

Planning Policies

2019 Revision

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Planning Accomplishments

Goals & Objectives Completed From 2010 Comprehensive Plan

Since the authoring of the *2010 City of Newton Comprehensive Plan*, many of the outlined goals and objectives have been successfully completed. The City of Newton has shown outstanding progress in the past seven years. This section lists the objectives that were completed and the year in which the accomplishment took place.

HOUSING PLAN

Objective H.1.A *Complete the planning and development of a new subdivision.*

The City of Newton acting through its Economic Development Committee will identify the location of the subdivision and a developer to develop the project. The City will then work to ensure the development has the necessary infrastructure to become attractive to future inhabitants. The estimated cost of the infrastructure investment is \$300,000 and will be paid for through the Capital Development Fund and TIF. The goal would be to complete the groundwork for the subdivision and have the infrastructure in place in 2011. **Completed in 2011.**

Objective H.1.B *Provide more housing options for retirees and elderly residents.*

The City of Newton acting through its Economic Development Committee will work with the developer to complete the assisted living facility in 2010. The City will utilize TIF to assist in this development. **Completed in 2010.**

PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES PLAN

Objective P.1.A *Upgrade the water infrastructure in the City.*

The City will continue to move forward with the construction of a new water plant to be completed in 2010. The \$1.866 million cost of the plant will be funded through the Economic Development Administration and through local loans. **Completed in 2010.**

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Objective T.1.C *Develop and construct the portion of Eagle Trails that lies within the city limits.*

The city will construct the Embarras River Walk as prescribed in the *Jasper County Eagle Trails & Greenways Comprehensive Plan*. The city will utilize the IDNR Trails Grant Program, OSLAD Program, and the IDOT ITEP Program to assist in financing each of the four phases of the trail. Phase I was funded through the ITEP program. This portion of the trail included the rehabilitation on the Embarras River Bridge. **Completed in 2014.**

COMMUNITY DESIGN/CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES PLAN

Objective D.2.A *Assist the Embarras River Tourism Council in investigating the construction of a Burl Ives' replica home that would serve as a museum and the Jasper County Chamber of Commerce office.*

The City of Newton will gift the lot north of the Library for the Council to develop the replica by the end of 2011. The estimated cost of this development would be \$250,000. **Completed in 2011- A Burl Ives Memorial replaced the original plan to construct the replica home.**

NATURAL RESOURCES AND PUBLIC HAZARDS PLAN

Objective N.2.B *Utilize a community channel through New Wave cable to display all warnings and community information postings.*

The City of Newton will provide payment to the Jasper County Chamber of Commerce to maintain and update the channel. The goal is to be accomplished by the end of 2011 with an annual cost of \$1,200 paid to the Chamber. **Completed in 2011.**

Objective N.3.A *Participate in the development and adoption of the Jasper County Multijurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.*

The City of Newton will identify specific strategies to be included in the HMP for the City of Newton and then will adopt the plan in 2011. This effort is funded through a FEMA grant. **Completed in 2010.**

RECREATION PLAN

Objective R.1.B *Make improvement to the current City parks.*

Complete the construction of the \$3.2 million Newton Aquatic Center in 2010 with use of OSLAD funds. **Completed in 2010.** In 2012, remodel the tennis and basketball courts in Peterson Park at an estimated cost of \$50,000. **Completed in 2012.** In 2010, replace the Boy Scout Cabin at an estimated cost of \$100,000. **Completed in 2012.** Remodel the park restrooms to meet ADA compliance with use of OSLAD funds in 2012 at an estimated cost of \$25,000 **(completed in 2015)** and upgrade playground and recreational equipment while making the pavilion ADA accessible at an estimated cost of \$75,000 **(completed in 2012).**

Objective R.2.A *Create a youth center or teen hangout.*

Explore working with other local organizations, such as the Ministerial Association, to sustain a youth center by 2015 at an estimated cost of \$250,000. **Completed in 2015.**

Objective R.2.B *Support exercise programs for adults and seniors.*

Allow groups to utilize the Newton Aquatic Center for adult exercise programs in 2010 and begin promoting the Embarras River Walk as a great means for exercise after construction. **Completed in 2010.**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Objective E.1.A *Develop an incubator.*

Investigate using the old TPS building or other existing space to be retrofitted into an incubator with a central reception area, lounge and meeting facilities, and individual office spaces available for rent to be completed in 2015 with use of EDA funds to develop at an estimated cost of \$250,000. **Completed in 2016.**

Objective E.1.B *Develop an entrepreneurship program in the schools.*

Work with CUSD1 to assist in creating and deploying entrepreneurship education and curriculum by the end of 2014. **Completed in 2014.**

CITY/COUNTY SHARED INITIATIVES PLAN

Objective C.1.A *Start a County-wide community foundation.*

Work with the Southeastern Illinois Community Foundation to establish a fund and begin fundraising efforts and promote local gift giving. **Completed in 2015.**

Goals, Objectives, & Policies to Guide the Leadership of Today and Tomorrow

HOUSING PLAN

Goal H.1

Prepare for future housing needs and encourage the upkeep of the current housing stock.

Objective H.1.A *Rehabilitate the blighted properties in the corporate limits of the City of Newton.*

The City of Newton Council and Economic Development Council has taken the initiative to apply for a Community Development Assistance Program Housing grant through the State of Illinois to rehab homes around Dufrain Park. If awarded, the City will begin the rehabilitation project. The application was written to secure \$400,000. The funds can be applied for every two years.

This is an on-going goal. The City of Newton received three grants in the past eight (8) years. The most recent grant is more than \$500,000 and will rehabilitate approximately 10 homes in 2019/2020.

Objective H.1.B *Encourage homeowner pride and beautification of properties.*

The City of Newton acting through its Deputy Code Official will enforce the Nuisance, Property Maintenance, and Dangerous and Dilapidated Building ordinances. Again, this is an ongoing, never ending concern.

Objective H.1.C *Investigate additional affordable housing options.*

The City of Newton will continue to explore further options in developing affordable housing for current and future residents. One avenue would be to identify developers who are currently looking for a community to build affordable apartments or small homes.

In May 2019, North Arrow Development received approval for the financing of a 35-unit senior living facility. This \$8.4 million project is expected to begin construction in Fall 2019 east of the Tractor Supply Company on Eaton Drive.

Goal H.2

Prepare for future housing needs aimed at the growing senior population.

Objective H.2.A *Add a memory care unit to existing assisted living facility.*

The City of Newton Council and JEDI will work with the current assisted living facility to continue discussions of adding a memory care unit to the facility. Jasper County's population of adults aged 55-years and older is expected to account for over 46 percent of the entire

population by 2021. Appropriate living accommodations should be present to meet the needs of this large population.

Objective H.2.B *Consider increasing the size of assisted living facility and nursing home facility or adding more facilities.*

The City of Newton Council and JEDI will work with the current assisted living facility and nursing home on plans for future expansions to meet the needs of this growing segment of the population. These two entities will also explore recruiting additional facilities to Newton.

PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES PLAN

Goal P.1

Upgrade the City of Newton’s aging public infrastructure.

Objective P.1.A *Upgrade the water infrastructure in the city.*

The City of Newton acting through its Water Department will establish a water line replacement program. Each year \$50,000 of municipal funds will be budgeted for this program. The City of Newton is currently applying for a grant to replace the water main along Liberty Avenue.

Objective P.1.B *Upgrade the city sewer lines.*

The city will continue to budget \$50,000 yearly for the sewer line replacement/relining program.

Objective P.1.C *Upgrade the city electrical infrastructure.*

The city will continue to perform electric upgrades as recommended by BHMG. Over the past two years, 200 utility poles have been replaced.

Goal P.2

Expand the City Hall footprint to accommodate increased public involvement and the safety of the public and the Council.

Objective P.2.A *Gut and renovate city hall while adding additional functional public space.*

The council is considering renovations to the existing footprint. The cost of the project will be less than \$900,000 to be completed in 2022.

Goal P.3

Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the City of Newton operations.

Objective P.3.A *Ensure the city’s continuous progress regardless of change in leadership.*

The city will investigate the hiring of a full-time General Superintendent to manage the day-to-day functions of the city in 2030. The cost allotted to this expense would be \$100,000 each year.

Objective P.3.B *The City will upgrade its current technology and begin utilizing geographic information systems (GIS) to track, record, and expand the city’s infrastructure and inventory management.*

The city will hire a consultant to convert all AutoCAD files to GIS compatible files and implement a GIS strategy by 2020.

Hire a technician who can instruct staff on how to utilize the programs. Staff will be given laptops and software to enable them to utilize the system while in the field. The technician will also be responsible for keeping the system current. The estimated cost of this would be \$40,000/year beginning in 2020.

Objective P.3.C *The city will continuously look for new ways to increase efficiencies, reduce spending, and maintain/increase level of service.*

The city will send department heads and local officials to training sessions and conferences so leaders can network with other community leaders and learn about best practices that can be implemented in Newton. In addition, the City will participate in regional, state, and national organizations or events that provide additional opportunities to network with other leaders and learn about best practices. The City of Newton will investigate doing a community swap with other Illinois communities of similar size and composition in hopes of learning new ideas and effective methods of providing efficient services.

Goal P.4

Support and promote the many nonprofit and service organizations in the City of Newton and the County of Jasper.

Objective P.4.A *Demonstrate the city’s desire to foster and support local groups and organizations.*

The city will continuously look for new ways to promote and partner with the Jasper County Economic Development Cooperative, the Jasper County Chamber of Commerce, the Jasper County Ministerial Association, the Newton Rotary, and others.

Goal P.5

Continue to focus on community beautification efforts.

Objective P.5.A *Enforce local ordinances relative to keeping properties clean, safe and maintained.*

The city staff will continue to enforce local ordinances that require property owners to keep their lawns mowed and free of debris, to keep their structures in good condition, and to tear down dilapidated structures.

Objective P.5.B *Ensuring city-owned properties are clean and maintained.*

The city staff will continue to provide the necessary upkeep to all city-owned properties to ensure they are aesthetically appealing and well maintained.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Goal T.1

Develop and implement plans for transportation infrastructure improvements.

Objective T.1.A *Continue to maintain and improve the current street system in the city.*

The city acting through its Streets Department will develop a plan for paving and curbing streets with a 3.5-year cycle. Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) will be utilized yearly for this plan at a budgeted \$100,000 each year. Washington Street is at the top of our list, with work on the first phase beginning in 2019.

Objective T.1.B *Assist in providing safe routes for pedestrians and non-motorized users.*

The city will reapply for the Safe Routes to School Program to receive \$195,000 for the replacement and improvements to the non-motorized and pedestrian transportation system each year until successful in securing the funds.

The city will also continue to implement a sidewalk replacement plan at an allotted cost of \$20,000 yearly using Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) funds.

Objective T.1.C *Develop and construct the portion of Eagle Trails that lies within the city limits.*

The city will construct the Embarras River Walk as prescribed in the *Jasper County Eagle Trails & Greenways Comprehensive Plan*. The city will utilize the IDNR Trails Grant Program, OSLAD Program, and the IDOT ITEP Program to assist in financing each of the

remaining three phases of the trail. The City was awarded a \$1 million grant for the Riverwalk project. Citizens, businesses, and the City are responsible for funding the remaining \$250,000 needed.

Objective T.1.D *Perform transportation studies to evaluate current traffic flows on city streets to develop measures for any redesigning to increase safety and decrease traffic congestion.*

The city will enlist the help of a local community college to perform a transportation study to be completed in 2020. The cost of the study is estimated to be \$10,000. In our opinion, once the new Dollar General store is built across from Casey's gas station, a new four-way stop light will be necessary to help control traffic flow and increase safety.

Goal T.2

Increase the number of public transportation options available to residents.

Objective T.2.A *Investigate the public transportation options available that are currently not being utilized.*

The City of Newton will investigate supporting a bus stop in Newton or the concept of a shuttle train that would run between Palestine and Effingham by the end of 2022. RIDES Mass Transit and WAD IT UP currently provide mass transportation as needed.

EDUCATION PLAN

Goal S.1

Increase the presence of higher education in the community.

Objective S.1.A *Expand Frontier College's and Unit 1's course offerings in Newton.*

The City of Newton will work with IECC and Unit 1 to provide vocational programs for students and adults. Such courses could include building trades, electrical, plumbing, CDL courses, and 3D printing. The city will enter this discussion with IECC by the end of 2019.

Objective S.1.B *Provide educational opportunities for seniors and adults.*

The city understands the necessity of lifelong learning and will work with IECC to provide computer skills training and other technical skills training, in addition to arts and hobby courses. The City will enter this discussion with IECC by the end of 2019.

Goal S.2

Build a stronger relationship between local business, workforce, and education.

Objective S.2.A *Provide avenues for youth to explore their interested field of study prior to leaving for college.*

The city will encourage local entrepreneurs and business owners to engage in a mentoring program where they can assist the youth in learning more about their field of interest and the opportunities that lie in Jasper County to begin their careers.

Objective S.2.B *The city will encourage the continuation of the Cooperative Program at the high school.*

The city will continue to commend those businesses who currently participate in the Cooperative Program and encourage nonparticipating businesses to support the program.

Objective S.2.C *The city will continue to support the Jasper County Economic Development Cooperative who among many other beneficial things, assists in building strong ties between business, industry, leadership, and education.*

The city will provide further means of supporting the Cooperative's efforts because it is instrumental in keeping the business community and the schools connected.

Objective S.2.D *Develop a vocational entrepreneurship program in the schools.*

The CEO Program has been very successful in Jasper County. Develop and execute a similar program that is focused on vocational needs.

COMMUNITY DESIGN/CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES PLAN

Goal D.1

Increase the use and vitality of the Newton Public Library.

Objective D.1.A *The city will promote the services offered by the Library.*

The city will continually promote the Library service offerings through all possible avenues.

Objective D.1.B *Expand the Library to become host to a Culture and Arts Center.*

The City of Newton will assist the Library in developing the new building and purchasing additional space for the Center. The city will have investigated this further by 2025.

Goal D.2

Assist in increasing tourism awareness.

Objective D.2.A *Provide ways for the public to see what Newton has to offer.*

The City of Newton is considering placing webcams throughout the city and streaming into the city's website by the end of 2019 at an estimated cost of \$5,000.

Objective D.2.B *Implement the City of Newton and Greater Jasper County Marketing Plan.*

The City of Newton will work with the county in implementing the objectives outlined in the marketing plan developed and included in this 2017 revision of the *City of Newton Comprehensive Plan*.

Goal D.3

Keep the history and culture of the community alive.

Objective D.3.A *Use social media and the website to tell the stories of the community and the people who have lived in it over the years.*

The City of Newton has already begun to publish pictures and posts about the history of the community on its social media sites. It can further expand upon this effort by doing so on a regular basis so the world can learn or reminisce about the unique history it has to offer.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND PUBLIC HAZARDS PLAN

Goal N.1

Safeguard the City and its residents against flash flooding problems.

Objective N.1.A *Maintain the drainage improvements made in the last few years.*

The City is committed to maintaining the recent improvements in decreasing the city's flash flooding problems.

Goal N.2

Further develop the emergency services in the City of Newton.

Objective N.2.A *Construct a new 911 facility.*

Begin construction on a new facility that will house 911 and ESDA in 2022 by utilizing the County’s 911 fund and FEMA funding. The County will re-build a new sheriff’s office, jail and 911 center at its current location, 106 E Morgan. Construction should begin in 2019 or 2020.

Goal N.3

Continually update mitigation strategies for natural hazard occurrences.

Objective N.3.A *Participate in the continuous update sessions of the Jasper County Multijurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.*

The City of Newton will participate in the regularly required updates to the plan.

RECREATION PLAN

Goal R.1

Sustain and enhance the local park system.

Objective R.1.A *Create a countywide park district.*

Petition to create a new taxing body that could include any park in Jasper County in 2022.

Objective R.1.B *Make improvement to the current city parks.*

On an ongoing basis, add additional landscaping and trees in the parks at an estimated cost of \$25,000. Upgrade the shelter in Peterson Park by 2018 at an estimated cost of \$20,000. (Completed)

Objective R.1.C *Develop a park plan and gain citizen input and support for future park decisions.*

The city has invested a significant amount of time and money in its park system. The city needs to develop a long-term plan to guide the future growth and maintenance of the parks.

Goal R.2

Provide residents with more recreation options.

Objective R.2.A *Sustain the youth center.*

Work with local organizations and groups to ensure the youth center is well-funded and continually engages the youth in positive activities.

Objective R.2.B *Organize more positive youth activities.*

Work with local organizations and groups to provide positive activities for youth to engage in. Develop a youth council and listen to what the youth are asking for and derive a plan to fulfill these requests.

Objective R.2.C *Provide more senior activities and involvement opportunities.*

Encourage the senior center, assisted living facility and other senior-focused agencies to join together in developing more senior activities for this growing segment of the population. Discuss ways to get the seniors involved in local organizations and events.

Objective R.2.D *Attract new recreation venues.*

Investigate and aim to attract venues such as a movie theatre, a full-service restaurant and event venue, canoe and horse rental facilities, and an ice skating rink all with an approximate cost of \$3 million to develop. The last two years, a temporary ice skating rink has been assembled on the west side of the court house during Holly Jolly festivities.

Objective R.2.E *Increase the number of multi-cultural activities.*

Encourage local organizations to take diversity in consideration when planning events, fundraisers, and festivals. There are many approaches to bringing multi-cultural elements into current and future functions.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Goal E.1

Provide services to grow and foster entrepreneurs.

Objective E.1.A *Promote the incubator and provide resources to those who inhabit it.*

Continue to promote the incubator space available. Provide resources and workshops to those who inhabit it, such as legal advice, startup workshops, and business coaching.

Objective E.1.B *Capitalize on the second careers of retirees in the community.*

Assist retirees with further developing business plans and bringing their entrepreneurial aspirations to fruition. Utilize the services provided through the incubator, the CEO Program and other education partners to develop a plan on serving this important population segment.

Objective E.1.C *Provide additional avenues for adults to explore entrepreneurial opportunities.*

Develop workshops and a network of resources and offerings at the incubator that anyone can utilize in learning how to become an entrepreneur and get started in their field of interest. Use contests or incentives to further increase participation.

Objective E.1.D *Provide assistance with succession planning and aligning current business owners with young people who want to purchase these existing businesses upon their retirement.*

Work to bridge the gap and provide networking opportunities that connect current business owners with young people who may one day want to purchase the existing businesses.

The City of Newton and JEDI will work to encourage local businesses to perform succession planning to ensure the retention of these current local businesses.

Goal E.2

Continue to attract additional industry.

Objective E.2.A *Continue with the construction of the biodiesel plant.*

This property will hopefully be sold in 2019 or 2020 as the biodiesel plant is probably not going to happen.

Objective E.2.B *Capitalize on the existing industry base to attract new industry.*

Work with TPS, Evapco, and other existing manufacturers on future opportunities to attract supporting industries to assist in making their operations more efficient. Network with these business leaders and build strong relationships. They will be your best community advertisers if they are happy in their locations.

Objective E.2.C *Actively seek opportunities to attract new industry.*

Respond to RFIs from companies and site selectors who are searching for new locations to construct plants and distribution facilities. Actively promote Jasper County as a location for development. Network with prominent site selectors so they are familiar with you, your

community and the properties you have available. Keep the information on the website current and continue to promote the Industrial Analysis information. Network with other economic development organizations so you can learn about potential projects and best practices when attracting industry.

Goal E.3

Retain current employers.

Objective E.3.A *Urge businesses to participate in cooperative advertising.*

The City of Newton will urge the Jasper County Chamber of Commerce to act as a power broker and work with the media to negotiate better rates for cooperative advertising.

Objective E.3.B *Regularly perform retention visits.*

The City of Newton and JEDI will perform regularly scheduled retention visits with local businesses to stay up-to-date on their operations, needs, concerns, and to reinforce these ties.

Goal E.4

Attract diverse living wage jobs.

Objective E.4.A *Fill the vacant space in the industrial parks with new employers.*

Continue to work on attracting industries by showcasing the value and incentives available when locating in Newton.

Objective E.4.B *Focus on recruiting small manufacturers and precision manufacturing operations.*

Big manufacturers are becoming less common. In addition, these manufacturers are hard to attract due to the highly competitive global environment. The city should focus its attraction efforts on smaller operations or distribution centers that are much more likely to locate in well-positioned small communities to enjoy access to raw materials, good transportation networks, and lower operating costs and taxes.

Goal E.5

Attract new service and retail businesses.

Objective E.5.A *Work to provide necessary services and shopping options for local residents.*

Continue to work on attracting businesses that will be well supported by residents, including a steakhouse or additional full-service restaurant and event/banquet center.

Objective E.5.B *Work to attract a 24-hour medical facility or urgent care clinic.*

The City should work with local medical facilities to incorporate 24-hour medical services or an urgent care clinic within its existing space. A new, 3-suite medical complex, Mid-Illinois Quick Care, was built and began operations in March 2019. Additionally, Carle Newton purchased and renovated Bruch Creek Medical Clinic and offers extended office hours.

Goal E.6

Ensure building codes and zoning ordinances encourage responsible development.

Objective E.6.A *Regularly review zoning, building code ordinances, and permitting processes.*

Evaluate current local codes and ordinances. Make any changes that might be impeding or prohibiting responsible developments within the community.

CITY/COUNTY SHARED INITIATIVES PLAN

Goal C.1

Provide a mode for residents to give back to Jasper County and the City of Newton.

Objective C.1.A *Promote and grow the Jasper County Community Foundation.*

Promote and grow the foundation by speaking to area groups on the opportunities for giving, promoting the foundation through social media, and educating/building partnerships with

financial consultants, funeral home directors, and accountants so they can lead their clients to this opportunity for giving back to their community.

Goal C.2

Partner on economic development strategies with the County.

Objective C.2.A *Jointly support the Jasper County Economic Development Cooperative.*

Provide a means for continuing the Coop and supporting the employment of the Executive Director through local funding sources. The annual cost is estimated to be \$20,000 from the City.

Objective C.2.B *Work together to support future developments.*

Jointly approach and support development projects that are mutually beneficial. This can include deriving incentive packages, undergoing utility projects, land sales, and ordinance changes, among other items.

Objective C.2.C *Work together on infrastructure improvements.*

Work together to more efficiently utilize taxpayer dollars while providing quality utilities.

Goal C.3

Partner to retain youth.

Objective C.3.A *Start a youth scholarship program for Jasper County high school grads to entice them to move back to the county after graduating from college.*

Continue to investigate other models of this type of initiative and how they work in other communities, then garner interest in developing a similar program in Jasper County.

Goal C.4

Partner to most efficiently utilize public funds and resources.

Objective C.4.A *Share information and costs associated with technology and GIS to make it more cost effective for both parties.*

Communicate how each entity is using GIS, so that duplicate efforts do not occur. Also, cost saving benefits will be reaped by jointly purchasing equipment and data.

Objective C.4.B *Partner to share government resources through intergovernmental agreements.*

Enter into intergovernmental agreements to share resources such as facilities, equipment, staff, technology and processes when feasible and practical.

Goal C.5

Partner to provide the general population with better information on local events and happenings.

Objective C.5.A *The county and the city will work with local media to ensure information is relayed correctly to the public.*

Both parties will invite the media to report on any happenings of either or both entities. They will also assist in the media's efforts by submitting press releases and photographs for dissemination to the general population.

Objective C.5.B *A Jasper County hub operated by Amber A Go Go exists to share news, list community businesses/services, and tie in all other media sources, civic groups, and important contacts to a central location that is easily accessed by the public.*

Goal C.6

Recruit public officials who are motivated and innovative with a strong concern about the betterment of the community.

Objective C.6.A *The county and the city will work to recruit concerned citizens to become public officials.*

The local government will work to assist those interested in becoming a local official to have the right tools necessary to be successful in displaying their will and qualifications to the public.