



# **City of Newton**

## **Strategic Growth Plan**

**Adopted June 2015**

# City of Newton Strategic Growth Plan – 2015

## 1. Economic Development

<p>Actions 1.1.1: Periodically update an inventory of vacant or underutilized buildings and previously used properties (brownfield sites) in Newton available for adaptive reuse. Coordinate this inventory with other economic development agencies. Develop a program offering incentives for reusing such vacant buildings and properties. Examine local development standards to look for regulations that might unintentionally impede efforts at adaptive reuse.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.2: Develop one or more small business incubators in vacant buildings.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.3: Create a new marketing strategy to attract new residents to Newton by targeting commercial and industrial development, the Charlotte area, and surrounding regions for both two-income families without children and families with children.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.4: Aggressively recruit "targeted" businesses based on Newton's most recent retail leakage study.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.5: Acquire a site for a spec building. Coordinate this activity with the Catawba County Economic Development Corporation (EDC).</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.6: Develop a dedicated and comprehensive economic development website.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.7: Encourage new commercial development along U.S. 321 and N.C. 16, including a hotel.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.8: Addition of an urgent care facility.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.9: Work with EDC to create a new industrial park.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.10: Expand the City's small business retention and expansion program.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.11: Apply for grants to help bring new industries into Newton.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.12: Encourage businesses that provide services to the Hispanic/Latino population.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.13: Promote Danner Industrial Park through marketing partnership with EDC.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.14: Promote Newton Corporate Center through marketing partnership with EDC.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.15: Ask Newton's citizens to approve a bond referendum to generate funding for economic development and infrastructure projects in the City.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.16: Develop a program to transform old manufacturing structures into usable space.</p>
<p>Actions 1.1.17: Assist in creating additional retirement communities.</p>

## 2. Downtown Newton

<p>Actions 2.1.1: Strengthen the Downtown Newton Development Association (DNDA) by funding a full-time Downtown Coordinator position and provide funding for marketing/events.</p>
<p>Actions 2.1.2: Develop additional parking in the Downtown area.</p>
<p>Actions 2.1.3: Implement a redevelopment/revitalization investment program for the Downtown area.</p>
<p>Actions 2.1.4: Add additional amenities including a dog park, outdoor theater space, a mini-park and a splash pad to attract commercial and residential development.</p>
<p>Actions 2.1.5: Install street signs Downtown designating the historic district.</p>
<p>Actions 2.1.6: Continue adding streetscapes Downtown.</p>
<p>Actions 2.1.7: Work with developers to create Downtown residential living options.</p>
<p>Actions 2.1.8: Encourage small business development including restaurants and breweries.</p>
<p>Actions 2.1.9: Encourage Downtown businesses to stay open later during weekdays and weekends.</p>

## 3. Community Appearance and Image

<p>Actions 3.1.1: Develop a new destination for Newton (e.g. a Sports complex).</p>
<p>Actions 3.1.2: Review corridor overlay district regulations to align appearance standards with economic development goals and objectives.</p>
<p>Actions 3.1.3: Implement Streetscape Project/Phase I Downtown Area.</p>
<p>Actions 3.1.4: Implement Streetscape Project/Phase II North Newton Area.</p>

Actions 3.1.5: Amend Downtown (B1) zoning regulations to encourage investments and strengthen appearance standards for buildings Downtown.
Actions 3.1.6: Create a new signature festival or event Downtown.
Actions 3.1.7: Develop a comprehensive street tree inventory and install trees consistent with recommendations from the Tree Board.
Actions 3.1.8: Create a new public art program.
Actions 3.1.9: Review and strengthen nuisance, minimum housing and non-residential maintenance codes.

**4. Growth Management**

Actions 4.1.1: Update the City's Comprehensive Plan.
Actions 4.1.2: Update residential and commercial plan review process.
Actions 4.1.3: Encourage residential growth by recruiting developers. Develop appropriate incentives, including but not limited to, the provision of utilities.
Actions 4.1.4: Seek to annex unincorporated areas as allowed under state law to encourage growth in the N.C. 16 and N.C. 10 corridors.
Actions 4.1.5: Develop comprehensive strategy to create new residential housing in Newton to attract residents to the City.
Actions 4.1.6: Assist in creating additional retirement communities in Newton.
Actions 4.1.7: Create one-stop permitting process for Newton businesses, developers and residents.
Actions 4.1.8: Improve online permitting and customer service.

**5. Transportation and Mobility**

Actions 5.1.1: Complete a comprehensive street condition analysis survey and establish a revised priority list of streets scheduled for paving or reconditioning.
Actions 5.1.2: Update existing sidewalk plan including a comprehensive sidewalk condition analysis survey and establish a revised priority list of sidewalks scheduled for construction or reconditioning.
Actions 5.1.3: Revisit the Transportation Improvement Program to prioritize projects relevant to the construction of roads that are critical to mitigating traffic congestion and creating links to existing and future arteries in the region.
Actions 5.1.4: Complete the City's wayfinding project with welcome signs and landscaping.
Actions 5.1.5: Continue to work with State Legislators, Catawba County, and adjacent municipalities to complete construction of N.C. 16 between Claremont Road and Tower Road.
Actions 5.1.6: Work with the MPO to select the best candidate projects for NCDOT's Project Prioritization Process to be included in the STIP.
Actions 5.1.7: Investigate the feasibility of changing Newton's one-way street system back to two-way traffic in the Downtown area.
Actions 5.1.8: Public Transportation - Add a new transit stop on Northwest Boulevard near West 20th Street to provide access to the Walmart Neighborhood Market.
Actions 5.1.9: Bicycle - Add bicycle lanes to the following streets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Cline Avenue (West J Street to West D Street)</li> <li>• South Main Avenue/North Main Avenue (Southwest Boulevard to Conover City Limits)</li> <li>• South College Avenue (Southwest Boulevard to North Main Avenue)</li> <li>• Brady Avenue (Southwest Boulevard to East 4th Street to North College Avenue)</li> <li>• East 20th Street/Rankin Avenue (North Main Avenue to East N.C. 10)</li> <li>• N.C. 10/N.C. 16 Business (South Brady Avenue to Newton City Limits)</li> </ul>
Actions 5.1.10: Greenway - Apply to NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Initiative for funding assistance for a Pedestrian Plan.
Actions 5.1.11: Sidewalks - Apply for Surface Transportation Program-Direct Attributable (STP-DA) and Transportation Alternative (TA) funds through the MPO to supplement the construction of prioritized sidewalks needs.
Actions 5.1.12: Continue the Greenway from N.C. 10 to Southside Park, south of Radio Station Road along West A Street, and to Downtown to tie into the existing sidewalk system.

## 6. City Utilities

Actions 6.1.1: Develop and implement a plan to expand City infrastructure to meet anticipated population growth and to replace outdated systems.
Actions 6.1.2: Generate a plan to expand City infrastructure to meet anticipated population growth and to replace outdated systems (e.g. Wastewater Treatment Plant).
Actions 6.1.3: Build and/or acquire redundant critical infrastructure (e.g. facilities, equipment).
Actions 6.1.4: Construct a new electric delivery station.
Actions 6.1.5: Construct a new two million gallon fresh water tank.
Actions 6.1.6: Assess public support for a bond referendum supporting a massive street resurfacing and sidewalk construction project.
Actions 6.1.7: Develop engineering plans and financing for construction of water and sewer utilities in Startown.
Actions 6.1.8: Develop a plan to replace the public works corporation yard/facility.
Actions 6.1.9: Initiate a long range water supply study.
Actions 6.1.10: Initiate a long range sanitary sewer capacity study.
Actions 6.1.11: Implement a stormwater utility enterprise fund.
Actions 6.1.12: Implement a smart metering project.
Actions 6.1.13: Construct critical water lines on N.C. 16, Balls Creek Road and Buffalo Shoals Road in cooperation with Catawba County.
Actions 6.1.14: Construct critical water lines on Rocky Ford Road in cooperation with Catawba County.
Actions 6.1.15: Construct water and sewer lines in unserved portions of the City.
Actions 6.1.16: Establish definitive timeline in the CIP for replacing aged iron water lines based on usage, failure rate, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Concentration in the Downtown area first, with emphasis on streetscape area.</li><li>• Coordinate with Fire Department about replacing water lines that do not meet fire code for the greatest impact on fire protection.</li></ul>
Actions 6.1.17: Include engineering assessments and planning into the CIP for upgrades to water plant to maximize the life of the facility and equipment for next 20 years.
Actions 6.1.18: Coordinate water line improvements with street resurfacing projects to get greatest leverage of Powell Bill funds.
Actions 6.1.19: Establish public outreach/partnership with a definitive timeline for expanding sewer into the Startown neighborhoods to maximize new sewer users.
Actions 6.1.20: Ensure entire neighborhoods hook onto sewer.
Actions 6.1.21: Coordinate streetscape improvements with sewer line upgrades.
Actions 6.1.22: Place all utilities underground in streetscape areas.
Actions 6.1.23: Coordinate sewer line rehabilitations with street resurfacing projects to get greatest leverage of Powell Bill funds.
Actions 6.1.24: Include engineering assessments and planning into the CIP for upgrades to waste water treatment plant to maximize the life of the facility and equipment for next 20 years.
Actions 6.1.25: Establish definitive timeline in the CIP for replacing aged terra cotta sewer lines based on usage, failure rate, etc.
Actions 6.1.26: Concentration in the Downtown area first, with emphasis on streetscape area when making sewer improvements.
Actions 6.1.27: Offer competitive rates/service for any new electric customers that may have a choice of provider.
Actions 6.1.28: Require by ordinance all new or upgraded electric lines in Downtown to be placed underground.
Actions 6.1.29: Conduct a pay scale reclassification to provide veteran public works employees compensation commensurate with experience and tenure. Offer incentive for employees with four years or more experience and training to stay with City instead of finding new employment.

## 7. Public Safety

Actions 7.1.1: Conduct a pay scale reclassification to provide Public Safety veterans compensation commensurate with experience and tenure.
Actions 7.1.2: Offer incentive for employees with four years or more experience and training to stay with City instead of finding new employment.

<p>Actions 7.1.3: Actively recruit minority, especially Hispanic, BLET participants/graduates for the police force:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sponsor minority candidates, especially Hispanic candidates, through BLET if there are no minority graduates.</li> <li>• Outreach to local high schools and regional colleges (ASU, UNC-Charlotte, CVCC, WPCC, CCC&amp;TI, etc.) to recruit minority applicants for BLET.</li> <li>• Use existing programs (DARE, Newton 101, etc.) for public outreach about employment potential, requirements, and possible sponsorship with police force.</li> </ul>
<p>Actions 7.1.4: Expand the police force to include one more officer per shift and one traffic patrol officer.</p>
<p>Actions 7.1.5: As City expands infrastructure with annexation intentions, include budget for officers.</p>
<p>Actions 7.1.6: Coordinate with Public Works Department to upgrade water infrastructure to meet Fire Code and maximize fire protection. Prioritize rehabilitations Downtown and around industrial areas.</p>
<p>Actions 7.1.7: Improve condition and access of abandoned or vacant industrial buildings and Downtown buildings to reduce fire risk. Work with DNDA and Main Street Program to establish a Historic Commission, or work with property owners, DNDA, Main Street Program and Planning Commission, to help regulate appearance, safety, and access of buildings downtown.</p>
<p>Actions 7.1.8: As Abernethy Laurels expands, work with the community to ensure adequate service, especially responding to medical calls.</p>

## 8. Recreation

<p>Actions 8.1.1: Complete a citywide Parks and Recreation Master Plan within the next 3 years.</p>
<p>Actions 8.1.2: Identify capital projects utilizing Sue Jones estate funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New playground equipment (Southside, Westside/Jaycee, Central and Jacob Fork parks)</li> <li>• New central recreation facility</li> <li>• Splash pad</li> <li>• Lighting at ball fields at Jacob Fork</li> <li>• Disc golf course</li> <li>• Flow track or exercise trail at Jacob Fork</li> <li>• Regulation size soccer field</li> <li>• Dog park</li> <li>• Outdoor stage</li> </ul>
<p>Actions 8.1.3: Determine outcome of Central High School and develop associated implementation strategies.</p>
<p>Actions 8.1.4: Complete Jacob Fork Park Phases II and III.</p>
<p>Actions 8.1.5: Create a strategy to support tourism with emphasis on the 1924 Courthouse and museum and the Newton Depot.</p>
<p>Actions 8.1.6: Set aside matching funds or whole project cost to complete Heritage Trail Greenway including completion of N.C. 10 to Southside Park. Continue the Greenway south of Radio Station Road along West A Street. Continue Downtown to tie into the existing sidewalk system.</p>
<p>Actions 8.1.7: Locate new operational facilities for the recreation (maintenance) staff.</p>
<p>Actions 8.1.8: Develop activities/programs for the senior adult population including, but not limited to, the creation of a senior center.</p>
<p>Actions 8.1.9: Construct a dog park.</p>
<p>Actions 8.1.10: Construct a columbarium or mausoleum.</p>
<p>Actions 8.1.11: Construct a splash pad.</p>
<p>Actions 8.1.12: Develop a community garden.</p>
<p>Actions 8.1.13: Greenway - Apply to NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Initiative for funding assistance for a Pedestrian Plan.</p>
<p>Actions 8.1.14: Resurface tennis courts at Broyhill and Jaycee parks.</p>
<p>Actions 8.1.15: Complete a citywide Parks and Recreation Master Plan.</p>



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