



COMMUNITY PARADIGM ASSOCIATES, LLC

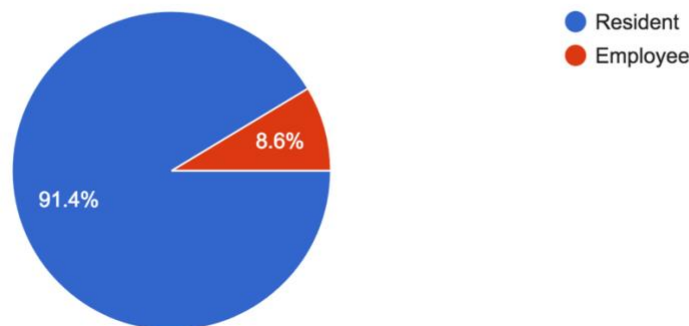
Watertown City Manager Public and Employee Input Survey Results

March 2022

Total Number of Responses: 332

Please select your status:

197 responses



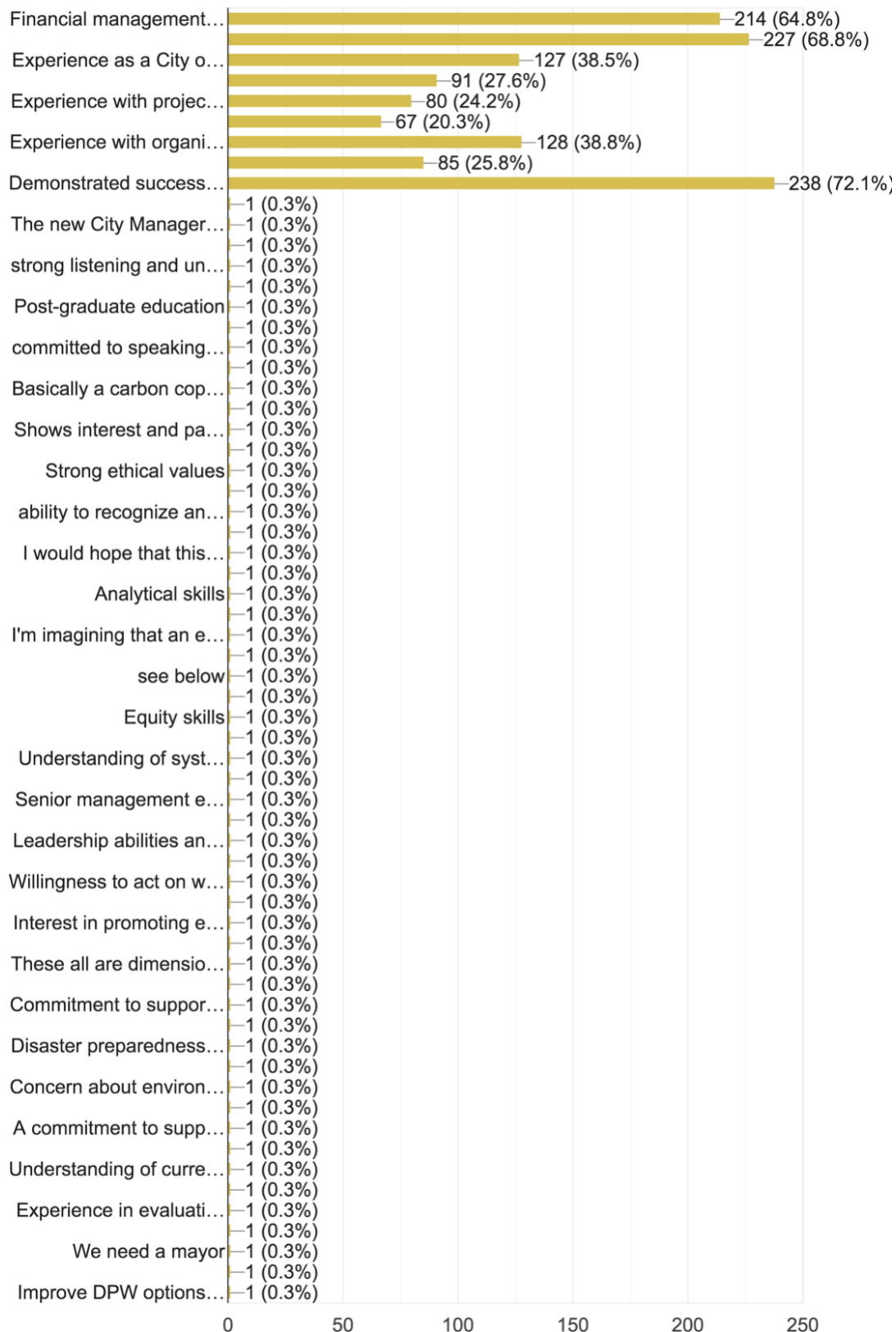
Top responses to Question 1 (Below, in accordance with response order in chart)

Financial management experience	64.8%
Strong communication skills	68.8%
Experience as a City or Town Manager or Administrator	38.5%
Economic development experience	27.6%
Experience with project management	24.2%
Collective bargaining skills	20.3%
Experience with organizational change	38.8%
Human resources/personnel management experience	25.8%
Demonstrated success in working collaboratively with boards, committees, community stakeholders, and the business community	72.1%



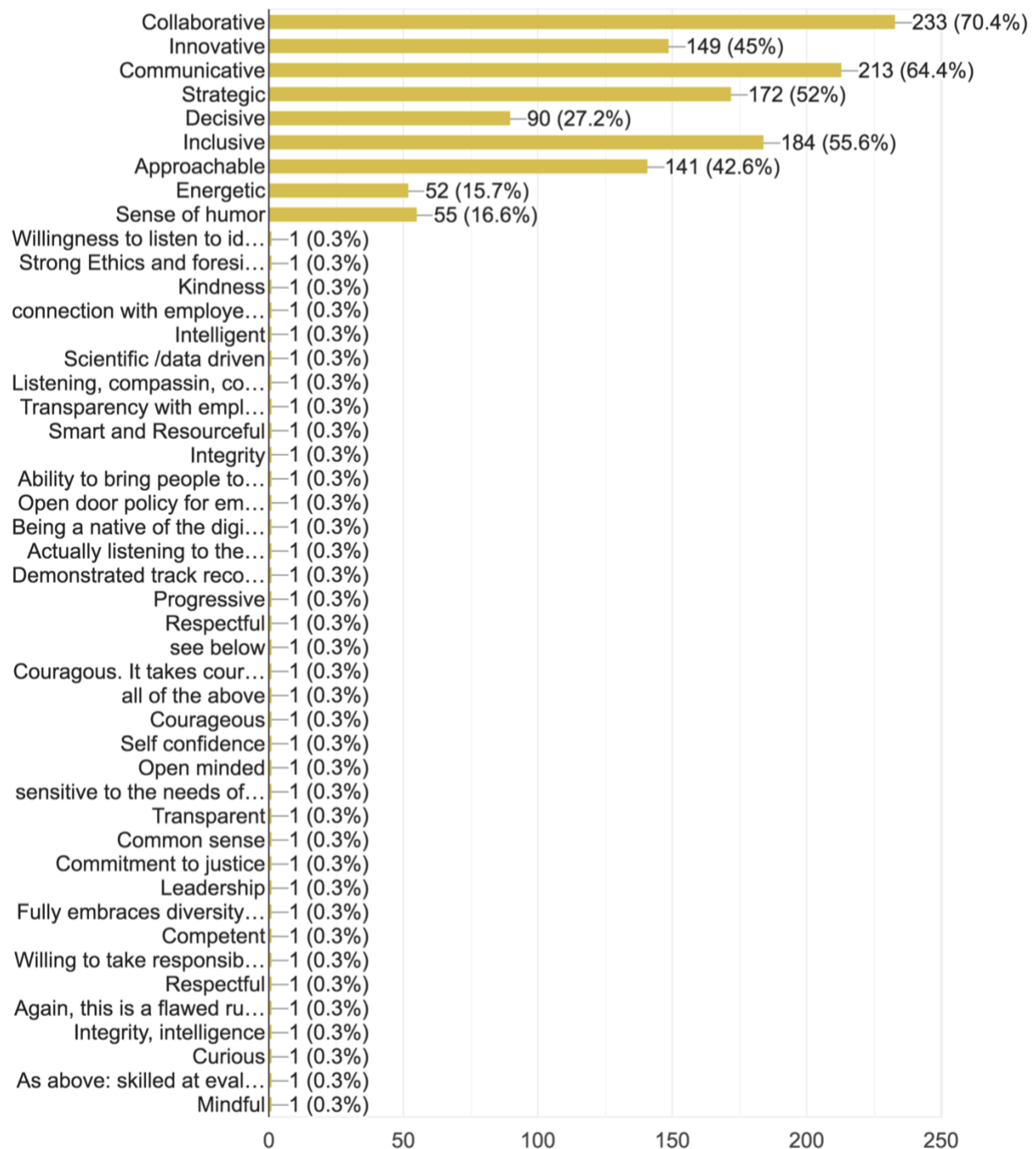
1. Which of the following professional qualifications do you believe are most essential to perform the work of City Manager in Watertown? Please select up to four.

330 responses



2. Which of the following personal characteristics do you believe are most essential to perform the work of City Manager in Watertown? Please select up to four.

331 responses



Top Responses for Question 3 (below)

Maintaining financial stability	65.9%
Building a strong Town government organization	39.0%
Maintaining/strengthening communication and engagement with residents	43.8%
Building a strong local economy	39.0%
Maintaining Town infrastructure	57.1%
Prioritizing public safety	28.7%
Creating a welcoming environment for all	48.9%
Maintaining/strengthening citizen communication and engagement	26.0%

3. What challenges and opportunities do you believe are most critical for the City Manager to be able to address? Please select up to four.

331 responses



4. The most important thing a new City Manager should know about Watertown is:

254 responses

4. The most important thing a new City Manager should know about Watertown is:
We have a lot of potential, but previous management has had a pretty closed mind. We need to change and grow in a positive vs reactive way.
Small town feel next to bigger cities
We do not exist in a bubble. We are next to Boston and Cambridge and it will be 2022.
We are undergoing huge change, partly with all the businesses moving in, but also with new populations. This is an exciting time!
It's important to balance new growth with preservation of what makes Watertown wonderful: its neighborhood feel, its small businesses, its community activities.
There is a lot of potential for new ideas and change. City has been held back by weak management.
Balancing new construction of condos vs legacy town environment. Town is being inundated with high rise condos
While it is a city many people don't see it that way and there needs to be respect for how things have been done in the past - change shouldn't be shoved down people's throats.
Freedom
Great town; let's keep it that way, especially when it comes to COVID response.
Watertown is a wonderfully diverse, thoughtful community full of good people.
The residents, not the social movements. We are not Cambridge, Belmont and Newton. We don't want to be them.
The city administration needs an overhaul
Watertown is facing challenges around housing cost and community change driven by business development similar to many communities in Greater Boston. Both effective policy and strong communication will be needed to address these while managing the kind of political and community dysfunction that rapid change and economic stresses can create.
housing increases will push many of us out! let's keep the sense of community
Watertown is one of the fiscally strongest cities/towns in the Commonwealth and the next Manager should be committed to continuing strong financial management.
We love Watertown for its perfect mix of walkable suburban neighborhoods (with amazing small businesses) & direct access to larger cities.
All voices matter
As an employee, the City is notorious for being a 'boys club', women are treated differently and there are documented instances of this happening and this needs to change. Additionally, the classification grades are an embarrassment. There is hope that a new City Manager will bring City Hall into the 21st century.

That we are losing our identity due to all of the commercial development.
It's a city full of individuals who support and respect each other's differences. It feels like a small town of committed people who cares out each other. Growth needs to be addressed in order for support to be available for those who need it.
Watertown is a destination because of its proximity to many things, but not because of its features or resources. For example, in my opinion, people do not move here for the schools, or for the parks/river, or even the amenities like Arsenal yards. Its benefit seems to be that it's less city than cities near by and sort of suburban, and convenient to metro west, Boston, etc. The housing is expensive (and getting more so) and while we are getting more restaurants/amenities (such as arsenal yards) those are not features that are unique to Watertown. Frequently the viewpoints in town (appear) to be divided between the long-time residents and the "newer" voices.
there is a history of lack of accountability from department heads and upper management leaving employees at town hall feeling like they are not valued
Current financial stability of government
Its finances.
There's a lot of room for growth.
There is a silent majority
Great town with a history of citizens who have a strong work ethic. A town that welcomes all and takes pride in our ethnic diversity.
It's a safe tight knit community that values all town employees.
There are too many condos being built
There is a growing political divide between the "New" Watertown and the "Old" Watertown. It will likely only get worse and more public as we get closer to the 2024 election. This needs to be addressed.
The community is evolving from a historically suburban and blue collar feel to a more urban, more diverse and gentrified personality. Community members from both perspectives are living in a small four-square mile area, creating an interesting dynamic.
the diversity of our community is something to celebrate and Watertown should lead on diversity and inclusion efforts, not shy away from them
We need a strong fiscal leader but also someone that can work with both the liberal and conservative members of our city to decrease the vitriol
The library is amazing!
History of ignoring public input
Watertown
A leader who can work with all of the community for our common benefit.
Watertown residents care a lot about their neighborhoods and connections to the past, but also about doing what is needed for the public good, so change can happen when people can see the benefits, but might happen slowly.
This is a very strong community with close family ties.
We pride ourselves in being fiscally responsible and having the ability for new initiatives (such as the school construction) without an override

It is dynamic and innovative.

EMPLOYEES DO NOT FEEL VALUED, HEARD OR APPRECIATED. This city functions with a 1950's attitude. PLEASE PLEASE BRING THE CITY UP TO 21ST CENTURY level. Regular meetings and engagement with employees, fair and equal treatment for all genders, fair and equal titles, why is there a Purchasing Agent vs Director of Personnel or Director of Health? Review all job titles, review all salaries, review grade scales. Fair and equal pay for all.

We are a blending of the old with the new.

We are energetically addressing climate change; if this isn't your priority, don't apply!

History as its unique character

The long-term residents do not have Watertown's best interest at heart. They are committed to values and priorities that do not represent all residents.

The police department is an undervalued group of hard-working men and women.

Watertown is an increasingly diverse community

the ethos of the town, their attitude toward the town Government and their participation ~ or lack of participation in town meetings.

It is exploding in biotech buildings but infra is lacking the growth

We need to update communications to enhance resident involvement and enable the voicing of citizen concerns, need progress on environmental protections in our town, smart sustainable choices

Economic Gentrification, Demographic Diversity, Rapid Development, Communication gaps, and both Leadership Turnover & longevity over the past 20 yrs have presented divisive identity conflict for the community & municipal government.

Watertown has a unique character -- it has a long history as an immigrant community, an amazing array of small, locally-owned businesses, and wonderful green spaces nearby (including the Charles River and Mount Auburn Cemetery). Local real estate trends are pushing it to become an annex to Cambridge and Boston in some ways, and some of that change can benefit local residents and the wider community, but I hope the new CM will recognize the value of some of Watertown's unique attributes and strive to preserve them, while remaining open and welcoming to a diverse array of residents and visitors.

It is overdeveloped resulting in little green space and traffic issues

Watertown is a diverse community that values community.

There is a strong component of residents who are very knowledgeable and very involved in the civic governance of the town and they would strongly want the City Manager to invite their input and to work collaboratively with them.

There is a lot of pride in coming from Watertown and neighbors care for each other.

We are a city- known as the Town of Watertown- because there is a history that needs to be embraced

The new City Manager should know we love this town and we want what is best for it. Most of us have families that have lived here for generations. Even if we don't participate in the government, our heart

and soul is for maintaining what makes Watertown a great place to live and raise a family. We need to stop building apartment buildings and build affordable homes for working class families.
We're overcrowded
We are a community not just a business, don't let historical conflicts/agendas sway your politics. The loudest person at the town meeting isn't always the best.
Watertown has been, and continues to be, in a state of transition from a blue collar, working class community to a gentrified area servicing the surplus businesses and white-collar workers from Cambridge/Boston/Newton. Securing the long-term viability of working-class families and small businesses in Watertown should be a priority.
Diverse / community is upset about newcomers demanding changes & changing the fabric of our small town
Citizen's concerns
We need more single-family houses
It is a varied community full of people with strong opinions
It is going through significant growth and cultural change
Watertown is in a period of transition and on the brink of becoming overdeveloped, with insufficient controls on developers. Meanwhile, there is wide cultural and economic diversity between the residents, who need a range of services.
What you see in council meetings isn't a representation of the people of Watertown. Most want strong police and fire. Great schools and less traffic. Other than that they'd like to be left alone. Those meetings are filled with complaints from people with an agenda. Do your job and ignore the noise. The council deals with the public. That isn't your job.
Experience and open mindedness
It's a community with extensive development in an area with a lot of people who have been here for a long time
City depts are understaffed and under supported and ongoing development is continually increasing these depts workloads
Watertown needs some TLC around the divide that many towns are experiencing--between residents who are born and raised in Watertown and have that historical knowledge and protection to keep Watertown as it has been and the residents, some who are undoubtedly from Watertown, who are looking for change and to make Watertown more inclusive.
Watertown has some excellent opportunities for youth and families, and I would like to see those continue and to grow.
The construction in Watertown around the middle school for the new high school is going to be incredibly disruptive. We are likely moving out of Watertown for this reason, so it is important for the new Town Manager to consider that there will need to be attention paid to that.
The town is fast losing its diverse, affordable character, becoming a place only wealthy people can afford to live and only big developers can afford to build.
There has been so much rapid development in recent years of large apartment complexes and lab buildings. Many residents are not pleased with the rapid change and the unattractive building complexes that are filling our city. That along with the lack of green space are two important things for him/her to know.

people feel like the balance between development and quality of life is off-kilter and there is no underlying vision for what kind of city we want to be
We like being a small community. Enough of the building of condos etc. We are done having to pay higher taxes for people who come and go. People born and raised here can't afford to live here anymore.
We seem to seriously be running behind in regard to bringing in new, attractive, cool businesses. No more sketchy massage parlors and hair salons, please!!
The town is quickly being gentrified and we are losing the town's feeling (ie, Russo's).
We have been waiting for nearly 20 years for Mt. Auburn Street to be paved.
Our rich culture and dynamic history that makes us a town despite the name change to "city". And to always recognize, embrace and respect our history and our roots of years gone by.
It needs to be revitalized. All of the life sciences companies are great for tax revenue, but we need more for the local community.
There aren't enough trees and open green spaces.
Watertown is a mix of immigrants/new citizens and an influx of bio science lab workers.
The majority of citizens just want someone who can balance the books and keep the city in good financial shape.
The citizens are very engaged in city government
We want an inclusive welcoming environmentally conscious reputation.
The incredible diversity of our population
The nepotism and family ties within the school system undermine education and community growth
The diversity of the town - language, age, ethnicity, race, immigration status, socioeconomic status - and that it is often the historically marginalized groups that are ignored within the town - their voices usually aren't heard.
I was born here in the 1970s and I know Watertown is a very complex community. The media doesn't get it right, far from it. The native residents have a parochial, hamlet view that probably has not existed since 1962. The new residents feel like outsiders despite some of them having lived here for 40 to 50 years. Watertown has a lot of history and that we are known by our most recent history is very insulting, never mind how some exploit that recent history. It is not a suburb, nor is it Cambridge, Somerville or Boston. We are a community on the verge, for better or worse. The recent town elections were extremely contentious and ugly. Our average age is 38 years old and yet the average of town government is closer to 58 years old. 50% are homeowners and 50% of residents are renters. Unfortunately, people leave once their children get to Jr High, and if they stay, they send their children to private schools. Given what was spent on the school, that needs to be addressed. Watertown is expensive! Assessments went through the roof in 2015, and they have only increased since then. We are predominately white, but that has been changing since 1995 and diversity really exploded around 2005. No one is addressing our diversity in an impactful way. Our library is probably our most modern institution. Our other institutions are very behind the times. The police department still uses paper records. We need to digitize all of our records pronto. As I said it is a very complex community.

Too many past mistakes. Rotary on orchard, bus lane chaos, mt st changes that are ridiculous. Actually repair road correctly, wasting money with plow after plow on main roads that are clear while side roads suffer

Despite our recent name change to City, Watertown has always been a TOWN, first and foremost. Most everyone in Watertown would like to keep it that way - a real challenge when everything is changing so rapidly around us

It has a strong shared sense of community but needs to work on involving new residents.

There is untapped potential for growth in community entertainment and engagement.

It's a small town with a vibrant community and untapped socio-economic potential

The town is in danger of being overdeveloped and steps need to be taken to balance the new development with retaining a strong residential community and green open space.

the changes that have occurred in the last five years in every aspect of Watertown;

Watertown is seeing a lot of investment from biotech and retail industries; we should be careful not to let them take advantage of Watertown and ensure the investments are done responsibly for the environment, Watertown citizens, and future citizens.

Good history of being fiscally prudent (no prop 2.5's to fund projects)

that it's time for a new vision and the change it requires. We need to have a goal for where we want to be as a city and work, work, work to get there/

Great financial shape

There seems to be an issue with community engagement in the decision making, the current structure for public safety meetings for example, in which questions from the public are read, but there is no process in place to respond or follow up to the questions that are left unanswered, feels unproductive. Citizens don't feel heard when there are aren't responses to their questions. Or at least, an effort to say "We don't have answer on that, but we will write this down and have an answer during the next meeting". This is just an example of the way that it sometimes feels like community members try to get involved, but can feel stifled by a lack of response.

It is a small community that is undergoing rapid change. I would like its family focus to be preserved; I would like young people who grew up here to be able to afford to stay; I would like Watertown to be a model for a diverse and forward-thinking community. We need to think about our grandchildren and great-grandchildren now, as what we do now has a strong impact on the lives they will be able to live.

They need to balance the wants of commercial developers and businesses with the needs of residents. Development and business needs are priority and the residents desire for a peaceful existence is ignored or not given enough weight. The city is being overdeveloped and the residents do not get any relief from noise, traffic or taxes. No tax relief for residents because, with all the development, infrastructure needs to be constantly updated. Constant construction and noise, dirt and traffic. Not pleasant for people who just want peace and tranquility in their home.

There has been too much building

That it's an up and coming area surrounded by more well-developed cities.

Financial status
snow removal on sidewalks, senior having to walk in the street because sidewalks are not cleared and the other problem is people jogging in the street when there are sidewalks, plus landscaping trucks parking in the middle of the street why don't they park in the driveway where they are attending the landscape
We want to foster a more diverse community among businesses and residents!
We're. a small (area-wise) Town. It's been a quality that distinguishes us. Our various neighborhoods have unique, cohesive qualities that are being threatened by teardowns. In last Town Plan there was some angry pushback about guidelines. We should try again - with a different approach.
The City is packed with smart capable people who can use their professional expertise to help address issues like infrastructure, planning, health care accessibility, school programs, and townwide communication systems. Reach out to them!
The role/relationship between the City Council and the City Manager has been redefined in the newly passed City Charter. Accountability, transparency, and communication have been lacking from both branches of government.
Residents with different political beliefs don't interact outside their own personal networks. Polity is highly polarized. Vicious, personal attacks against progressives are increasing.
The diversity of our community is what makes Watertown wonderful. Keep Watertown affordable for its diverse community.
Watertown's diversity is an untapped resource of talent
It is getting too expensive for families.
Residents know what's best
It is very racist and this needs to change.
The city is changing rapidly and not everyone is happy about that, but new people should be just as involved as those who grew up here.
He should understand the good works our present manager has accomplished
It needs a lot of work as it relates to raising up and valuing ALL voices and concerns.
Everyone seems to know everyone.
honesty is best policy
Great town, issues in her/his new Town Hall that need serious and direct attention. Keep fiscal a priority but balance some time with keeping the town hall working better. Listen to the residents.
Watertown is changing and its new town manager needs to be proactive in this to lead the town to a place that is welcoming to all who are here and coming here, to guide development that is innovative and creative and to help bring along town departments to be more reflective of who resides in this community.
What residents value most
see below
Town is rapidly changing and growing.

It's made up of Townies who were born and raised here and people who moved here from other towns or other states. We all need to get along and move Watertown forward in a positive way without creating divisions. Also, with all the new luxury condos, Watertown is getting to be too expensive for folks to live in. We don't want it to lose that small town feel of friendly neighborhood folks.

There are tensions within the community and town departments related to how to ensure that Watertown is a welcoming community to all people, particularly in regard to race, class and immigrant status.

As with many US cities, we are on the verge of changes. We are a beautiful, vibrant, healthy, city with a ton of potential to improve the quality of life for us all. We are also a community of active, energetic, groups that take great pride in our civic engagement efforts on many fronts.

Watertown is experiencing the growing pains of successful business growth and growth of luxury housing along with the disappearance of affordable housing for low and middle income residents and employees. We are hoping for bold leadership to keep our city a welcoming and affordable place to live and raise families. Even our property tax base will benefit if we can offset the leap in business growth with significant affordable housing/home ownership increases.

We are a diverse community where, historically, not all voices are at the table and need to be sought out and included, especially our non-white citizens and those whose first language is not English

Watertown is growing in every aspect and there is no long-term plan to manage any of it.

Maintaining Streets infrastructure and Get a better way to get that every resident knows about administrative decisions

Watertown demographics are changing rapidly, and overall the city is getting less white. In order to be a welcoming, inclusive, and thriving city, the new City Manager needs to be aware of the sense that there are 2 Watertowns; one that welcomes and is part of the change, and one that resists and seems to resent the change. It is imperative that the new City Manager have an understanding of this division and how it is playing out in the schools and between residents who advocate for increased awareness regarding anti-bias and anti-racism among public safety officials and the WPD and Public Safety Committee.

We're growing and changing rapidly; need to help shepherd us to a new bright future!

*Creative tension between the "old" Watertown and the "new" Watertown

*Need for better outreach to minority residents to seek their input

We have always stuck to the status quo for sake of ease, but many of us want someone who is willing to think creatively about building a strong and inclusive town through more progressive budgeting

Understand the diversity in this town, not necessarily by race, but Watertown has a wide spectrum of economic and cultural diversity and good town leadership will include and embrace all residents.

Not to polarize citizens and choose political sides but work for everyone in the town.

The city is changing, becoming more diverse. I think that's particularly true among the younger community members, who will likely be the city's future.

The winter parking ban must change to a single side of street ban like other sensible surrounding communities. Plus the state of Mount Auburn St should be changed

There are so many great small businesses.

All don't feel welcomed in the community

Despite our financial and other strengths/assets, we lack strong leadership, and our community is more divided and disengaged, as a result of this.

This is a complex city undergoing enormous change which will either contribute to a stronger community or a more fractured one. The City Manager should help ensure a stronger community.

Human diversity is our strength, but there are undercurrents of tension here that threaten this. It can take a long time to see the challenges and to appreciate both our sources of unity and division.

Engagement with the community is imperative

We are a growing community that has had a lot of changes in the recent years.

This is a critical time for Watertown going forward, and an opportunity to address some long-standing problems and take full advantage of some excellent economic development opportunities. To do so, we need to address problems with communication between the leadership and residents, and find ways to improve public involvement and conversations across political divides. We also need to improve city staff development and management – including more attention to goal setting, professional development, regular evaluation against goals, and meeting diversity goals. The new City Manager needs to have strong managerial skills in general, including but not only financial management, and to have experience with change management and with effective management in a municipal union setting. Implementing changes envisioned by the revised Charter Review will help improve the roles of City Council and City Manager to provide more effective strategic planning (by the Council) and execution (by the Manager and staff).

Watertown is great, and as a resident, I wish I had a chance to get more involved. Building civic infrastructure and opportunities are key!

We used to be small not over built and now we have nothing not even a town square with mom and pop shops.

We are a changing community and we have the opportunity to lead and innovate in responsible, sustainable, and equitable management and development of our shared resources.

A deep knowledge about the population.

We haven't had good, creative, community-minded development planning—mostly reacting to planning proposals. Not keeping up with best practices.

Many Watertown residents are committed to Watertown's growth and development (in terms of sustainability/climate, green and cultural spaces, DEIB, housing, and employment to name just a few issues), and have knowledge and skills they want to share with Watertown government.

The level of polarization

It is in flux, but Watertown is a great city

The City of Watertown has an extremely diverse population (ie. economic, religious and political) and is in the midst of significant redevelopment. This is not a “lock yourself in the corner office” type administrative job. The community has expectations for the new City Manager and it's a safe bet that vision will be different based on who and when you ask that question.

The great Police Dept. Housing needs elders
It is divided, almost polarized between long time and recent residents, and City Manager must know how to hear and take account of both sides on all issues.
Watertown has very little open green space, we very much need to conserve what we have, especially for public health and for mitigating climate change. And to create more green spaces and related infrastructure as best we can, this is a top priority for the coming decades
It is overdeveloped. Needs more trees. It is a Town.
Watertown is diverse, and not everyone has a biotech engineer salary. I work in Watertown, but I'm not sure if I'll ever live here because I can't afford the rent. I commute 37 miles to work in a community that I love with dynamic and innovative coworkers who I treasure.
The city is undergoing a period of growth and change
We are not Cambridge and we don't want to be.
Watertown residents are frustrated with what many feel is a lack of transparency across town government, and are eager to engage and contribute to our community--but we often don't know how! It is extremely important to me that our next City Manager prioritize engaging with residents, creating opportunities for meaningful input and engagement, communicating effectively, and being open and transparent about government decisions. There is also a clear political divide around issues of public safety and policing as well as diversity and inclusion in the schools. The incoming City Manager must have a demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion work--and be open and willing to learn on these issues. We desperately need a leader who has demonstrated that they can effectively bring people together across different political views to work towards racial equity within city affairs, and who believes that this is critical to our common safety and well-being.
We expect a transparent and accountable city government that is responsive to the residents.
All the residents matter and should feel comfortable, welcome, included in the community. Whether renting or owning, whether recent arrivals or long time Watertownians, whatever race, ethnicity or cultural background- all belong.
Opinions in this town run the gamut!
There is a culture of insider old boys club that needs to be addressed and not perpetuated by the City Manager. There needs to be accountability for staff paid by public tax dollars. If department heads are accountable to the City Manager, the City Manager needs to be able to actually hold department heads accountable.
There are serious divides -- concerned citizens at both ends of the political spectrum, with the vast majority in the middle not engaged
The population is becoming more diverse on many dimensions and the City Manager must be responsive to all parts of it.
The Density of the city of Watertown, MA
About its rich immigrant history, it's a heterogeneous multi-ethnic community comprised of a large portion of working-class families. We are not and never should look to become a snobby, "yuppy" town like many of the surrounding towns.
It is a diverse and growing community representing a big range of priorities and interests
Deeply divided community. Radical political narratives and pandering often drive bad policy and decision making.
Young individuals and college students who live here are interested in making change and improving our city, you need us to move forward and you should be listening to us. We are the future of this city.
We need systemic change & accountability to move us into the 21st Century

We need someone who actively seeks out and incorporates diversity-especially racial and ethnic diversity-in everything they do.

There aren't any consequences for town employees for failing to meet residents' needs

Driscoll's knowledge at an exit meeting/consultation follow ups with Town Council representation at meeting.

It is a strong community going through great change.

The city has a predominantly progressive-minded population and a vocal minority of conservative voters.

It is not Cambridge!

Watertown is changing rapidly and faces a lot of opportunity. The City Manager should work with residents and city government to proactively adapt to these changes in a way that benefits residents and makes Watertown a more welcoming place for all. They should not try to keep Watertown exactly the way it is/has been.

Watertown is at a crossroads. With the surging demand to work and live here, it has a tremendous opportunity to become one of the most dynamic cities in the Greater Boston area. However, managed poorly, Watertown could just as easily become unaffordable and uninviting for all but a small subset of existing residents. The new City Manager *must* bring a vision for what the City can become and a collaborative and inclusive approach for getting us all there together.

The diversity of its residents, employees and businesses

We are a diverse town that needs experience and compassion in a leader

The fact that Watertown is changing - increase life-science development, raising and often prohibitive cost of housing, demographic changes - and there is not agreement that these changes are positive.

We want more shade trees and green roofs and solar to combat climate change and to keep temperatures down and provide cleaner air.

Unique character of ethnic and income diversity, which is in danger of being weakened by large business developments and lack of affordable housing; small physical area.

It is diverse and vibrant and its size and density are an asset

Residents are very proactive in Town Government and requires being responsive to the residents of Watertown.

People are ready for change and many would like to see a City Manager who is a visionary and somebody who is willing to address internal changes necessary to make the city government accountable to the changing demographics in town. The new City Manager should be capable of leading change and bringing a more inclusive, transparent, diverse, and collaborative spirit to City government.

Watertown has the capacity to develop, and benefit from, a vibrant small business brick and mortar community.

There is strong community support for creating more open space, planting and preserving trees and improving the environment. Take a strong position with developers to create more park space, save existing trees and plant more trees.

The city of Watertown employees work very hard and care about the work they are doing for the residents.

How diverse and unique our resident population is.

Watertown

We are committed to welcoming people of all races and backgrounds who wish to make Watertown their home.
it is changing towards a more 21st century outlook, while wanting to maintain a small-town feel
We have an Economic and Planning Department that has made this city unlivable. We have lost our grocery stores, our gym, and many small businesses. The biolab developers have bought up Watertown. Our Planning Department has given this town away with no requirement for net zero building, no attention to mature trees being removed, no concern for increased traffic, no concern for the fact that we have little "green" space, nada. We can't live on biolabs. What a town must have to be vibrant and livable, no longer exists here. The necessity of a strong middle class, good schools, and vibrant areas of town for community and citizen "hanging out," open space (parks, etc.) are not part of the Planning Department's vision. We need a vibrant "spot" like Belmont Center, Lexington Center, Harvard Square, even Cushing Square in which talking with a neighbor, doing a little shopping, catching a cup of coffee is possible.
the changing demographics and friction between old and new Watertown
That we desperately need strong leadership within city government. Our city manager is a financial expert but...Employees do not feel valued or respected, because there is no communication, collaboration or opportunities for feedback. There is no employee evaluation process in place, no assessment process of operations or department needs or positions - over decades. Personnel policies and procedures are grossly outdated and everything takes too long. We cannot retain strong, diverse talent. In the years I've worked for the city, I have said goodbye to dozens of wonderful, competent colleagues who leave for reasons that are totally avoidable. And, many leave in anguish, due to unaddressed issues. Many good, hard working professionals work for this city but they are worn out and deserving of a more healthy and functioning workplace environment. The main themes identified in the Charter Review process last year brought to light many issues concerned residents had about the way city operates. Ironically, these themes - lack of communication and responsiveness, balance of power between councilors and management, as well as lack of transparency and accountability are also issues those of who work for the city are challenged by. It's critical we hire someone who is a multi-skilled strong leader who can build a team that can upgrade and overhaul the infrastructure, including its human resources. *I also live in the city
A diverse community in which there is some fear of change among the largely white communities that have long dominated town offices and schools.

Because of the ethnic, cultural, and racial diversity in Watertown, the new City Manager should be willing to invest a significant amount of time and effort getting out into the community, visiting houses of worship, social service agencies, businesses, etc., and attending meetings of community organizations, in order to become familiar with as many aspects of our community as possible. The new manager will need to know the community as well as possible in order to make informed management decisions that will benefit as many people as possible.
Housing affordability is a pressing issue for our community. Public transportation and bike lanes need investment and promotion.
It's evolving as a community, with many silos, demographic conflicts, and vulnerability to external forces that need to be addressed affirmatively and with humility. E pluribus unum is the opportunity here, more than anything else. The rise of grassroots activism needs to be cultivated in ways that promote more cross-sector, cross-cultural collaboration — in other words, collective action in the public interest. It's not just a technocratic challenge, it's one that calls for heightened humanism and civic virtue.
There are many residents of Watertown who see themselves as old, "true" Watertown and resist those of us who have moved here in recent years and want to build a more inclusive community.
that the city, while relatively small, is a regional leader in inclusive and thoughtful development with lots of work to do.
the city is at a pivotal point in its evolution with big change on the horizon

Incremental, well-planned change is appreciated and supported by citizens, and over-communication/inclusion is extremely important because word spreads quickly in a small city.
We have wonderful neighborhoods, a great community and active and engaged citizens
Like many places in the US, Watertown has become more polarized in recent years. Please ask for information beyond the soundbites that members of any group will tell you about those they think of as the "other side." Be curious about what people actually fear or hope for, so decisions can address actual problems, concerns, and potential for improvement.
For example, I am concerned about "public safety," but I didn't check that box above. That's because I know that to some, prioritizing public safety means directing resources and support toward policing, and to others, it means making sure policies and government actions don't make the problems of vulnerable populations worse. A checkbox isn't sufficient to gather the information our City Manager would need to know about public safety in Watertown.
Next door to Town Hall is one of the best public libraries in the Commonwealth!
It is a rapidly changing city that is at an inflection point in terms of changing demographics, development and environmental issues. There is great opportunity for the future that should not be missed. I hope the new City Manager has vision and especially for the existential environmental crises the earth faces and make these a priority. The City needs to be reorganized to have a strong Energy/Climate/Environmental Office with additional resources. We cannot do business as usual or fall back on old familiar ways.
In many ways Watertown has led the way in environmental actions and should continue to
Watertown is a city but foremost it is a community. Whether someone is a resident, public servant, or a local business owner/employee, it is vital that equity and accessibility are supported for all people.
Residents care about environmental issues and making Watertown a greener community!
Fiscal Responsibility
Fiscal Responsibility
Fiscal management.
That the citizens talk about be a welcoming and open city, yet there is very little if any diversity within the city government.
It's a great place to live and it needs a lot of 'cleaning up', such as an overhaul of pay rates, job descriptions, evaluation mechanisms, grievance processes, anti-discrimination policy updates, exit interviews...to name a few. Department Heads should be asked to re-apply for their jobs under a new City Manager.
Watertown relies on the success of residential and business needs working together. Increased development in both areas requires more coordinated efforts to bring both together and advance mutual interests. Historically they have been siloed - this will not be sustainable.
Like nearly everywhere in the US, Watertown has experienced a growing mental health crisis throughout the pandemic, and we need to assess what resources and policies we have in place to address this increased need. We need to have mental health counselors on staff 24 hours/day to address crises (which often happen in the middle of the night, when we currently have no counselors available). As well meaning as the police are, they are not the right people to respond to a mental health emergency. We need to rethink what first responder tasks fall to law enforcement, and which tasks are best handled by other professionals.
We have strong roots and don't support transitioning the town to a woke community. We value our police and firemen. Always have and always will. Public education in Watertown has been declining for years. New schools are a start but not enough to overhaul the system
We are rapidly changing with the influx of development both residential and commercial. We need to balance growth with preserving open space and a sense of community.

There is so much opportunity for Watertown to grow both economically and culturally, and the city is right on the cusp of really positive change.
It is a wonderful, diverse city, but we have to keep pushing to make it better!
There is potential for Watertown to be great. I'm so excited about the growth Watertown might experience in the coming decades. But, that growth should not come at the expense of Watertown's past. While it's great to have a Shake Shack, I know people, lifelong Watertown residents, who could no longer afford to live in town and had to move. I don't want to join that club.
committed to Watertown being accessible and inclusive of everyone
The great gulf dividing more progressive Watertown from conservative longtime residents
Need to respond to groups with very different views, and be a leader in bringing in understanding of new approaches to issues
The overdevelopment needs to stop.
We are a widely diverse population who strive to maintain a safe and affordable community for long term residents while welcoming a new both new members and industries to our area.
That it is very diverse both culturally and economically.
The city is growing quickly with a lot of life sciences moving in. But it's still a "town" in many unique ways and keeping quality of life for residents and encouraging families to stay in Watertown should be part of any strategy for the town. We want people to stay and grow the community regardless of how big industry moves in and out.
They should know about where we come from and where we are going: a working-class town that had big factories like hood and the stock yard and now we are becoming a center for biotech like Kendal square in Cambridge. Also, our Armenian population is important part of who we are and our diversity.
We recently moved to Watertown and still return to Cambridge and Somerville for parks, playgrounds, and virtually all shopping. We're disappointed that it's not walkable, that there aren't bike lanes, that playgrounds need updating and innovation, that recycling is only picked up every other week, that there aren't more trees. If the public schools do not meet our needs, we will move.
It's a vibrant, diverse, and welcoming community--yet the vast new biotech developments risk destroying the aspects that attracted us to the town in the first place.
Watertown is a diverse city with increased pressure on housing and transportation
We have many talented employees that care deeply about the community.
We're on the upswing economically, but we need to improve the city, better communications, reduce crime and better address traffic.
Welcoming
Watertown is changing from a blue-collar community to a mixed white-collar community. The Watertown public schools (specifically WHS) need better rankings. We need better math and science proficiency. We have to be able to compete with our neighboring districts, like Belmont, Newton, Cambridge. By doing this we can make Watertown a more desirable place for families to choose to buy homes and raise their families here. It will also increase property value if the Watertown public schools are ranking high in Massachusetts.
Very territorial people of Watertown

It is a wonderful place to grow up and raise a family. An overwhelming majority of its residents would like public safety, education and infrastructure prioritized. Taxes and water have gone up, with all the new construction we'd like relief. Of course we as residents would like to be kept in the loop and updated. Although there is no need for a direct line to the manager, that's what the council is for. So he/she is able to do their job without having to sift through every frivolous request.

Watertown is an amazing community with amazing residents. As an employee of the schools for 30+ years, I am delighted with the amount of financial support the schools receive from the people of Watertown and its government. I am also excited to work in a community that takes great pride in its schools and supports them in a variety of ways.

We are growing!

We are growing!

5. What other information do you believe we should know in our search for a new City Manager?

192 responses

5. What other information do you believe we should know in our search for a new City Manager?

Honesty and integrity are very important. Not on your checklist of qualities.

Fiscally conservative, socially aware

We could use a new law firm to represent the town.

Success of individual in prior positions

I think the person should live in town.

Stop worrying about "inclusion" and just get the best person for the job.

Please select a person who is LGBTI inclusive!

Someone who takes actions and do the right thing for the residents. Not to kowtow to the extreme liberals who like to spend other people's money without any regards.

We need someone who is independent of the existing influential families.

find someone who will engage with all residents and make staying for affordable for all

We have a solid foundation in place for the next manager to build on.

Continued economic development is key!

Balancing growth with sustainability and green space

Any and all information regarding staffing issues, especially those that include staff that have had many complaints filed against them.

I've lived here 30 years (I still feel like a newbie) and never once worried about the fiscal solvency of the town. That says a lot for how the town has been run and was never overlooked by residents.

I'd look at the downtown development in Hudson, ma that is making their downtown a destination. Also, it would be good if there was a way to keep people like myself in the town. There's not affordable home ownership options for professionals in the town - 2 bedrooms start at 500K (And that's not a lot of space) and single income families can't make it work.

a timely transition

Hire the most qualified. Do not hire solely for the sake of diversity.

We need to be careful of over development.

Too much traffic, poor roads and we need to stop all the condos being built. There is no room in the schools left for more homes.

The current City Manager's fiscal savvy appears to have had a significant impact on the community over the years. No doubt a new City Manager will need many skills however 'financial management experience' likely will be most valuable of all.

the new city manager should prioritize climate action and sustainability efforts - it is essential for the long-term livability and strength of Watertown and our neighboring communities

I know this has been addressed, but I still feel strongly that the new City Manager should be required to move to Watertown (if not already here) within one year of her/his employment. A City Manager cannot be fully committed to Watertown while residing somewhere else.

Please support the ESL programs at the library. So valuable!

His philosophy and/achievements regarding employment, personnel, fiscal responsibility, social and community services, especially for the needy.

Ensuring the candidate is not woke or looking to implement other Marxist/socialist ideologies such as Critical Race Theory, "equity", etc.

We need someone who is going to keep up the standards which have made Watertown self-sufficient and that should take priority over other agendas.

INCLUDE EMPLOYEES, more City Council engagement with employees, I'm not sure they are adequately aware of the pulse of the environment of the City Hall. There is an incredibly dedicated and hard-working team/staff currently employed at City Hall, you are all very lucky to have such a dedicated staff, but you will continue to lose excellent employees and always spin wheels with rehire and filling same positions. Restructure and look at in detail the hiring practices. Very outdated and not automated. It should not take 3+ months to bring an employee onboard. No one can wait that long to accept a job. Make sure you take care of Chris McClure - we CANNOT AFFORD to lose him. HE IS A PHENOMENAL DIRECTOR, MANAGER AND HUMAN BEING. A PRIME EXAMPLE OF HOW A DIRECTOR SHOULD LEAD. HE IS AN IMMENSELY TALENTED AND TASK ORIENTED PERSON. WE ARE BEYOND LUCKY TO HAVE HIM ON OUR TEAM.

don't understand the question

Vitally important to conduct a very deep and thorough reference check. Also, to have key people conduct in-depth interviews and to weigh their responses thoughtfully

Please, please, please hire someone who brings a completely different approach and perspective from the current town manager. Change is long overdue.

I believe that there is an exaggerated undercurrent concerning public safety put forth by very few of the BIOPIC community, with the intent to de fund the police department, especially in regard to staffing personnel at the several schools, and shift financial resources to social programs and civilian counsellors. Defunding the police department places all of us in potential peril and would more than likely result in a dramatic increase of firearm ownership.

Look to other progressive cities to learn from them (Somerville, Cambridge)

Please select candidates who show good judgement & independence, are experienced with navigating change, show a history of effective implementation of actions, professional communication, excellent financial management, actively informs public of how money is used, impervious to immediate political influence, serves public interest first in a balanced manner that moderates between special interests of new progressive movement & entrenched old guard loyalty, actively seeks to address longstanding community concerns/unmet needs for transparency & greenspace, diversifies development beyond explosion of condos & toxic biolabs, relies primarily on evidence backed goal measurements w/ modern best-practice approaches, increases multi-use grass field sqft for recreation, strategic 50yr vision for slow funding of aging municipal properties/pipes, stabilizes resident taxes which continually jump despite

massive influx of revenue over past decade. A smart, adaptable, strong, skilled Moderate leader who listens to numbers and planful future public needs.
I hope the new town manager will prioritize support and funding for public goods in Watertown: abundant and updated parks and open space (including community gardens), maintaining our wonderful library, senior center, and other public spaces and programs, funding a robust public health program, and programs to support small and locally-owned businesses.
We need less development
I think it would be important to identify the role of the City Manager vs. the Town Council - i.e. who is primarily responsible for the items in #3. Which items are "owned" by the manager or the council, and which require collaboration between them. For example, is it the city manager's job to "Build a strong local economy"? I wouldn't think that's primarily his/her role - but it looks like this is a competency that you may use to hire the next manager.
Should be able to frame any change that is good for Watertown into a way that doesn't alienate people. But not be afraid to make those changes.
That this is not a resume building small town, move on job. If they want it, they need to want to see it through to the future as much as the present
We need affordable housing
Sometimes it's the smaller things that count as major wins.
Managing a city requires more than managing a budget - the community has atrophied over the years due to a single-minded focus on fiscal concerns. Watertown needs a leader who can engage with the community, staff, and stakeholders across Watertown and craft a shared vision for the future.
They should be sensitive to all opinions! They must be fair when unions are negotiating. Education, fire & police should be top priority! Oh and health care workers!
Find another Mike Driscoll
The relationship between the new manager and employees is critical because that is not a feature of the current administration. It will take time for people to trust the new hire.
This should NOT be a political position or popularity contest. It is strictly a professional appointment. I favor a low-visibility technocrat who is skilled at doing the job, but with plenty of transparency. Accountability is to the elected City Council rather than to the general public. I don't think communicating with and responding directly to the general public should be a significant part of the job description. (In this sense, I think many residents misunderstand the nature of this job and are looking for someone to complain to and hold accountable - which is not the job of a Manager.) The Council needs to do a better job of supervising the City Manager, and increasing citizen communication and engagement. Top priorities for the Manager are to keep the town's finances strong and in good order, and to make sure the policies set by the Council are implemented. I expect the Manager to have significant expertise in municipal matters (preferably in this region of the country if not in MA specifically) and a strong professional network in order to advise the Council on best practices and possible risks as experienced by other cities and towns.
That he/she is willing to bring their own ideas BUT look at their predecessor and realize he gave them a blueprint for how it's done.

Not sure, but thank you for collecting opinions from residents!

How the person intends to balance the fast-paced growth in the community with the needs of people who have been living here for some time.

Local government can best serve our dynamic and diverse community through the tedious, boring, technocratic implementation of best practices. No need to reinvent the wheel. I'd like to see a technocrat, a work-horse and not a show-horse.

a) experienced but relatively young, not rooted in 20th century; but old enough to welcome settling into a long-term job and not use Watertown (a relatively small community) as a stepping-stone to a bigger and better job.

I think the residents of Watertown should be able to hear from the candidates as you get closer to the final decision. It would be nice for those forums to be multiple modality and to have as much notice as possible, so people can attend.

We need a City Manager who understands that our local government needs to be much more transparent and who is committed to making Watertown a pioneer in climate-friendly policy.

no one person can be everything to everyone. If i could add more choices in Question 3, they would be "Ethical" and "Fosters Transparency"

The manager doesn't need to know how to do absolutely everything (that would be an impossible combination), but they should know what they don't know... and be able to hire good people who do. For example, I don't expect the new manager to be a digital communications whiz, but I'd like them to know and care enough about engaging all generations to hire someone who is. It's about being aware and being a good delegator.

To provide a safe & strong community dedicated to growing the town with a better education system

Embrace and implement up to date technology and user friendly interactive website presence. And to please get an Assistant Town/City Manager to assist with daily communications and interaction with resident's requests, questions and suggestions. And implement a 24/7 hotline for emergency needs for residents.

We need someone who puts environmental concerns and citizens' quality of life first; someone who listens to the citizens and the council and allows them to guide his actions on behalf of the citizens of Watertown.

Demonstrated ability to work with groups of varied and sometimes conflicting interests

We need to find a way to have town employees be more diverse

The person selected must be hopeful, realize that the climate requires attention, planning, action and hold the importance of creating an inclusive humanistic work environment.

We have had a City Manager for many years who himself has ignored the legitimate opinions of the citizens who paid his salary. He has encouraged town staff to do the same. This must stop.

Foster community building and sociability over mega economic development.

Orientation towards justice and equity

We need to get away from the "old school" style of "father knows best" city managing. Patrician mollification is detrimental.

The person should be able to think well, positively motivate people who work for the City, hire a diverse and capable City workforce.

In the past, focus had to be on the here and now - 'keeping the lights on' - to get us to where we are today (thank you Mgr. Driscoll). But, with the challenges facing us (climate change, etc), we now need someone who can join the council in formalizing a VISION for the 'town's future and be able to communicate and rally the town around that vision.

It has a strong base of financial stability and community support to build on.

The town needs to bring in a brewery and develop main street.

Laser focused to deliver on infrastructure projects without delays and budget over runs

We need an energetic and smart city manager who can be open and inclusive to all of Watertown's citizens - someone who understands the development that is happening, who has an overall picture of the residents and their needs. We need a leader and not someone who just responds to needs brought by developers. This is such an important choice for Watertown and our future. Let's get it right.

It will be extremely difficult to support a candidate whose background is deeply intertwined with police and public safety, has conflicts of interest with local businesses or the biotech industry.

Get someone with a good track record

It was hard to select the top 4 in Question 1. This person needs to have almost all of the qualities in #1 with clear strengths in at least 4.

Administration building is obsolete

This survey is a good idea! Finding ways to involve the community in the process as much as possible is really important I think.

Watertown has an active and engaged citizenry. People are involved with the government of the city and will want to be part of processes and decision-making. This sometimes makes change occur more slowly but it is important in building a strong community.

Get someone who has a personality and more than just a number cruncher who still did not save any of us lifelong residents a dime. Also need to update technology for the residents and make town (city) hall more accessible to residents. More customer service accessible. There seems to be a lot of disgruntled employees who are not engaged and make the taxpayers feel like we are bothering them when we call or visit the administration building.

Hire someone who works well with employees.

The city Manager needs to live in Watertown
The person should seek to transition Watertown to a critical location outside of Boston.
Extensive financial and government regulation management.
Trash left in the middle of sidewalks of weeks
Need for updated, robust Town planning document - preserve small-town character + protect from over-development + prioritize greenspace + reinvigorate Watertown Square.
Watertown's cultural diversity is one of its finest characteristics. We should never miss an opportunity to highlight and support it.
The effects of explosive growth have yet to be determined.
Substantiate information on how candidate has interacted with members of minority communities with interviews and documents. Analyze his/her ability to listen. Collect data on how he/she demonstrated accountability for commitments.
strong leadership skills and transparency are important
Please don't hire a racist City Manager.
Opinions on various subjects, including civil rights, environmental issues and equity.
We need to stop building
The city manager will never please everyone, but everyone should feel like feel their perspective will be listened to and considered. That is far from happening for everyone now, nor has it been happening for sometime, if ever.
large scale forward thinking for goodwill and betterment of citizens
She/he needs to be a good listener and have the skill set to lead both fiscally and as a manager.
Same as above - Watertown is changing and its new town manager needs to be proactive in this to lead the town to a place that is welcoming to all who are here and coming here, to guide development that is innovative and creative and to help bring along town departments to be more reflective of who resides in this community.
Seek a philosopher-king/queen! Look for someone who doubts the advice coming from all interested parties. Find a contrarian willing to weigh counter-arguments to every new idea advanced. identify someone with no political agenda. Hire the one who has tasted both money and power and is willing to set them aside while serving our City.
You may ultimately fail in this search, but at least you will have tried.

I believe person should not be a longtime Watertown resident in order to approach the job with fresh ideas and an open mind.
The person should have at least a fairly deep knowledge of Watertown and not have to learn everything from scratch.
You should make a strong effort to recruit candidates of color.
The recently approved Charter changes are significant. They reflect new attention to and desire for a City Council and City Manager relationship that is transparent, accountable and collaborative and for a commitment to meaningful public input.
We know racism exists in Watertown. I hope a new City Manager can take the lead and join with others who stand against racism and other discrimination.
We don't expect a City Manager to solve it all. We expect him/her to take the lead and hear concerns, as individuals or as a group. And not be afraid to challenge the status quo, when it is no longer functioning with the best outcomes. We need a City Manager that models respectful treatment of employees, does annual employee satisfaction surveys, annual Department Head evaluations, creates a new HR Department, rewrites discrimination policies for the City.
Know prioritize any events occurs
Watertown is in a unique position to grow into a thriving and diverse community, and we need a City Manager who recognizes and capitalizes on that strength to enhance the lives of all of our residents and people who work in town.
Growth is good, make sure the city gets our fair share, use new growth to fund schools, roads, infrastructure, etc.
Seek candidate with experience managing change, implementing equity practices, establishing strategic financial goals and priorities to guide decisions in support of residents' needs. Ask for outreach examples the candidate has used to gain community and employee input.
Find someone who engages directly with community members
City Manager needs to be a visible public figure, everyone living in Watertown, renters, owners and all ages of citizens should know who the manager is because this person should be a well-known public figure. The job holds tremendous responsibilities in shaping the government, culture and economy of this city and the manager needs to be a great communicator.
There was a strong desire for transparency expressed in the discussions around the City Charter. Hearing the candidate's experience with and suggestions for transparent and inclusive city government would be welcome.
That many residents feel slighted by our current manager's outdated style of operations and poor communications, and that the desire for change is strong. The recent Charter Review process brought to light so many unaddressed issues and gaps and many are looking to a new manager to do a major

overhaul of how we function. Lack of accountability, transparency, and communications are major themes.	
Their past experience supporting diversity, equity and inclusion as well as environmental stewardship and innovation.	
There needs to be demonstrable appreciation for the diversity of housing units both through zoning, design standards, and public way maintenance to modernize all neighborhood types thoughtfully. This includes recognizing the need to preserve single family residences in both single-family and mixed zones, noting that we are already becoming top heavy with units in large buildings and townhouses. All kinds of dwellings have value, including residences that allow families to afford a small private yard if they wish it, create a cohesive community feel amongst long-term neighbors including owner-residents, and maintaining green space for the city overall.	
addressing town employees needs	
I believe we need someone who will be able to come in, take a good look at our processes and procedures and not be afraid to make changes where needed. No more "this is how we've always done it" attitude.	
The Kitchen Table Conversation project (sponsored in 2019 by the Council Media & Public Outreach subcommittee with support from Watertown Community Conversations(WCC)) provided valuable resident input on what needs improvement in Watertown. Please take advantage of that information to inform the search. WCC continues to be a very useful resource for supporting effective public input to the search process -- including help with process design and with facilitating dialogue. Finally, our library is a great resource for bringing people together to learn and discuss important issues in Watertown. I hope the City Manager search will build on the initial efforts made during the Charter Review process to improve transparency, communication and public engagement.	
Stop the building!! We are becoming Cambridge with less space!!	
That they will be ready to lead, innovate and move on at an appropriate time.	
We need new planning that actually plans!	
The new City Manager should be visible in/to the community, open to resident participation and feedback; create a welcoming, nurturing, supportive working environment that has career growth for all city employees; have demonstrated commitment to accountability (self and others), communication, diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging that will be applied to the City at large, and to the City government in particular; specific qualifications may place barriers to attracting a diverse pool of candidates and so demonstrated skills and knowledge are more important; BIPOC candidates should be sought however ideology and demonstrated commitment to all aspects of DEIB are of upmost importance; recent local elections revealed divisions in Watertown, the new City Manager should have experience in bridging differences, inspiring unity, and working towards common good.	

He or she will have significantly less autonomy than the current manager	
Are they willing to make unpopular decisions for the longterm prosperity of the town	
1.Does the candidate tend to change jobs frequently? Although we do not need a twenty-year commitment, we also don't need a revolving door in the corner office. 2. This is not an on-the-job training position. A successful candidate must have experience in leading a growing city in an urban setting into the future. 3. If the Town Manager is going to be involved in negotiations with the various unions in our City we should know something about their skill, experience and success as a negotiator.	
Past experiences	
Can s/he lead the implementation of Watertown's Climate Action Plan.	
It is a Town. Snow and ice need to be removed promptly or be fined.	
Watertown is changing, and I hope we find someone who can breathe new life into its ongoing transformation.	
Search for candidates that have strong DEI values and are willing to engage with the entire community	
That there is a real need for the incoming City Manager to have strong experience and skills managing city staff. As a small city undergoing rapid development, we need a leader who can take input from City Council and residents, articulate a clear vision, set goals, evaluate performance, and support staff development accordingly.	
Since the last town Manager was here for 29 years, the new manager will have a major task ahead of them to reshape our city government for the 21st century.	
Watertown exists as part of the larger area, not in a vacuum. I would be interested in having a City Manager who is interested in collaboration with neighboring cities and towns on shared priorities- for example, on climate change mitigation projects, public transit and safe bike infrastructure, supporting local businesses that make our area wonderful to live and shop in...	
the focus should on local issues, not national or international ones	
Please, please, please look for a City Manager who understands how systemic oppression is operating within city government/institutions and can do something to address it.	
Candidates' track records working with community groups and public safety departments and supervising heads of government departments.	
The history, accomplishments & education of any potential candidate for City Manager.	
It's unfortunate that the decision was made that the manager must be a Watertown resident. That really limits the candidate pool unnecessarily and I hope does not severely impact the ability to find the most qualified candidate.	
The diversity of our leadership should reflect the diversity of our community. If I were conducting the search I would make it a priority to include BIPOC and women-identifying candidates	
Residential taxation and costs of services growth is a major problem and is projected to continue for the foreseeable years to come. Watertown has not realized the tax subsidies anticipated from prolonged permissive and excessive overdevelopment.	

A performance audit or something of the sorts should be improved in line with development goals for Watertown. What are the development goals, I'm not sure, but that's something you should consider talking to the community members about. We feel very ignored.
The old guard is has been slowly leaving & residents are hungry for change/engagement/accountability & 21st Century responsiveness & services
We need someone committed to prioritizing the improvement of our schools and making them as strong as can be by working with the other elected and town officials, parents and community members. The new buildings are/will be amazing and we need to stay the course to complete them while continuing to prioritize other investments of time and funds to make them as strong as possible.
Residents are overtaxed and underserved. Taxes keep going up, the town increasingly caters to business interests and consultants, yet the needs of homeowners are ignored.
Find Driscoll 2.0, but even better ;)
How committed he will be to his job and how well he understands and likes people.
There is a deep-rooted tradition of nepotism in this town that need not pervade this hiring process. Be very careful to study the back story of all candidates because pre-existing loyalties will always float to the surface later and lead to an erosion of public trust.
This hire is the most consequential choice facing Watertown in a generation. Please prioritize someone with a compelling vision for the future and experience managing a broad range of stakeholders to get there.
Ability to delegate to carefully selected managers
Real financial experience not just a townie. Go big.
You should work very hard at avoiding the default that the only thing a new City Manager needs to do is keep the financial situation as it is now. Look for someone who is not afraid to bring their own values, experience, and talents to Watertown.
That you need to talk with citizens of the town where they formerly worked to get citizen input about their performance before hiring them. Thorough background checks!
(1)The town manager should provide support to the Town Council; (2)Should have demonstrated history of success
The Town Manager needs to focus heavily on fair and affordable housing and that housing should be maintained. This is clearly not the case presently. Many issues currently.
Fiscal responsibility is important, but too often, it has been considered the ONLY metric/priority that matters. This has been detrimental in many ways, particularly when it comes to transparency, accountability, inclusiveness, diversity, etc. It should also be noted that despite solely focusing on fiscal responsibility and the constant talk of avoiding an override because of said fiscal prowess, taxes will be increasing 4.3% for the average resident in FY 2022 and have continued to increase.
Someone with the ability to motivate and celebrate the residents and employees of Watertown
Performance on the issues that matter to the residents of the town.
I hope you'll keep employees as up to date on the search process as you will residents.

Due to Covid, we are living in an increasingly divisive community, both socially and politically. We need someone who is entering this application process with an open mind, not on a hard party platform. It is possible to find a republican candidate who is committed to equity and inclusion just as much as it is possible to find a democratic candidate who questions the ethics of vaccine passports. We have to stop thinking in black and white. We need a leader who is respectful and accessible to all political parties, and open to rationale and fair dialogue. More than that, we need an individual who is in this work for the right reasons - WITH NO FINANCIAL TIES TO PHARMA or any other regulatory bodies. I see conflicts of interest rapidly changing political operations at the federal and state level, and I would be devastated to see that trickle down to Watertown especially as we welcome 8 new life science projects into our coveted 4 sq miles.

Our new City Manager should bring forward thinking approaches while understanding the history and desire to maintain the unique Watertown small, local feel.

Our current administrators run this town as their fiefdom. They "need" supervision and consultation and we "need" a place where less than professional behavior can be reported and addressed. In addition, Massachusetts's Climate Bill doesn't seem to have registered. There is so much that must be addressed on that front--way too much for a comment section such as this. Last, we have a good City Council. Whoever fills the Town Manager position must work with our representatives. We voted for them, and they represent us--not the administrators.

a new kind of leadership is needed than the one that has existed for over 25 years

That there will likely be a lot of turnover in the coming months/year causing a lot of additional stress for employees who have to sustain the workload without enough support. There are many needs and no one person (as a new manager) will be able to address everything. So selecting someone who understands the scope of the change process ahead is critical. If we don't find a strong match for the needs, we should not fill the position until we do.

Our new City Manager will have ultimate responsibility for the leadership and performance of our Police Department. Therefore, I believe that the Manager should possess the following characteristics and hold the following values:

- Be committed to improving the relationship between the WPD and increasingly diverse constituencies in Watertown.
- Be willing to direct the WPD to seek out, listen to, and engage in ongoing dialogue with marginalized voices in our city in order to better recognize and understand the fears and frustrations of those who do not feel safe and are not being heard.
- Be committed to engaging regularly with community organizations that are working to address concerns of diversity, equity, inclusion, transparency and accountability in public safety.
- Be open to including residents, businesses, community organizations, police officers, town officials, mental-health professionals and social service providers in finding new ways to problem-solve issues of safety and well-being in Watertown.
- Be committed to establishing informative, easily accessible and routine reporting of the WPD's operations and effectiveness, including clear and accurate comparisons of subjects of police contacts by race, ethnicity, and gender.
- Be committed to monitoring progress of the WPD towards compliance with any mandated police reforms.
- Support adequate funding in the WPD budget to foster the relationship-building initiatives noted above, as well as other similar initiatives that may arise from dialog with community members.

I also believe it will be important for the new City Manager to require that these values and commitments

be shared by the WPD Police Chief, and that this should be an explicit part of the performance review of the City Manager.

I strongly believe that the new City Manager needs to recognize that, for "innovation" and "excellence" to occur, along with high levels of performance (one of several immediate challenges is fulfilling the Charter amendments approved by voters), there needs to be a culture of inquiry, learning, and reflective practice, so as to take in new knowledge — or co-create new knowledge — about how best to tackle the myriad problems Watertown faces. That's involves discarding outdated frameworks and practices, and aiming for "usable knowledge in the public interest," which elevates us all.

I would like the next City Manager to come recommended not just by influential colleagues but by support staff or residents who traditionally wield less power.

please hire a manager who is looking towards the future of Watertown rather than trying to maintain the status quo (and FYI I say this as a resident who grew up here)

There are some differences in opinion between long-time residents and relatively new citizens when it comes to density, traffic, development, investment, city safety, and education. We need a town manager who can listen and understand those varying opinions and take them into account while making decisions in a balanced way. We also do not have large budgets, so we need a manager who can make tough decisions and not over fund new, untested ideas and policies. Education and student needs, including new programs and athletics and the arts, should be top priorities as well as slowing down the constant development, mitigating density and traffic problems, and making sure all city leaders are accountable.

We are committed to strong climate legislation and infrastructure. We would like a City Manager who supports environmental regulation and renewable energy. We need someone who will listen to residents' concerns and work well with the City Council.

The new manager will need to address the effects of longstanding HR neglect. They should already understand (without needing remedial training) that the homogeneity of Watertown's current municipal leadership - in contrast to the diversity of those who live, work, and shop here - is a reason to ask questions, listen to the responses, and update policies and management practices. Department leaders need to become more representative of - and responsive to - their staffs and their various constituencies in the community.

We need a committed environmentalist as City Manager. Climate resiliency should be first and foremost.

The new City Manager should not just say they are committed to the things our town needs (diversity, equity, the environment) but have actually taken tangible actions that have been successful in the past.

The ideal candidate should be someone who is not afraid to go against the grain to achieve success for the good of the community. Going against the status quo and using innovative thinking strategies can open new doors for all stakeholders of the City. We want Watertown to support and reflect our values of inclusion and diversity. Supporting the development of new technology and opening opportunities to people from diverse backgrounds can only strengthen the City.

We need someone with innovative thinking to push the city further into new ideas.

<p>Welcome change. Don't be afraid to lead even if people push back. Be a listener but be decisive when you know a tough decision needs to be made. City employees are hoping for a good boss who appreciates them and treats them fairly and expects the same from DH's and direct supervisors.</p>
<p>The City Manager must seek input from stakeholders to help guide their decision-making and they should be transparent in sharing their vision and in their decisions (even when a vocal minority may disagree). In doing so, they also need to hold others accountable and be consistent in making our city government stronger. We need to transition from an old-school mentality into a more modernized way of doing business. There are so many opportunities to leverage our new schools, new development, and new industries. Do not get stuck into being status quo.</p>
<p>We need someone who will engage with all segments of the community and have an open mind about rethinking how policing works. We need someone who understands the benefits that generation after generation of immigrants have brought to our community, and who appreciates the strength this diversity of backgrounds and experiences gives us. We need someone who will prioritize building affordable housing here so we don't just become another generic suburb.</p>
<p>Get out and really talk to residents not just elected officials.</p>
<p>We need someone who brings knowledge but is also open to new ideas.</p>
<p>There is a small but vocal group of residents who want Watertown to "stay the way it is." I'm hopeful that both this committee and the new City Manager will be able to foster a stronger, more inclusive city that's future-looking, not holding on to an idealized past.</p>
<p>Climate readiness needs to be a top priority.</p>
<p>The new city manager must have skills to recruit new, younger more capable professionals</p>
<p>We need a manager who has the skills to recruit young and talented professionals</p>
<p>Residents want to be able to have a voice in government. It feels as though business interests have been driving the city's agenda. No more labs!</p>
<p>Demonstrated commitment to equity, inclusivity and accountability to all residents</p>
<p>Be sure the person doesn't let Watertown become overrun with Life Science projects. We need more affordable housing and businesses that give back to the community.</p>
<p>Communication with residents and working with residents on issues is key. Watertown is a great place to live. It's unique and growing but still has a "town" feel that makes it desirable.</p>
<p>I'd like to see someone hired who is not a relative or friend of those making hiring decisions, someone who is preferably not a white man.</p>
<p>The previous manager had no system in place for employee evaluation. They didn't have to set goals and show that they had met them. This should be a top priority when interviewing candidates.</p>
<p>What is their vision for the city and how would they begin implementing it?</p>
<p>Be transparent and open.</p>

Their experience in education development
Please look for a manager with common sense.
Find best person for the job. They have big shoes to fill. Mr. Driscoll was a gold standard for town managers. Every city/town in the commonwealth wish they had him for the last 30 years. So I'd like best person for the job, someone with new ideas but also willing to look at the work done over the last few decades and know they have a pretty good blueprint to work off.
It would be nice to have a collaborative process in this search and I greatly appreciate having the opportunity to answer this survey. Thank you!
Housing is expensive.
Housing is expensive.