

Planning Department

Mission

To provide community-based planning that guides the future of the city while advancing efforts to preserve our historical roots, provide diverse and affordable housing options, promote a strong and resilient economy, pursue a climate friendly Newton environment, offer varied transportation options, and maintain a continued emphasis on the quality of the place that is Newton.



MetroWest/Civico Development Proposal for West Newton Armory (43 units of affordable rental housing to be created)

The Department of Planning and Development is charged with both planning for Newton's future and undertaking actions today consistent with adopted policy as well as current rules and regulations. Members of the department provide professional expertise and guidance to the following boards and commissions: the Auburndale Historic District Commission, the Chestnut Hill Historic District Commission, the City Council, the Commission on Disability, the Conservation Commission, the Economic Development Commission, the Fair Housing Committee, the Newton Affordable Housing Trust, the Newton Historic Commission, the Newton Housing Partnership, the Newtonville Historic District Commission, the Planning and Development Board, the Upper Falls Historic District Commission, the Urban Design Commission, the WestMetro HOME Consortium, and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The Planning Department staff provided technical expertise and guidance to help facilitate many important initiatives in Fiscal Year 2023:

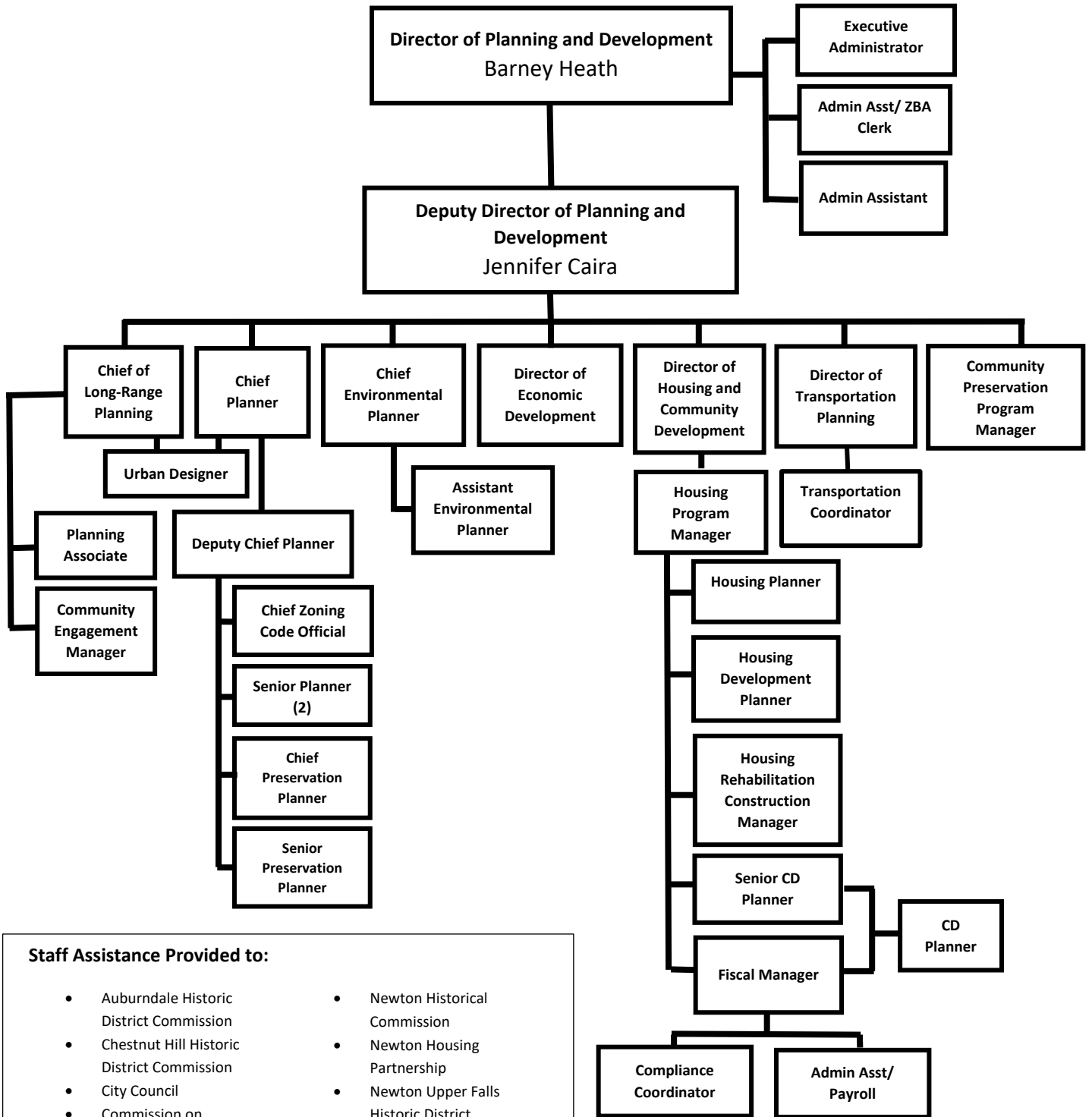
- Transitioned all 14 Planning Department development review applications to NewGov, creating an online permitting process integrated across city departments with streamlined workflow and improved public access to records.
- Completed an update to the City's accessory dwelling unit ordinance.
- Analyzed and presented recommendations on 100 special permit requests to the City Council Land Use Committee.
- Established the Newton Affordable Housing Trust.
- Produced an initial version 1.0 of proposed village center zoning.
- Moved forward with ordinance amendments to make outdoor on-street dining permanent.
- Successfully positioned the West Newton Armory affordable housing development to gain a comprehensive permit and apply for low-income housing tax credits.
- Continued our Planning Department's mission to endeavor to provide excellent customer service to the public and first-rate professional support to the following Boards and Commissions:
 - ❖ City Council
 - ❖ Auburndale, Chestnut Hill, Newtonville and Newton Upper Falls Historic District Commissions
 - ❖ Commission on Disability
 - ❖ Community Preservation Committee
 - ❖ Conservation Commission
 - ❖ Economic Development Commission
 - ❖ Fair Housing Commission
 - ❖ Farm Commission
 - ❖ Newton Affordable Housing Trust
 - ❖ Newton Historical Commission
 - ❖ Newton Housing Partnership

- ❖ Planning and Development Board
- ❖ Urban Design Commission
- ❖ WestMetro HOME Affordable Housing Consortium
- ❖ Zoning Board of Appeals

Barney S. Heath

Barney S. Heath, Director
Newton Department of Planning and
Development

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



Staff Assistance Provided to:

- Auburndale Historic District Commission
- Chestnut Hill Historic District Commission
- City Council
- Commission on Disabilities
- Community Preservation Committee
- Conservation Commission
- Economic Development Commission
- Fair Housing Committee
- Farm Commission
- Newton Affordable Housing Trust
- Newton Historical Commission
- Newton Housing Partnership
- Newton Upper Falls Historic District Commission
- Newtonville Historic District Commission
- Planning & Development Board
- Urban Design Commission
- WestMetro HOME Consortium
- Zoning Board of Appeals

Financial and Operating Highlights

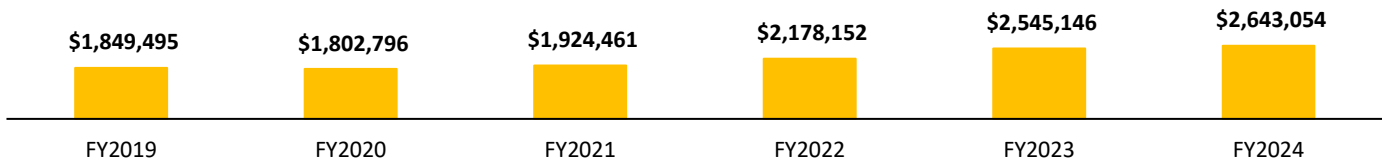
Financial Highlights

	< -----Actual ----->				Original FY2023	Proposed FY2024
	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022		
Expenditure by Department						
Conservation	\$ 133,960	\$ 183,991	\$ 210,147	\$ 166,975	\$ 208,424	\$ 215,449
Planning	\$ 1,439,623	\$ 1,352,393	\$ 1,423,311	\$ 1,703,864	\$ 1,999,916	\$ 2,062,786
ZBA	\$ 48,047	\$ 52,969	\$ 55,440	\$ 49,992	\$ 66,369	\$ 72,763
Econ Development	\$ 107,821	\$ 89,123	\$ 108,528	\$ 104,381	\$ 121,134	\$ 139,070
Historical	\$ 120,043	\$ 124,319	\$ 127,035	\$ 152,940	\$ 149,303	\$ 152,986
Total	\$ 1,849,495	\$ 1,802,796	\$ 1,924,461	\$ 2,178,152	\$ 2,545,146	\$ 2,643,054
% Incr	6.80%	-2.52%	6.75%	13.18%	16.85%	3.85%

Personnel

Full-Time Employees	19	19	19	19	22	22
Part-Time Employees	3	3	3	3	2	3
Total	22	22	22	22	24	25

Total Planning Expenditures



Operating Highlights (January 1, 2022- December 31, 2022)

- 591 Historic Property Applications Reviewed
- 379 Highest One Day Ridership for NewMo Ride Service
- 115 Development Review Team Meetings
- 112 Formal Zoning Review Memorandum Provided
- 100 Special Permits Presented to Land Use Committee
- 38 Wetland Permits Issued
- 17 City Boards and Commissions Staffed
- 16 Transportation Granted Garnered
- 15 Restaurants with On-Street Dining

Planning and Development

Fiscal Year 2024 Outcomes and Strategies

Outcome 1

Plan for Newton's Future

Newton has a well-deserved reputation as a great place to live because of its quality of life and its unique villages and neighborhoods. Much of our work in the Planning Department is focused on how

our City retains this quality of place and pro-actively plan for Newton's future and meet the challenges of our times, including traffic congestion, the high cost of housing, and climate change. Our goal is to provide the best possible guidance to our community's leaders to achieve the community's desired outcomes for the City.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2024 include:

- Continuing to develop zoning recommendations for village centers and commercial corridors to fulfill the City's housing, economic, transportation and climate goals.
- Streamlining further interdepartmental coordination and Special Permit condition tracking through NewGov.
- Providing technical analysis and recommendations for Special Permits and Comprehensive Permits so new development is consistent with City goals.
- Safeguarding and improving the City's Conservation Areas to ensure safe access and enjoyment of these special natural areas.

The Planning Department will continue assessing strategies and provide professional input for the health and vibrancy of Newton's village centers:

Outcome 2

Strengthen Our Village Centers

- Undertake an in-depth analysis of village center parking dynamics and provide actionable recommendations.
- Collaborate with stakeholders and Newton DPW to finalize Newton Highlands village center streetscape design.
- Update the commercial zoning use table to reflect 21st century use categories.
- Support our businesses and non-profits.

Planning and Development

Fiscal Year 2024 Outcomes and Strategies

Outcome 3

Improve Newton's Transportation Systems

The Planning Department in partnership with fellow City departments and state agencies, will build on our progress in improving mobility options for Newton's residents and workforce:

- Develop a bicycle/pedestrian master plan to encourage safer mobility across Newton.
- Work with the MBTA to finalize the accessible design of our three commuter rail stations, while working with state and federal partners to advance construction; work with the T as construction begins on the new accessible Newton Highlands station.
- Collaborate with MassDOT on Commonwealth Avenue Carriageway project in Auburndale.
- Embark on long-term pilot design for stretch of Washington Street between Chestnut Street and Lowell Avenue.
- Complete a traffic calming project on Albemarle Road to improve safety conditions.
- Expand our electric vehicle charging infrastructure citywide.

The Planning Department will continue seeking strategies to address inequities and challenges faced by people with low incomes.

- Assess how to redevelop the city owned portion of the former Walker Center property into permanently affordable housing.
- Support the Newton Housing Partnership, Newton Affordable Housing Trust, and the Fair Housing Committee in our efforts to affirmatively further fair housing through production and preservation of housing, supportive services, and innovative policies.
- Continue to collaborate with Newton Health and Human Services and Boston-based Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath) to implement Newton's Economic Stability/Mobility Initiative for 50 low-income families throughout Newton over two years.
- Oversee the implementation of the WestMetro HOME Consortium's Fair Housing Testing Program, in partnership with the Suffolk Law School's Housing Discrimination Testing Program.
- Initiate the funding allocation recommendations of the WestMetro HOME-ARP plan for new rental housing production, supportive services, Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA), and non-congregate shelter for homeless individuals and families across the 13-community WestMetro HOME Consortium region.

Outcome 4

Address Challenges Faced by Low-Income Residents

FUND: 0001 - GENERAL FUND
DEPARTMENT: 114 - PLANNING

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET
DEPARTMENT LEGAL LEVEL OF CONTROL

	ACTUAL 2020	ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ORIGINAL 2023	RECOMMENDED 2024	CHANGE 2023 to 2024
PLANNING SUMMARY						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	1,504,803	1,584,873	1,745,426	1,971,541	2,047,145	75,604
52 - EXPENSES	121,225	114,147	223,023	276,200	300,000	23,800
58 - CAPITAL EXPENSES	42,981	66,405	840	25,000	0	-25,000
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	133,075	159,036	208,863	272,405	295,909	23,504
TOTAL DEPARTMENT	1,802,085	1,924,461	2,178,152	2,545,146	2,643,054	97,908
CONSERVATION						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	137,664	141,251	141,363	155,517	162,333	6,816
52 - EXPENSES	429	247	22,562	25,450	50,550	25,100
58 - CAPITAL EXPENSES	42,981	66,405	840	25,000	0	-25,000
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	2,210	2,244	2,209	2,457	2,566	109
TOTAL CONSERVATION	183,284	210,147	166,975	208,424	215,449	7,025
PLANNING						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	1,118,553	1,176,299	1,332,697	1,535,338	1,596,959	61,621
52 - EXPENSES	117,207	105,127	186,345	235,950	230,000	-5,950
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	116,634	141,885	184,823	228,628	235,827	7,199
TOTAL PLANNING	1,352,393	1,423,311	1,703,864	1,999,916	2,062,786	62,870
ZONING BD OF APPEALS						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	50,889	52,849	42,807	53,864	56,896	3,032
52 - EXPENSES	1,376	1,839	3,716	2,000	4,750	2,750
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	704	751	3,469	10,505	11,117	612
TOTAL ZONING BD OF APPEALS	52,969	55,440	49,992	66,369	72,763	6,394
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	87,318	101,739	95,878	101,718	101,328	-390
52 - EXPENSES	548	5,320	7,095	10,450	10,250	-200
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	1,252	1,469	1,408	8,966	27,492	18,526
TOTAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	89,119	108,528	104,381	121,134	139,070	17,936
HISTORICAL						
51 - PERSONNEL SERVICES	110,380	112,735	132,681	125,104	129,629	4,525
52 - EXPENSES	1,665	1,614	3,305	2,350	4,450	2,100
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	12,275	12,686	16,954	21,849	18,907	-2,942
TOTAL HISTORICAL	124,319	127,035	152,940	149,303	152,986	3,683

FUND: 0001 - GENERAL FUND
DEPARTMENT: 114 - PLANNING

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET
DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL

	ACTUAL 2020	ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ORIGINAL 2023	RECOMMENDED 2024	CHANGE 2023 to 2024
114 - PLANNING						
0111471 - CONSERVATION						
PERSONNEL SERVICES						
511001 FULL TIME SALARIES	137,164	140,751	136,885	154,267	160,933	6,666
514001 LONGEVITY	0	0	3,000	750	900	150
515005 BONUSES	500	0	0	0	0	0
515006 VACATION BUY BACK			1,478	0	0	0
515102 CLEANING ALLOWANCE	500	500	0	500	500	0
TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES	138,164	141,251	141,363	155,517	162,333	6,816
EXPENSES						
534100 POSTAGE	250	222	279	250	250	0
534200 PRINTING	206	0	0	0	0	0
542000 OFFICE SUPPLIES	179	25	0	200	100	-100
546000 GROUNDS MAINT SUPPLIE	0	0	22,173	25,000	50,000	25,000
571000 VEHICLE USE REIMBURSE		0	110	0	200	200
TOTAL EXPENSES	635	247	22,562	25,450	50,550	25,100
FRINGE BENEFITS						
57DENT DENTAL INSURANCE	225	208	35	202	212	10
57HLTH HEALTH INSURANCE	0	0	139	0	0	0
57MEDA MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	1,985	2,036	2,036	2,255	2,354	99
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	2,210	2,244	2,209	2,457	2,566	109
CAPITAL EXPENSES						
584100 GROUNDS IMPROVEMENT	42,981	66,405	840	25,000	0	-25,000
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENSES	42,981	66,405	840	25,000	0	-25,000
TOTAL CONSERVATION	183,991	210,147	166,975	208,424	215,449	7,025

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL
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		ACTUAL 2020	ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ORIGINAL 2023	RECOMMENDED 2024	CHANGE 2023 to 2024
0111475 - PLANNING							
PERSONNEL SERVICES							
511001	FULL TIME SALARIES	1,028,267	1,102,567	1,239,251	1,389,889	1,416,481	26,592
511101	PART TIME < 20 HRS/WK	1,403	0	0	0	99,325	99,325
511102	PART TIME > 20 HRS/WK	65,046	67,391	73,235	126,949	68,153	-58,796
513010	REGULAR OVERTIME	8,835	100	2,557	10,000	5,000	-5,000
514001	LONGEVITY	1,148	1,148	5,823	5,075	4,575	-500
515006	VACATION BUY BACK	10,354	1,594	8,330	0	0	0
515102	CLEANING ALLOWANCE	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,425	3,425	0
TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES		1,118,553	1,176,299	1,332,697	1,535,338	1,596,959	61,621
EXPENSES							
527400	RENTAL - EQUIPMENT	2,935	2,446	2,935	3,000	3,000	0
527500	RENTAL/LEASE - PROPER	0	20,000	0	0	0	0
530100	CONSULTANTS	97,210	67,754	154,103	200,000	200,000	0
530209	PUBLIC MEETING EXPENS	269	2,280	250	2,500	2,500	0
531300	TEMP STAFFING SERVICE			13,972	0	0	0
531900	TRAINING EXPENSES	0	206	540	2,500	2,000	-500
534010	TELEPHONE	308	0	0	500	0	-500
534020	CELLULAR TELEPHONES	2,009	1,494	1,369	2,250	1,750	-500
534100	POSTAGE	916	1,543	1,076	2,500	2,000	-500
534200	PRINTING	6,731	2,110	4,286	7,000	5,000	-2,000
534300	ADVERTISING/PUBLICATIO	545	1,112	1,635	7,500	4,000	-3,500
542000	OFFICE SUPPLIES	1,589	3,308	2,554	2,500	2,500	0
558500	COMPUTER SUPPLIES	0	931	2,691	450	1,500	1,050
571000	VEHICLE USE REIMBURSE	430	0	25	750	750	0
571100	IN-STATE CONFERENCES	1,094	255	70	1,500	1,500	0
571200	REFRESHMENTS/MEALS	0	0	0	0	1,000	1,000
572000	OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL	1,847	0	562	1,000	1,000	0
573000	DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	1,324	1,689	277	2,000	1,500	-500
TOTAL EXPENSES		117,207	105,127	186,345	235,950	230,000	-5,950
FRINGE BENEFITS							
57DENT	DENTAL INSURANCE	2,609	2,906	3,226	4,118	4,550	432
57HLTH	HEALTH INSURANCE	77,657	92,660	123,174	161,767	172,223	10,456
57LIFE	BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	319	362	375	513	477	-36
57MEDA	MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	15,197	16,073	18,166	22,117	23,172	1,055
57OPEB	OPEB CONTRIBUTION	20,851	29,885	39,881	40,113	35,405	-4,708
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS		116,634	141,885	184,823	228,628	235,827	7,199
TOTAL PLANNING		1,352,393	1,423,311	1,703,864	1,999,916	2,062,786	62,870

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL
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		ACTUAL 2020	ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ORIGINAL 2023	RECOMMENDED 2024	CHANGE 2023 to 2024
0111476 - ZONING BD OF APPEALS							
PERSONNEL SERVICES							
511001	FULL TIME SALARIES	50,889	52,219	39,474	53,364	56,396	3,032
513010	REGULAR OVERTIME	0	0	297	0	0	0
514001	LONGEVITY	0	630	0	0	0	0
515006	VACATION BUY BACK			3,036	0	0	0
515102	CLEANING ALLOWANCE	0	0	0	500	500	0
TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES		50,889	52,849	42,807	53,864	56,896	3,032
EXPENSES							
534100	POSTAGE	533	266	808	750	1,500	750
534300	ADVERTISING/PUBLICATIO	844	1,574	1,966	1,250	2,500	1,250
558500	COMPUTER SUPPLIES			942	0	750	750
TOTAL EXPENSES		1,376	1,839	3,716	2,000	4,750	2,750
FRINGE BENEFITS							
57DENT	DENTAL INSURANCE	0	0	62	202	210	8
57HLTH	HEALTH INSURANCE	0	0	2,216	7,491	7,896	405
57LIFE	BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	0	0	14	57	60	3
57MEDA	MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	704	751	602	781	828	47
57OPEB	OPEB CONTRIBUTION	0	0	574	1,974	2,123	149
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS		704	751	3,469	10,505	11,117	612
TOTAL ZONING BD OF APPEALS		52,969	55,440	49,992	66,369	72,763	6,394

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL
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	ACTUAL 2020	ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ORIGINAL 2023	RECOMMENDED 2024	CHANGE 2023 to 2024
0111482 - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
PERSONNEL SERVICES						
511001 FULL TIME SALARIES	76,430	101,739	88,388	101,718	101,328	-390
511101 PART TIME < 20 HRS/WK	4,456	0	0	0	0	0
515006 VACATION BUY BACK	6,432	0	7,490	0	0	0
TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES	87,318	101,739	95,878	101,718	101,328	-390
EXPENSES						
534100 POSTAGE	0	0	0	200	200	0
534200 PRINTING	0	0	0	500	500	0
534300 ADVERTISING/PUBLICATIO	0	0	0	750	750	0
542000 OFFICE SUPPLIES	119	0	0	500	500	0
571100 IN-STATE CONFERENCES	238	0	0	500	500	0
571200 REFRESHMENTS/MEALS	0	0	0	500	500	0
573000 DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	190	5,320	7,095	7,500	7,300	-200
TOTAL EXPENSES	548	5,320	7,095	10,450	10,250	-200
FRINGE BENEFITS						
57DENT DENTAL INSURANCE	0	0	0	0	528	528
57HLTH HEALTH INSURANCE	0	0	0	7,491	21,675	14,184
57LIFE BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	5	0	0	0	0	0
57MEDA MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	1,252	1,469	1,408	1,475	1,475	0
57OPEB OPEB CONTRIBUTION	0	0	0	0	3,814	3,814
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	1,257	1,469	1,408	8,966	27,492	18,526
TOTAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	89,123	108,528	104,381	121,134	139,070	17,936

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET DEPARTMENTAL DETAIL
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	ACTUAL 2020	ACTUAL 2021	ACTUAL 2022	ORIGINAL 2023	RECOMMENDED 2024	CHANGE 2023 to 2024
0111494 - HISTORICAL						
PERSONNEL SERVICES						
511001 FULL TIME SALARIES	109,081	111,735	125,282	124,104	90,008	-34,096
511101 PART TIME < 20 HRS/WK	298	0	0	0	38,221	38,221
514001 LONGEVITY	500	500	500	500	900	400
515006 VACATION BUY BACK	0	0	6,399	0	0	0
515102 CLEANING ALLOWANCE	500	500	500	500	500	0
TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES	110,380	112,735	132,681	125,104	129,629	4,525
EXPENSES						
531400 REGIST/RECORDING FEES	0	0	0	100	100	0
534100 POSTAGE	1,428	1,486	2,764	1,600	3,500	1,900
534200 PRINTING	151	56	100	250	250	0
534300 ADVERTISING/PUBLICATIO	0	0	223	100	300	200
542000 OFFICE SUPPLIES	86	72	219	300	300	0
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,665	1,614	3,305	2,350	4,450	2,100
FRINGE BENEFITS						
57DENT DENTAL INSURANCE	225	208	289	403	319	-84
57HLTH HEALTH INSURANCE	6,660	6,926	10,302	14,983	11,844	-3,139
57LIFE BASIC LIFE INSURANCE	0	0	21	57	30	-27
57MEDA MEDICARE PAYROLL TAX	1,511	1,558	1,850	1,814	1,887	73
57OPEB OPEB CONTRIBUTION	3,879	3,994	4,492	4,592	4,827	235
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	12,275	12,686	16,954	21,849	18,907	-2,942
TOTAL HISTORICAL	124,319	127,035	152,940	149,303	152,986	3,683
TOTAL PLANNING	1,802,796	1,924,461	2,178,152	2,545,146	2,643,054	97,908