



Strategic Plan

2025-2026

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Executive Summary

This document was created by the City of Newton Department Head Staff and City Commissioners. The Strategic Plan is divided into three main areas of focus: sustaining exceptional public service, creating a welcoming place to call home, and planning and growing for the future. The strategic plan is intended to serve as a guide and point of reference for Senior Management as they plan operational priorities and focus. We acknowledge that this is a living document and may require updating and revision from time to time. The City Commission expects to be updated no less than annually on the progress and status of the identified goals and objectives.

City Mission & Vision

Mission:

To deliver exceptional services through planning, hard work and innovation while enhancing the quality of life for all.

Vision:

A growing and thriving community that embraces our heritage, actively shapes our future, and is a welcoming place to call home.

City's Guiding Principles and 6-Pack

12 Guiding Principles:

The City of Newton employees are committed to establishing and maintaining a servant leadership culture within our organization, using the 12 Principles of Servant Leadership as a guide.

1. Listening
2. Empathy
3. Nurture the spirit
4. Building Community
5. Healing
6. Awareness
7. Calling
8. Conceptualization
9. Foresight
10. Persuasion
11. Growth of People
12. Stewardship

6 Pack:

The 6 Pack is our organization's employee core values statement. The values were identified by City employees in 2018 through a series of surveys and engagement activities. You'll see them on signage throughout City facilities, on T-shirts, and elsewhere in our organization. And it's more than just a slogan – we live it. Staying true to these values is crucial to maintaining the servant leadership culture that we've worked hard to develop here at the city.

1. Serve Others First
2. Do the Right Thing
3. Work Hard
4. Raise the Bar
5. Explore New Ideas
6. Have Fun

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Strategic Plan Action Items 2025-2026

1) Sustain exceptional public service

1. Provide the staffing & resources to enable quality levels of services

- a. Perform a Classification and Benefit Survey and implement the plan.
- b. Implement succession plans for key staff.
- c. Implement an Internal Professional Development plan for all departments.
- d. Attract and retain a diverse, talented and engaged workforce.
- e. Develop and implement a servant leadership framework within the organization to enhance team collaboration and employee satisfaction.

2. Maintain and improve public infrastructure

- a. Build healthy operating budgets for maintenance.
- b. Update and use CIP as a policy document to prioritize and plan for projects.
- c. Leverage different sources of funding where available for public projects (grants/partnerships/fundraising).
- d. Promote the SS4A planning process to actively include residents in improving transportation safety.
- e. Update Plumbing, Mechanical, Fuel Gas, Property Maintenance & Existing Building Codes 2024-25 and 2024 Fire Code.
- f. Update Engineering Construction & Design Specifications 2025-26
- g. Conduct a public safety needs assessment.

3. Increase transparency and engagement to improve trust

- a. Regularly conduct public surveys for input on issues and projects.
- b. Produce City newsletters via email and hard copy mailings.
- c. Prepare more City materials in Spanish as well as English.
- d. Implement online pay options for City fees for services.
- e. Review and Update Municipal Code.
- f. Design and launch a new website with a more user-friendly design.
- g. Establish a city outreach and engagement program.
- h. Change water meter readings from hundred cubic feet to gallons to improve customer understanding.
- i. Take a proactive approach to fostering a culture of safety and openness within the organization.

2) Create a welcoming place to call home

1. Prioritize Quality of Life amenities

- a. Create safe, attractive spaces that enhance sense of community, including continued funding of playground replacements and new recreational amenities.

- b. Continue to extend and connect missing links of the City's trail system.
 - c. Prioritize beautification of the City, including highway entrances, plantings, hardscaping, etc.
- 2. Invest in downtown**
- a. Continue to develop the Main Street program, including local and State grant opportunities.
 - b. Pursue opportunities to enhance the aesthetics of the downtown built environment.
 - c. Begin demolition, remediation, and redevelopment of 320 N. Main.
 - d. Facilitate redevelopment of Newton Station and Amtrak's Heartland Flyer extension.
- 3. Promote redevelopment and revitalization in established neighborhoods and commercial areas**
- a. Re-evaluate and enhance the Neighborhood Revitalization Program.
 - b. Continue to fund programs encouraging rehabilitation of older homes.
 - c. Prepare a targeted strategy to promote infill development.
 - d. Increase efficiency and effectiveness of environmental control efforts to beautify the city and boost community pride.
- 4. Market Newton as a vibrant community to live, work and play**
- a. Implement the Choose Newton Strategic Marketing Plan 2024-25.
 - b. Partner with real estate agents and economic development staff to distribute community marketing pieces for resident recruitment.
 - c. Encourage community-building activities and events, and partner with community groups and nonprofits to support their efforts.
 - d. Pursue opportunities to support Newton Public Schools and to promote the quality of Newton education.

3) Plan and grow for the future

- 1. Create and sustain fiscally responsible plans and policies**
- a. Support sustainable growth through adoption of an economic development policy.
 - b. Maintain a responsible and sustainable fiscal position, including at least a AA-bond rating.
 - c. Prioritize commercial development as requested in community surveys (i.e. restaurants, shopping, etc.).
 - d. Organize and leverage data to target new businesses.
 - e. Update the Comprehensive Plan, Bike Plan, Housing Study, and Water & Sewer Master Plan.
- 2. Leverage partnerships toward community growth**
- a. Pursue partnerships to grow recreational opportunities in Newton, including improvements to Themian Park.

- b. Recruit housing developers to increase new housing starts by 15% 2024-2027.
- c. Create and sustain multi-agency stakeholder meetings to share City Vision/Mission/Goals at least once a year.
- d. Utilize industry engagement information from Harvey County Economic Development staff to influence decision-making for economic development policy and practices.