

We Long For A Town Where We Go Hard On The Issues And Easy On The People

We long for civility.

We long for a Town where people focus more on what we have accomplished, with pride and amazement, and focus less on what remains to be done, with frustration and criticism.

Where people come together to meet real challenges with resolve and good humor, and a willingness to work collaboratively. Where finding a reasonable compromise is considered a win.

Where we can disagree, without being disagreeable, and people are civil, respectful, and supportive, even in the face of disagreement.

Where broad generalities and stereotypes are not raised over differences of opinion.

Where there is an appetite for increased listening to others, and where opinions are allowed to evolve and change.

Where we worry more about the common good than a single agenda.

We long for a Town where residents take the time to go past the headlines, learn about the issues, and ask questions.

Where civility and common courtesy prevail, and dialogue builds us up without breaking us down.

Where we can leave the past behind us and grasp the opportunities that await us.

Where we no longer assume the worst in others, that secret agendas disappear, and that honesty and civility are not considered slanderous and outdated.

We long for that Town.

We long for welcoming.

We long for a Town where everyone feels respected and safe.

Where we are as happy to greet our neighbors as we are to cheer for the home team. Where cancel culture is discredited.

Where working toward a vision of an equitable future and shaping economic development are not construed as a conflict of interest.

Where we make space in our thinking to accept different points of view, not just the fashionable ones, and where we live is in line with our values.

Where neighbors from all parts of our Town can prosper.

Where our Town is a place welcome to all who enter, and compassion rules the day. Where the only class that matters is the life-long learning one.

This is the Town that we long to see.

We long for a sense of place.

We long for a Town where people stop looking at all the bad, and start looking at what an amazing Town we live in.

Where our Town keeps building beautiful spaces, and nature and sustainability are at the forefront of our lives.

Where people smile when they wave to you, and the roads are in such good shape that you can look beyond them while driving.

Where the Town brings out the best in us, and our dreams can become reality. Where animals roam free, and we take the time to slow down and enjoy the view. We long for that Town.

We long for local government to be valued.

Where public service is appreciated and respect for public employees is the norm.

Where local government creates as much customer satisfaction as the most successful private business.

Where residents who have questions about their community reach out for answers before turning to social media.

Where Town management is an honorable profession, and elected officials are respected for their commitment.

Where the way we always did it is not the standard.

We long for that Town.

We long for Collaboration.

We long for a Town where problems are seen as opportunities, where success and failure are shared, and credit and blame are of less consequence.

Where people are inspired by empathy, coming together to meet challenges with resolve and good humor and a willingness to work collaboratively.

Where residents are resilient, positive, and display a wicked sense of humor.

Where people take their responsibilities seriously, without taking themselves too seriously. Where people focus on what unites us and use our commonalities to achieve shared goals.

Where we achieve our goals because everyone recognizes we are on the same team, whether or not we all agree on the same game plan, and where our leaders foster and encourage this environment, rising above discord.

Where residents understand the impact of local government on their daily lives and are willing to collaborate to make their community exceptional.

Where people take satisfaction and pride in all that we have accomplished together as a community, extending the benefit of the doubt that what remains to be done will get done by the good people, both elected and professionals, to whom we entrust the task.

We long to build that Town. Where we go hard on the issues, and easy on the people.

—A crowdsourced poem via **Kate Fitzpatrick**, *Town Manager*, Needham, MA