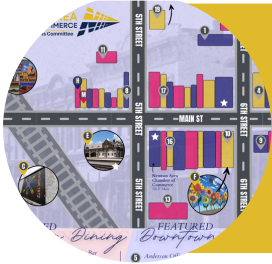


# NEWTON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2023 DOWNTOWN PROMOTIONS REPORT

**Downtown Promotions Committee** - The Chamber's Downtown Promotions Committee meets once/month. This Committee includes 18 members who are involved in businesses in the Central Business District and 1 Chamber employee. This Committee leads the effort to promote the services our Downtown businesses provide and help make Downtown the best it can be.



**Downtown Promotional Materials** - Chamber staff and Committee members work hard to promote local Newton businesses to visitors. In 2023, The Chamber created an "Explore Newton" brochure highlighting places to dine, shop, and explore in Newton for the NJCAA Golf Tournament hosted at Sand Creek Station. Chamber staff also worked with Community Creative Services to create a map of the Downtown Area. Physical copies of this map are available at the Chamber office and an interactive, digital version is available online.

**"Eat, Shop, Love, Newton" - February 2023** - The Chamber and the Downtown Promotions Committee ran a "Show Your Love for 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 2023, the Chamber and the Downtown Promotions Committee brought back Third Thursdays to 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.

**Summer Sale "Main"ia- June 15th-17th** - From June 15th-17th, the 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. Fourteen businesses participated and three people won a prize of Chamber Checks or local gift cards.



**College Night- August 24th** - College night is a fun way to welcome area college students back for the start of the semester. Students came downtown to play Business BINGO and win prizes for visiting each of the 17 participating business. Students from Hesston College, Bethel College, and others attended. The first 100 participants received sling bags with goodies donated by local businesses. Over 100 BINGO cards were turned in and 16 students won prizes.

**Taste of Newton - October 12th** - This annual event brought an estimated 10,000+ people to downtown Newton. This year we had 66 vendors, including our four block sponsors, lining 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.





**Taste of Christmas - November 9th-11th** - A record breaking 40 local businesses participated in Taste of Christmas, 22 of those located in the central business district. Participants visited all businesses to complete the puzzle and to enter the drawing for over \$1200 in prizes donated by local businesses. 72 people from 13 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.

**Deck Downtown - December 3rd-17th** - Nineteen downtown businesses decorated their windows for this year's window decorating competition. For the first time this year we had a Judge's Choice and a People's Choice category with traveling trophies for each. This event helps to make downtown Newton a special place to shop, eat and enjoy during the holiday season. Our 3 Judges selected Bella Veil Bridal 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 Rohr Jewelry.



**Shop Local Sundays - December 3rd, 10th, 17th** - The Downtown Promotions Committee ran a "Shop Local Sundays" campaign during the month of December to promote shopping local for Christmas gifts.

**Ribbon Cuttings** - The Chamber hosted 23 Ribbon Cuttings or Groundbreakings in 2023 for new businesses or expansions. Out of the 23, 7 were for business in the downtown area.



**School Pride Banners** - The Chamber collaborated with USD 373, Bethel College, and the City of Newton to create and install Bethel College and Newton Schools banners along both sides of Main Street. Students at Newton High School created the brackets that hold the banners. This was a big team effort and a project that will promote community pride for years to come.



**NetWork Kansas Loans** - In 2023, the Chamber did 1 Gap loan for \$10,000. So far in 2024 we have done 2 loans totaling \$146,500.

Since we started working on Gap loans in 2020, we have done 10 loans totaling \$230,650. Everyone is current with their loans and we are working with more businesses on loans for 2024.



**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. Chamber and City staff shared about the campaign with 100+ business leaders at several Chamber Breakfasts and other events in 2023. A total of \$20,478.68 has been raised so far. The Chamber donated \$5,000 of that amount and several Chamber Board members have contributed as well.

