

Informal Debate Examples

Proposition to Repave Cobblestone

In favor of repaving: The classic cobblestone streets of this town are detrimental to the vehicles and need to be updated.

Against repaving: Those cobblestones were laid down 300 years ago and should be preserved as any historical landmark should.

In favor: By preserving something sort of kitschy and cute, we are putting the tires, wheels, and general infrastructure of our vehicles at risk.

Against: The cobblestones are more than just cute. They're integral to the reputation of this town and bring a mass of tourists traveling to see a little slice of history.

In favor: And what do we say to the residents who have already had to spend hundreds of dollars on car repairs?

Against: The only area of town that retains the cobblestones is the main downtown area. Residents can go about their business just fine on asphalt, then park at the train station and walk the rest of the way.

In favor: We're inconveniencing the citizens for a return that is immeasurable. How do we know just how much tourism comes into town strictly due to those cobblestones? It could very well be the high-end shops and five-star dining.

Against: People can go anywhere for nice food and shops, but they come here. Removing those cobblestones will be removing the unique charm of this town. Not only that, but the construction will be massive, inconvenient, expensive, time consuming...it's just completely unnecessary.

In favor: It's our job to look out for the safety and well being of our citizens. It is dangerous to be riding around on roads that can pop your tire. Someone walking in high heels could very well twist an ankle. I've seen plenty of people teetering around precariously.

Against: Shall we pave the woods too? And the lawns? We can't flatten everything because someone chooses inappropriate footwear. That's just silly. Tearing up the roads and paving them just isn't in the budget, and it's bad for business. No one will want to go to the downtown area with all that noise and dust and chaos.

In favor: We have a budget for road repairs and a state grant for that very purpose. As for businesses, people will not stop eating and shopping just because of a little construction. We'd work on one area of the road at a time, not all at once. There will be no chaos.

Against: That budget is intended for road repairs. This isn't a repair you're suggesting; it's an unnecessary expenditure for an unnecessary project. If there are cracks, sinkholes, potholes, fading lines and the like on existing roads, the budget will cover that. This would have to be added as a completely separate side project. We simply don't have the money for this.

In favor: We can tap into reserve funds.

Against: Those are for emergencies. Money is irrelevant, though. The cobblestones make this town. We don't want to be like every other town. I park my car and walk into town just fine. It's not that big of an inconvenience. There are wheelchairs at the train station if the elderly need to be wheeled into town.

In favor: The men who laid down those cobblestones did so in the name of progress. The stones were meant to cover up mud and dirt. They would want us to continue progressing and not cling to the past if it meant sacrificing new technology for the sake of aesthetics.

Against: That's completely speculator. I appreciate the sentiment, but you cannot speak for them and use their potential feelings on the topic as ammunition.

In favor: You're appealing to tradition; I'm appealing to tradition. I'm just taking a page from your book.

Against: It's less about tradition and more about the future. Future generations of citizens will be less likely to want to stay in their average hometown, and future generations of tourists will be less likely to visit just another average town. We are one of the very few towns left with these cobblestone roads. It makes us a tourist destination, which brings in money. The risk of a popped tire from someone who refuses to park in a free lot is far lower than the risk of millions of dollars lost due to an obliterated tourism infrastructure.

In favor: Well, when you put it in a blanket statement like that...

Against: Do you not agree?

In favor: I'd like to research more on just how much the streets affect our tourism; however, yes, I can agree with that statement.

Against: Okay then. Do your research on the town's tourism, and we'll go from there.