



**CITY OF NEWTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2025-2035  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

ISSUE DATE: February 4, 2025

**PURPOSE**

The City of Newton is seeking proposals from qualified consultant firms to provide professional services to develop a 10-year Comprehensive Plan with the objective of providing the City Commission, Planning Commission, City staff, City residents, and the business community with a compelling vision and plan used to guide decision-making and development.

The planning process undertaken shall develop a comprehensive vision for the City of Newton and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). The Comprehensive Plan will provide an inclusive framework for the orderly and consistent planning of the City's neighborhoods, commercial corridors, edges, trails, and public open spaces. It will consider plans for future growth with a strong emphasis on land use development and redevelopment patterns, infrastructure, transportation and mobility, housing diversity, and urban design. It will also include a ten-year optimization plan with strategies and schedule for implementation through 2026-2036.

**ABOUT THE CITY**

The City of Newton is a city in and the county seat of Harvey County, Kansas, United States. As of the 2020 census, the population of the city was 18,602. Newton is located 25 miles north of Wichita. The city of North Newton is located immediately north and exists as a separate political entity. Newton is located at the intersection of Interstate 135, U.S. Route 50, and U.S. Route 81 highways.

Newton is served by five at-large City Commissioners. City elections take place in the fall of odd-numbered years. The top two vote-getters are elected to four-year terms, and the third-place vote-getter serves a two-year term.

A mayor is appointed each year from within the Commission. Traditionally, the highest vote-getter in the last election is appointed vice mayor and becomes mayor the following year.

The mayor is recognized as the head of City government for ceremonial purposes. The mayor conducts Commission meetings and executes contracts, deeds and agreements on behalf of the City, but has no additional authority or voting powers. The vice mayor generally fulfills this role when the mayor is not available.





After many years of stagnant valuation growth, the City of Newton saw some encouraging growth for the 2025 budget, a sign that the City Commission's focus on community development is starting to pay off. An expanding tax base means a reduced property tax burden for Newton homeowners in the long term.

The 2025 budget includes a decrease of 1 mil as the assessed valuation rose by 12.7% and services were able to be funded as needed with the Commission being able to offer some property tax reduction. This still will leave the City with a 14.4% reserve fund balance, just shy of a policy of 15% reserve.

The \$63.3 million budget allows for an additional 4 full-time positions, increased security and IT costs, additions to the parks and cemetery and \$400,000 for anticipated wage increases following a city comprehensive salary and benefits study to maintain competitive

Over the past few years, the City has worked diligently to cut expenses; delayed hiring, projects, and maintenance where possible; and extended the life of vehicles and equipment, while accommodating new growth and development and maintaining City services at a minimum standard. All departments continue to seek any cost-saving measures that are available to them.

The City Commission has prioritized community development in recent years to help grow the tax base in the long term, which has resulted in an uptick in development projects and needed services.

Newton is now starting to see the resulting revenue growth, the City as a whole saw an increase of 10% in assessed valuation over last year, partly due to new growth and increases in sales of property. If this trend can continue, it will mean a broader tax base and reduced burden on current property owners.

Inside and outside, there is no shortage of recreational opportunities for residents of all ages. 18 public parks and miles of trails run along Sand Creek through the heart of the city. Traditional golfers and disc golfers also have several options. Youth and adult leagues feature a variety of sports from football and softball to swimming. Indoors, there's no reason to leave town for cosmic bowling or first run movies. Two county parks just outside the city offer boating, fishing, hiking and camping.

The City of Newton strives to be the best place to live, work, learn and play while keeping its small town traits.

## CURRENT AND CORRESPONDING PLANS

The City of Newton has historically used a 20-year planning horizon in its Comprehensive Plans and has a history of success in implementing the recommendations described in its previous plan.

We are proposing moving to a 10-year plan that allows us to have a more frequent formal renewal process to accurately address our community's changing needs and desires. We expect that the vision of the Comprehensive plan and supporting recommendations will be beyond what could be fully realized in 10 years



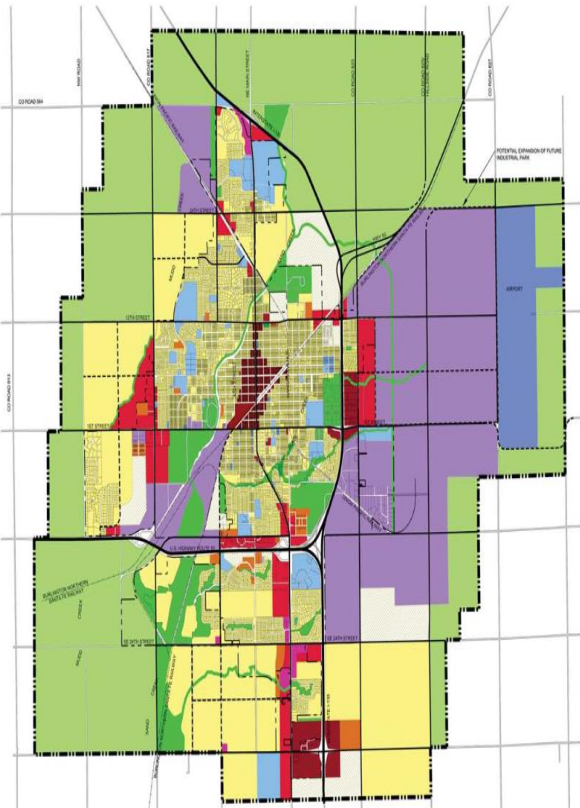
Respondents are encouraged to review the following corresponding plans and resources on our website at <https://www.newtonkansas.com/>:

- [2010-2030 Comprehensive Plan](#)
- [Choose Newton](#)
- [City of Newton](#)
  - Zoning Regulations
  - Subdivision Regulations
- [2025 Adopted Budget](#)
- [City Website](#)
- [Public Meeting Agendas & Minutes](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Housing Study](#)
- [Bicycle Master Plan](#)
- [Downtown Master Plan](#)
- [Water and Sewer Masterplan](#)
- [S. Kansas Traffic Studies](#)
- [Historic Guidelines](#)
- [Historic Downtown Survey](#)
- [Results from Main Street Survey or Latinos Unidos Survey](#)



## PLANNING AREA

The City of Newton's Planning Area (combined city limits and ETJ – Extraterritorial Jurisdiction)



## PROJECT SCOPE

### TASK 1: EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CURRENT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW

- Review and evaluate the existing Comprehensive Plan utilizing staff input.
- Understand the issues of unique concern to the City and build upon prior planning efforts. A review of existing/previous City documents with relevant background information should be completed (see the list of notable City resources/plans found on page 3).
- An initial review of the community within the broader regional context of Harvey County and account for the fact the Newton is part of the Wichita MSA. Comprehensive planning will occur at a system-wide level looking at broad-based needs, preferences, and priorities encompassing the City's entire Planning Area.
- Provide a timeline for the completion of the Comprehensive Plan with clear deadlines and specific action items identified for each phase of the project.

### TASK 2: PUBLIC PROCESS

- Identify, describe and implement a comprehensive community outreach strategy and methodology for citizen involvement in the Comprehensive Plan development process. Proposals must address multiple methods for soliciting involvement, which may include but is not limited to: traditional in-person forums, social media, video conference, etc. Special consideration will be given to submittals that reflect innovative approaches to citizen involvement and plan to utilize a diverse array of outreach methods. Proposals must include specific information related to planning for public engagement where in-person, traditional public forums may not be feasible or advisable as a result of public health concerns.
- Assure residents, user groups, associations and other stakeholders that they are provided an opportunity to participate in the development of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Act as professional facilitators to gather specific information about services, use, preferences and any agency strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or threats.
- Provide well-organized and directed activities, techniques and formats that will ensure that a positive, open, and proactive public participation process is achieved.
- Provide written records and summaries of the results of all public process and communication strategies.
- Help to build consensus on the plan and if consensus is not possible, provide information for informed decision-making for the Planning Commission and Governing Body.
- Provide methods to hear from as many people as possible, including residents, non-residents, students, the business community, the development community, and any associated stakeholders
- Conduct a minimum of three (3) workshop/forums with the general public with the intent of maximizing public participation through varying meeting dates, times, and locations.
- Conduct a minimum of one (1) meeting with the Governing Body, one (1) meeting with the Planning Commission, and one (1) meeting with the Comprehensive Plan Committee during the public process task. These meetings do not include semi-regular progress report meetings.



### TASK 3: STATISTICALLY-VALID SURVEY

- Provide a broad-based statistically-valid community needs assessment survey(s)(Survey must be scientific to assure good data) to identify community needs, desires, goals, and future priorities. There may be one or multiple surveys used as a baseline to determine needs, desires and cost structures/willingness to pay thresholds.
- The survey, whether developed as a mail-out document, web-based survey or combination thereof, must include a structured, random sample of households within the City and individual neighborhoods. The consultant must advise how the survey will be properly maintained, controlled and how survey duplications will be avoided.
- The results of this task to be documented in the Comprehensive Plan will include, but are not limited to:
  - Prioritize placemaking amenities, features, and neighborhood character
  - Determine Industrial, commercial and residential needs
  - Development of policy recommendations
  - Establish level of service guidelines
  - Provide a strategic action plan

### TASK 4: DEMOGRAPHICS AND TRENDS

- Review and interpret demographic trends and characteristics of the City of Newton and surrounding areas.
- Collect and analyze information on needs, desires, operations, programming, and land use trends and make level of service recommendations.

### TASK 5: EXISTING AND FUTURE FACILITIES, PROGRAMS AND STAFFING

- Compile an inventory and assessment of existing community facilities and provide recommendations for improvements that will be financially and environmentally sustainable for the City and its residents. Inventory should include the following, at minimum:
  - Assessment of physical conditions and functionality
  - Map illustrating the location and type of facility
- Provide an informed study of how the City of Newton will address future needs.
- The assessment will include a comparative analysis to communities of similar size and density and using nationally accepted standards/benchmarks.
- The analysis should consider the capacity of each amenity found within the system as well as functionality, accessibility, condition, comfort, and convenience.
- Identify areas of service shortfalls and projected impact of future trends.
- Include possibilities for partnerships with neighboring communities where appropriate.
- Provide recommendations for technological advancements in city development (i.e. smart city technology, fiber optic).



### TASK 6: RANK AND PRIORITIZE DEMAND AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Develop a set of prioritized recommendations for local subdivision development, policies, and capital improvement projects that define the quality of life in Newton.
- Priorities for commercial needs and desires, residential neighborhoods, and quality of life amenities.

## **TASK 7: PROGRESS REPORTING**

- The consultant and staff from planning and zoning and City Manager's Office shall hold progress meetings as often as necessary, but in no case less than once per month until the final plan is approved by the Governing Body.
- The consultant shall supply the City with an electronic copy of all completed or partially completed reports, studies, forecasts, maps or plans as deemed necessary by the City at least three (3) working days before each progress meetings. City staff shall schedule the meetings, as necessary, at key times during the development of the Comprehensive Plan.

## **TASK 8: STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN**

- Identify key implementation tools to bring the comprehensive plan's goals, policies, and strategies to fruition.
- Develop an action plan that integrates the proposed comprehensive plan with existing plans, policies and initiatives (i.e. matching public infrastructure priorities with future land uses, plan relationship to budget, etc).
- Approach the comprehensive plan as a dynamic document with recommendations for regular review, evaluation, and modification, including the establishment of an amendment process or changes to the future land use map.
- Suggest updates or modifications to the City of Newton to ensure compatibility and consistency with the new Comprehensive Plan.

## **TASK 9: DEVELOPMENT OF FINAL PLAN AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS**

- Determine the appropriate and best land uses within the City of Newton and its Planning Area.
- Develop Comprehensive Plan pursuant to the state enabling legislation, [Article 7, Section 12-747](#) of the Kansas State Statute.
- The Comprehensive Plan must include written goals, plans, objectives and policy statements that articulate a clear vision for the City's land use pattern that will serve as a "road map" through 2035.
- The Comprehensive Plan shall include:
  - Land Use & Urban Design: Designation, development patterns, placemaking characteristics, streetscape improvements, and environmental resources (i.e. tree canopy, water and floodplains, etc.)
  - Quality of Life Amenities: Public parks, trails, community facilities, and services
  - Infrastructure: Location, expansion, and proposed improvements to meet the needs of the City's growing population
  - Transportation & Mobility: Street network development patterns, accessibility, pedestrian access, and alternative transportation methods
  - Housing: choice, diversity, and affordability to meet the needs of the City's diverse workforce
- Charts, graphs, maps and other data as needed to support the plan and its presentation to the appropriate audiences, including:
  - Future Land Use Map
  - Future Land Use Map including entire planning area (combined city limits and ETJ) – include in pricing as Option B
  - Street Classification Map
- Provide all GIS data and maps utilized in the process.
- A summary of existing conditions, inventories, staffing and level of service analysis.
- Document a comprehensive graphic record of the process, including dedicated memorialization of citizen engagement and survey results.
- A strategic action plan.

## ELIGIBILITY

The City is seeking a consultant firm that has the following demonstrated expertise:

- Experience and development of city-wide comprehensive plans.
- Development and implementation of public participation processes and community engagement using innovative and diverse modalities.
- Effective communication of recommendations and implementation strategies to elected and appointed officials, citizen advisory boards, and related stakeholders.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROPOSAL

Proposals shall include all of the following. Failure to address all requirements may result in the proposal being deemed non-responsive.

### 1. PROJECT APPROACH, CONTENT & TIMELINE

A letter of submission shall include the name, address and telephone number of the person(s) who is authorized to legally represent the firm. Include a narrative that presents the services the firm would provide detailing the approach, methodology, deliverables and client meetings to be provided. A proposed timeline for completion of the Comprehensive Plan and its components must be included, and shall include a milestone schedule that illustrates the total projected completion time through the submission to the City of the final plans and supporting materials.

### 2. QUALIFIED & DEMONSTRATED COMPETENCIES

Identification of the personnel to be assigned to this engagement, including resume of related experience. Specific qualifications and competencies should communicate expertise in development of land use patterns for communities with characteristics similar to the City of Newton and experience in comprehensive planning.

### 3. PAST PROJECT EXPERIENCE & CLIENT REFERENCES

Background on the firm and its experience in preparing similar plans. Client references should include, at minimum: client name, location, contact person, contact information and a brief description of the project. Links to electronic plans completed previously are highly encouraged. Of particular interest are engagements involving communities with characteristics similar to the City of Newton.



## EVALUATION AND AWARD CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated by one (1) member of the City Commission, two (2) members of the Planning Commission, and three (3) City staff members. The Selection Committee consists of six (6) members. City staff will also make recommendations to the Committee during the selection process. The Committee may request interviews as deemed necessary. In order to be considered for selection, respondents must submit a complete response to this Request for Proposals. Failure to submit all information may result in the submittal being considered nonresponsive, and therefore, rejected.

Adherence to directions will ensure a fair and swift evaluation by the City and the Selection Committee. The City will notify only those firms who qualify for oral presentations for the purpose of clarification, to enhance the materials presented in any part of the submittal, and to respond to the questions of the selection committee. However, the Selection Committee is not required to request clarification; therefore, all information submitted should be as complete as possible.

The following criteria will be used in screening, ranking and selecting the successful candidate:



CRITERIA	WEIGHT
Project Approach, Content & Timeline	45%
Qualifications & Demonstrated Competencies	35%
Past Project Experience & Client References	20%

The top ranked finalist(s) will be invited to negotiate an agreement with the City. A detailed scope of work will be developed and agreed upon based on the individual project scope by the selected firm and the City. This detailed scope of work and associated fee will be incorporated as part of the agreement. The City reserves the right to negotiate with any single firm or multiple firms to provide the desired services at its discretion. Additionally, the City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted.

## FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

All proposals must be received by April 1, 2025. Proposals received after the deadline may not be considered. Fifteen (15) physical proposals are required in addition to an electronic version delivered via email.

PHYSICAL PROPOSALS	ELECTRONIC PROPOSALS	QUESTIONS
City of Newton, Kansas Attn: Justin Erickson Planning and Zoning Supervisor 201 E 6th Newton Ks. 67114	<a href="mailto:jerickson@newtonkansas.com">jerickson@newtonkansas.com</a>	316-284-6020