

[NOTE: The changes to this article do not appear using track changes. Rather – this article contained so many updates/edits that it presents better as a new draft.]

ARTICLE 9 NEIGHBORHOOD AREA COUNCILS

SECTION 9-1. Purpose

The purpose of this article is to reaffirm the existence of Newton’s neighborhood area councils and provide for a means of citizen engagement at the neighborhood level. Neighborhood area councils are intended to facilitate communication between residents and city officials.

SECTION 9-2. Authorization

The city council shall, by ordinance, establish the governance of neighborhood area councils.

SECTION 9-3. Boundaries and Creation

(a) The city council shall establish guidelines for neighborhood area council boundaries and creation. The guidelines shall include a minimum and a maximum number of residents to be represented by a neighborhood area council; provided, that at the time of the establishment of a neighborhood area council, the number of residents contained within the service area shall be not greater than the average number of residents in a ward.

(b) The city council may approve resident petitions for the establishment of neighborhood area councils.

(c) Neighborhood area council boundaries shall conform to the guidelines established by the city council and be reasonably compact.

SECTION 9-4. Elections

The city council shall establish, by ordinance, the manner in which the elections for neighborhood area councils will be conducted.

SECTION 9-5. Powers and Duties

Neighborhood area councils shall perform advisory and communications functions and such other functions as prescribed by ordinance. All functions allowed by ordinance shall be allowed equally to all neighborhood area councils.

SECTION 9-6. Additional Requirements

The ordinance establishing a neighborhood area council shall include the requirements for area council bylaws providing for its structure and the conduct of its business, annual reporting, and maintenance of financial records. The neighborhood area councils shall create bylaws conforming to the guidelines established by ordinance, which shall require approval from the city council before implementation.