



## Appendix

# Summary of Key Group Interviews

If asked to “sell” someone new to the community, what would be the bragging points in regard to your area?

- Nice medical campus — ranks in the top five counties in state with access to family medicine
- Number of medical specialties, which is exceptional for our size of community
- Family-friendly community
- Newton has a true community identity — a city to itself
- Close to metropolitan city — Wichita
- Great public education system – wins a lot of state and national awards
- Very good private schools – offers a choice
- Newton offers amazing cultural opportunities and recreation programs
- Outsiders always surprised with what Newton has to offer
- Strong work ethic and high standards, but tend to be critical because of high standards
- Safety and security of the community — low crime
- Small school system compared to a large city
- Cultural arts through Bethel College
- Great family and retirement destination community
- Good logistics for manufacturing
- Good highways, except no connection on Highway 50 for northbound traffic
- Community conversations are occurring on how to attract businesses and people to Newton
- Bethel College is a great resource, brings people back to retire, or stay after graduation
- Safety of the community — low crime rate
- Amtrak connections to larger cities
- The size of community is a nice fit
- Diverse retail options
- Values of the community — rural, Midwest conservative
- Great place to raise kids
- Convenient access to get around town
- Variety of housing options
- Sand Creek golf course community
- Strong downtown district — Main Street
- Airport for business travel

- Strong sense of community
- Progressive leadership wanting the town to grow
- Convenient commute times within the city and to Wichita
- Newton does a good job of looking toward the future
- Revitalization of Sand Creek and bike paths throughout town
- Performing arts academy
- Newton cares and invests in kids
- Caring educators in the community
- Vocational college; adult learning opportunities
- Cost of living is very reasonable
- Many activities in the community to bring people together
- Great feeling of community: chance to part of something bigger than yourself
- Well-maintained green space and park facilities
- Low cost of living in Newton compared to other Kansas cities; price of housing, taxes, etc.

**Biggest challenges your institution/business/neighborhood is facing, especially in respect to local level.**

- Some people are afraid of change, while another segment of people are screaming for change
- Biggest challenge is managing community change
- Change is an attitude; how you perceive change; asking why, not why not
- Community dissent puts a damper on a lot of innovation because leaders don't want to step out
- Increasing property taxes; property values
- Finding capable employees; limited labor supply pool
- Affordable housing or workforce housing
- Ensuring Newton offers a quality of life to attract people and businesses
- High enough paying jobs to not create a strain on social service programs
- Ensure we keep the professional paying jobs in Newton; don't lose to Wichita
- Overcoming the view Kansans have of themselves and our state
- We need something to identify and brand the Newton community
- Dealing with community forces wanting Newton to become a bedroom city, others wanting Newton to stay the same; and those wanting the best of both worlds
- Need for a recreation facility; daycare facilities — difficult to achieve implementation
- Dealing with the desire of people wanting to keep things the way they are
- For nonprofits in the community, the biggest challenge is ensuring funding
- Growing elderly population with fewer resources, services to meet the demand and needs
- Need to foster atmosphere that lets private investment capital succeed

- Municipal water rates are a competitive disadvantage compared to Wichita
- Maintenance of older housing stock
- A small percentage of households lack the income to maintain their older homes
- Creating a community without economic development incentives
- Need for recreational and parks facilities for a growing community
- Competing with the Internet for people to obtain news
- New retail growth will dissipate and damage business development in downtown
- Adapting to new technology and corporate businesses vs. locally owned shops and individual identity
- Getting people to come downtown to visit shops, art galleries, etc.
- Offering art movies in downtown; encouraging a community conversation about movies, arts, culture
- People resisting change in a community is always a challenge
- Getting people to get off the highway and discover our community on their way to Wichita or Salina
- With change comes education; educating both locals and new prospects about what Newton has to offer
- Defining what is the vision of the city; and ensuring consistency in the vision over time
- Marketing to all age groups in the community and competing against big box retail
- Leading in a consistent direction with defined goals and objectives; changes in political leadership result in inconsistency and lack of implementation
- Ensuring the existing wealth of the community remains in the community through community foundations
- Next 10 years, focus on getting manufacturing/distribution blue collar jobs; then for the next 10 years focus on attracting Generation X white collar and green jobs
- Creating a place where people want to be
- Need to create a 3G network and free high speed Internet zone in downtown
- Recreate downtown with businesses incubators
- Focus on the wellness of the community (walking, bike paths)
- Need to create a convenient transit system to Wichita — light rail

### **Opportunities for your institution to better collaborate with similar organizations?**

- Medical community works very well together
- Physicians have moved here because it's very physician-friendly
- Newton, by nature, is a very collaborative community
- The creation of the Newton Medical Center is an excellent example of collaboration
- Countywide economic development is another example of collaboration
- Communication, trust, dialogue is way above average between the city, county, chamber
- Stronger collaboration with businesses in the community for Bethel and high school students
- Newton is well on its way in collaborative relationships in education

- Prepare our children to work in collaborative relationships with people from a global perspective

### Role of government in promoting your institution's mission – how could it be improved?

- Ensuring effective communication so the right hand knows what the left hand is doing
- One-stop office for job seekers; for newcomers to learn about available social services
- City government incentives to rehab old homes
- City government incentives for downtown storefront improvements
- Need to work defining the Newton community image; branding of the city
- Need to work on a strong sense of community identity and pride in being a citizen of Newton
- Fair, consistent enforcement of government codes and regulations
- As a community, we are learning to succeed — hospital, golf course — can-do attitude is emerging
- Making sure people know about all the education choices in the community
- Civic leaders need to value all the dimensions of the community
- Teach collaborative skills, technology, critical thinking in students so they can adapt to future changes
- Medical community has a good relationship with county Health Department
- Staff has a responsibility but employers need to be forgiving to schedule interruptions because they have a sick child, etc
- School is not a transfer from the family unit — it's an extension
- A diversity of faiths — but we all take responsibility for the food bank, Harvey Co. Health, etc.
- Have people with vision — but maybe we're not bold enough in stepping up in being armor bearers and protecting local leaders from criticism
- Community leaders need to support the people who have taken the risk to be our political leaders
- Tend to move to older people to be the leaders — need some younger people; willing to take risks, excited about life. Need to encourage youth in leadership
- Need some of the old bulls to pave the way for the younger group
- Need leaders to help move and mentor young people

### What do you think local leaders need to keep in mind when planning the future?

- Need to take advantage of the Kansas Sports Museum
- Give priority to young professionals — businesses, entertainment, etc.
- How to focus on young professionals — perhaps narrow our purpose to young families
- Taking advantage of the convenient commute to metro city jobs, amenities, etc.
- How to make Newton attractive to young people, not just young professionals
- Keeping Newton's own community identity
- A regional plan for growth and development
- Invest in maintaining older neighborhoods and not only encouraging growth in new subdivisions

- Deal with the widespread occurrence of poorly maintained older housing throughout Newton
- Deal with substandard housing — need to create a positive community image
- Pay attention to the needs of low-income households in the community — don't ignore their plight
- Ensuring good paying jobs are created
- Promote community progress with values that care for all citizens
- Create an environment where today's youth can come back to work and live
- Focus on bringing young families with kids into the community
- Expand the tax base
- Focus on affordable housing for young families (\$80,000 to \$120,000 quality home)
- Implementation of a YMCA recreation center
- Focus on community amenities to ensure we compete effectively in attracting professionals, families
- Encourage/foster growth in small businesses; local entrepreneurship
- Accept that national retail, restaurant, business franchisees are coming to Newton in the future
- Plan for growth, not for staying the same
- Plan for recreational needs into the future
- Create a diverse economic base with small businesses/industry
- Plan for sustainable growth — stable community — don't rely on connections to the national economy
- Create a community development pattern for people to walk, bike — high energy costs
- Address Highway 50 issue of separating the community — safe pedestrian movement
- Develop our local character; let's not turn into a place driven by corporate America
- Acknowledge we are an agricultural-based community; expand our local connections to farming
- Change the appearance of the old buildings downtown; refresh the image of downtown
- Have a vision for the future, but be flexible and responsive to adapt to changes
- Our leaders need to have communication with all groups in the community — not just the Chamber
- Think about how to accommodate retirees living with working adults
- Think about public art; art fairs on Main Street; Fox Theater should play independent and art films
- Embrace the historical character of downtown
- Create bulb-outs at street intersections in downtown to make pedestrian-friendly
- Create a zone in downtown for farmers market, civic space for gathering for events
- Pay attention to the entryways into downtown; make them look welcoming
- Create a walking/biking linkage between Bethel College and downtown
- Strengthen community connections with Bethel College