

NEWTON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2024 DOWNTOWN PROMOTIONS REPORT



Downtown Promotions Committee - The Chamber's Downtown Promotions Committee meets once/month. This Committee includes 22 members who are involved in businesses in the Central Business District. The Committee is now affiliated with the Main Street Kansas Program. This Committee leads the effort to promote the services our Downtown businesses provide, plan special events, and help make Downtown the best it can be.

"Eat, Shop, Love, Newton" - February 2024 - The Chamber and the Downtown Promotions Committee ran a "Love to Shop Local" campaign during the Valentine's Day season by creating posters, distributing social media messaging, and placing ads in the newspaper that encouraged others to think local for their Valentine's gifts and activities



Third Thursdays - In 2024, the Chamber and the Downtown Promotions Committee continued Third Thursday events in Downtown Newton. On the Third Thursday of the month from May-December, downtown businesses stayed open late until 8 PM and other Newton organizations set up activities outdoors. These events help give Newtonians a fun place to hang out in the evenings and promotes enjoying our local businesses all year long. We are currently working with Choose Newton Main Street to offer a reinvigorated Third Thursdays program in 2025 including monthly themes and elevated marketing and communication.

Summer Sales "Main"ia- June 20th-22nd - In the month of June, the Chamber's Downtown Promotions Committee ran a Main Street "Main"ia promotion. The event kicked off with Third Thursday and encouraged people to shop the sales going on at local stores. Shoppers received an entry to our drawing for every \$10 they spent at a participating store. Ten businesses participated and two people won a prize of Chamber Checks or local gift cards.



College Night- August 22nd - College night is the Chamber's way of welcoming area college students back for the start of the semester and introducing them to the business community. Students came downtown to play Business BINGO and win prizes for visiting each of the 28 participating business. Students from Hesston College, Bethel College, and others attended. 134 BINGO cards were turned in, 18 students won prizes, and 100 students received goodie bags.

Taste of Newton - October 3rd - This annual event brought an estimated 10,000+ people to downtown Newton. This year we had 55 food vendors and 5 block sponsors lining four blocks of Main Street and selling all different kinds of food and drinks to people from all over Kansas. The streets were packed and KSN covered the event throughout the evening.



Main Street Christmas Decorating - The Chamber staff and volunteer Ambassadors decorate the poles on Main Street for Christmas every year. We purchase garland and red bows to add some Christmas cheer to the 400-800 blocks of Main Street starting at the beginning of November.



Taste of Christmas - November 14th-16th - 35 local businesses participated in Taste of Christmas in 2024, 20 of those located in the central business district. Participants visited all businesses to complete the puzzle and to enter the drawing for over \$1,000 in prizes donated by the business participants. 88 people from 10 different towns turned in puzzle boards to enter the drawing. Three winners were drawn and were each given a variety of local gift cards, chamber checks, and prize items. This was the first year children under 18 years old were able to participate in the prize drawing and 29 kids joined in the competition.

Deck Downtown - December 5th-15th - Thirteen downtown businesses decorated their windows for this year's Christmas window decorating competition. This event helps to make downtown Newton a special place to shop, eat and enjoy during the holiday season. Our 3 Judges selected Signature Hair Studio as the winner of the Judge's Choice category. Over 240 votes were cast for the People's Choice category and first place was awarded to Signature Hair Studio as well. They received traveling trophies for each category that they can display in their business until next year's winners are announced.



Ribbon Cuttings - The Chamber hosted 27 Ribbon Cuttings or Groundbreakings in 2024 for new businesses or expansions. Out of the 27, 7 were for business in the central business district including a mural project outside the Fraternal Order of Eagles building, the new Newton Public Library, Prairy Deli, Hope Women's Center, and more.

NetWork Kansas Loans - In 2024, the Chamber and NetWork Kansas did two Gap loans for local businesses in Harvey County.

The Chamber has done 11 loans since 2020 totaling \$230,650. The average loan is for \$20,968 and the average rate is 3.18%. Eight of those loans are ongoing and three are paid in full. Everyone is current with their loans and we are working with more businesses on loans for 2025.



Downtown Beautification Campaign - The Chamber is a part of the team of people working to spread the word and raise money for the Downtown Beautification Campaign. The Chamber and several Chamber Board Member organizations have contributed to the campaign. The marketing materials for this campaign are being revamped to continue soliciting in 2025.

