

# City of <Anytown, USA>

## Code of Teamwork and Cooperation

<draft #1>

*The purpose of this Code of Teamwork and Cooperation is to provide a general framework for collegiality and cooperation among policymakers, administration and management, following the principle that “the things we do today will affect our city’s future.”*

*In developing this Code the term “partner” refers to the elected officials selected by the voters to create and shape the future of the jurisdiction. The terms “administration” and/or “management” refers to the people who work for the jurisdiction and are charged with carrying out the policies of the elected officials.*

### **Section A – Commitments to Partners**

**Commitment #1** - What happened in the past, stays in the past. While it may be unrealistic to forgive and forget past hurts and transgressions, we cannot allow hard feelings and personal grudges to shape decisions affecting the public good. From today on, I agree to move forward with my partners, without regard to past offences, for the good of the city and its future.

**Commitment #2** - I am dedicated to two-way communication with all my partners. In pursuing this goal, I will communicate frequently, and I will focus on generating the highest-quality understanding through that communication. I will use active listening techniques to facilitate that communication, and develop a personal understanding of my partners' individual long-range agenda. When possible I will help my partners to achieve their goals and objectives.

**Commitment #3** - If I want to know something my partners know ... I'll ask them. If I have information they need to know about an issue, I'll communicate with my partners. I'll keep my mind open to opportunities, but if I have a stated opinion about a topic and change my mind, I'll be candid and let everyone know as soon as possible. I will do this all within the scope of open meetings and open government.

**Commitment #4** - Before speaking or acting on a topic that involves the city, I will check my assumptions and determine what collateral effect my words or actions might have on my working relationship with my partners, the staff, and the future of the city.

## **Section B – Expectations of Partners**

*In return for my commitments to my partners, I expect my partners to reciprocate as follows:*

**Expectation #1** - If one of my partners has concerns involving me or my interests, I expect to be contacted as soon as reasonably possible about those concerns. Likewise, if a partner has concerns about another partner and their interests, they need to contact them directly, and as soon as possible. Don't allow concerns, rumors, innuendo or gossip to fester. Keep the channels of communication open. Resolve concerns as soon as possible. Move on. Don't let the poison of hard feelings, harsh words and misunderstanding infect our partnership.

**Expectation #2** - Keep public comments focused on issues...not people. When discussing issues do not ascribe, impugn or assume any unconstructive motives to a partner's position on the issue.

**Expectation #3** - If you are approached by the press, the public, or another partner requesting an unflattering comment or opinion about one of your partners, suggest they contact that person directly. Don't spread gossip...don't spread rumors...don't take cheap shots. Preserve your relationships with kindness and respect.

**Expectation #4** - Keep me informed...don't let me be surprised. If you have information about something that affects me, let me know. I will reciprocate.

**Expectation #5** - Don't passively accept being misquoted by the press or by individuals. If a comment that isn't accurate is attributed to you, you have the responsibility to actively correct it.

**Expectation #6** – Keep our relationships positive. If you want to maintain trust within the group, don't make negative comments publicly or in situations where those comments might become public. If you have a "beef" with one of your partners it is your duty to quickly bring it to their attention and resolve it. Once resolved...move on.

**Expectation #7** - We will frequently share our hopes and dreams for the city, and we will publicly celebrate success. We will look for opportunities to help each other achieve those dreams.

**Expectation #8** - We will all respect each other's personal and physical space.

## **Section C – Expectations of Administration / Staff**

**Expectation of Staff #1** - A staff member should return telephone calls and contacts from the public and from elected officials as soon as possible, but under all circumstances within 24 hours. Final solutions and follow-up to problems will depend upon the situation – and agreed upon delivery times.

**Expectation of Staff #2** - Emergencies noted by elected officials need staff's immediate attention.

**Expectation of Staff #3** - Staff needs to meet agreed deadlines for deliverables.

## **Section D – Commitments to Administration / Staff**

**Commitment to Staff #1** - As an elected official I will deal with management level staff on constituent services, not line staff.

**Commitment to Staff #2** - I will be clear on my expectations for delivery times and deliverables, and will work to reach reasonable agreements with management on what gets done and when.

**Commitment to Staff #3** - I will give issues the appropriate priority, and not over prioritize issues and needs. I recognize that the staff has other demands on their time besides mine, and some of those requests come from my partners...other elected officials. I also recognize that there are few true emergencies.

**Commitment to Staff #4** - I will treat the staff as professionals and with respect. I will follow the “Golden Rule.”

**Policy Team**

**<Signatures>**

**Administration / Management Team**

**<Signatures>**