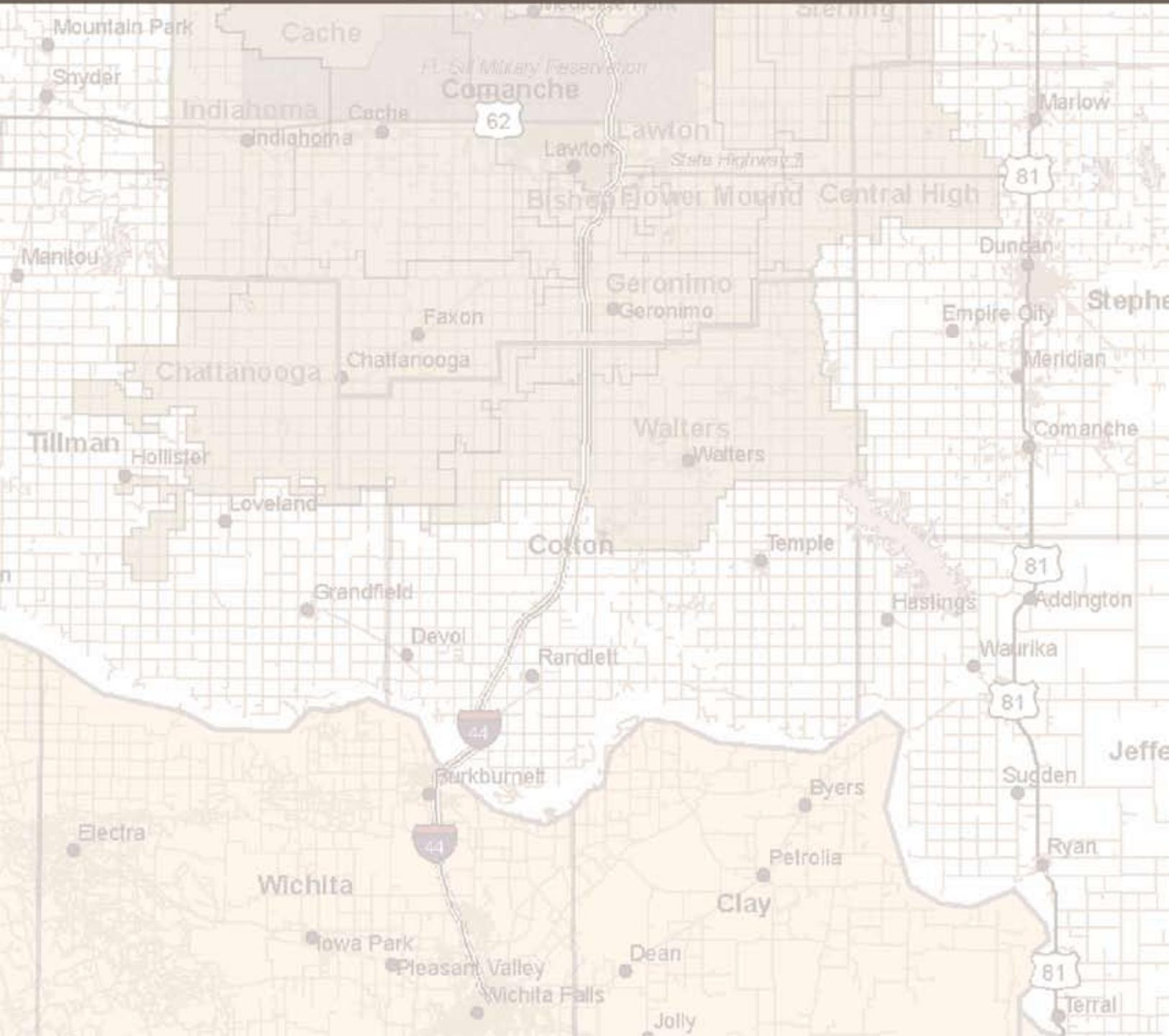


CHAPTER 9 PUBLIC SAFETY





CHAPTER 9

Introduction

To most of the new residents in the Lawton Fort Sill region, the provision of adequate public safety services and infrastructure in their new communities is a given. Fire, police and ambulance services are fundamental components of the overall quality of life in the community that they rarely think about, but when these services are needed, it can become a matter of life and death for some families. In many ways, the influence that the public safety infrastructure network has on the region's preparedness for future growth is significant but unseen and intangible. This chapter provides observations and recommendations about these critical public safety services that are necessary elements in the development and growth of quality communities in and around Fort Sill.

As described in earlier sections of this report, the BRAC deployment at Fort Sill will generate significant new population growth and development in the region. In many areas, this growth has already been anticipated and new residential and commercial developments have been planned and constructed (i.e. southwest and west Lawton). In these urban areas, a foundation of public safety facilities and services are in place throughout the City, and to a large degree, this growth can be accommodated by the existing facilities and personnel. On the other hand, in smaller communities like Cache and Elgin, where significant new growth is projected, the addition of even a small amount of new residential dwellings or new commercial buildings will stress an already limited network of fire, police and emergency services.

This chapter addresses the three main components of the region's public safety infrastructure, namely fire suppression services, police and law enforcement measures and emergency medical and transport services. In all but a few circumstances, each of these critical services are provided by local government

entities, and because most of the anticipated growth is to occur within Comanche County and in particular the cities of Lawton, Cache and Elgin, this analysis will concentrate on the county and municipal facilities and manpower available to provide services in these areas.

The planning team interviewed the leaders and officials at each of the major service providers to gain insight into anticipated impacts, existing service deficiencies and shortcomings and to identify critical issues within the overall public safety infrastructure network. Based on this qualitative research, a variety of empirical data sources were reviewed and analyzed to determine trends and potential issue areas. Several existing studies and reports were utilized in our research efforts (see box), but many of the smaller communities lacked sufficient and accessible data to provide meaningful inputs into our analysis. To a large degree, the analysis of the quantitative research and data supported the assessment of local service providers as to where existing deficiencies and possible gaps in future services provision would be most significant.

Key Data Sources/Reports Utilized

- *Comanche County Community Needs Assessment – 2005 Survey, Cameron University*
- *City of Lawton - All Hazard Mitigation Plan 2004, Carter & Burgess, Inc.*
- *Crime Statistics Report, 2000-2008, City of Lawton Police Department*
- *Fire Department Incident Reports/Trends, 2000-2008, City of Lawton Fire Department*
- *Interviews with various officials/leaders of public safety providers*

Existing Conditions

This section provides a summary review of the capacity and capabilities of the County, municipal and private public safety providers within the study area. Police, fire and emergency medical services are evaluated and emphasis is given to the areas of Lawton, Cache and Elgin due to their anticipated growth rates.

Law Enforcement and Police Services

A community's image and perception as a "safe" community are important and vital factors in maintaining and enhancing the quality of life in a city, and these perceptions can strongly influence the community's ability to promote and encourage future growth. Over the past several years, the Lawton – Comanche County region has been "tagged" as a community that suffers from the presence of undesirable groups or "gangs." While there is evidence that confirms that these undesirable groups do exist within the area, there is considerable evidence that suggests that their presence and activities are no greater in the Lawton area than they are in other comparable communities across the nation. This section reports on the current status of law enforcement within the primary impact communities of Lawton, Elgin, Cache and Comanche County.

Comanche County

The Comanche County Sheriff is responsible for the law enforcement measures across the unincorporated areas of Comanche County. In addition, the Sheriff coordinates with the Comanche County Detention Center to transfer, detain and transport incarcerated individuals to the Comanche County Jail. While most of Comanche County is incorporated, the growth trends in the region have placed additional burdens on the Sheriff's office in those unincorporated areas on the fringes of Lawton, and the City of Lawton Police Department assists in these efforts as needed

through a mutual aid agreement. Recent records indicate that the total service calls or responses to request for action by the Sheriff's office are increasing each year and the number of criminal cases filed in Comanche County has increased. Almost 13,000 misdemeanor cases and over 4,000 felony cases have been processed through the Comanche County court system over the past seven years. Current manpower and equipment is sufficient, but as BRAC-induced growth reaches its peak in the period 2015-2020, additional officers and equipment will be needed.

In January, 2004, the Comanche County Detention Center was opened and the new facility now had a capacity of 283 prisoner beds. Since its opening, this facility has been at or above capacity consistently and a recent sales tax bond referendum was passed to provide additional monies for expanding the jail facility. The jail provides beds for detained persons from the Sheriff's office, the state of Oklahoma, U.S. Marshall's office, Oklahoma Highway Patrol, and other municipal and county entities. Additionally, a private prison (GEO Group Inc. – formerly Wackenhut) on Flower Mound Road in Lawton provides an additional beds for the County at high prison count time periods. Finally, the County Commission, Detention Center administrator, County Sheriff and the local judiciary continue to examine methods to provide alternative sentencing for persons convicted of illegal activities. These efforts have not led to a significant decrease in prisoner counts as of yet, primarily due to the limited range of non-violent offenses that may qualify for such sentencing.



City of Lawton

The Lawton Police Department provides law enforcement services for the incorporated areas of the city of Lawton, as well as mutual aid services to Comanche County Sheriff. The department employs over 150 commissioned full-time police officers, approximately 10 part time officers, and over 50 additional civilian personnel to assist in dispatch, administrative and support services. The department’s central office is located in downtown Lawton and it has three (3) substations/precinct locations, two in north Lawton and one in south Lawton near the airport (see Exhibit 9.1 for locations of Lawton Police Department stations/substations). The department conducts numerous programs throughout the community to provide alternative outlets for juvenile activities, as well as providing information regarding ongoing department programs related to illicit drug activities, crime prevention, domestic violence, and other related law enforcement issues.

Due to the anticipated high growth rate in the City, the BRAC changes could and likely will impact this department significantly. Figures 9-1 and 9-2 indicate the historical trends for violent and non-violent crimes in the Lawton area since 2000.

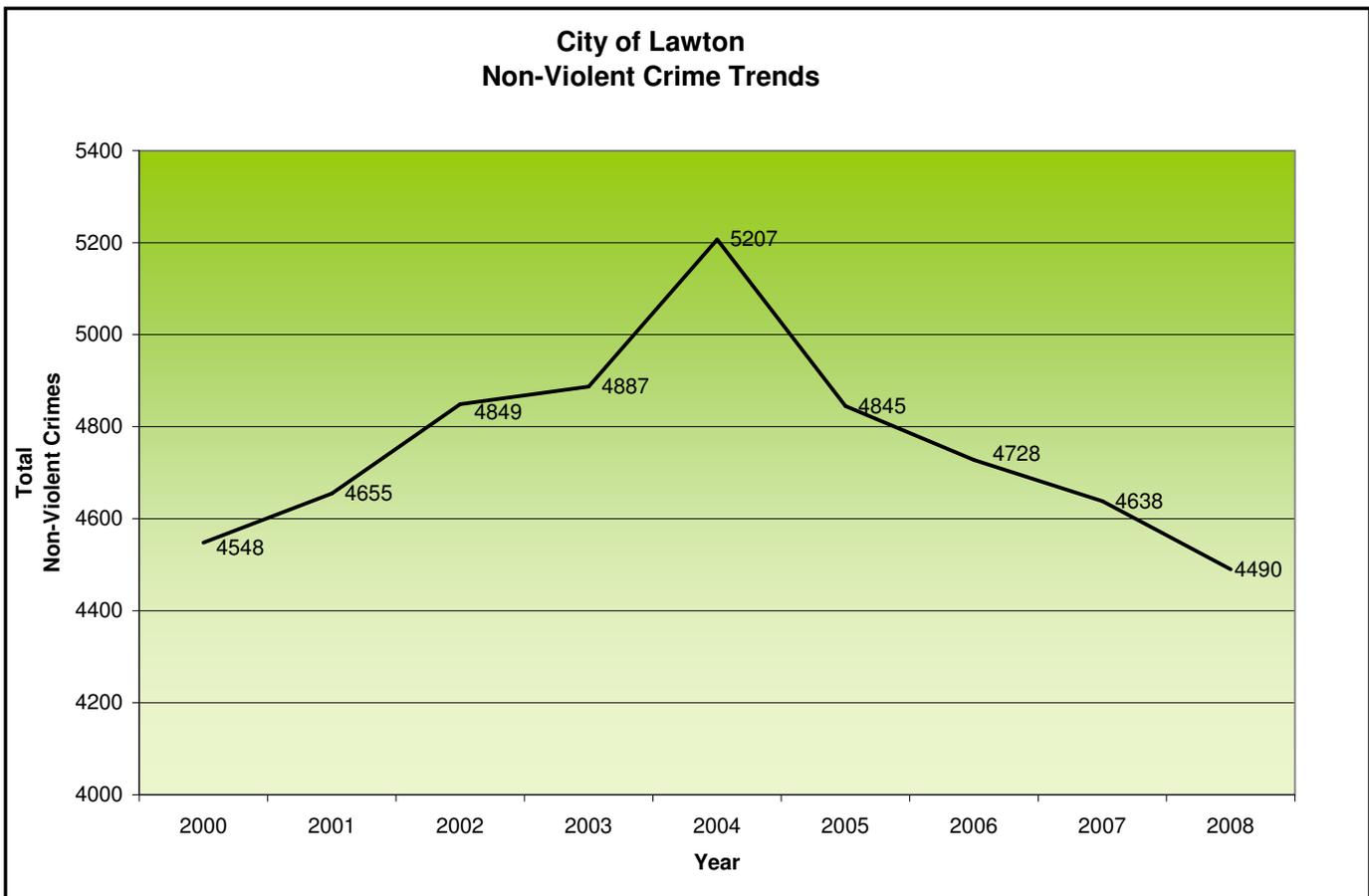


Figure 9-1: Non-Violent Crimes in Lawton (2000-2008)



While the rate of growth has slowed in recent years, the number of violent crimes has virtually doubled during the period 2000-2008, but the incidence of non-violent crimes has remained static. Based on interviews with local law enforcement leaders, the BRAC growth will stress the department's ability to prevent and/or police criminal activities due to the increased population base and the increased geographic coverage area that the City is growing into.

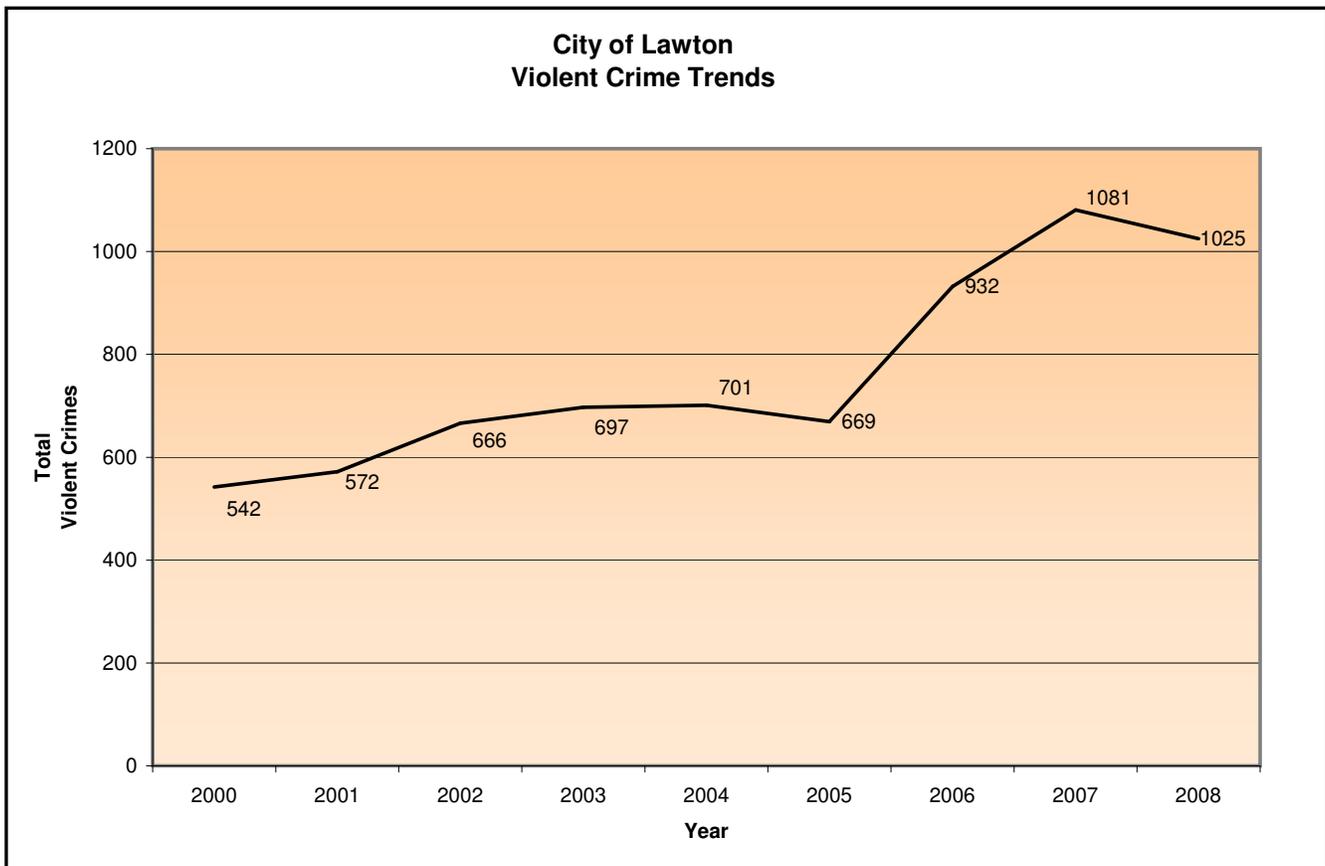


Figure 9-2: Violent Crimes in Lawton (2000-2008)



Lawton Police Efforts

INSERT EXHIBIT 9.1



City of Elgin

The Elgin Police Department provides law enforcement services within the city limits of Elgin. The department has four full-time officers and has a continuing presence within the Elgin Schools facilities. Recent statistics indicate that illegal activities are increasing commensurate with the population growth in the community. The forecasted population growth due to BRAC will strain the current law enforcement resources and require new personnel, equipment and facilities.

City of Cache

The Cache Police Department provides law enforcement services within the city limits of Cache, and like Elgin, the department has a small staff and limited resources and equipment. Historical crime records and statistics were generally not available, but current perceptions within the community indicate that, although crime is an issue, the City has maintained its standing as a “safe” community in the eyes of its residents. The projected growth from BRAC and the city’s potential geographic expansion to the east (towards Pecan Valley) are the key concerns of the department.

Fire and Emergency Medical Services

Throughout the Lawton region, the local fire departments generally provide both the fire suppression and emergency medical services for the communities. These multi-functional departments provide firefighting operations, emergency medical response, rescue and extrication services for their communities, and most of them are tied together with formal or informal mutual aid agreements in order that effective services can be provided.

These mutual aid networks are extremely important due to the widespread nature of existing and projected residential development in these communities and the community’s high

expectations regarding emergency services regardless of where they live or what jurisdiction they fall under. Conversations with local leaders and service providers indicate that all of Comanche County, including the unincorporated areas, believe they are entitled to and pay for urban level public safety services. This commonly-held but inaccurate belief places significant, uncompensated burdens on the local municipalities, particularly the Lawton Fire Department. By law, these departments will respond to emergencies outside their service areas only when the incident overloads the capacity of the first responder to adequately save lives or properties and the first responder requests backup assistance. With BRAC growth, and the service demands and facility needs that will accompany it, this burden will grow more significant unless more personnel, equipment and operating funds can be planned.

Fire Suppression Services

Volunteer Fire Departments in Comanche County

Comanche County currently has eighteen (18) volunteer fire departments (VFD) which serve the smaller communities and the rural areas surrounding these communities (see box). In general, each of these departments has more volunteer personnel than their equipment can handle, with some departments having over 25 active volunteer firefighters. Although the equipment varies in each VFD, the departments generally have a tanker and brush truck for firefighting. Response times in these rural areas vary widely, but in general, they do not meet the minimum first responder certification standard of a five (5) minute response time at least 95% of the time for their service areas. An additional complicating factor in fighting fires in the urbanized areas within the small cities is the inconsistent availability of fire flow and pressure from the city (or rural water district) water systems. Even if the response time has been adequate and the initial suppression efforts have been successful,



many times additional water is needed and not available. The County recently proposed adding new tanker trucks in centralized locations within the County that would be accessible to VFD's in the firefighting efforts.

COMANCHE COUNTY VFD'S

- Bethel Road VFD
- Cache VFD
- Chattanooga VFD
- Cox's Store VFD
- Cove Acres VFD
- Edgewater Park VFD
- Elgin VFD
- Fletcher VFD
- Flower Mound VFD
- Geronimo VFD
- Hulen VFD
- Indianoma VFD
- Medicine Park VFD
- Meers VFD
- Paradise Valley VFD
- Porter Hill VFD
- Sterling VFD
- Wichita Mountain Estates VFD

City of Lawton

The Lawton Fire Department provides fire suppression and emergency medical response services within the City of Lawton and has mutual aid agreements with the County (and other nearby communities) for emergency responses in the areas just outside their city limits and with Fort Sill for emergencies occurring on post. Figure 9.1 indicates the seven fire station locations within the city that are operated by the Lawton Fire Department.

According to recent statistics compiled by the Department (see Figure below), the department has experienced an increase of almost 31% in reported incidents since 2005.



Figure 9-3: Lawton Fire Department Incident Trends

Based on our research, the department has set its operational capacity to respond to approximately 8,000 – 8,500 incidents over the foreseeable future. Most of these emergency calls have been medical-related (almost 70% of total calls), and in many instances, the fire department serves as a first responder for medical emergencies due to their ability to access all parts of the city quickly from their seven locations.

City of Elgin

The city is currently transitioning their VFD into a full time operation in order to provide more effective and efficient service to the community. The department now has a full time Fire Chief and approximately 25 volunteer firefighters. In addition, the recent addition of a Comanche County Memorial Hospital ambulance service in the city is enabling the department, along with its companion providers, to provide full emergency medical and fire suppression services. The equipment operated by the department includes two structure engines and two tankers. Fire flow and pressure within the city's water distribution system are primary obstacles for the department, and as the city grows with BRAC-induced development, these issues will intensify. Another issue that confronts the City is the recruitment and retention of qualified applicants for emergency medical services and fire fighting. The Fire Chief and other local EMS providers have indicated that attracting emergency services personnel is difficult and retaining them is even harder because of the presence of the City of Lawton's department and their pay scales.



City of Cache

The city has a volunteer fire department and has a small supply of structure and tanker trucks that serve their community. Based on the limited data available and interview with local service providers, the primary concern in Cache is the ability of the city to meet future growth demands and provide services to the potential annexation areas east of the City.

Emergency Medical Services

The EMS component of the public safety infrastructure network is generally provided by three private providers and the Lawton Fire Department. As stated earlier in this chapter, Lawton Fire Department has historically provided EMS support to the private providers, but based on their ability to respond quickly to emergency situations, many times they are the first responder. The department has trained staff to accomplish these services, but as growth continues, their ability to provide this service and maintain their current level of service in firefighting capabilities will be stressed.

Comanche County Memorial Hospital Ambulance Service, Southwestern Medical Center ambulance service and Kirk's Ambulance Service (two locations in Lawton) provide the majority of EMS services for Comanche County and the broader study area (see Exhibit 9.1 for locations of first responders-EMS). Reynolds Army Community Hospital (on post) provides EMS for Fort Sill locations and personnel. The staffing and equipment at each of these providers is adequate to meet current needs, but future growth will require upgrades and expansions. In general, these entities provide medical services and transport services to the region and are connected via an informal and formal network of mutual aid agreements (and "good citizens" approach) to provide the required emergency services in a timely manner to all areas within and around Comanche County.

E-911 Services and Emergency Management**E-911 Services**

Perhaps the single most important factor in providing effective public safety within the region is the efficient and effective communication lines among the various service providers. Based on the research, it is evident that both a formal and informal network of mutual aid agreements are in place in the region that effectively allows the whole region to operate at a greater efficiency and effectiveness than the sum of its individual service provider parts. To assist in coordinating the communication amongst service providers, Comanche County and the City of Lawton is constructing an E-911 emergency dispatch center that is scheduled for completion in the summer of 2009. This comprehensive facility will dispatch emergency calls and providers from the City of Lawton, Comanche County and Oklahoma Regional Medical Response System E-911 dispatch center, as well as provide new training facilities for Lawton Police Department. This facility and the combined staffing currently operating in other facilities in the area will greatly enhance the community's ability to dispatch and communicate with available EMS providers in order that someone locally can attend to the emergency.

Emergency Management

The Comanche County Emergency Management office provides emergency management coordination and assistance for all of Comanche County, including coordination and assistance with County VFD's and the E-911 call center and the County's Public Information Office.



Needs Assessment

Based on a review of current and past community needs assessment surveys, interviews with local service providers and a review of current and projected response times for critical public safety services throughout the community, our findings indicate that the public safety services within the communities of the Lawton Fort Sill region will be significantly impacted over the long term. In the short term, the formal and informal network of mutual aid agreements among the various communities will assist each community in bridging the service gaps that might exist on a day-to-day basis. However, the need for additional overall institutional capacity to handle new growth in the long term will not and can not be overcome by the current additional capacity that results from the organizational/operational efficiencies gained through the mutual aid network.

Three primary factors contribute to the need for additional capacity in the public safety infrastructure. First, BRAC-induced growth will create more people and more properties to be protected, and at the most basic level, this growth will drive the need for additional fire, police and EMS facilities and manpower. Second, the current development trends indicate that this growth will occur at the edges of the existing urban areas. Not only will the existing public safety infrastructure network need to handle more people and more property, but this infrastructure will now be stretched over a greater geographic area, thus increasing response times and reducing overall levels of service without significant new personnel and facility additions. Third, the coordination and mutual aid network that exists within the community is at its maximum operational capacity and efficiency presently. The region's service providers have worked together to provide excellent service to the entire area, but as new growth occurs these networks of mutual aid will

not be able to overcome the need for additional capacity within individual communities.

The following sections provide an assessment of the organizational and physical needs or gaps within the overall regional network, as well as the needs at the individual primary impact area communities of Elgin, Cache and Lawton.

Region-wide Organizational/ Operational Assessment

As described previously in this section, the mutual aid agreements that exist among the several safety providers in the region greatly enhances the operational effectiveness of each individual community, with the possible exception of the City of Lawton services. Due to the Lawton's Fire and Police Departments having the most complete, organized and trained staff and their facilities and equipment being the most advanced in the region, these departments contribute significantly to the mutual aid network of services in the region. However, with BRAC growth starting to occur in Lawton, these public safety resources will be strained and Lawton's ability to provide additional support and mutual aid will be more limited. Similarly, as growth occurs in each community, the timeliness and effectiveness of the mutual aid responses from each organization will lessen.

Effective and timely communication of emergency situations and call for responders is a critical element in the overall public safety infrastructure. The new E-911 call center being constructed in Lawton will assist in this effort, but there is some evidence that the smaller communities in the region have not coordinated their E-911 services with this facility and organization. Due to the limits of rural/small town fire and police resources and the wide geographic service area to be covered, a highly coordinated, inter-regional communications system is needed and full participation is warranted throughout the region.



As the communities grow and volunteer fire departments likely transition into full time operational units and staff, the need to recruit and retain public safety officers will grow in importance. Presently, the most pressing staff recruitment and retention issues are most evident with the EMS ambulance service providers, as these providers are having difficulty matching salaries or job advancement opportunities in the local health care marketplace. As growth continues, it is likely that the smaller communities' staffs will be enticed by the wages and advancement opportunities of Lawton's public safety providers and essentially become the training ground for Lawton's staffing needs. Coordination and support of all providers needs to be provided to ensure that agencies and departments are not working at cross purposes in regards to staff recruitment and retention into the future.

Specific Community Assessment

The following needs were identified in each of the separate primary impact area communities and the smaller communities in the broader Comanche County area.

City of Lawton

Based on a review of overall response times and current levels of service, the primary gaps in Lawton's public safety infrastructure are the following:

1. Fire Suppression and EMS Services in Southwest growth areas: This high growth area is currently served by the Fire Station No. 5 at Gore Blvd. and NW 53rd Street. This station was reconstructed in 2005 and provides comprehensive firefighting capabilities and staff for the northwest and western portions of the city. As development occurs in the southern portions of this area, this station will not be able to provide the level of service and response time as it does currently, thus an additional station is needed to handle the

additional 2,000 residential units projected in this area.

2. Police Services in east Lawton growth areas: The proposed Nine Mile Creek sewer project will promote the development of the east side of Lawton, from Bishop Road north to Rogers Lane. There are no police facilities on the east side of Interstate 44. Additional staff and a police substation appear to be warranted in this area.
3. Fire Suppression Services and EMS in east Lawton growth areas: Fire services are presently provided via Fire Station No. 6 at SE 45th Street and Gore Blvd. for this area, but the anticipated growth in the Nine Mile Creek basin will create more people and property to be protected. Upgrades to this station appear to be warranted.
4. Additional Staff: In order to properly operate and administer the additional facilities and provide expert, professional firefighting and crime prevention services for the City, additional staff will be needed. At a minimum, additional firefighters are needed for the new southwest station and the upgraded east station, and new police officers will be needed to protect the community.

City of Elgin

Based on interviews with local services providers, a review of the incidence records and an examination of the growth projected for the City due to BRAC, the city's public safety infrastructure needs will be significant. Current population and growth estimates for the City project a doubling of the City's population over the next 10 years and this increase will generate the need for additional fire and police services. Based on the projected development patterns in the city and an assumption that the fire department will transition to a full time operation in the next 2-3 years, the following needs have been identified:

1. Fire and Police Service Facility Upgrade (east of railroad): The growth in the City could total upwards of 1,000 new homes in the area and the current police and fire facility and equipment will not accommodate this increased load. Assuming that a new fire engine company (staff, equipment and apparatus) can serve approximately 500-700 homes, then this type of additional need will exist in the central and eastern portions of the community. Additionally, new police officers to protect the additional residents will be required (2-4 officers are projected based on current staffing levels).
2. Fire Station (west of railroad): In addition to the growth occurring on the east side of town, the Highway 277 and Interstate 44 interchange areas will likely experience growth pressures. The north south rail line (at Highway 277/SH 17 junction) serves as an impediment to service capabilities if all service providers are located east of this line. Accordingly, it appears that an additional fire station (projected to be an engine company level facility) is warranted to serve the projected properties and population base that could exist in the high growth area around Interstate 44.

growth, would warrant the equivalent of two engine company facilities and an additional 2-3 police officers (based on current staff levels).

Comanche County Volunteer Fire Departments

The primary issue related to firefighting and public safety in the rural and small town areas within Comanche County is the availability and proximity of firefighting apparatus. Because so many of these VFD's have mutual aid agreements among them and their firefighters are volunteers, the first responders may not originate from the nearest community to the incident. An increase in the number of available tankers and associated fire apparatus across the county could improve the response time and effectiveness of the firefighting teams.

City of Cache

Like Elgin, the growth anticipated in Cache will stress the capacity and services of the existing public safety infrastructure. Based on these growth trends and the assumption that the City will pursue annexation of large residential areas east of town thus requiring a full time firefighting staff, the following needs are identified:

1. Fire and Police Facility Upgrade: The growth of the City (north of downtown and in the areas east of town) will require new equipment, facilities and personnel for the existing public safety network. The existing property inventory and population base, plus the projected



Recommendations

In most growing communities, the impacts on and advancements in the public safety infrastructure network are largely unnoticed and intangible to the residents of the community. As the community grows, area residents just assume that adequate protection of life and property will occur, and in all but a few remote cases, exemplary protection is provided in the study area. As a public safety officer commented in an interview with the project team, “Fire and police services are like life insurance; they cost too much when you pay for them, but when you need them, you can’t have enough.”

The growth anticipated with BRAC deployment at Fort Sill will create significant impacts for the communities of Lawton, Elgin and Cache, and to a lesser extent, for the smaller communities in and around Comanche County. These services have to be provided as growth occurs or the community risks reducing its current level of service across the entire service area. However, the revenues to fund the increased services typically do not enter the municipal income stream until new homes and businesses are paying property taxes and/or creating sales tax, and even when these new revenues streams are created, there is no guarantee that the monies will be used for public safety.

The previous sections of this chapter have identified the current and future needs within the community, and the following section provides overall recommendations to meet these needs. The recommendations focus on three primary areas: (1) Organizational recommendations for the public safety network of providers in the region; (2) Capital Improvement recommendations for specific communities; and (3) Funding and Operational recommendations.

Organizational Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered for regional and specific community action. These strategies address the current and projected public safety needs and issues, and the multi-jurisdictional nature of these actions warrants a thorough and inclusive involvement of all agencies and providers to ensure their individual needs are met within the confines of an overarching regional strategy and approach.

Establish and Maintain Current Levels of Service as Growth Occurs

In order to accurately gauge the impact of growth and create the information and data needed to support enhanced facilities and funding for public safety improvements, the communities within the primary impact area (i.e. Lawton, Cache and Elgin) should undertake an examination of their current levels of service. Whether it is average response time for emergency calls, overall force levels per 1,000 population or some other community-accepted standard, the public safety network should establish and document these levels of service in order to:

- Create a sound basis for future improvements (staffing and facilities) when growth occurs;
- Create a rational connection between the impacts created by new growth and the need for public safety infrastructure improvements, thus creating a rational nexus between the impact generator and the need created;
- Create a greater awareness with the public on the unseen but critical impacts and needs created by growth;
- Generate a logical argument and plan for the funding of phased expansions and improvements as new growth and its accompanying needs occur.



Create Comprehensive Regional Public Safety Plan with Accompanying Interlocal Agreements

The research indicated that, over the last 5-10 years, the Comanche County public safety providers have formed formal and informal networks and mutual aid agreements to effectively meet the emergency and protection needs of the community without having to increase overall force or facility levels significantly. The effectiveness of this organizational network will be strained and possibly overloaded with the initiation of the new BRAC growth in the anticipated development areas. More formal alliances and agreements are needed to enhance the communication efforts (E-911 services and radio communications), mutual aid agreements and the potential labor shortage issues in the public safety field. The Comanche County Emergency Management Office is a logical administrator and coordinator of these efforts.

Capital Improvements Recommendations

As documented in the needs assessment portion of this section, the current public safety infrastructure in the growth communities of Lawton, Cache and Elgin is insufficient to meet the future demands of a growing population base and property inventory. The following capital improvements are recommended to meet the anticipated needs, based on the current levels of service in the community. These improvements should be timed to meet the demands coincident with new growth and the exact nature of the improvements should be linked to the specific needs and levels of service established in the community.

City of Lawton Fire and Police Services

In order to maintain the current level of services for residents and businesses that will locate in the high growth areas of southwest and east Lawton, the following improvements are proposed (See Exhibit 9.2):

- **New Fire Station in southwest Lawton:** A comprehensive facility (modeled after the newly constructed Fire Station No. 5) should be constructed as growth and demand dictates. The facility should be able to address all urban level emergency situations (Type One Engine, Aerial Apparatus, etc.) and should be staffed to service the future growth in the area (see the “Funding and Operational Recommendations” for proposed staffing). Estimated cost for land, facility, equipment and apparatus is estimated at \$6.2 million and the location of the facility should be in the Bishop Road and 52nd Street area.
- **Upgraded Fire Station No. 5 in east Lawton:** The existing facility should be sufficient to meet the needs in the near term, but over the next ten years, this growth area will expand with new residential and commercial developments. Additional facility square footage, expanded equipment and apparatus additions are required to improve this facility to an urban level firefighting operation. Estimated cost for facility, equipment and apparatus needs is \$ 2.5 million.
- **New Lawton Police Department substation in east Lawton:** LPD lacks a permanent presence on the east side of Interstate 44, and as growth occurs, the Gore Blvd. at 45th Street area represents a logical location for a substation for this high growth area. A possible consolidated facility with the Fire Station No. 5 site would reduce overall costs and possibly provide a unique community asset in this side of town (i.e. facility could include meeting rooms, etc.). Estimated cost for facility and equipment is \$1.0 million.



INSERT EXHIBIT 9.2



City of Elgin Fire and Police Services

In order to maintain the current level of services for residents and businesses that will locate in the high growth areas in and around the city of Elgin, the following improvements are proposed (See Exhibit 9.2):

- **New consolidated Public Safety Facility in central Elgin:** A comprehensive facility that can incorporate police and fire services is needed to meet current and future demands for the areas east of the Stillwater Central railroad line. This facility should provide space for a fully outfitted engine company and staff, as well as the central operations for the police department. The growth of the City may also require expanded city services, thus the facility could also be a part of a larger, comprehensive municipal complex. Estimated cost for facility, equipment and apparatus for police and fire is \$3.2 million.
- **New Fire station at the Interstate 44 and Highway 277 area:** The junction of these critical regional transportation corridors will promote new growth and development and likely require the provision of fire suppression services in the western portion of Elgin. The railroad's impact on response times and overall efficiency dictates the general location of the facility, and the facility should be equivalent to a Type One Engine and Ladder company that is capable of handling industrial facility emergencies. Estimated cost for land, facility, equipment and apparatus is \$4.0 million.

City of Cache Fire and Police Services

In order to maintain the current level of services for residents and businesses that will locate in the high growth areas in and around the city of Cache, the following improvements are proposed (See Exhibit 9.2):

- **New consolidated Public Safety Facility in central Cache:** A comprehensive facility that can incorporate police and fire services is needed to meet current and future demands for the northern and eastern growth areas. This

facility should provide space for a fully outfitted engine company and staff, as well as the central operations for the police department. Estimated cost for facility, equipment and apparatus for police and fire is \$2.5 million.

Comanche County Volunteer Fire Departments via Comanche County Emergency Management office

In order to enhance the firefighting capabilities in the rural areas and small towns in the Comanche County area, the purchase and placement of large tankers in centralized locations within the County is recommended. Through consultation with the local volunteer fire departments, the CCEM should evaluate the need for 5 – 10 locations throughout the County. Estimated cost per location would be approximately \$250,000.

Funding and Operations Recommendations

The preceding recommendations are oriented towards the capital improvements necessary to provide adequate public safety services, however, outlined below are summary recommendations regarding the operational aspects of the public safety infrastructure network.

Operational and Staffing Additions in Primary Impact Areas Communities

The following staffing additions for Police and Fire departments in Lawton, Cache and Elgin are based on current levels of services within each community and the assumption that Elgin and Cache transition into full time firefighting departments. These proposed staff additions should be phased according to the identified needs in the communities and evaluated periodically based on revised or updated level of service standards.

- **City of Lawton Police Department Staff Additions:** Based on a current level of service



of approximately 1.5 officers per 1,000 persons in the city, the anticipated growth in staffing would be in the range of 5 – 7 officers by 2012 and another 10 -15 officers by the year 2020. This force level growth is based on the additional population increase anticipated in Lawton due to BRAC (Cache, Elgin and other growth areas not included). Average cost per officer (raw salary and benefits) is approximately \$85,000.

- **City of Lawton Fire Department:** Based on the development of a new fire station in southwest Lawton and the upgrading of Fire Station No. 6, the department would need approximately 35 firefighters for the new station and another 15 firefighters at the upgraded facility in east Lawton. Average cost per firefighter (raw salary, benefits and uniforms and safety equipment) is approximately \$100,000.
- **City of Elgin Police and Fire Departments:** Based on the proposed capital improvements necessitated by growth and development, a full time staff of 8 – 10 firefighters and 5 – 8 police officers is anticipated.
- **City of Cache Police and Fire Departments:** Based on the proposed capital improvements necessitated by growth and development, a full time staff of 5 – 8 firefighters and 3 – 5 police officers is anticipated.

Investigate the Use of Impact Fees, Facilities Taxes, and Fire Protection Districts as Means to Fund Public Safety Infrastructure Capital Improvements

The funding of these needed capital improvements is particularly difficult given the limitations and restrictions placed on municipalities by Oklahoma state statutes. Sales tax bond referendums have historically been the most equitable and feasible means to fund these types of improvements, but the small commercial/business property inventories in the cities of Cache and Elgin all but deny them an opportunity to raise sufficient capital over a reasonable period of time. Accordingly, Cache and Elgin (and the growth areas in eastern

Lawton city limits) should investigate an impact fee and/or facilities tax on new developments as a means to raise the necessary funds to make the needed improvements.

Furthermore, current state statutes permit the creation of Fire Protection Districts within Oklahoma counties as an additional revenue enhancement measure for the rural, unincorporated areas near or adjacent to larger municipalities. This legislation allows the local governments to create a special assessment district, with defined boundaries, in which the ad valorem tax base of that district could be assessed a special tax rate for the provision of fire fighting equipment and personnel. While this law has been used on a very limited basis across the State, the unincorporated areas near Lawton (i.e. Pecan Valley area) may be a logical location to institute these provisions due to its growth potential and current service limitations. In this way, the Lawton Fire Department could provide needed service outside its current city limits and receive compensatory funding from the home owners and businesses which benefit from these services.

Implementation

The following pages indicate the specific implementation steps, processes, participants and costs for the recommendations included in this chapter.



Lawton Fort Sill Growth Management Plan Implementation Checklist				Responsibilities		Timing	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Subject: Public Safety and Emergency Services				Primary	Secondary			
				Issue: Anticipated growth and development will strain the capacity and effectiveness of the overall emergency response protocols throughout the County which currently depend on an informal and formal network of first responders and mutual aid agreements. Coordinated action plans and communications are needed to maintain effectiveness in a community that is growing				
Recommendation: Develop and implement a Comprehensive Regional Public Safety Action Plan that is implemented via Interlocal agreements among public safety providers and their funding agents.								
Convene a regional Public Safety summit that brings together the major service providers (Lawton, CCEM, Cache, Elgin, VFD's, E-911 center, ambulance services, etc.) to review findings of this study, evaluate current operating protocols and determine if and how the current public safety infrastructure network can be enhanced through coordination and mutual aid				CCEM	CITY, LPD, LFD, ODEM, AMB, VFD	Near	\$1,000	LOCAL, ODEM
Action 1: Develop a Regional Public Safety Action Plan that provides the formal network and arrangements for responding to and effectively dealing with emergency situations throughout the county, including interlocal agreements regarding mutual aid, funding, E-911 call center participation and funding, communications protocol, etc. municipality and county				CCEM	CITY, LPD, LFD, ODEM, AMB, VFD, ASCOG	Mid	\$70,000	LOCAL, ODEM
Action 2: Develop a Public Safety Council that provides a coordinated and comprehensive response and actions to the current and future issues related to fire, police and emergency medical services in the County, including staff recruitment and retention, priority needs, funding opportunities, etc.				CCEM	LPD, LFD, CITY, VFD, AMB, ODEM	Long	N/A	NA

Issue: Future development and growth will strain the capacity and effectiveness of existing fire, police and emergency medical services in the primary impact area communities and lead to the need for more staffing and facilities

Recommendation: Establish and Maintain current levels of service and standards as growth occurs and Investigate the use of Impact Fees to fund needed capital improvements

Develop the baseline level of service standard that is applicable to each public safety service provider (i.e. police, fire and EMS)				CITY	CCEM, CO	Mid		
Action 1: Develop, advertise and solicit technical assistance in developing levels of service standards for Lawton, Cache and Elgin and identify the proper metrics for evaluating and identifying the appropriate thresholds of growth that would necessitate additional staffing and facilities.				CITY	CCEM, LPD, LFD	Mid	\$30,000 per city	LOCAL, ODEM
Action 1.1: Develop separate operational (i.e. staffing) plans and capital improvements (i.e. facilities and equipment) plans for each community service provider in order to link levels of service standards and needs to the identified upgrades and resources necessary to meet those needs				CITY	CCEM, LPD, LFD	Mid	\$10,000 per city	LOCAL, ODEM
Action 1.2: Investigate the use of an Impact Fee or facilities tax funding method in Cache and Elgin (and a possible increase in such fees in Lawton) and a Fire Protection District (funding and service for unincorporated areas near Lawton) as means to fund needed improvements identified in the level of service standards study and capital improvements and operational plans				CITY	CCEM, LPD, LFD	Long	N/A	N/A

Implementation Partners/Agencies

- CITY - Local municipal governments
- CO - County governments
- FORT - Fort Sill
- LPD - Lawton Police Department
- LFD - Lawton Fire Department
- CCEM - Comanche Co. Emergency Management
- PIO - Comanche County Public Information Officer
- OEA - Office of Economic Adjustment
- VFD - Various Volunteer Fire Departments in Comanche County
- ASCOG - Association of South Central Oklahoma Governments
- CCDC - Comanche County Detention Center
- ODEM - Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management
- AMB - local ambulance service providers (private entities)

Timing

- Near - 2008 - 2009
- Mid - 2010 - 2011
- Long - 2012+

Funding Sources

- LOCAL - bond/general revenues from local governments
- STATE - state revenue source
- FEE - Local Impact Fees/Facilities Tax
- OEA - Office of Economic Adjustment
- ODEM - Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management
- OSMC - Oklahoma Strategic Military Commission
- AMB - local ambulance service providers (private entities)



Lawton Fort Sill Growth Management Plan Implementation Checklist Subject: Public Safety and Emergency Services		Responsibilities		Timing	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
		Primary	Secondary			
Issue: Long term growth and development in the primary impact area communities will strain the capacity of existing public safety services and facilities.						
Recommendation: Plan, develop, adopt, design and implement a coordinated set of Public Safety Capital Improvement projects in these areas to provide long term capacity and adequate fire, police and emergency medical services for future growth						
Action 1:	Revise the current Capital Improvements Plan and budgets for the city of Lawton, Elgin, Cache and Comanche County to include the following public safety capital projects					
Action 1.1	Plan, design and begin construction on a new Fire Station in southwest Lawton that is modeled after the facilities, equipment and apparatus included in the new Fire Station No. 5 in Lawton.	City	LFD	Long	\$6.2 million	LOCAL, FEE
Action 1.2	Plan, design and begin construction on an upgraded Fire Station No. 6 in east Lawton	City	LFD	Long	\$2.5 million	LOCAL, FEE
Action 1.3	Plan, design and begin construction on a new Police substation in east Lawton (possibly in conjunction with or adjacent to Fire Station No. 6)	City	LFD	Long	\$1.0 million	LOCAL, FEE
Action 1.4	Plan, design and begin construction on a new consolidated Public Safety complex in Elgin (east of Stillwater Central railroad)	City	CCEM	Long	\$3.2 million	LOCAL, FEE, FED, ODEM
Action 1.5	Plan, design and begin construction on a new Fire Station at the Interstate 44 and State Highway 277 interchange area (west of RR)	City	CCEM	Long	\$4.0 million	LOCAL, FEE, FED, ODEM
Action 1.6	Plan and procure facilities and apparatus for the placement of large tankers for enhanced firefighting capabilities in the rural areas of Comanche County	CCEM	CO, VFD	Long	\$250,000 per location	LOCAL, FED
Implementation Partners/Agencies CITY - Local municipal governments CO - County governments FORT - Fort Sill LPD - Lawton Police Department LFD - Lawton Fire Department CCEM - Comanche Co. Emergency Management PIO - Comanche County Public Information Officer OEA - Office of Economic Adjustment VFD - Various Volunteer Fire Departments in Comanche County ASCOG - Association of South Central Oklahoma Governments CCDC - Comanche County Detention Center ODEM - Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management AMB - local ambulance service providers (private entities)						
Timing Near - 2008 - 2009 Mid - 2010 - 2011 Long - 2012+						
Funding Sources LOCAL - bond/general revenues from local governments STATE - state revenue source FEE - Local Impact Fees/Facilities Tax OEA - Office of Economic Adjustment ODEM - Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management OSMC - Oklahoma Strategic Military Commission AMB - local ambulance service providers (private entities) FED - Federal grant funding (CDBG, USDA, etc.)						



Lawton Fort Sill Growth Management Plan Implementation Checklist Subject: Public Safety and Emergency Services						Potential Funding Sources
Action	Description	Responsibilities		Timing	Estimated Cost	
		Primary	Secondary			
Issue: Additional staff will be needed to provide services in the primary impact area communities.						
Recommendation: Based on the established levels of service created in each community and coincident with the development of new facilities, recruit and hire new public safety staff to maintain desired force levels.						
Action 1:	Develop the baseline level of service standard that is applicable to each public safety service provider (i.e. police, fire and EMS) and monitor the growth trends within the community to determine when critical growth thresholds and staffing needs are achieved	CITY	CCEM, CO	Mid		
Action 1.1	Add the following police officers to the current Lawton Police Department force as necessary to maintain the established levels of service in the community: 5 - 7 officers by the year 2012 and an additional 10 - 15 officers by the year 2020	CITY	LPD	Mid & Long	\$85,000 per officer	LOCAL, FEE
Action 1.2	Add the following firefighting personnel to the current Lawton Fire Department force as necessary to maintain the established levels of service in the community: approximately 35 firefighters and staff for the proposed southwest Fire Station; and approximately 15 firefighters and staff for the proposed, upgraded Fire Station No. 6	CITY	LFD	Long	\$100,000 per person	LOCAL, FEE
Action 1.3	Add the following police officers and firefighting personnel to the City of Elgin Police and Fire Department forces as necessary to maintain the established levels of service in the community: 5 - 8 police officers by the year 2020; a full time firefighting staff of 8-10 firefighters as the proposed fire facilities are completed.	CITY	CCEM	Long	\$70 - 90,000 average costs per person	LOCAL, FEE
Action 1.4	Add the following police officers and firefighting personnel to the City of Cache Police and Fire Department forces as necessary to maintain the established levels of service in the community: 3 - 5 police officers by the year 2020; a full time firefighting staff of 5 - 8 firefighters as the proposed fire facilities are completed.	CITY	CCEM	Long	\$70 - 90,000 average costs per person	LOCAL, FEE
Implementation Partners/Agencies						
CITY	Local municipal governments					
CO	County governments					
FORT	Fort Sill					
LPD	Lawton Police Department					
LFD	Lawton Fire Department					
CCEM	Comanche Co. Emergency Management					
PJO	Comanche County Public Information Officer					
OEA	Office of Economic Adjustment					
VFD	Various Volunteer Fire Departments in Comanche County					
ASCOG	Association of South Central Oklahoma Governments					
CCDC	Comanche County Detention Center					
ODEM	Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management					
AMB	local ambulance service providers (private entities)					
Timing						
	Near	2008 - 2009				
	Mid	2010 - 2011				
	Long	2012+				
Funding Sources						
	LOCAL	bond/general revenues from local governments				
	STATE	state revenue source				
	FEE	Local Impact Fees/Facilities Tax				
	OEA	Office of Economic Adjustment				
	ODEM	Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management				
	OSMC	Oklahoma Strategic Military Commission				
	AMB	local ambulance service providers (private entities)				
	FED	Federal grant funding (CDBG, USDA, etc.)				

