regional agencies.

The loss of Whitesboro's own volunteer firefighter crew has only deepened the emergency. Today, all fire response comes from either Rio Grande or Cape May Court House, two departments that are already stretched thin. In February 2025, when a large storage facility on Shunpike and Indian Trail Road caught fire, the building was fully engulfed by the time fire crews arrived, according to Middle Township Police Chief Tracey Super. Allegedly, the blaze was started by a homeless senior who had been living inside one of the units for shelter, a tragic symbol of the overlapping crises of housing insecurity, poverty, and institutional abandonment in the neighborhood. In a neighborhood without hydrants, adequate roads, or its own firefighters, response delays are inevitable and deadly.

To make matters worse, Whitesboro's fractured postal system is now a fire safety hazard. The lack of an operational post office and forced address changes to other towns have led to EMS and fire crews being misrouted in emergencies, unsure whether a reported address lies in Cape May Court House, Rio Grande, or somewhere in between. Lives have been endangered simply because emergency responders couldn't find them.

This isn't just a matter of poor infrastructure. It is a matter of life and death. Whitesboro needs urgent investment in emergency preparedness, transportation, and basic infrastructure.

Historical Sites

Tucked quietly along Route 9 in Cape May County lies a town whose very soil carries the hopes, history, and hardships of generations of Americans. Whitesboro, a community founded in the late 1800s as a safe haven for Americans fleeing racial violence and seeking opportunity. And yet, despite its deep historic roots and undeniable contribution to local and national heritage, Whitesboro remains unrecognized as the independent borough it was, excluded from official records and denied landmark designations that would protect its legacy. Today, the physical and cultural foundations of this community are in danger of being erased, paved over, or forgotten.

On Route 9 South stands the Whitesboro Historical Foundation Museum, housed in the home of Leon Matthews Jr., son of the town's second constable. Just steps away, Tiffany's Green Beans N Birds, a beloved soul food restaurant, now occupies the former home of comedic icon Flip Wilson.

Not far off, the St. Stephens AME Church, founded in the early 1900s, once stood as the spiritual heart of Whitesboro's African Methodist Episcopal community. Its closure and sale during the COVID-19 pandemic marked not only the end of an institution but the beginning of its erasure. The church and its parsonage are no longer affiliated with the AME Church. The First Baptist Church of Whitesboro, however, endures, founded in 1904, it recently celebrated 120 years of service as "the church in the heart of the community, for the heart of the community."

Whitesboro's original Grammar School, opened in 1910–1967, now serves as the headquarters for the Concerned Citizens of Whitesboro, Inc., though it's officially owned by Middle Township. Meanwhile, many of the town's sacred and historic grounds have already been lost or endangered. When the Garden State Parkway was built, hundreds of gravesites were uprooted, including that of Civil War veteran Noah Cherry, whose lone surviving gravestone stands as a haunting reminder of what the state of New Jersey destroyed. Elsewhere, the old Seventh-day Adventist Church has disappeared into overgrowth, while archaeological evidence suggests its historic burial grounds have been rezoned for residential development. Many historic gravestones have been found in the backyards of Whitesboro residential homes along the Garden State Parkway, including a WWII veteran.

The Queen Esther Household of Ruth Cemetery, founded by the local Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, still houses the remains of former Odd Fellows and their families, including Civil War, Spanish-American War, WWI, and WWII veterans.

But the Odd Fellows hall is gone, destroyed without ceremony. Whitesboro's original train station? Gone. The second public school? Replaced by an office plaza that now serves as a legislative headquarters for state representatives, built on land once sold by Congressman George H. White for public education.

In the late 1800s, during the "Boroughitis" wave that swept across New Jersey, the State Legislature allowed small towns to self-incorporate by local referendum. Eighteen such towns that gained official borough status still exist today. They include: Allendale (Bergen County) – Nov 8, 1894, Bergenfield (Bergen County) – June 26, 1894, Bogota (Bergen County) – Nov 14, 1894, Bound Brook (Somerset County) – Reincorporated in 1891, Cresskill (Bergen County) – May 11, 1894, Dumont (as Schraalenburgh, Bergen County) – July 20, 1894, Fairview (Bergen County) – Dec 19, 1894, Lodi (Bergen County) – Dec 22, 1894, Maywood (Bergen County) – June 29, 1894, Montvale (Bergen County) – Aug 31, 1894, Mountainside (Union County) – Sept 25, 1895, North Arlington (Bergen County) – March 26, 1896, Oradell (as Delford, Bergen County) – March 8, 1894, Park Ridge (Bergen County) – May 14, 1894, Pompton Lakes (Passaic County) – Feb 26, 1895, Roselle (Union County) – Dec 20, 1894, Westwood (Bergen County) – May 8, 1894, Woodcliff (now Woodcliff Lake, Bergen County) – Aug 31, 1894.

Whitesboro, however, though clearly qualifying, has never been granted the official recognition for its self-incorporation. That injustice persists today. While other towns with far less historical or cultural significance are protected, celebrated, and funded, Whitesboro remains administratively invisible.

Whitesboro is not a relic of the past, it is a vibrant, proud, living community built on the vision of Americans who sought to build something of their own. And they did. They built homes, churches, businesses, and civic institutions. They sent soldiers to fight in every American war since the Civil War. They created a place of refuge, pride, and perseverance.

What Whitesboro needs today is not another study, excuse, or symbolic gesture. It needs to be formally recognized and protected:

- As a New Jersey borough born during the Boroughitis era
- As a historic district and cultural landmark by county, state, and federal authorities
- And as a community worthy of the infrastructure, services, and respect due to any American town

The people of Whitesboro have preserved their story for over a century. It's time the State of New Jersey and the United States of America do the same.

Adequate Zoning

Today, Whitesboro has been excluded from key planning and revitalization efforts outlined in Middle Township's 2010 and 2020 Master Plans. As the township prioritizes growth in affluent areas, Whitesboro suffers under inadequate zoning that fails to preserve the neighborhood's historical character, land-use decisions that stifle needed development, and hinders all historic preservation despite the neighborhood's cultural significance. Middle Township's planning leaves Whitesboro vulnerable to gentrification, where rising property values and speculative development displace residents and erase the community's historic identity. To protect the legacy of Whitesboro and ensure sustainable development, Middle Township could:

- Amend its Master Plan to explicitly recognize Whitesboro as a historic district with targeted zoning and infrastructure needs.
- Designate protective zoning overlays that limit incompatible development and promote affordable housing.
- Allocate infrastructure funds for critical improvements such as road paving, sewer installation, and street lighting.
- Incorporate community-led planning practices, ensuring residents shape the neighborhood's future.

Whitesboro does not seek charity, it seeks justice through equitable planning, dignified zoning, and targeted public investment. Only then can the neighborhood realize its full potential as a culturally rich and inclusive community.

Adequate Zoning

Below's a draft ordinance Middle Township could adopt to grant Whitesboro residents an fair chance to redevelop their neighborhood:

(Whitesboro Historic and Sustainable Growth Overlay District (WHSGO)

An Ordinance Establishing the Whitesboro Historic and Sustainable Growth Overlay (WHSGO) with NRTC Alignment and Moderate-High Density Standards in Middle Township, Cape May County, New Jersey.

Section 1: Title and Purpose

This ordinance shall be known as the Whitesboro Historic and Sustainable Growth Overlay District (WHSGO). The intent is to:

- Stimulate revitalization consistent with an Whitesboro NRTC Plan,
- Promote moderate-to-high residential density,
- Protect the historical integrity of the district,
- Support green infrastructure and energy initiatives,
- Create opportunities for workforce housing and local enterprise.

Section 2: Applicability

- Applies to the parcels identified in the designated Whitesboro Revitalization Area, as mapped.
- This overlay supplements and may supersede the underlying zoning.
- The NRTC implementation plan will serve as a planning reference document.

Section 3: Permitted Uses

In addition to those permitted by the base zoning, the following are allowed as-of-right within WHSGO:

- Residential
- Multi-family buildings up to 4 stories (by right), up to 5 with bonuses
- Townhomes and stacked flats
- Live/work units
- Affordable housing and senior housing
- Mixed-Use & Commercial
- Ground-floor retail or commercial with residential above
- Community-based nonprofits and incubator spaces
- Cafés, co-working hubs, markets, and health clinics
- Green & Civic Uses

Adequate Zoning

- Community gardens and urban farms
- Solar carports and microgrid nodes
- Workforce development centers
- Cultural and historic institutions

Section 4: Density and Bonuses

- Base Density: 16 dwelling units per acre
- With Bonuses (for including NRTC-aligned features): up to 25 units/acre
 - 20% affordable units
 - Historic structure rehabilitation
 - Green building certification (LEED, Passive House)

Section 5: Building & Design Standards

- Height: Up to 4 stories by right; 5 with community benefit bonuses
- Setbacks: Minimal front setbacks; rear yard 20 ft
- Parking: 1 space per unit; shared or off-site allowed
- Facade Design: Must reflect historic neighborhood scale and materials
- Open Space: 10% of total development area for public space

Section 6: Historic Preservation Incentives

- Adaptive reuse encouraged
- Expedited approvals for preserving key sites
- Tax abatements available for historic-compatible projects

Section 7: Renewable Energy and Green Infrastructure

- Rooftop solar and wind permitted
- Green roofs and EV-ready parking for large projects
- Bioswales and pervious pavement required for stormwater

Section 8: Administration and Review

- A Whitesboro Revitalization Committee shall advise the Planning Board
- NRTC projects coordinated with Township Plan Manager
- Annual reports published on development and equity

Section 9: Conflicts and Severability

In case of conflict with other ordinances, the provisions of WHSGO shall govern. If any portion is held invalid, remaining sections shall remain in force.

Section 10: Effective Date

This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon adoption and publication according to law.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS



Photo 1: Peace Token Bait & Tackle store on Indian Trail Road



Photo 2: Indian Trail Road and Route 9 South Intersection



Photo 3: Site of WHF Community Resource Center on Wiley Street



Photo 4: Whitesboro Congressman George H. White Post Office



Photo 5: Congressman George H. White Memorial Plaque at Whitesboro Post Office



Photo 6: Welcome to Middle Township Whitesboro Sign



Photo 7: Whitesboro Rt 9/Main Street Bus Stop



Photo 8: Whitesboro Rt 9/Main Street Bus Stop serviced by NJ Transit



Photo 9: Whitesboro non-active train tracks



Photo 10: Whitesboro Historic Grammar School



Photo 11: First Baptist Church of Whitesboro



Photo 12: Whitesboro Dr. Martin Luther King Community Center



Photo 13: Whitesboro Boise Clay Complex with a displaced headstone honoring Whitesboro's colored soldiers.



Photo 14: Dr. King Memorial at Dr. MLK Community Center curated by Shirley Green



Photo 15: March 1968 Star Herald announcing Boise Clay's plan to build the then Boise Clay Complex



Photo 16: Bethel Commandment Church & Food Bank on George St.



Photo 17: Whitesboro Main Street/Route 9 Intersection



Photo 18: Altobelli Rental Properties on Rt. 9 South, previously the historic Hillside Hotel



Photo 19: Altobelli Rental Properties on Rt. 9 South



Photo 20: Old St. Stephen's AME Chuch on Rt. 9 South



Photo 21: New Christ Gospel Church on Rt. 9 South



Photo 22: Tiffany's Greens Beans N Birds Restaurant on Rt.9 South



Photo 23: Whitesboro Historical Foundation Museum on Rt. 9 South



Photo 24: Abandoned Seventh Day Adventist Church on E. Main St.



Photo 25: Home Depot on Indian Trail Road



Photo 26: Garden Lake Homes on Rt. 9 South



Photo 27: Holy Temple Church Of Christ Church on Fishborn St.

MUNICIPAL & REGIONAL REVITALIZATION PRIORITIES

Middle Township Plan Endorsement Recommendation Report

The Middle Township Plan Endorsement Recommendation Report, issued on April 28, 2023, by the New Jersey Office for Planning Advocacy, evaluates the Township's progress in aligning its development policies with the goals of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP). In seeking re-endorsement, Middle Township aimed to reaffirm its commitment to responsible growth and to renew the designation of its CAFRA (Coastal Area Facility Review Act) Centers. This process began with a pre-petition meeting in April 2021, followed by the establishment of a Plan Endorsement Advisory Committee in June 2021 and the submission of a Municipal Self-Assessment Report in September 2021.

The report confirmed that Middle Township's planning initiatives reflect the eight core goals of the SDRP:

Revitalize Cities and Towns – Promote growth within existing communities.

Conserve Natural Resources – Safeguard environmentally sensitive areas.

Promote Economic Growth – Foster diverse and sustainable economic opportunities.

Protect the Environment – Prevent pollution and encourage environmental health.

Provide Public Facilities and Services – Ensure equitable access to vital infrastructure.

Provide Adequate Housing – Support diverse and affordable housing options.

Preserve Cultural and Recreational Resources – Maintain historic and recreational assets.

Ensure Consistent and Coordinated Planning – Strengthen coordination across agencies and levels of government.

The report also notes that Middle Township is experiencing moderate population growth and is striving to balance development with the preservation of its natural and cultural heritage. The township is incorporating climate resiliency measures, such as infrastructure upgrades and adaptive land use policies, to address the challenges –

posed by sea-level rise and more frequent severe weather. However, the plan fails to acknowledge or incorporate the unique conditions, needs, and aspirations of the Whitesboro community. At present, there are no strategies in place to specifically align Whitesboro's growth with the goals outlined in the SDRP.

Master Plan Reexamination

Middle Township's Master Plan was adopted in 2010 and subsequently reexamined in 2021. The strategies proposed in this NRTC Neighborhood Plan for the Whitesboro area are fully compatible with both the original Master Plan and its 2021 Reexamination. Many of the proposed NRTC strategies are designed to implement the broader planning recommendations within the specific context of the Whitesboro Neighborhood.

The 2021 Master Plan Reexamination outlines the following focus areas:

A. Overall Vision

- Advance sustainable and balanced development.
- Preserve rural, natural, and agricultural landscapes.
- Enhance the overall quality of life and access to public services.

B. Land Use

- Promote mixed-use development.
- Preserve neighborhood character and appropriate scale.

C. Economic Development

- Expand the economic base.
- Strengthen tourism, particularly during the off-season.
- Develop water-based recreational opportunities.

D. Environmental Stewardship

- Conserve wetlands, groundwater, and native vegetation.
- Encourage renewable energy and sustainable practices.

E. Infrastructure

- Improve sewer, stormwater, and transportation services.
- Expand infrastructure for seniors and low-to-moderate income residents.
- Encourage modern, green construction methods.

F. Housing

- Support a range of affordable housing options.

- Prioritize senior housing and proximity to employment.
- Encourage accessory dwellings and housing rehabilitation.

G. Transportation

- Expand biking infrastructure and transportation alternatives.
- Promote public transit and shuttle systems.
- Improve pedestrian safety and eliminate hazardous crossings.

H. Historic & Cultural Preservation

- Safeguard historic districts and scenic roadways.

I. Recreation

- Provide diverse recreational spaces and plan for future growth-related needs.

Although Whitesboro is not explicitly highlighted in the Master Plan Reexamination, the outlined goals align well with the priorities and recommendations presented in this NRTC Neighborhood Plan.

Cape May County Local Road Safety Plan (LRSP)

The Cape May County Local Road Safety Plan (LRSP) is a five-year strategy to enhance road safety at the county and municipal levels. Developed with support from the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO), the plan aims to reduce traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries by 50% by the year 2050.

While the LRSP did not directly involve Whitesboro residents or stakeholders, many of its findings and recommendations are in line with the goals of this NRTC Neighborhood Plan.

Behavioral and Non-Infrastructure Strategies:

- Public Awareness – Campaigns via social media, signage, and outreach to visitors.
- Education – Programs in schools and driver education initiatives.
- Enforcement – Increased visibility of traffic enforcement at high-risk areas.
- Positive Reinforcement – Initiatives such as helmet safety rewards for children.

Currently, none of the LRSP's top-priority infrastructure projects are located in Whitesboro. However, future iterations of the plan could –

incorporate targeted improvements such as enhanced pedestrian night-time safety and traffic infrastructure upgrades in the Whitesboro neighborhood.

Forward 2050: South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO)

Forward 2050 is a long-range transportation plan developed by the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization for Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties. This comprehensive vision extends to the year 2050 and addresses key regional issues, including:

- Population and employment changes
- Climate change adaptation
- Transportation equity
- Infrastructure resilience
- Emerging technologies

The plan's vision and objectives are strongly aligned with those of the NRTC Neighborhood Plan.

Vision Statement:

"To provide a safe, efficient, equitable, and resilient multimodal transportation system that supports regional vitality and quality of life."

Key Goals:

1. Eliminate roadway fatalities and serious injuries.
2. Ensure equitable access to transportation options.
3. Enhance mobility, connectivity, and reliability.
4. Promote clean transportation and climate adaptation.
5. Support job creation and goods movement.
6. Maintain and modernize infrastructure.

Major Strategies:

- Implement Complete Streets policies.
- Expand EV infrastructure.
- Improve freight mobility, ports, and rail access.
- Upgrade rural and underserved transit options.
- Increase climate resilience through flood protection and roadway upgrades.
- Use performance-based planning and data analytics to guide investments.

Financial Plan:

- Over \$8 billion in projected funding through 2050.
- Priorities include system preservation, public transit, pedestrian/bike networks, and safety upgrades.

Community Engagement:

- Included surveys, workshops, advisory committees, and public comment periods.
- Strong emphasis on reaching historically underserved communities.

Middle Township Public Schools Strategic Plan 2020–2025:

Transforming the Future

The Middle Township Public Schools Strategic Plan, adopted in October 2020, sets a five-year course for school improvement across four strategic focus areas. The plan was informed by community input and stakeholder engagement in 2019–2020.

Though the plan does not explicitly reference Whitesboro, many of its objectives align with the goals outlined in this NRTC Neighborhood Plan.

1. Budget and Finance

- Upgrade school facilities.
- Expand extracurricular programs through community and grant partnerships.

2. Curriculum and Instruction

- Deliver academic interventions for students in need.
- Modernize high school academy programs and build community partnerships.
- Promote equity through diverse curriculum content and cultural awareness.

3. School Climate

- Launch student mentorship programs.
- Recognize and celebrate student and staff achievements, promoting an inclusive school culture.

4. Community Engagement

- Increase parent involvement with accessible, multilingual educational programs.
- Build strong relationships with local businesses to support students.

Section 6

Neighborhood Assets and Involvement

The Whitesboro Neighborhood is critically underserved when it comes to essential medical, cultural, civic, recreational, and educational amenities. The limited facilities that do exist within the community are often under-resourced and stretched beyond capacity. Residents consistently identify the lack of basic services as one of the neighborhood's most pressing challenges.

Whitesboro lacks access to vital community infrastructure, including fresh-food grocery stores, healthcare clinics, public schools, banks, tutoring and learning centers, entertainment venues, laundromats, convenience stores, and a healthy mix of well-funded, culturally relevant community, retail, and social service institutions. There is also a clear absence of locally owned businesses that reflect and serve the identity and needs of the community.

In stark contrast, the surrounding communities, including Cape May Court House, Rio Grande, Avalon, Wildwood, and Cape May, are asset-rich and benefit from a wide range of high-quality services and amenities. Cape May Court House alone is home to institutions such as Cooper University Health Care at Cape Regional (formerly Cape Regional Medical Center), Cape Atlantic Community College, Rutgers University's Cooperative Extension of Cape May County, all Middle Township Public Schools, the Middle Township Performing Arts Center, TD Bank, Sturdy Savings Bank, Acme Markets, Staples, Wawa, and Buon Gusto Express Kitchen, and more.

Similar amenities exist in the neighboring towns of Rio Grande, Avalon, Wildwood, and Cape May. However, for Whitesboro residents, accessing these essential services often requires a private vehicle or reliance on ridesharing services, an obstacle that creates inequity in access and further isolates the community from the broader economic and social resources of the region.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSETS

Community Assets

- Medical

CHOP Pediatric Primary Care	1315 Route 9 South,
------------------------------------	----------------------------

- Transportation

NJ Transit 552 Bus	US-9 Main St, E Lena St, Shell Bay Ave, Oyster Rd.
---------------------------	---

- Education

Martin Luther King Community Center	207 W Main St
WE R THE WORLDS HOPE CHILD LEARNING CENTER	314 Langston Street
CCWI Rainbow Summer Camp & Homework Club	100 E Main Street

- Parks and Recreation

Martin Luther King Community Center	207 W Main St
Whitesboro Grammar School	100 E Main Street

- Community

Whitesboro Historical Foundation	2215 Rt 9 South
Martin Luther King Community Center	207 W Main St
Concerned Citizens of Whitesboro	100 E Main Street
First Baptist Church of Whitesboro	8 W Main Street

Bethel Commandment Church/Food Bank	402 S. George,
Christ Gospel Church	2209 Route 9 South
Dawn's Delights	20 Chestnut Ave
Mont's on Wheels	20 Chestnut Ave
Tiffany's Greens Beans N Birds	2012 Rt 9
Soul on 9/ SH Southern Cuisine	1701 Rt 9
Green Forest Alkaline Water	314 W Scott St
Holy Temple Church Of Christ	Fishborn St

- Celebrations/Events

Whitesboro Black History Gala	200 Congress Pl
Community Empowerment Fundraiser	1159 Route 9 South
History Ride in The Historic Town of	2215 Rt 9.
Whitesboro Flea Market	West Wiley St
Whitesboro Pep Rally	207 W Main St
Whitesboro Pep Rally II	1159 Route 9 South
Whitesboro Bus Tour	1500 Rte 47, Rio Grande
Whitesboro Community Forum	8 W Main St
Whitesboro Earth Day Clean-Up	Lena/Dunbar St
CCWI Whitesboro Reunion	207 W Main St
First Baptist Church Anniversary	8 W Main St
Juneteenth	207 W Main St
Whitesboro First Annual Memorial	207 W Main St
John Roberson Golf Tournament	1510 US-9, Cape May Court House
Middle Township Christmas Parade	West Mechanic Street

- Fire/EMS/Police Station

There are no Fire, EMS, or Police Stations in the Whitesboro neighborhood.

- Retail/Commercial Corridor

Route 9	Route 9, from Indian Trail Road to Edgewood Ave
----------------	--

Regional Assets

- Medical

Cooper University Hospital Cape Regional	2 Stone Harbor Blvd, Cape May Court House
Cape Regional Urgent Care	11 Court House South Dennis Rd, Cape May Court House,
AtlantiCare Urgent Care	900 Route 109, Cape May,

- Museums

Whitesboro Historical Foundation Museum	2215 Rt 9 South, Whitesboro
Museum of Cape May County	504 Route 9 North, Cape May Court House
Harriet Tubman Museum	632 Lafayette Street, Cape May
Naval Air Station Wildwood Aviation Museum	500 Forrestal Road, Cape May Airport
Forgotten Warriors Vietnam Museum	529 Forrestal Road, Rio Grande
Doo Wop Experience Museum	4500 Ocean Avenue, Wildwood

- Civil/Cultural

Middle Township Performing Arts Center	212 Bayberry Dr., Cape May Court House,
Congress Hall	200 Congress Pl, Cape May
Wildwood Convention Center	4501 Boardwalk, Wildwood
Cape Point Arts & Science Center	101 Lehigh Avenue, Cape May Point
Morey's Pier	3501 Boardwalk, Wildwood
Cape May Zoo & Park	707 Route 9 North, Cape May Court House
Cape May Winery	711 Town Bank Rd, Cape May
Shore Club	1170 Golf Club Road Cape May Court House
Cape May Convention Hall	714 Beach Ave, Cape May
Fox Park Amphitheater	4500 Ocean Avenue, Wildwood,
Macedonia Baptist Church	630 Lafayette St, Cape May,
SOAR Church	1324 Dehirsch Ave, Woodbine
Asbury AME Church	4100 New Jersey Ave. Wildwood
Eureka Baptist Church	142 West Spencer Avenue, Wildwood,
Cape Community Church	1159 US-9, Burleigh
Wildwood Pentecostal Church	3705 Park Blvd, Wildwood

Municipal Revitalization Priorities

Since 2015, under the leadership of Mayor Tim Donohue and continued by Mayor Chris Leusner, Middle Township has overwhelmingly focused on revitalizing and fostering economic growth in all areas of the township, with minimal emphasis on Whitesboro. A key initiative was a Downtown Cape May Court House planning collaboration launched in 2023, in which the Township partnered with Cape May County to re-envision the historic business district. Officials solicited extensive public input, and surveys were circulated to residents, visitors, and local businesses to gather ideas for making the town center more walkable, attractive, and business-friendly.

According to the township's website, Donohue explained, the goal was not only to attract new businesses but to enhance quality of life with improvements like additional parking, green space, and pedestrian amenities that would create a "true sense of place" in the community. This collaborative planning approach, with county investment and resident engagement, aims to fill empty storefronts and strengthen the downtown's cohesiveness.

Over the past two years, a wave of new businesses has opened or announced in Middle Township, outside the Whitesboro neighborhood. National retailers and eateries like Old Navy, AutoZone, Mavis Tire, and Chipotle opened new locations in 2024, and several more businesses are slated for 2025, including an INSA cannabis dispensary, an AtlantiCare medical office complex, and a "Dink It" indoor pickleball facility, according to the Cape May County Herald.

These investments, alongside local enterprises, have revitalized commercial corridors (particularly in the Rio Grande section) and expanded services available to residents. Officials have also leveraged redevelopment designations and a new liquor license availability to attract private investment, for example, in 2019, the Township designated conditional redevelopers for key sites in Rio Grande and Burleigh and rezoned land near Garden State Parkway Exit 10 to facilitate a new 100-room hotel project. The Township is even partnering with the county on a proposed \$25 million mixed-use redevelopment of the former Rio Grande Kmart site, a public-private venture to rejuvenate a major commercial property.

In January 2022, under Mayor Donohue's tenure, the Township reached a settlement agreement on affordable housing with the Fair Share Housing Center, outlining a detailed plan to fulfill state-mandated housing needs.

Under this plan, Middle Township accepted a third-round affordable housing obligation of 320 units, to be achieved through a combination of new inclusionary developments and zoning reforms. The settlement calls for creating favorable conditions for developers to build mixed-income housing: for example, the Township identified redevelopment areas (such as an Indian Trail Road tract and sites in Rio Grande) where higher-density residential projects would be permitted with a 20% affordable set-aside. Since then, no affordable housing developments have been built in the Whitesboro neighborhood.

According to the township's website, Middle Township has invested in improving existing housing and neighborhoods through grant-funded rehabilitation programs. Middle Township operates an ongoing Housing Rehabilitation Program that provides financial assistance for low-income homeowners to repair and upgrade their homes, thus preserving the affordable housing stock. In 2021, the Township secured a \$107,000 Small Cities CDBG grant, which helped rehabilitate 12 homes, and it continues to annually seek such funds.

Most recently, in mid-2024, Mayor Leusner announced that Middle Township was awarded \$400,000 from the NJ Department of Community Affairs to fuel the rehab program. This grant, comprising \$200,000 in federal Small Cities Block Grant funds and \$200,000 in state Lead-Based Paint Abatement funds, will allow roughly a dozen more low-income homes to receive needed renovations (roof repairs, heating upgrades, lead paint remediation, etc. No marketing outreach has been done in Whitesboro for low-moderate income residents to learn about this existing program or apply for new housing rehab assistance.

Upgrading infrastructure has been a cornerstone of Middle Township's revitalization agenda, recognizing that modern utilities and safe roads form the backbone of a thriving community. One of the most significant undertakings has been the Del Haven Water Project, a multi-year effort to extend public water service to the Del Haven and Green Creek sections along the Delaware Bay. Many of the roughly 1,000 homes in that area had –

long struggled with poor-quality well water; the Township forged an agreement with the Lower Township Municipal Utilities Authority to bring a safe, reliable water supply to those residents, according to the township's website. Deputy Mayor Ike Gandy called it a "historic expansion of water service" that will ensure clean drinking water, boost property values, and even lower fire insurance rates now that hydrants are available. Following the water hookups, Middle Township in December 2023 awarded a \$645,903 road restoration contract to resurface all streets disturbed by the pipe work. The Whitesboro Neighborhood wasn't included in this initiative.

Middle Township has pursued improvements to other parks and athletic facilities outside Whitesboro. Notably, the Township is on track to undertake a comprehensive upgrade of the Clarence and Georgiana Davies Sports Complex (the "Goshen Complex"), which is a 65-acre hub of baseball and soccer fields in Goshen. In 2025, Mayor Leusner and his team secured preliminary approval from the county Open Space Board for a \$2.455 million grant to overhaul the aging Goshen sports complex, according to the township website. The project (pending final approval after public hearings) will refurbish all playing fields and amenities: plans call for re-grading and reseeding fields, modernizing the field lighting systems, rebuilding dugouts and bleachers, installing a new announcer booth and upgraded concession stand, and repaving walkways and parking areas.

Security enhancements like improved lighting and surveillance cameras will also be added. "This is an exciting step forward for Middle Township and our residents," Mayor Leusner said, noting the upgrades will create a safer, more enjoyable environment for local youth sports and families who use the complex. The county grant, if finalized, will cover the bulk of the investment, with the Township likely contributing matching funds or in-kind support.

Overall, both Donohue and Leusner have prioritized fiscal responsibility and innovation in service delivery. For instance, to counter rising costs and enhance emergency response, Middle Township privatized its EMS (ambulance) services in 2022 and simultaneously joined the county's central 9-1-1 dispatch system, rather than operating its own – moves that –

saved money while maintaining effective public safety coverage, according to the Cape May County Herald. The Township also renegotiated contracts (like trash and recycling collection) for better rates and, in a bold step, withdrew from the New Jersey State Health Benefits Program in favor of a private health insurance plan, aiming to curb soaring insurance premiums. Mayor Leusner highlighted these actions in his 2025 State of the Township address as examples of managing inflation pressures through efficiency and shared services. All these actions, although beneficial to the majority of Middle Township, don't prioritize the high investments needed in the Whitesboro Neighborhood to create economic parity with the rest of the township.

Recent Investment

In the Whitesboro Neighborhood, Middle Township has invested local resources into enhancing indoor recreation at the Martin Luther King Community Center. The 7-acre complex with a gymnasium and outdoor courts received a series of upgrades in 2019–2021 to better serve residents. The Township's capital budget funded renovations at the MLK Center, including the installation of new outdoor basketball courts lined for both basketball and pickleball, replacement of old equipment, and interior improvements, according to the township's website. After the Township expanded its youth basketball programs and even launched a travel AAU team, heavy usage had worn down the facility. In response, the gym's basketball and volleyball court lines were repainted, new glass backboards and rims were installed outside to replace rusted hoops, and durable vinyl flooring was added in the lobby to handle foot traffic.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) has served as the lead organization for the Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project since its planning phase began in 2023. With the support of an NRTC planning grant, WHF has successfully expanded its reach beyond the immediate community, assembling a dynamic consortium of experienced and resourceful partners committed to transforming Whitesboro into a vibrant, world-class destination to live, work, and thrive.

NEIGHBORHOOD INVOLVEMENT

Community Organization Effectiveness

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) has served as the lead organization of the Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project since its inception in 2023. Following the award of an NRTC planning grant, WHF has successfully expanded its influence beyond the boundaries of the neighborhood, assembling a network of experienced and resourceful partners dedicated to revitalizing Whitesboro into a vibrant, world-class community in which to live, work, and play.

Community Support and Engagement

WHF's deep-rooted commitment to the neighborhood, however, spans more than 25 years. Since the late 1990s, the Foundation has worked in close collaboration with local organizations, becoming a trusted cornerstone of the community. WHF has consistently served as the primary resource for historical preservation, social service coordination, and the planning and execution of cultural and civic commemorations, solidifying its role as a key driver of both memory and progress in Whitesboro.

Physical Development

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), in partnership with the Essex Community Land Trust, has identified over 20 acres of land within the Whitesboro neighborhood for permanent preservation through the Community Land Trust (CLT) model. Although physical construction hasn't begun, WHF and its development partners have initiated discussions with three Community Development Financial Institutions, New Jersey Community Capital, The Reinvestment Fund, and LISC New Jersey to support the pre-development planning process.

Community Support and Engagement

Community participation and leadership have been central to the mission of the WHF's Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project (WHPP). From its inception in 2023, WHF has prioritized inclusive engagement, ensuring that neighborhood voices shape the vision and direction of this transformative effort.

To date, more than 1,000 community residents have actively participated in WHPP events, meetings, and activities. This number does not include the thousands more reached through social media outreach, surveys, press coverage, and informal engagement.

Between June 2023 and April 2025, WHF has directly organized over 35 public community meetings and celebration events, each designed to inform, involve, and empower residents. They are listed below with dates:

Whitesboro Community Listening Session	Jun 3, 2023	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Community Listening Session II	Jul 10, 2023	Community Meeting
Annual Whitesboro Reunion Festival	Aug 30, 2023	Community Celebration
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project	Sep 22, 2023	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project	Oct 20, 2023	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Small Business Expo	Nov 11, 2023	Community Celebration
Whitesboro Bus Tour	Nov 11, 2023	Community Celebration
Whitesboro Pep Rally	Nov 11, 2023	Community Celebration
Whitesboro Sunday Worship Service	Nov 12, 2023	Community Celebration
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project	Nov 17, 2023	Community Meeting
Middle Township Christmas Parade	Dec 8, 2023	Community Celebration
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project	Dec 15, 2023	Community Meeting
Community Empowerment	Jan 13, 2024	Community Celebration
Meet & Greet Luncheon	Jan 21, 2024	Community Celebration
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project	Feb 16, 2024	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project	Mar 15, 2024	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Earth Day Community Clean-up	Apr 22, 2024	Community Celebration

Whitesboro Community Rally II	May 11, 2024	Community Celebration
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project Monthly Meeting	May 24, 2024	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project Monthly Meeting	Jun 21, 2024	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project Monthly Meeting	Jul 19, 2024	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Bus Tour	Jul 20, 2024	Community Celebration
History Ride in the Historic Town of Whitesboro	Jul 20, 2024	Community Celebration
Whitesboro Flea Market	Aug 31, 2024	Community Celebration
Whitesboro Community Listening Session	Aug 31, 2024	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project Monthly Meeting	Sep 20, 2024	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Community Candidates Forum	Sep 22, 2024	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project Monthly Meeting	Oct 18, 2024	Community Meeting
First Baptist Church of Whitesboro 120th Anniversary	Oct 26, 2024	Community Celebration

Whitesboro Community Listening Sessions on Waste Issues	Nov 15, 2024	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project Monthly Meeting	Nov 15, 2024	Community Meeting
Middle Township Christmas Parade	Dec 6, 2024	Community Celebration
Build One America/New Jersey Annual Year End Celebration	Dec 12, 2024	Community Celebration
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project Monthly Meeting	Dec 20, 2024	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project Monthly Meeting	Jan 17, 2025	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project Monthly Meeting	Feb 21, 2025	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Black History Gala	Mar 15, 2025	Community Celebration
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project Monthly Meeting	Mar 21, 2025	Community Meeting
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project Monthly Meeting	Apr 18, 2025	Community Meeting

Section 7

Proposed Vision, Strategies, Activities, & Outcomes

VISION STATEMENT

On August 10th, 2023, at the second Whitesboro Community Listening Session, long-time Whitesboro resident Steve Akers asked, "Tell us one thing you want to do with this project?" In response, Minister Elorm Ocansey answered, "We are working to preserve the legacy and future of Whitesboro." (Figure 4)

In one accord, the community agreed, and the vision and mission of the Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project was born.

"To preserve Whitesboro's legacy and future, the Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project seeks to unify the community of Whitesboro in the pursuit of self-revitalization, self-reliance, and good self-governance."

Mr. Steve Akers



*Figure 4: Mr. Steve Akers at July 2023
Whitesboro Community Listening Session.*

Based on the Vision Statement, this Neighborhood Plan is organized around five key focus areas:

1. Social, Environmental, & Civil Justice
2. Economic & Workforce Development
3. Infrastructure & Housing Development
4. Historic & Cultural Preservation
5. Family & Youth Development

To realize the goals outlined in each focus area, this NRTC Neighborhood Plan presents a comprehensive set of strategies informed by data analysis and extensive community engagement. These strategies are designed to capitalize on the Whitesboro Neighborhood's unique assets, including its strong sense of history, high levels of educational attainment, vibrant entrepreneurial spirit, civic engagement, and deep-rooted community cohesion. They also reflect the practical realities of implementation, aligning with the demonstrated capacity of the Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) as the NRTC lead organization, as well as the specialized expertise and strengths of its partner organizations within the Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project (Figure 5).

Together, these efforts form a bold yet achievable roadmap for equitable and sustainable neighborhood revitalization.



Figure 5: WHPP participants at the July 2023 Whitesboro Community Listening Session.

PROPOSED STRATEGIES

Focus Area 1: Social, Environmental, & Civil Justice

Strategy 1.1: Sustain and grow a grassroots network of local residents, organizations, and external partners to collaborate on and oversee social, environmental, and civil justice issues.

Through its Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project (WHPP), the Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) has established a robust consortium of local residents, community organizations, and external partners dedicated to collaboratively addressing social, environmental, and civil justice challenges in the neighborhood. This inclusive consortium invites committed individuals and organizations to actively support the mission, vision, and long-term sustainability of the WHPP in alignment with their unique capacities.

Consortium members are regularly informed and meaningfully engaged in project decision-making through ongoing communication with WHF and the WHPP leadership team. This leadership team is responsible for convening meetings, fostering collaboration, and providing the tools and resources necessary for all members to effectively contribute to the project's goals.

This straightforward yet impactful model has enabled WHF and its partners to begin revitalizing the Whitesboro neighborhood in a thoughtful, community-driven way. Sustaining and expanding this consortium is essential not only to the continued success of the WHPP but also to advancing long-term solutions to social, environmental, and civil justice challenges, both longstanding and emerging.

This strategy will be advanced through the following key activities, each designed to strengthen community participation, promote sustained engagement, and build the infrastructure necessary for long-term revitalization:

Regular Community Meetings

Monthly meetings will serve as the primary forum for community engagement and decision-making. These gatherings will allow WHPP members to review progress on current objectives, propose new initiatives, and maintain accountability to the project's mission and vision. WHPP leadership will be responsible for developing meeting agendas, facilitating discussions, and ensuring that all voices are heard. To support accessibility, meetings will include childcare and refreshments.

Professional Community Organizer(s)

WHF will hire one or more professional community organizers—either as part of its staff or through a project partner—to manage day-to-day execution of the consortium's objectives. These organizers will play a critical role in coordinating stakeholders, facilitating engagement, and ensuring consistent communication across the project.

Community Outreach Team

A dedicated outreach team will conduct door-to-door canvassing, participate in community events, distribute flyers in high-traffic areas, and carry out other outreach activities to raise awareness and promote participation in the WHPP. This team will serve as the bridge between project leadership and neighborhood residents, ensuring that information flows both ways.

Establishment of a Community Resource Center

In response to the lack of a dedicated, community-controlled gathering space in Whitesboro, WHF will pursue the development of a permanent Community Resource Center. This facility will host WHPP meetings and serve as a neighborhood hub for programs, services, and cultural events. More than just a physical space, the Center will be a visible symbol of community pride and empowerment. It will also support other revitalization goals, such as providing a venue for social service delivery, small business incubation, and microloans to local entrepreneurs.

Strategy 1.2: Promote civic engagement to uphold democratic self-determination and just governance among residents and stakeholders.

WHF, in partnership with Proper Foundation, is launching the "How To Tend Your Garden" program to organize, train, and empower Whitesboro residents and partner stakeholders to take meaningful civic action that -

advances democratic self-determination and equitable governance within the Whitesboro neighborhood. This initiative is grounded in the belief that sustained neighborhood transformation requires an informed, engaged, and empowered community. Through strategic capacity-building and knowledge-sharing, this program will cultivate grassroots leadership and collective power.

Program Activities:

Community Stewardship Workshops and Trainings

WHF and its partners will host a series of workshops designed to build the leadership capacity of both new and experienced WHPP members.

Training sessions will cover the fundamentals of public campaigns and civic participation, while also offering advanced skills development in areas such as public speaking, policy advocacy, coalition-building, and non-violent direct action.

Community-Led Planning, Policy, and Economic Research

To ensure informed and strategic civic engagement, WHF and its partners will conduct, commission, or facilitate access to relevant research tailored to the neighborhood's needs. This includes planning studies, policy analysis, and economic assessments to help WHPP members lead effective campaigns and make data-informed decisions in pursuit of neighborhood self-determination.

Strategy 1.3: Build strategic alliances to identify, prevent, and eliminate environmental injustices while enhancing quality of life and the natural environment.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), in partnership with the New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA), is deeply committed to addressing environmental justice issues raised by members of the Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project (WHPP). By leveraging NJEJA's deep expertise and established green workforce development partnerships, this strategy promotes a collaborative, community-centered approach to environmental health, sustainability, and equitable development in the Whitesboro neighborhood.

This strategy will be implemented through the following key activities:

Environmental Justice Education and Advocacy

Host community workshops and seminars to educate residents on core environmental justice principles, the health and social impacts of pollution, and effective community advocacy strategies.

Training on New Jersey's Environmental Justice Laws

Offer structured training sessions to help residents understand the state's Environmental Justice Laws and how they apply to decision-making processes that impact local neighborhoods like Whitesboro.

Participatory Environmental Assessments

Conduct community-led assessments to identify and document environmental hazards in the neighborhood, and work with residents to prioritize areas for targeted action.

Policy Development and Advocacy

Working with NJEJA to draft and advance policy recommendations designed to mitigate environmental inequities and prevent further harm to the community.

Civic Engagement with Policymakers

Facilitate dialogue and advocacy efforts with local and state officials to support the adoption and implementation of environmental justice policies that reflect the needs of Whitesboro residents.

Green Jobs and Workforce Development

Connect community members to green construction, clean energy, and environmental remediation training opportunities through NJEJA's workforce development collaborations, including their partnership with Soulful Synergy.

Sustainable Neighborhood Projects

Initiate projects such as community gardens, tree planting, and the development of accessible green spaces to enhance environmental quality, promote health, and foster community pride.

Strategy 1.4: Collaborate with social justice institutes on shared concerns to advocate for systemic reforms that are both transformative and achievable.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) intends to partner with the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice (NJISJ) to confront systemic challenges identified by members of the Whitesboro Historic Preservation –

Project (WHPP). This collaboration seeks to promote transformative, community-driven reforms that advance economic equity, criminal justice reform, and democratic empowerment in the Whitesboro neighborhood.

This strategy will be pursued through the following coordinated activities:

Community Listening Forums

Host public forums in Whitesboro to gather resident perspectives on critical issues such as housing discrimination, voter suppression, and disparities in the criminal justice system. Insights from these sessions will inform joint advocacy campaigns and shape policy priorities.

Legislative Advocacy Partnerships

Collaborate on targeted legislative initiatives, including support for the New Jersey Voting Rights Act and efforts to restore the right to serve on juries for formerly incarcerated individuals, advancing justice and equity through inclusive democratic participation.

Research and Policy Development

Conduct and commission rigorous studies to expose systemic inequalities disproportionately affecting the Whitesboro neighborhood. Findings will be used to draft actionable policy proposals and advocate for their adoption at the municipal, county, and state levels.

Strategy 1.5: Collaborate with power-building institutes on shared concerns to promote the goals of social inclusion, racial justice, sustainability, and economic opportunity.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), in partnership with Building One America/New Jersey (BOA/NJ), is committed to promoting social inclusion, racial justice, sustainability, and economic opportunity throughout the Whitesboro Neighborhood. This strategy is designed to build grassroots power through leadership development while advocating for equitable policies that foster inclusive growth and long-term resilience.

To achieve this strategy, WHF and BOA/NJ will collaborate on the following activities:

Leadership Development

Organize and participate in BOA/NJ's intensive training programs that focus on building strategic leadership, understanding power dynamics -

and executing effective advocacy and organizing campaigns.

Equitable Infrastructure Investment

Advocate for targeted infrastructure projects in the Whitesboro neighborhood that prioritize the use of Project Labor Agreements (PLAs), creating high-quality, unionized jobs while ensuring inclusive hiring practices that benefit historically underrepresented populations.

Affordable and Inclusive Housing

Support the implementation and enforcement of New Jersey's Mount Laurel doctrine to increase the availability of affordable housing options in Whitesboro, counteract residential segregation, and enhance social mobility.

Educational Equity and Integration

Collaborate on regional strategies to ensure all Whitesboro students have access to high-quality, integrated public education. This includes advocating for school funding formulas and policies that promote racial and economic diversity and meet regional integration benchmarks.

Strategy 1.6: Collaborate with interfaith organizations to promote shared values of peace, love, respect, humanity, integrity, welfare, and understanding.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), in partnership with Peace Islands Institute New Jersey (PII-NJ), is committed to fostering mutual respect, social cohesion, and shared values such as peace, humanity, empathy, and understanding across the diverse cultural and faith communities that make up the Whitesboro neighborhood. This partnership is rooted in a common mission to build bridges, celebrate diversity, and strengthen the bonds that unite residents of all backgrounds.

This strategy will be implemented through the following collaborative activities:

Friendship Dinners

Host inclusive dinners that bring together residents of different faiths, cultures, and backgrounds to foster dialogue, mutual understanding, and community trust.

Cultural and Religious Celebrations

Co-organize programs around observances such as Ramadan, Thanksgiving, and other significant holidays to promote cross-cultural empathy and –

shared values of compassion and service.

Intercultural Exchange Trips

Facilitate intercultural travel opportunities for WHPP members to diverse destinations, focusing on interfaith dialogue, cultural appreciation, and humanitarian outreach.

Annual Community Appreciation Dinner

Host an annual dinner honoring first responders, law enforcement, and community leaders to strengthen relationships between public safety professionals and the communities they serve.

Youth Expression Contest

Launch a community-wide art and essay competition for K-12 students on themes such as kindness, empathy, and inclusion. Winners will be recognized at a public ceremony celebrating youth leadership and creativity.

Community Speaker Series

Present a series of discussions featuring PII-NJ speakers and thought leaders addressing interfaith collaboration, social justice, civic responsibility, and community building.

Strategy 1.7: Collaborate with public safety entities to provide substance use disorder treatment and recovery support services.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) recognizes the profound impact substance use disorders have on individuals, families, and communities. In response, WHF has partnered with the New Jersey State Police's Operation RISE (Recovery Initiative Support & Engagement) program to take a proactive, compassionate approach to addressing substance use in the Whitesboro neighborhood. This partnership is grounded in a commitment to education, recovery support, and stigma reduction. Together, WHF and Operation RISE will pursue the following coordinated activities:

Educational Workshops and Informational Sessions

Co-host regular community forums to educate residents about substance use disorders, available treatments, and recovery pathways, helping to dispel myths and increase awareness.

Direct Access to Recovery Services

Leverage Operation RISE's expansive network to connect community members with professional treatment programs, peer recovery specialists, and long-term support resources.

Stigma Reduction Campaigns

Launch public awareness efforts that promote understanding, compassion, and acceptance, encouraging those struggling with substance use to seek help without fear or shame.

First Responder and Community Training

Provide targeted training sessions for first responders, WHPP members, and key community stakeholders to ensure they are equipped to identify, respond to, and support individuals affected by substance use disorders.

Strategy 1.8: Collaborate with journalism institutions to develop a trustworthy, community-based news platform.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), in collaboration with Ark Republic, the Rutgers University School of Communication and Information (SCI), and the New Jersey Civic Information Consortium (NJCIC), is committed to cultivating an informed and empowered Whitesboro through the development of community-led media. This initiative addresses long-standing information gaps, strengthens local narratives, and counters misinformation by ensuring that Whitesboro residents have the tools, training, and platforms to tell their own stories and shape public discourse.

Together with our partners, WHF will implement the following actions:

Establish a Local Press Corps

Launch journalism workshops led by Rutgers SCI and Ark Republic to train residents, particularly youth and aspiring storytellers, in news writing, media ethics, digital storytelling, and reporting on local affairs.

Amplify Resident Voices

Co-develop multimedia stories that capture Whitesboro's history, culture, and revitalization efforts, ensuring that community narratives are told authentically and reach wider audiences.

Create a Community News Platform: In partnership with NJCIC, secure funding and technical support to develop a sustainable, resident-run –

media outlet dedicated to covering the issues that matter most to Whitesboro, from development and education to health and civic engagement.

Strategy 1.9: Collaborate with green energy firms on sustainable energy upgrades to lower residential and commercial energy bills.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), in partnership with Solar Landscape, is committed to advancing environmental sustainability, energy affordability, and economic opportunity in the Whitesboro neighborhood. Through New Jersey's Community Solar Program, this collaboration enables residents, especially renters and low-to-moderate-income households, to benefit from clean, renewable energy without the need for rooftop solar installations.

This initiative supports both environmental justice and household economic resilience by lowering utility costs, reducing carbon emissions, and opening pathways to green jobs for residents.

The strategy will be implemented through the following actions:

Community Solar Outreach and Enrollment

Organize neighborhood-based workshops and informational events to educate residents and local business owners on the benefits of community solar and assist with the enrollment process, ensuring equitable access to energy savings.

Green Jobs Training and Workforce Development

Partner with Solar Landscape to promote and deliver workforce development programs that prepare residents for careers in the fast-growing renewable energy sector, with a focus on inclusive hiring and pathways to family-sustaining employment.

Energy Literacy and Bill Assistance Sessions

Provide practical sessions on how to interpret utility bills, understand energy usage, and access relevant energy assistance programs offered by the state or utility providers, especially for households managing high energy burdens.

Policy Advocacy for Program Expansion

Collaborate with Solar Landscape and other stakeholders to advocate for the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to expand the capacity –

of the Community Solar Program, ensuring that more Whitesboro residents can participate in and benefit from the transition to clean energy.

Strategy 1.10: Work with Partner with Accountable Policing Organizations to Address Racial Injustices in Law Enforcement.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), in collaboration with New Jersey Communities for Accountable Policing (NJ-CAP), is committed to eliminating racial injustices within law enforcement and the broader criminal legal system. This partnership empowers the Whitesboro Neighborhood through advocacy, education, and systemic reform initiatives.

Key Components of the Initiative:

Advocacy for Legislative Reform

WHF and NJ-CAP will advocate for the passage of state legislation that would grant municipalities the authority to establish Civilian Complaint Review Boards (CCRBs) with subpoena power and the ability to conduct concurrent investigations alongside internal affairs units. These powers are essential for ensuring independent and effective oversight of law enforcement agencies.

Community Education and Engagement

The initiative will organize workshops, forums, and informational sessions to educate residents about their rights, the importance of police accountability, and the mechanisms available for reporting misconduct. By fostering an informed and engaged community, WHF aims to build trust and collaboration between residents and law enforcement.

Establishment of Local Oversight Mechanisms

In anticipation of legislative changes, WHF will work towards establishing a local CCRB in Whitesboro. This board would be comprised of community members and would serve as an independent body to review complaints, recommend disciplinary actions, and suggest policy reforms.

Collaboration with Legal and Civil Rights Organizations

By partnering with organizations specializing in civil rights and legal advocacy, WHF aims to provide residents with access to legal resources and support when addressing instances of misconduct or systemic issues within the criminal justice system.

Focus Area 2: Economic & Workforce Development

Strategy 2.1: Sustain and grow a grassroots network of residents, organizations, and partners to collaborate on and oversee economic and workforce development issues.

See strategy 1.1

Strategy 2.2: Work with Labor Unions to Expand Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Training.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), in partnership with the Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EASRCC), is launching the Whitesboro Carpenters' Apprentice Ready Program (W-CARP), a pre-apprenticeship training initiative designed to connect local residents to meaningful careers in the skilled trades. W-CARP will equip participants with essential skills in construction, including foundational math, workplace professionalism, and hands-on carpentry training.

Graduates will be prepared to enter EASRCC's registered apprenticeship programs and pursue union employment offering family-sustaining wages and long-term career growth.

To implement this strategy, WHF and EASRCC will undertake the following activities:

Community Outreach and Recruitment

Host informational sessions and targeted outreach campaigns to raise awareness of the W-CARP program and recruit participants from the Whitesboro region, with a focus on engaging underrepresented and marginalized populations.

Pre-Apprenticeship Training Delivery

Provide structured pre-apprenticeship programming in partnership with EASRCC that emphasizes job readiness, technical skills development, and pathways to union apprenticeship and employment.

Policy Advocacy for Union Labor Standards

Advocate for the adoption of policies that mandate 100% union labor in both public and private development projects in and around Whitesboro. These efforts will promote fair wages, ensure high-quality construction, -

Support for Clean Energy Workforce Expansion:

Collaborate with EASRCC in advancing New Jersey's green energy transition by supporting workforce development initiatives tied to clean energy and all other infrastructure development projects.

Strategy 2.3: Provide adult learners and prospective high school graduates with access to industry-aligned career pathways.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), in partnership with the New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCCC), is bringing the NJ Pathways to Career Opportunities initiative to the Whitesboro neighborhood. This collaborative effort is designed to connect residents, particularly adult learners and recent high school graduates, with high-quality educational and workforce training programs offered through New Jersey's community colleges. These programs align with the state's most in-demand sectors, including health services, infrastructure and energy, manufacturing and supply chain management, and technology and innovation.

Host Community Information Sessions

Organize regular outreach events, workshops, and information sessions to increase awareness of career pathways and training opportunities available through local community colleges.

Provide Wraparound Support Services

Offer guidance and support to help participants navigate the full range of services needed to enroll and succeed, including assistance with admissions, academic advising, financial aid applications, and transportation coordination.

Foster Direct Connections with Industry-Aligned Programs

Help residents enroll in career pathways that lead to industry-recognized credentials, paid internships, and job placement in New Jersey's key growth sectors.

Strategy 2.4: Collaborate with culturally competent healthcare agencies to establish widespread nursing training.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), in partnership with Transformation Homecare, is launching a community-based healthcare workforce development initiative to expand access to culturally competent –

nursing and caregiving careers. This collaboration aims to provide residents of the Whitesboro neighborhood with the training and support necessary to enter the healthcare field, addressing both employment opportunities and the need for diverse, empathetic care providers in the community.

Key Activities:

Community Outreach and Recruitment

Organize informational sessions and workshops to raise awareness about Certified Home Health Aide (CHHA) training opportunities, targeting underrepresented populations within the Whitesboro region.

Support Services for Trainees

Provide resources and assistance to help participants navigate the training and certification process, including guidance on financial aid, enrollment procedures, and academic advising.

Policy Advocacy

Advocate for policies that support the expansion of culturally competent healthcare training programs and address barriers to entry into the nursing profession for marginalized communities.

Career Placement and Advancement

Collaborate with local healthcare providers to facilitate job placements for program graduates and support ongoing professional development opportunities.

Focus Area 3: Infrastructure & Housing Development

Strategy 3.1: Sustain and grow a grassroots network of residents, organizations, and partners to collaborate on and oversee infrastructure & housing development issues.

See strategy 1.1

Strategy 3.2: Work with community development financial institutions and their affiliates to develop quality, healthy, and affordable homes.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) is partnering with leading Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), -

New Jersey Community Capital (NJCC), The Reinvestment Fund, and LISC New Jersey to expand access to affordable, sustainable, and community-rooted housing in the Whitesboro neighborhood. These partnerships aim to address long-standing housing inequities by financing and supporting the development of high-quality homes that meet the needs of low- to moderate-income residents.

NJCC has a proven track record, having facilitated the development of over 10,880 affordable housing units across New Jersey through strategic investments and partnerships. The Reinvestment Fund offers a range of financing options, including support for small-scale developers and community land trusts, to promote long-term housing affordability. LISC New Jersey has supported the development or preservation of more than 2,600 affordable homes and apartments, providing various loan types and technical assistance to non-profit housing developers.

To implement this strategy, WHF will undertake the following activities:

Leverage Financial Resources

Utilize financing and technical assistance from NJCC, The Reinvestment Fund, and LISC New Jersey to support the development of affordable housing projects in Whitesboro.

Promote Sustainable Development

Incorporate green building practices and energy-efficient designs to ensure that new housing developments are environmentally sustainable and cost-effective for residents.

Engage the Community

Facilitate community meetings and workshops to involve residents in the planning and development process, ensuring that housing solutions align with local needs and preferences.

Support Local Developers

Provide training and resources to local, minority-owned, and nonprofit developers to build capacity and encourage community-led housing initiatives.

Strategy 3.3: Preserve Land and Affordable Housing Through Community-Led Ownership Models

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), in collaboration with the Essex Community Land Trust (ECLT), is committed to preserving land and ensuring long-term housing affordability in the Whitesboro neighborhood through the creation and stewardship of community-led land trusts. This strategy addresses displacement, speculative development, and gentrification by keeping land in community control and ensuring that housing remains accessible for future generations.

To achieve this strategy, WHF and ECLT will:

- **Permanently Preserve Land:** Identify, acquire, and place parcels of land within the Whitesboro neighborhood into a community land trust structure to remove them from the speculative real estate market.
- **Designate Housing Units for Affordability:** Develop and maintain housing units on CLT land that remain permanently affordable, ensuring access for low- and moderate-income residents.
- **Engage Current Homeowners:** Identify current Whitesboro homeowners who are interested in placing their properties into the community land trust to preserve affordability for their heirs, stabilize ownership across generations, and explore pathways to reduce or cap property tax burdens through CLT participation.
- **Support Local Ownership and Stewardship:** Provide technical assistance and education to residents and neighborhood stakeholders about land trust governance, empowering them to participate in the stewardship and oversight of community assets.
- **Build Resident Capacity:** Host workshops and trainings to prepare residents to serve on land trust boards and engage in advocacy for equitable housing policy at the local and state levels.
- **Partner with CDFIs and Mission-Aligned Funders:** Collaborate with community development financial institutions (CDFIs) and other philanthropic, public, and private funding actors to finance the construction of affordable housing and other community-serving assets, such as childcare centers, health hubs, or co-working spaces, on CLT-designated sites.
- **Community Housing Stability:** Assist Whiteboro homeowners, renters, and CLT participants in accessing complementary local, state, and federal housing assistance programs.

Strategy 3.4: Collaborate with Public Transit Advocacy organizations to enhance night-time safety, walkability, bikeability, and mass transit.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) is partnering with the New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition (NJBWC) to promote safer, more accessible, and equitable transportation options in the Whitesboro neighborhood. This collaboration aims to improve infrastructure for walking and biking, ensuring that all residents can navigate their community safely and comfortably.

NJBWC is the only statewide advocacy organization in New Jersey dedicated to promoting safe and accessible walking and biking. Their initiatives include the SAFE (Streets Are For Everyone) Network, which supports local advocates in creating bike- and walk-friendly communities, and the promotion of Complete Streets policies that prioritize safety for all road users.

To implement this strategy, WHF will undertake the following activities:

Community Engagement and Education

Organize workshops and informational sessions to educate residents about the benefits of walkable and bikeable communities, and to gather input on local transportation needs.

Infrastructure Assessment and Planning

Collaborate with NJBWC to assess current infrastructure and identify areas for improvement, such as the addition of sidewalks, bike lanes, night-time safety, and crosswalks.

Policy Advocacy

Advocate for the adoption of Complete Streets policies by local government, ensuring that future transportation projects consider the needs of all users, including pedestrians and cyclists

Funding and Resource Mobilization

Seek funding opportunities and technical assistance to support infrastructure improvements and community programs that promote active transportation.

Focus Area 4: Historic & Cultural Preservation

Strategy 4.1: Sustain and grow a grassroots network of residents, organizations, and partners to collaborate on and oversee historic & cultural preservation issues.

See strategy 1.1

Strategy 4.2: Promote Whitesboro's unique history in an entertaining and informative manner.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) is spearheading a comprehensive initiative to celebrate and preserve the rich heritage of Whitesboro, New Jersey, a historically significant African American-founded community established in the late 1800s. Through the development of a world-class museum and visitors center, WHF aims to honor the town's legacy and educate future generations.

Key Initiatives:

Museum and Visitors Center Development

WHF is dedicated to creating a state-of-the-art facility that will serve as a cultural hub, showcasing Whitesboro's history and contributions to American society. This center will offer interactive exhibits, educational programs, and community events.

Intergenerational Educational Programs

By involving school-age children in the creation of exhibits and storytelling, WHF fosters a connection between generations, ensuring the community's history is passed down and appreciated by younger members.

Whitesboro Black History Gala

An annual event celebrating the achievements and resilience of the African American community in Whitesboro. The gala features performances, honors notable figures, and brings together residents and supporters to reflect on the town's legacy.

Legislative Recognition Efforts

WHF is actively pursuing official recognition of Whitesboro as a historic American community at the local, county, state, and federal levels.

This includes efforts to list Whitesboro on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places, ensuring legal protections and access to preservation resources.

Focus Area 5: Family & Youth Development

Strategy 5.1: Sustain and grow a grassroots network of residents, organizations, and partners to collaborate on and oversee family & youth development issues.

See strategy 1.1

Strategy 5.2: Work with healthcare associations to eliminate health disparities, with a Focus on Maternal Health.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) is collaborating with the New Jersey Black Women Physicians Association (NJBWPA) to address and eliminate healthcare disparities within the Whitesboro community, particularly those affecting maternal health. This partnership aims to provide accessible, culturally competent care and education to improve health outcomes for vulnerable populations.

Key Initiatives:

Mobile Health Services

Deploy mobile health units to deliver prenatal and postnatal care directly to residents, reducing barriers to access and ensuring timely medical support.

Community Education Programs

Conduct workshops and seminars focusing on maternal health, nutrition, and wellness, empowering women with knowledge to make informed health decisions.

Healthcare Navigation Assistance

Offer guidance in navigating healthcare systems, including assistance with insurance enrollment, appointment scheduling, and understanding patient rights.

Advocacy for Policy Change

Work jointly to advocate for policies that address systemic inequities in healthcare, aiming to improve maternal health outcomes statewide.

Strategy 5.3: Develop Comprehensive After-School Tutoring Camps to Foster Holistic Student Development

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) and partners are committed to enhancing educational outcomes for students in the Whitesboro community by collaborating with public education leaders to establish after-school tutoring camps. These programs are designed to provide a meticulously engineered educational ecosystem that supports students' intellectual, social, and emotional growth.

Key Initiatives:

Integrated Academic Support:

Implement high-impact tutoring sessions focusing on core subjects such as mathematics, reading, and science. These sessions will be tailored to meet individual student needs, promoting academic excellence and confidence.

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Incorporate SEL frameworks into the curriculum to help students develop essential skills such as self-awareness, empathy, and resilience. This holistic approach ensures that students are equipped to navigate both academic challenges and interpersonal relationships effectively.

Enrichment Activities

Offer a variety of extracurricular activities, including arts, music, and physical education, to foster creativity and physical well-being. These activities aim to provide a well-rounded experience that nurtures diverse talents and interests.

Family and Community Engagement

Engage families and community members through workshops, volunteer opportunities, and regular communication to create a supportive network that reinforces student learning and development.

Continuous Evaluation and Improvement

Establish mechanisms for regular assessment and feedback to ensure program effectiveness and to make data-driven adjustments that enhance student outcomes.

Strategy 5.4: Develop a Community-Based National Defense Cadet Corps (NDCC) club.

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), in collaboration with the Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation (EOMF), is initiating the development of a National Defense Cadet Corps (NDCC) club in Whitesboro. Minister Elorm Ocansey of EOMF also serves as a Chaplain Candidate & Lieutenant with the New Jersey Army National Guard. With this initiative, EOMF aims to provide local youth with leadership training, civic education, and pathways to military and civilian careers, fostering a sense of discipline, responsibility, and community engagement.

Key Components of the Initiative:

Leadership and Civic Education

This club will offer structured training in leadership principles, citizenship, and ethical decision making, aligning with the NDCC's mission to prepare students for responsible roles in society.

Community Engagement

Cadets will participate in community service projects, fostering a strong connection between the program and the Whitesboro community.

Career Pathways

The program will provide information and guidance on military and civilian career opportunities, including the benefits of National Guard service, such as tuition-free education at New Jersey public colleges and universities.

Strategy 5.5: Collaborate with labor leaders to establish Woodworking and trades training for Youth in Whitesboro

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), in partnership with the Carpenter Contractor Trust (CCT) and Maplewoodshop, is launching a community-based initiative to provide woodworking and other trades training to children and adolescents. This program aims to equip youth with valuable career and life skills through hands-on learning experiences, fostering both personal growth and future employment opportunities.

Key Components of the Initiative:

Hands-On Woodworking Education:

Maplewoodshop offers safe, portable, and easy-to-implement woodworking programs that teach students critical life skills through collaborative and –

adaptive woodworking. Their curriculum aligns with educational standards and emphasizes social-emotional learning, making it suitable for integration into schools and community organizations.

Labor-Management Collaboration

The Carpenter Contractor Trust serves as a liaison between union carpenters and contractors, promoting workforce development and community engagement. Their partnership ensures that the training programs are aligned with industry standards and provide pathways to apprenticeships and careers in the skilled trades.

Community-Based Implementation

By integrating these programs into local community organizations, WHF aims to make trades education accessible to all children in Whitesboro. This approach not only imparts practical skills but also fosters a sense of community and belonging among participants.

NRTC Investment and Opportunity

Whitesboro Neighborhood Revitalization Plan: Reviving Legacy, Empowering Our Present & Rebuilding Our Future

The Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs' Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit (NRTC) program, is leading a comprehensive, community-driven revitalization initiative for the historic Whitesboro neighborhood. This plan builds upon the area's rich legacy, cultural resilience, and the collective strength of the Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project (WHPP) to ensure that future investments benefit all residents equitably.

Building on Legacy and Community Strength

Founded in the late 1800s by prominent African American leaders, including U.S. Congressman George Henry White, Reverend J.W. Fishburn, Booker T. Washington, Samuel H. Vick, Aletha Gibbs, Wiley H. Bates, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Ernest Cherry, Honorable William H. Hunt, and many unnamed others, Whitesboro was envisioned as a self-sustaining community free from racial discrimination. Today, WHF honors this legacy by engaging residents, local organizations, and external partners to shape a revitalization plan that reflects the community's aspirations and preserves its historical significance.

Strategic Goals and Collaborative Efforts

The revitalization plan focuses on five key areas:

Social, Environmental, & Civil Justice: Developing a healthy environment and a just civil society.

Economic & Workforce Development: Developing an equitable economy and a sustainable, thriving workforce.

Infrastructure & Housing Development: Developing a modern civil infrastructure and affordable, supportive housing for low-moderate income and chronically houseless people.

Historic & Cultural Preservation: Developing a historically accurate, vibrant, and culturally rich communal scene for all ages.

Family & Youth Development: Developing self-sufficient family units and well-educated, creative, and healthy children.

Inclusive Planning for Sustainable Growth

WHF's approach ensures that revitalization efforts are inclusive and tailored to the needs of Whitesboro's diverse population. By leveraging the NRTC program and engaging a broad coalition of stakeholders, the plan seeks to create a vibrant, sustainable community that honors its past while building a prosperous future.

For more information and to participate in the revitalization efforts, visit preservewhitesboro.org.

Section 8

Participatory

Planning Process

The Whitesboro Neighborhood Revitalization Plan emerged from a proud and deeply collaborative planning journey that spanned from June 2023 to June 2025. At the heart of this effort was the Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF), which led an inclusive process designed to capture the voices, values, and visions of the community. Through intentional outreach and dynamic partnerships, WHF brought together neighborhood residents, local organizations, business owners, property stakeholders, and regional leaders, ensuring that the plan reflects both the heritage and future aspirations of Whitesboro.

Over the two-year process, more than 700 unique members of the Whitesboro community contributed their insights, energy, and ideas. More than 200 residents, local entrepreneurs, and stakeholders participated directly in community meetings and public forums, many returning time and again to help shape the evolving plan. An additional 35+ individuals completed a detailed community survey, sharing personal perspectives on the neighborhood's most pressing needs and promising opportunities. Property owners, small business operators, nonprofits, and local government leaders all played vital roles in this collective visioning.

While the Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project (WHPP) officially launched in June 2023, it was in October 2024 that the NRTC (Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit) planning process formally began. WHF submitted its letter of intent to Middle Township, signaling its commitment to create an NRTC Neighborhood Plan rooted in historic pride, cultural preservation, and forward-thinking development. Soon after, WHF and community leaders hosted a public town hall to introduce the process and invite all who care about Whitesboro to get involved. Since then, WHF's dedicated WHPP outreach team has continued building momentum, engaging residents and stakeholders through door-to-door canvassing, phone banking, flyers at local events, and digital outreach on social media platforms.

This consistent engagement ensured that every voice had a chance to be heard and that the final plan is one of, by, and for the people of Whitesboro. The result is a bold and united vision for revitalization, rooted in community, driven by heritage, and focused on a thriving future.

Community participation was at the core of the planning process and took shape through a wide range of engaging formats. The WHPP Leadership Committee provided strategic guidance throughout, while monthly community meetings invited residents to dive deep into specific neighborhood planning topics. A large-scale community celebration brought neighbors together in a spirit of unity and pride, reinforcing the shared purpose behind the revitalization effort. The WHPP also showed up at existing community events, meeting people where they were to gather input and share updates. An online, neighborhood-wide survey gave residents another accessible way to voice their priorities. In addition, targeted stakeholder meetings were held with property owners, local businesses, nonprofit leaders, and government officials, ensuring that a broad range of perspectives were included in shaping a collective vision for Whitesboro's future.

LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

The WHPP Leadership Committee was officially established on October 13th, 2023, as a driving force behind the revitalization of Whitesboro. Today, it proudly includes a diverse group of resident leaders, local business owners, and nonprofit partners, all committed to honoring the town's legacy while shaping its future. Meeting on an ad-hoc basis throughout the planning period, the committee plays a critical role in defining the planning framework, developing strategic goals, and providing thoughtful feedback on the draft revitalization plan. Their guidance ensured the process remained community-centered, inclusive, and rooted in the unique values of Whitesboro.

The committee consists of the following individuals:

- Shirley Green, Executive Director of Whitesboro Historical Foundation: Business Owner
- Michelle Brown, Board Member of Whitesboro Historical Foundation: Resident/Business Owner
- Michelle Arlayne Robinson, Director of Black Kulture Incorporated: Business Owner
- Bobby Harrison, Chairman of Green Forest Alkaline Water: Resident/ Business Owner
- Minister Elorm Ocansey, Principal Founder and representative of NRTC partner, Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation
- Felicia Simmons, Executive Director and representative of NRTC partner, Proper Foundation-
- Oriana Holmes-Price, Director of Organizing and representative of NRTC partner, New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance:
- Alexa McNeil, Growth and Coordination Consultant, and representative of NRTC partner, Essex Community Land Trust
- Anthony Abrantes, Assistant Executive Secretary-Treasurer and representative of NRTC partner, Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters

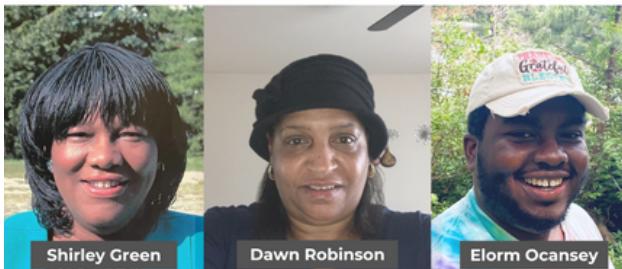
COMMUNITY MEETINGS & CELEBRATIONS

Over 35+ community meetings and celebration events were held throughout the two-year planning period on a monthly basis. Each community meeting or celebration event, hosted by WHF's Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project, highlighted and addressed particular issues important to neighborhood residents.

Photos & Videos from the Community Meetings & Celebrations

Be True

PODCAST



Ft. Whitesboro

Community Listening Session I

Thu. 06/01/23 | 6:00 PM EST

Courtesy of the Be True Podcast, a public education program on the African-American community, and the struggle for Freedom & Justice in America, a full recording of the Whitesboro Community Listening Session - 06/01/23

YouTube Link: youtu.be/iOLZSDDPR8E

ANNUAL WHITESBORO REUNION FESTIVAL
SEPTEMBER 1-3, 2023
MARTIN LUTHER KING CENTER
WHITESBORO, NJ

BE BOLD
Believe It & Achieve It



SPEAKERS
9-2-23



2023 CCWI Annual Whitesboro Reunion

Be True

PODCAST



Ft. Whitesboro

Community Listening Session II

Mon. 07/10/23 | 7:00 PM EST

A full recording of the Whitesboro Community Listening Session II - 07/10/23

YouTube Link: youtu.be/jcqBlzmje3k



WHD at 2023 CCWI Annual Whitesboro Reunion

WHITESBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT
INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR MONTHLY



COMMUNITY MEETING



SEP 22, 2023
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

100 E. MAIN ST, WHITESBORO, NJ

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com [\(609\) 551-0544](tel:(609)551-0544)
preservewhitesboro.org

*Inaugural Whitesboro Historic Preservation
Project (WHPP) Community Meeting
- 09/02/23*

YouTube Link: youtu.be/U2qbIMpt2CQ

WHITESBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT
INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR MONTHLY



COMMUNITY MEETING



OCT 20, 2023
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

100 E. MAIN ST, WHITESBORO, NJ

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com [\(609\) 551-0544](tel:(609)551-0544)
preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP Community Meeting - 10/20/23

YouTube Link: youtu.be/ZZ4m9sfIJ7I

DATE: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22ND, 2023

TIME: 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

MEETING AGENDA

- OPENING PRAYER
- INTRODUCTION
- REVIEW OF MIDDLE TOWNSHIP' 2010 & 2020
MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT
- DISCUSSION OF WHITESBORO COMMUNITY
ASSESSMENT PLAN PROPOSAL
- DISCUSSION OF WHITESBORO COMMUNITY
MASTER PLAN PROPOSAL
- PUBLIC COMMENT
- ADJOURNMENT
- CLOSING PRAYER

Featured Speakers

 Shirley Green
Whitesboro Historical Foundation

 Minister Elorm Ocansey
Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation

 Felicia Simmons
Proper Foundation LLC

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com [\(609\) 551-0544](tel:(609)551-0544)



preservewhitesboro.org

*Inaugural Whitesboro Historic Preservation
Project (WHPP) Community Meeting Agenda
- 09/02/23*

DATE: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20TH, 2023

TIME: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

MEETING AGENDA

- OPENING PRAYER
- INTRODUCTION
- WHITESBORO COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT PLAN
- WHITESBORO COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN
- ENGAGING WHITESBORO BUSINESS LEADERS
- PUBLIC COMMENT
- ADJOURNMENT
- CLOSING PRAYER

Featured Speakers

 Shirley Green
Whitesboro Historical Foundation

 Melissa Moore
609 Nutrition Spot LLC

 Felicia Simmons
Proper Foundation LLC

 Minister Elorm Ocansey
Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com [\(609\) 551-0544](tel:(609)551-0544)



preservewhitesboro.org

*WHPP Community Meeting Agenda -
10/20/23*



WHPP Small Business Expo & Bus Tour – 11/11/23

YouTube Link: youtu.be/dnd_iZcroew



**WHPP Small Business
Expo & Bus Tour – 11/11/23**



WHPP Pep Rally – 11/11/23

YouTube Link: youtu.be/KT2v8WCCUEg



**WHPP Pep Rally –
11/11/23**



WHPP Sunday Worship Service - 11/12/23

YouTube Link: youtu.be/W5hsSjh-H5g



WHPP Community Meeting - 11/17/23

YouTube Link: youtu.be/VnLxAULQjHO



WHPP Community Meeting Agenda - 11/17/23



WHPP Middle Township Christmas Parade - 12/08/23

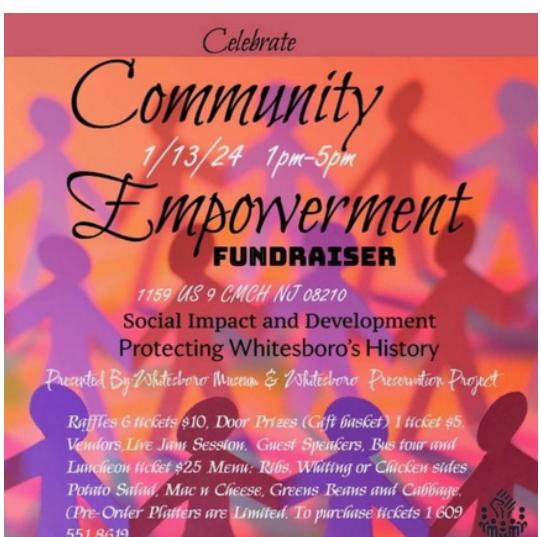


WHPP Community Meeting - 12/15/23

YouTube Link: youtu.be/WZEtMRomlu0



**WHPP Community Meeting
Agenda - 12/15/23**



Black Kulture Incorporated & WHPP Community Empowerment Fundraiser - 01/13/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/oPaEKaLjnnk



Black Kulture Incorporated & WHPP Community Empowerment Fundraiser - 01/13/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/e7TgHHhF0mc

A flyer for a church anniversary luncheon. At the top is a circular logo for First Baptist Church of Whitesboro, featuring a cross, a chalice, and a loaf of bread, with the text 'FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF WHITESBORO' and 'MATTHEW 19:26'. To the right is a portrait of Minister Elorm Ocansey. The main title 'MEET & GREET' is in large, bold, black letters, with 'Luncheon' in a smaller, blue, cursive font below it. Below the title is a call to action: 'Come worship with us as we celebrate our 120th anniversary year and join us for lunch with our special guests.' Below this are four circular portraits of special guests: Steve Young, Felicia Simmons, Kathy Valentine, and Minister Elorm Ocansey. At the bottom, there is a logo for 'SUNDAY January 21st, 2024', a clock icon with 'START AT 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM', and the church's address '8 W MAIN ST, WHITESBORO, NJ, USA' with a location pin icon. The website 'preservewhitesboro.org' is at the bottom.



First Baptist Church of Whitesboro & WHPP Meet & Great Luncheon - 01/21/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/h4AfUWsCPn4

WHPP Community Meeting - 02/16/24

DATE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH, 2024
TIME: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
MEETING AGENDA

WHPP Community Meeting Agenda - 02/16/24

WHITESBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT
INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR MONTHLY



COMMUNITY
MEETING

Every 3rd Friday of the month.

MAR 15, 2024
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
100 E. MAIN ST, WHITESBORO, NJ

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com (609) 551-0544
preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP Community Meeting - 03/15/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/kP0fYxcTyLY

DATE: FRIDAY, MARCH 15TH, 2024

TIME: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

MEETING AGENDA



- OPENING PRAYER
- INTRODUCTION
- WHITESBORO COMMUNITY VISION/ACTION PLAN
- ENGAGING WHITESBORO'S ARTISTIC COMMUNITY
- PUBLIC COMMENT
- ADJOURNMENT
- CLOSING PRAYER

Featured Speakers



Patricia Anderson



Shirley Green

Whitesboro Historical Foundation



Minister Elorm Ocansey

Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com (609) 551-0544
preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP Community Meeting
Agenda - 03/15/24



WHPP Earth Day Clean-Up - 04/22/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/knmCP1NcA54



WHPP May Day Rally-Up - 05/11/24



May 11, 2024 - Whitesboro Rally II - 01:00 PM



Chairman Lawrence Hamm
Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project

• Cape Community Church
1159 Route 9 S, CMCH, New Jersey
preservewhitesboro.org

May 11, 2024 - Whitesboro Rally II - 01:00 PM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RALLY TO BUILD OUR COMMUNITY

"Justice is merely relative. It can exist between equals. It can exist among lions, but between lions and lambs, never!"

In the spirit of Congressman George H. White and Whitesboro's founding pioneers, we call on all hard-working lions to help us build a new, safe, prosperous, and self-sufficient municipality, state, and country.

We're honored to be joined by People's Organization for Progress Chairman & United States Senatorial Candidate, Lawrence Hamm.

The Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project invites you to join us and our special guest on May 11th, 2024, at 01:00 PM EST at Cape Community Church (1159 Route 9 S, Cape May Court House, NJ 08210) for a rally to build Whitesboro and our community.

Press contact:

Felicia Simmons
Organizer (609) 551-0544
whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com

preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP May Day Rally-Up - 05/11/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/uaD44H6tRRk

WHITESBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT
INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR MONTHLY



COMMUNITY MEETING

Every 3rd Friday of the month.

MAR 15, 2024
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
100 E. MAIN ST, WHITESBORO, NJ

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com (609) 551-0544
preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP Community Meeting - 03/15/24
YouTube Link: youtu.be/kPOfYxcTyLY

DATE: FRIDAY, MARCH 15TH, 2024

TIME: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

MEETING AGENDA



- OPENING PRAYER
- INTRODUCTION
- WHITESBORO COMMUNITY VISION/ACTION PLAN
- ENGAGING WHITESBORO'S ARTISTIC COMMUNITY
- PUBLIC COMMENT
- ADJOURNMENT
- CLOSING PRAYER

Featured Speakers

Patricia Anderson
Divine Uniqueness

Shirley Green

Whitesboro Historical Foundation

Minister Elorm Ocansey

Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com (609) 551-0544
preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP Community Meeting
Agenda - 03/15/24

WHITESBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT
INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR MONTHLY



o o o o o
COMMUNITY
MEETING

Every 3rd Friday of the month.

MAY 24, 2024
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
100 E. MAIN ST, WHITESBORO, NJ



whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com

preservewhitesboro.org

(609) 551-0544

WHPP Community Meeting - 05/24/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/JrvFf4JcLcI

WHITESBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT
INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR MONTHLY



o o o o o
COMMUNITY
MEETING

Every 3rd Friday of the month.

JUNE 21, 2024
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
100 E. MAIN ST, WHITESBORO, NJ



whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com

preservewhitesboro.org

(609) 551-0544

WHPP Community Meeting - 06/21/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/9ENPAQGhtnQ

WHITESBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT
INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR MONTHLY



o o o o o
COMMUNITY
MEETING

Every 3rd Friday of the month.

JULY 19, 2024
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
100 E. MAIN ST, WHITESBORO, NJ



whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com

preservewhitesboro.org

(609) 551-0544

WHPP Community Meeting - 07/19/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/UPpIGp4bODI

DATE: FRIDAY, MAY 24TH, 2024

TIME: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

MEETING AGENDA



- OPENING PRAYER
- INTRODUCTION
- WHITESBORO COMMUNITY VISION/ACTION PLAN
- ENGAGING WHITESBORO'S EDUCATOR COMMUNITY
- PUBLIC COMMENT
- ADJOURNMENT
- CLOSING PRAYER

Featured Speakers

Benessa Harrison

Shirley Green
Whitesboro Historical Foundation

Minister Elorm Ocansey
Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com (609) 551-0544

preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP Community Meeting

Agenda - 05/24/24

DATE: FRIDAY, JUNE 21ST, 2024

TIME: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

MEETING AGENDA



- OPENING PRAYER
- INTRODUCTION
- WHITESBORO COMMUNITY VISION/ACTION PLAN
- ENGAGING WHITESBORO'S INDUSTRY LEADERS
- PUBLIC COMMENT
- ADJOURNMENT
- CLOSING PRAYER

Featured Speakers

Audry E. Green

Shirley Green
Whitesboro Historical Foundation

Felicia Simmons
Proper Foundation

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com (609) 551-0544

preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP Community Meeting

Agenda - 06/21/24

DATE: FRIDAY, JULY 19TH, 2024

TIME: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

MEETING AGENDA



- OPENING PRAYER
- INTRODUCTION
- WHITESBORO COMMUNITY VISION/ACTION PLAN
- ENGAGING WHITESBORO'S BUSINESS LEADERS
- PUBLIC COMMENT
- ADJOURNMENT
- CLOSING PRAYER

Featured Speakers

Bobby Harrison

Shirley Green
Whitesboro Historical Foundation

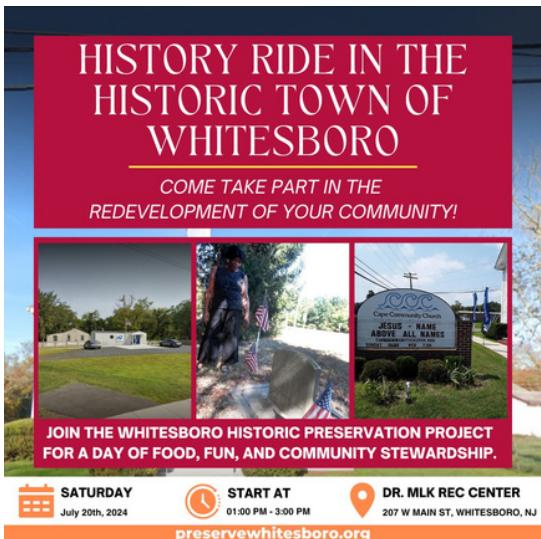
Felicia Simmons
Proper Foundation

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com (609) 551-0544

preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP Community Meeting

Agenda - 07/19/24



WHPP History Ride In The Historic Town of Whitesboro - 06/20/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/DHAWT3uRZxY



WHPP Welcome to Whitesboro Flea Market - 08/31/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/AgapvvuXujM

A flyer for a community meeting. The background shows a church interior with people seated in wooden pews. The title 'Whitesboro Community Listening Session' is at the top in large, bold, white letters. Below it, 'Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project' and 'invites you to join us for a conversation on preserving our community.' are in smaller white text. The main event title 'Community Meeting' is in large, bold, white letters on a white rectangular box. Below it, 'AT THE CAPE COMMUNITY CHURCH' is in white. To the right, a box contains a clock icon and 'A 2 Hour Discussion'. Another box below it says 'Free & Open to the Public'. At the bottom, 'Saturday August 31' is in large white letters. To the right, 'Featured Speakers' is followed by two circular profile pictures: Shirley Green (Whitesboro Historical Foundation) and Britnee Timberlake (Essex Community Land Trust). Contact information at the bottom includes an email (whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com), a phone number ((609) 551-0544), and a website (preservewhitesboro.org). A small circular portrait of a person is in the top right corner.



WHPP Welcome to Whitesboro Flea Market - 08/31/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/gntwM8dCG5Q

WHITESBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT
INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR MONTHLY
WHITESBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT
ORGANIZED. 2023

COMMUNITY
MEETING

Every 3rd Friday of the month.

SEP 20, 2024
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
100 E. MAIN ST, WHITESBORO, NJ

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com
preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP Community Meeting - 05/24/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/JrvFf4JcLcl



A flyer for the 'Community Forum 2024' in Whitesboro. The top half features the text 'COMMUNITY FORUM 2024' in large, bold, black and orange letters. Below this, a horizontal line separates the title from the text: 'Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project invites you to join us at the First Baptist Church of Whitesboro to learn about your 2024 local & federal candidates.' At the bottom, it says 'Light refreshments will be served!' and provides the website 'preservewhitesboro.org'. The bottom right corner contains a QR code and the URL 'www.bit.ly/4ea1jFV'. The right side of the flyer has a sidebar with a blue header 'Register Now' and contact information: a phone icon with '(609) 551-0544', a globe icon with the URL, and a calendar icon with the date 'September 22nd, 2024'. There are also icons for a clock and a location pin.



WHPP Community Forum - 09/22/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/iA6rTWHzZg

WHITESBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT
INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR MONTHLY



COMMUNITY
MEETING

Every 3rd Friday of the month.

OCT 18, 2024
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

100 E. MAIN ST, WHITESBORO, NJ

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com [\(609\) 551-0544](tel:(609)551-0544)
preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP Community Meeting - 10/18/24

YouTube Link: youtu.be/kE-xoIUbtdc



WHPP at First Baptist Church of Whitesboro
120th Anniversary - 10/26/24



DATE: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15TH, 2024
TIME: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
MEETING AGENDA

- OPENING PRAYER
- INTRODUCTION
- WHITESBORO NEIGHBORHOOD NRTC PLAN
- ADDRESSING WHITESBORO'S ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS
- PUBLIC COMMENT
- ADJOURNMENT
- CLOSING PRAYER

Featured Speakers



Shirley Green
Whitesboro Historical Foundation



Oriana Holmes-Price
New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance



Felicia Simmons
Proper Foundation



Minister Elorm Ocansey
Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com [\(609\) 551-0544](tel:(609)551-0544)
preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP & NJEJA Community Listening Session
YouTube Link: youtu.be/wpVJR0KhvRo

DATE: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18TH, 2024
TIME: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
MEETING AGENDA



- OPENING PRAYER
- INTRODUCTION
- WHITESBORO COMMUNITY VISION/ACTION PLAN
- ADDRESSING WHITESBORO'S PLANNING NEEDS
- PUBLIC COMMENT
- ADJOURNMENT
- CLOSING PRAYER

Featured Speakers



Shirley Green
Whitesboro Historical Foundation



Michelle Arlayne Robinson
Black Kulture Incorporated



Felicia Simmons
Proper Foundation



Minister Elorm Ocansey
Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com [\(609\) 551-0544](tel:(609)551-0544)

preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP Community Meeting
Agenda - 10/18/24

WHITESBORO COMMUNITY
LISTENING SESSION
ON WASTE ISSUES

Are you concerned about
waste pollution in your
community?

We invite Whitesboro community
members to join us in this gathering
to share their experiences with
waste-related injustices and issues
in their community.

FRIDAY
NOV 15, 2024
6:30 - 8:30 PM (IN-PERSON)
7:00 - 8:30 PM (VIRTUAL)

Whitesboro Grammar
School
100 E Main Street
Whitesboro, NJ 08210

REGISTER:
tinyurl.com/EJLISTENSWHITESBORO
Refreshments will be served

INTERPRETACIÓN EN ESPAÑOL DISPONIBLE PARA LAS PERSONAS ASISTIENDO EN PERSONA

HOSTED BY



WHPP & NJEJA Community Listening Session
Agenda - 11/15/24



WHPP & NJEJA Community Listening Session
YouTube Link: youtu.be/wpVJR0KhvRo

WHPP & NJEJA Neighborhood Canvassers



WHPP Middle Township Christmas Parade - 12/06/24



WHPP Building One New Jersey Annual Year-End Celebration - 12/12/24



WHPP Community Meeting & Holiday Party - 12/20/24
YouTube Link: youtu.be/MqfNkbyidrM

A flyer for the Whitesboro Historic Preservation Project. The top half features the text 'WHITESBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT' and 'INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR MONTHLY' above a circular logo. The logo contains a portrait of a man in historical attire, with 'WHITESBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT' around the top edge and 'ORGANIZED. 2023' at the bottom. Below the logo, the text 'COMMUNITY MEETING' is displayed in large, bold, sans-serif letters. Below that, 'Every 3rd Friday of the month.' is written in a smaller, italicized font. A calendar icon shows the date 'JAN 17, 2025'. To the right of the date, the time '6:30 PM - 8:30 PM' and the location '100 E. MAIN ST, WHITESBORO, NJ' are listed. The bottom left features an envelope icon and the email address 'whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com'. The bottom right features a phone icon and the phone number '(609) 551-0544'. The bottom center features the website 'preservewhitesboro.org'.

WHPP Community Meeting - 01/17/25
YouTube Link: youtu.be/wpVJR0KHvRo

WHPP Community Meeting - 02/21/25



BREAKING NEWS

Whitesboro Historical Foundation Announces Inaugural Black History Gala at Congress Hall

[Read More](#)



More Information At
preservewhitesboro.org

DATE: FRIDAY, JANUARY 17TH, 2025
TIME: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
MEETING AGENDA

- **OPENING PRAYER**
- **INTRODUCTION**
- **WHITESBORO'S HISTORIC & CULTURAL PRESERVATION**
- **PUBLIC COMMENT**
- **ADJOURNMENT**
- **CLOSING PRAYER**

Featured Speaker

 **Shirley Green**
Whitesboro Historical Foundation

Funding has been made possible in part by the New Jersey Historical Commission/Department of State, and the Cape May County Board of County Commissioners through the Division of Culture & Heritage.

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com (609) 551-0544

preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP Community Meeting Agenda - 01/17/25

DATE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST, 2025
TIME: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
MEETING AGENDA

- **OPENING PRAYER**
- **INTRODUCTION**
- **WHITESBORO'S CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**
- **PUBLIC COMMENT**
- **ADJOURNMENT**
- **CLOSING PRAYER**

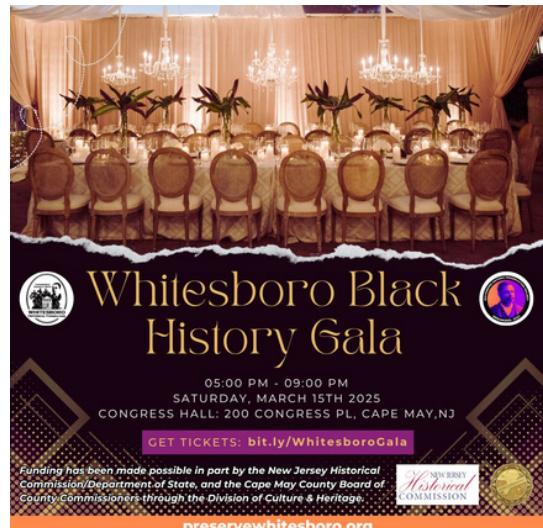
Featured Speaker

 **Felicia Simmons**
Proper Foundation & 4 Asbury Park CPC

Funding has been made possible in part by the New Jersey Historical Commission/Department of State, and the Cape May County Board of County Commissioners through the Division of Culture & Heritage.

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com (609) 551-0544

WHPP Community Meeting Agenda - 02/21/25



WHPP Inaugural Black History Gala at Congress Hall - 03/15/25



WHPP Inaugural Black History Gala at Congress Hall - 03/15/25



WHPP Inaugural Black History Gala at Congress Hall - 03/15/25
[YouTube Link: youtu.be/9NAX7QDMZwo](https://youtu.be/9NAX7QDMZwo)



WHPP at New Jersey Bike & Walk Summit - 03/29/25

WHITESBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT
INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR MONTHLY



○ COMMUNITY
MEETING

Every 3rd Friday of the month.

MAR 21, 2025
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
100 E. MAIN ST, WHITESBORO, NJ

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com [\(609\) 551-0544](tel:(609)551-0544)
preservewhitesboro.org



DATE: FRIDAY, MARCH 21ST, 2025
TIME: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
MEETING AGENDA



- OPENING PRAYER
- INTRODUCTION
- WHITESBORO'S PUBLIC SAFETY
- PUBLIC COMMENT
- ADJOURNMENT
- CLOSING PRAYER

Featured Speakers



Detective Sean Gursang
New Jersey State Police (NJSP)



Michele Schreffler
Director, NJSP IA, ROPF, NIN, & CACI



Christopher Houser
NJSP CPBS | Recovery Advocate Social Worker



Richard LoRusso
NJSP CPBS | Recovery Advocate Social Worker

Funding has been made possible in part by the New Jersey Historical Commission/Department of State, and the Cape May County Board of County Commissioners through the Division of Culture & Heritage.



whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com [\(609\) 551-0544](tel:(609)551-0544)
preservewhitesboro.org



WHPP Community Meeting - 03/21/25
YouTube Link: youtu.be/o91V_VtUxvk

WHITESBORO HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROJECT
INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR MONTHLY



○ COMMUNITY
MEETING

Every 3rd Friday of the month.

APR 18, 2025
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
100 E. MAIN ST, WHITESBORO, NJ

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com [\(609\) 551-0544](tel:(609)551-0544)
preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP Community Meeting - 04/19/25

DATE: FRIDAY, APRIL 18TH, 2025
TIME: 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM
MEETING AGENDA

- OPENING PRAYER
- INTRODUCTION
- WHITESBORO'S PUBLIC TRANSIT INFRASTRUCTURE
- PUBLIC COMMENT
- ADJOURNMENT
- CLOSING PRAYER

Featured Speaker



Tiffany Robinson
Trails Network Manager
New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition



Funding has been made possible in part by the New Jersey Historical Commission/Department of State, and the Cape May County Board of County Commissioners through the Division of Culture & Heritage.

whitesborohistoricpreservation@gmail.com [\(609\) 551-0544](tel:(609)551-0544)
preservewhitesboro.org

WHPP Community Meeting
Agenda - 04/19/25



WHPP Community Meeting w/ Tiffany Robinson, Trails Network
Manager, New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition - 04/19/25

Enhancing Travel
Paths in Whitesboro:
Linking Connectivity
and Growth

Tiffany R. Robinson, Trails Network Manager
New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition

April 18, 2025



What are the biggest challenges you face when traveling around Whitesboro?

street lights
through roads lighting
sidewalks
trails
one way in one way out
side walks
animals

WHPP Community Meeting w/ Tiffany Robinson, Trails Network Manager, New Jersey Bike & Walk Coalition - 04/19/25



WHPP NRTC Plan Presentation
Community Meeting - 05/23/25



WHPP NRTC Plan Presentation Community Meeting with Minister Elorm Ocansey, Principal, Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation, and Felicia Simmons, Executive Director, Proper Foundation – 05/23/25



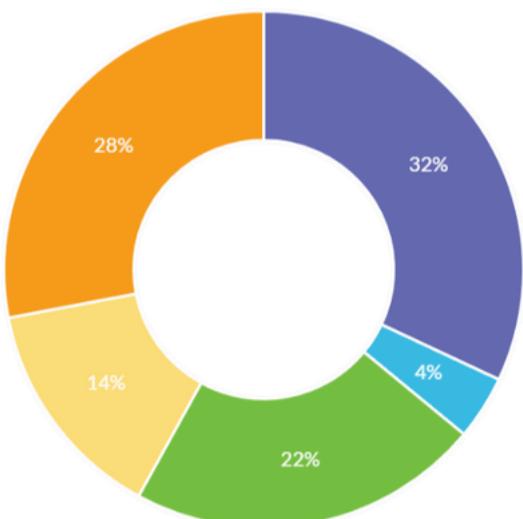
WHPP Members meeting with Curtis Bashaw, Founder & Managing Partner, Cape Resorts at Tiffany's Greens Beans N Birds – 05/23/25

NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

Through the online platform SurveyPlatet, the WHPP created a comprehensive neighborhood survey and solicited responses from Whitesboro neighborhood residents, community organizations, and external partners. The survey was publicized through social media, email newsletters, word of mouth, community events, and the local Cape May County Shoppers Guide. Overall, the survey was conducted between October 2024 and May 2025 and drew 35+ participants in total.

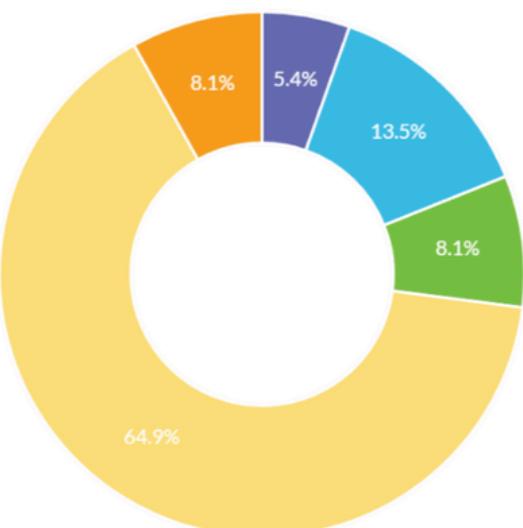
Below is a summary of the findings:

PARTICIPANTS' PRIMARY CONNECTION TO WHITESBORO



Choice	Total
Resident	16
Business Owner	2
Community Organization	11
Visitor	7
Other (please specify):	14

LENGTHS OF PARTICIPANTS' CONNECTION TO WHITESBORO



Choice	Total
Less than 1 year	2
1-5 years	5
6-10 years	3
More than 10 years	24
I am not currently connected, but I have ties to the community.	3

IMPROVING WHITESBORO'S ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY



Survey participants expressed a deep and abiding love for Whitesboro, alongside a clear vision for its future, one rooted in development, preservation, equity, and community collaboration. Many emphasized the need for infrastructure improvements and modern conveniences while strongly advocating for the preservation of Whitesboro's unique history and Black cultural legacy.

A strong theme was the desire for growth that doesn't erase the past. One respondent said plainly: "Having Whitesboro remain the community it has always been and stop the onset of gentrification that is occurring." Another echoed: "Keeping/preserving the history of Whitesboro and its value as a Black community." This commitment to cultural continuity was underlined by the call for "Preserving the town for the younger generations" and "Preserving the unique identity and character of the community."

Several residents expressed the need for better infrastructure: "There are so many improvements needed but if I narrow it down to one, I would say streets and sidewalks and lighting," said one participant. Others called for "Side walkway" additions and "Affordable housing, preservation of town history, and improved infrastructure."

Safety and cleanliness were also high on the list. One succinctly said: "Clean it up," while another called for "Protection and cleanliness." Another participant said they want to help their relatives with "maintenance of their homes and property," underlining both a personal and community-level commitment to well-being.

Economic opportunity was another strong focus. Participants want to see “support for small businesses” and “a quality food market to replace Dollar General..., but with packed shelves, natural foods, beer, deli counter, fruit, etc.” Others noted the need for “more of everything we need to build a town” and encouraged Whitesboro to “open up to be a little more modern.”

CREATING A MORE SUSTAINABLE AND THRIVING WORKFORCE IN WHITESBORO



Survey participants clearly voiced a shared goal: empowering the people of Whitesboro, especially its Black residents, with meaningful employment, entrepreneurship opportunities, and sustainable development that keeps the community's legacy intact.

A repeated theme was the need for jobs created by and for the community. One resident emphasized: "Create a maintenance building in Whitesboro and hire residents from Whitesboro." Another stated plainly: "Get people to work." The message was reinforced with calls for "More jobs at the center" and "Maybe more jobs for the young people."

The community also wants to see support for small businesses and entrepreneurship, with residents stating: “Encourage entrepreneurship,” “Creating small businesses,” and “Small businesses need to grow with prices geared towards the neighborhood with easy access.” There was a call for better local wages and reinvestment: “Wages and benefits need to be attractive. Reinvestment.”

One powerful comment highlighted a broader economic vision: “Have a cooperation or company there,” showing the desire for long-term, rooted economic infrastructure. Another emphasized the need for training pipelines: “Working with local and external organizations to connect residents to training opportunities.”

Education and long-term investment were also central concerns. Several participants called for “The development of adult training and apprenticeship programs,” “Continuing education institutions, including technology,” and “Development of small business as well as new ideas in educational institutions.” A respondent suggested Whitesboro should “be inclusive of Wildwood Heights and noted land tracts under J. White territories for incoming grants.”

Others called for deeper state involvement: “The state needs to be more invested,” and for collaboration beyond the community: “Consider collaborating with other Black Historical Societies and Museums in the State by forming a consortium.”

Participants also emphasized the importance of grounding economic growth in cultural and historical education, especially for young people: “Educating the younger generation about their ancestors in the community, from the founding families to how those families have grown to this generation.”

Lastly, there was a strong desire to keep the character of the community front and center: “Stop trying to outsource the residents. It has always been an African American community and should remain one.” And as one respondent simply put it, the way forward is with “Devoted people to support developmental programs.”

These reflections show that the people of Whitesboro aren’t just asking for jobs, they are calling for ownership, opportunity, and a sustainable future that grows from within the community itself.

ADDRESSING HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES IN WHITESBORO



Housing is at the heart of community life, and survey respondents made it clear: Whitesboro needs more affordable, secure, and community-rooted housing, alongside significant infrastructure improvements. From anti-foreclosure plans to public transportation and land oversight, residents shared powerful, actionable ideas.

A resounding call was made for affordable housing expansion: "Push affordable housing issues through as it's very much needed," one participant urged, while another added: "Funding to add more affordable housing." Others were specific, noting the need for "Low-income housing" and "More housing units."

Many voiced frustration over the current system, asking for new safeguards and oversight. One resident recommended: "Developing an anti-foreclosure plan, putting into place an anti-eviction ordinance," and added the need for "accessible emergency routes for evacuation and personnel activity." Another stressed the need to "Get deeds, proper subdivisions not consolidations, more active participation in township and school committee meetings." To help maintain land and housing stock already within the community, a powerful idea was shared: "Create a fund where residents can contribute in keeping land etc., within the community."

Related to that, someone called for the creation of a “town committee to oversee tax and land sales for legitimacy, then locate land for affordable development of units to keep working families.”

Participants also want housing and development projects to reflect transparency and local control: “Total transparency notifying residents of any new developments or changes in the community!” Another noted: “More citizens of the county have to take part in county & city held meetings to discuss the issues with housing for the displaced & homeless & low-income and the declining infrastructure.”

The need for restoration and cleanup was also highlighted: “Create task force to help board up houses that are empty, property that’s overgrown. Clean trash up throughout Whitesboro.”

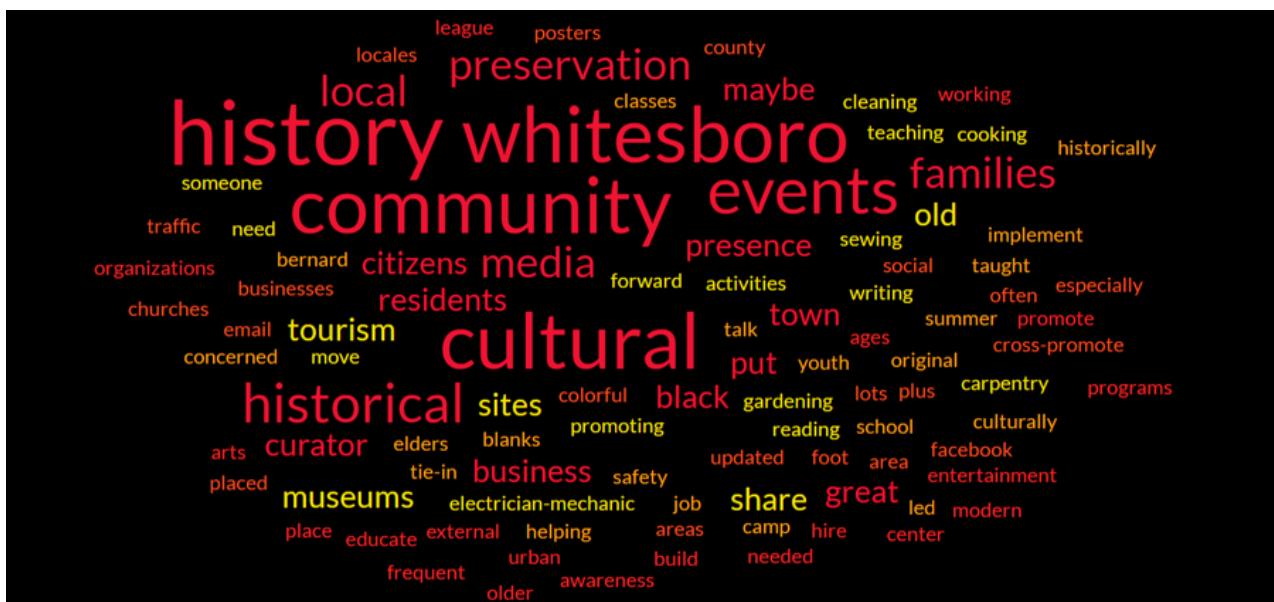
To support housing development and homeownership, participants called for financial tools: “Tax incentives for developers, including Section 8 units? Low down payments for housing without getting upside down later.”

One participant was clear-eyed: “Well to be honest, the area is not great for housing, though it’s needed.” Others are still listening and learning: “Still learning the community’s needs,” one wrote, while another simply said: “I’m open to ideas on this myself as housing is a huge issue everywhere.”

There was a shared understanding that investment and collaboration are essential. Residents suggested: “Just keep on reaching out to some Black investors who may be able to invest in what we are trying to do! Let us send out letters, emails, Facebook messages, phone calls and other means.” Another emphasized: “Working with local and external organizations to connect residents to affordable housing opportunities.”

Infrastructure was not forgotten. Residents called for better transportation and internet access, suggesting: “Invest in reliable public train options to connect Whitesboro with larger employment hubs,” and “Expand high-speed internet availability to support remote work, education.”

PROMOTING CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RICHNESS FOR ALL AGES IN WHITESBORO



Residents of Whitesboro expressed a deep sense of pride in their community's rich heritage, paired with a strong desire to preserve, teach, and celebrate that history for generations to come. Across all ages, survey participants stressed that honoring the past must go hand-in-hand with engaging, educational, and inclusive programming.

A recurring theme was the importance of hands-on education and intergenerational learning. One resident encouraged, "Talk to the elders, their families, some of the original families... they are the history." Another added: "Get the older people/families to bring their pictures, land grants, deeds, stories of how their ancestors came to be in Whitesboro... to do a Remembrance Day."

Others suggested embedding community history into everyday learning: "Have classes taught in school about their community," and "Networking, hosting historic events in schools... definitely more community involvement." Another voiced the need to "bridge the gap between young and old citizens to share Whitesboro's history and to share ideas on future plans."

Cultural and historical programming stood out as a high priority. Residents expressed strong support for “more cultural events that are interactive as well as informative,” and emphasized that “more frequent cultural and historical events” should be held.

One participant called for a bold step forward: "Whitesboro should promote entertainment for all ages and an Urban Business League of its own. Maybe build a modern Cultural Center for the Arts and community awareness."

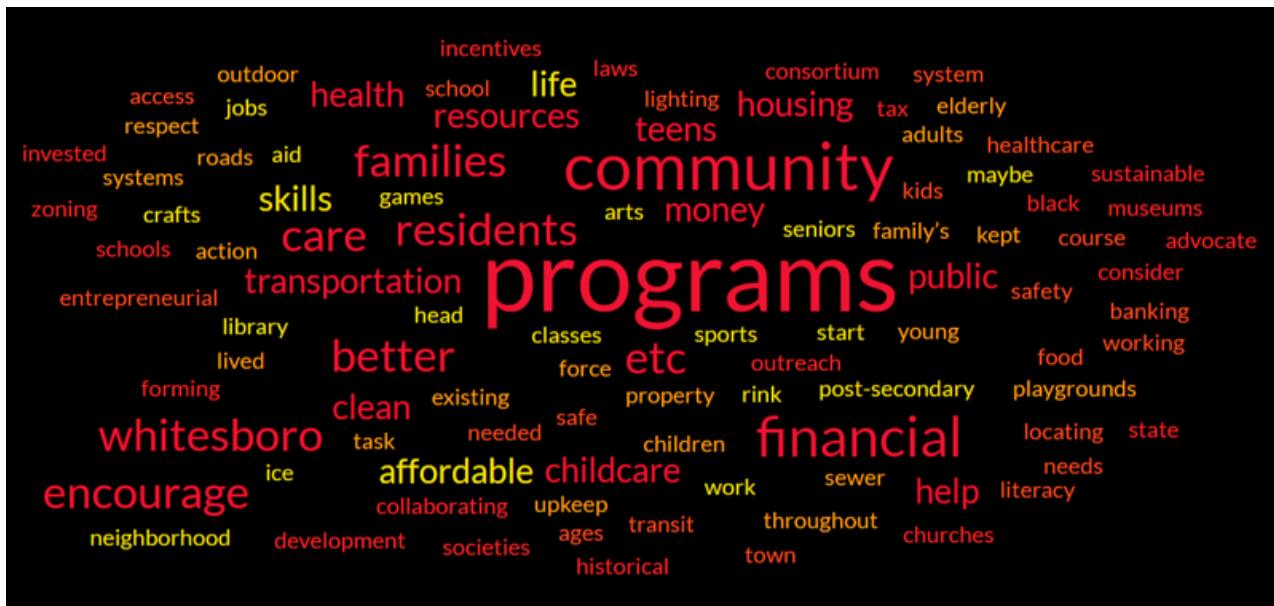
Support for history and preservation efforts already underway was also voiced. "Concerned Citizens of Whitesboro, led by Bernard Blanks, are doing a great job both culturally and historically," said one respondent. Others want to see expansion: "Create community events targeting support for the Whitesboro Preservation Foundation," and "Consider collaborating with other Black Historical Societies and Museums in the state by forming a consortium."

A strong emphasis was placed on making cultural and historical efforts visible and accessible. Ideas included "touring and tourism programs," "more tie-in with local businesses," and "colorful posters... placed in areas with lots of foot traffic." Participants called for increased media usage "videos, commercials, and advertisements," "an online presence and visual media," and the use of social media platforms to engage a wider audience.

Many participants also emphasized programming for youth as a bridge to future sustainability. Suggestions included "Summer camp in Whitesboro," and "activities such as promoting and having someone teaching carpentry, electrician, mechanic, sewing, gardening, reading, writing, cleaning, cooking, helping, and the history of our town."

One resident reminded the community to stay the course and stay active: "Move forward." Another tied all the efforts together with a clear and hopeful vision: "People love history, museums, and visiting historical sites. Building on that with well-advertised sites would be great."

HELPING FAMILIES AND CHILDREN IN WHITESBORO THRIVE



Survey participants passionately shared a holistic vision for uplifting families and children in Whitesboro blending strong education, supportive services, safe spaces, and community-rooted investment. At the heart of these visions is the belief that every family deserves a safe, nurturing, and opportunity-rich place to grow.

The foundation of this support, many noted, begins with jobs and economic stability: "More jobs," one resident stated simply. Another called for "better work programs to make money, more neighborhood arts, crafts, sports and games." Others urged Whitesboro to advocate for "zoning laws and tax incentives that encourage sustainable development" and "corporate engagement through hiring commitments and scholarships."

Families need access to quality services, participants emphasized, everything from education to childcare to healthcare. One person envisioned: "Head Start, transportation, library, post-secondary classes, etc."

Another wrote: "Better public safety, working public transit, healthcare, and more." One powerful idea called for "childcare, food programs, after-school care," while another pushed for "more for families to do with their kids."

Community and school support were central themes. Residents advocated for “more money invested in schools and health programs” and “affordable housing and educational programs.”

A clear recommendation was made for “daycare and aftercare, homework help, life skills for the teens (financial), and community clean-ups.” Many expressed that education should go beyond textbooks, calling for “financial literacy and entrepreneurial programs for residents of all ages,” and “Family and Consumer Sciences programs to teach life skills Whitesboro was known for in the past.”

Several participants emphasized the role of infrastructure in building a thriving environment for families: “Outdoor playgrounds for children, teens, and young adults and families that are kept safe and clean, with any needed lighting etc.” Another noted the basics: “Better roads, sewer systems throughout Whitesboro, and respect for the residents who lived there.”

Help for the most vulnerable came through strongly. One person said simply: “Seniors aid.” Others called for a “task force to help elderly and families’ upkeep of existing property,” and “housing, environmental, childcare, transportation, affordable healthcare.”

The community wants spaces for healing, learning, and connection. Suggestions included “tech labs,” “more neighborhood arts, crafts, sports and games,” and even a hopeful pitch for an “ice rink.”

Importantly, many called for stronger civic engagement and grassroots leadership, stating the need for “more community programs, more outreach from the churches and community,” and “getting members of the community more involved in all aspects of government.”

Lastly, the vision for sustained cultural identity and unity remains clear: “Consider collaborating with other Black Historical Societies and Museums in the state by forming a consortium,” and “history programs” remain vital to grounding the next generation in the strength of their roots.

NOTICE TO MIDDLE TOWNSHIP OF INTENT TO DEVELOP A NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

On October 22, 2024, WHF and its partners provided email and written notice, via certified mail, to Middle Township's Mayor, Christopher Luesner, and Business Administrator, Kimberly Osmundsen, of its intention to develop a Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Neighborhood Plan for Whitesboro:



Whitesboro Historical Foundation

DATE: OCTOBER 22, 2024

FROM: SHIRLEY GREEN, PRESIDENT/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: WHITESBORO HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

TO: CHRISTOPHER LEUSNER, MAYOR: MIDDLE TOWNSHIP

CC: KIMBERLY OSMUNDSEN, CLERK/BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR: MIDDLE TOWNSHIP

RE: NOTICE OF WHITESBORO HISTORICAL FOUNDATION'S INTENTION TO DEVELOP A NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION TAX CREDIT NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN FOR THE WHITESBORO NEIGHBORHOOD

Pursuant to the Program Rules of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit (NRTC) program, this letter is to inform you of the Whitesboro Historical Foundation's (WHF) intention to develop a neighborhood plan for the Whitesboro Neighborhood (Map is attached). This plan will identify neighborhood opportunities and issues, and propose a comprehensive set of economic development, housing, social support, and related strategies to drive the neighborhood's revitalization over the next decade. When approved by the DCA, this Plan will also enable the WHF to participate in NRTC's annual project application rounds to seek funding to implement these comprehensive strategies.

As mandated by the NRTC Program Rules, the process by which the plan is developed will be one in which neighborhood residents, property owners, local businesses, and nonprofit organizations within the neighborhood participate meaningfully. We plan to host several community meetings and other engagement opportunities during the planning process.

At the end of the process, before a final draft of the neighborhood plan is formally submitted to the DCA for approval for the NRTC program, we will provide the Township with a 30-day period to review the plan and make comments or suggestions. We hope the Township will be able to provide a letter indicating its support for the plan.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Shirley Green

President/Executive Director

✉ 46 Oyster Road., CMCH, NJ 08210 (Mail)

📞 609-425-9603

✉ 2215 Rt 9 South., Whitesboro, NJ 08252

✉ shirleygreenwhf@gmail.com



Whitesboro Historical Foundation



Whitesboro NRTC Neighborhood

POLICYMAP

46 Oyster Road., CMCH, NJ 08210 (Mail)

609-425-9603

2215 Rt 9 South., Whitesboro, NJ 08252

shirleygreenwhf@gmail.com

Notice of Whitesboro Historical Foundation's Intention to Develop a Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Neighborhood Plan



Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation <elormocanseymini...> Oct 22, 2024, 4:32PM

to Chris, shirleygreenwhf, Felicia, Kimberly ▾

Hi Chris, good afternoon! Hope all is well with you.

Attached is the Whitesboro Historical Foundation's notice regarding the development of a Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Neighborhood Plan for the Whitesboro Neighborhood.

A copy of the notice will follow in the coming days via USPS-certified mail.

Looking forward to your support and feedback throughout this process.

Best, Elorm...



Minister Elorm Ocansey
Principal, Elorm Ocansey Ministry Foundation

(640) 203-9318 | eoministryfoundation.org

PUBLIC PRESENTATION OF WHITESBORO NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

On May 23, 2023, the Whitesboro Historical Foundation (WHF) and WHPP leadership took the bold step of presenting the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit (NRTC) Plan to the entire Whitesboro community at a public meeting, marking a powerful declaration of shared vision and local empowerment.

After more than two years of intensive collaboration and planning, the Plan was formally delivered to Middle Township on June 16, 2025, officially initiating a 30-day public review and comment period. It was submitted via email and certified mail directly to the Mayor and Township Clerk/Business Administrator.

To ensure broad access and maximum engagement during the review period, WHF launched a high-impact public outreach campaign:

- Digital Access: The draft plan was prominently featured on the WHPP website, amplified through social media channels, and distributed via e-mail newsletters, and text blasts, empowering residents to engage on their own terms.
- Physical Access: Print copies of the plan were made available during business hours at the Whitesboro Historical Foundation Museum (2215 Route 9 South, Whitesboro), serving as a tangible touchpoint and symbol of community ownership.

NOTICE TO MIDDLE TOWNSHIP OF WHITESBORO NRTC NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN



Whitesboro Historical Foundation

DATE: JUNE 16, 2025

FROM: SHIRLEY GREEN, PRESIDENT/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: WHITESBORO HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

TO: CHRISTOPHER LEUSNER, MAYOR, MIDDLE TOWNSHIP

CC: KIMBERLY OSMUNDSEN, CLERK/BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR, MIDDLE TOWNSHIP

**RE: NOTICE OF WHITESBORO HISTORICAL FOUNDATION'S NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION TAX CREDIT
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN FOR THE WHITESBORO NEIGHBORHOOD**

Pursuant to the Program Rules of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit (NRTC) program, this letter is to inform you of the Whitesboro Historical Foundation's (WHF) neighborhood plan for the Whitesboro Neighborhood. This plan identifies neighborhood opportunities and issues, and proposes a comprehensive set of economic development, housing, social support, and related strategies to drive the neighborhood's revitalization over the next decade. When approved by the DCA, this Plan will also enable the WHF to participate in NRTC's annual project application rounds to seek funding to implement these comprehensive strategies.

As mandated by the NRTC Program Rules and evident in Section 8 of our plan, the process by which our plan was developed was one in which neighborhood residents, property owners, local businesses, and nonprofit organizations within the neighborhood participated meaningfully, resulting in this historic document. To view the electronic version of our plan, please visit preservewhitesboro.org, or visit the Whitesboro Historical Foundation Museum at 2215 Route 9 South, Whitesboro, 08252, New Jersey to view the physical version.

We kindly ask the township committee for a formal letter indicating its support for the plan and look forward to an invitation to an upcoming township committee meeting to celebrate this historic accomplishment for the Whitesboro community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Shirley Green

President/Executive Director

✉ 46 Oyster Road., CMCH, NJ 08210 (Mail)

📞 609-425-9603

✉ 2215 Rt 9 South., Whitesboro, NJ 08252

✉ shirleygreenwhf@gmail.com