

MASTER PLAN REPORT

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BETHEL
FORWARD

Executive Summary.....	7	Master Plan Capacity & Building Mix.....	92
COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUMMARY	11	At-Grade Crossing Study.....	94
Overview.....	13	Look to National Precedents & Statistics.....	94
Timeline At-a-Glance.....	13	Prioritize Rail Crossings in Bethel.....	95
Overarching Goals.....	13	Envisioned Character.....	96
Stakeholder Interviews.....	14	Developing Around the Train Station.....	96
Overview of Results.....	14	Build a 'Skinny' Street.....	97
Detailed Results.....	15	Use Pedestrian Scaled Intersections.....	98
Community Voices Workshop.....	18	Celebrate the Open Space & Make it Public.....	99
Community Voices.....	19	Revitalize Diamond with Compatible Use & Form.....	100
Community Choices Workshop.....	20	Realizing the Vision.....	101
Charrette.....	21	Tax/Acre Theory & Practice.....	101
Charrette Design Sessions & Meetings.....	22	Re-plant Fertile Land.....	102
EXISTING CONDITIONS.....	23	INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS.....	103
Regional Context.....	25	Environmental Needs.....	105
Local Transit ROUTES.....	26	Introduction.....	105
Regional Context.....	27	Environmental Review.....	106
TOD area.....	28	Soils Map.....	108
Original TOD Boundary.....	28	Soils Legend.....	109
Expanded Boundary.....	29	Wetlands Map.....	110
Environmental Analysis.....	30	Wetland Impact Permitting.....	111
Topography.....	30	Environmental Risk Sites.....	112
Open Space.....	31	Sanitary Sewer Analysis.....	113
Wetlands.....	32	Initial Analysis.....	113
Environmental Assessment.....	33	Potential Development Calculations.....	115
Physical analysis & Documentation.....	34	Water Supply Analysis.....	116
Street Network.....	34	Transportation Summary.....	117
Buildings.....	35	Multi-use Streets.....	117
Civic Buildings.....	36	Traffic Flow & Generation Analysis.....	119
Historic District.....	37	Street Design.....	122
Site Photos & Key.....	38	Introduction.....	122
Downtown Parking Survey.....	40	Street Types.....	123
Greenwood Ave Documented.....	41	Slow Streets.....	124
Frontage Analysis.....	42	Street Sections.....	125
Sidewalk Survey.....	43	Slow Zone & Vision Zero.....	126
Existing Study Area.....	44	Proposed Plan for Greenwood Avenue.....	127
Zoning.....	45	Roundabouts.....	128
Scale Comparison.....	46	Introduction - An Engineers Perspective.....	128
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.....	47	Proposed Locations.....	129
Existing Conditions.....	49	Examples.....	130
Introduction.....	49	Precedents.....	131
Demographic Characteristics & Trends.....	49	Completer Streets.....	132
Existing Business Distribution.....	53	Streets for People - A planners Perspective.....	132
Retail Context.....	54	IMPLEMENTATION.....	135
Sales Voids.....	55	Where to Begin.....	137
Consumer Preferences, Habits & Insights.....	57	Methods to Stimulate Activity.....	138
Housing Characteristics.....	58	Economic Recommendations & Action Items.....	140
Retail & Housing Growth Projections.....	63	Master Plan Recommendations & Action Items.....	144
Recommendations.....	64	Transportation Recommendations & Action Items.....	152
Retail Development Focus Areas.....	69	Next Steps.....	154
MASTER PLAN.....	71	APPENDIX.....	X.157
Introduction.....	73	Concept Master Plan Designs.....	x.159
Theory & Practice.....	73	North Area Conservation Sketch Plan.....	x.160
Specific to Bethel.....	75	North Area Courtyard Sketch Plan.....	x.161
Overarching Goals.....	75	South Greenwood Ave Retrofit Sketch Plan.....	x.162
Concept Vision Plans.....	76	Greenwood Ave to School Street Detail Sketch Plan.....	x.163
Illustrative Plan.....	76	Transportation Alternatives.....	x.164
Key Design Ideas.....	77	Stakeholder Interviews Summary.....	x.165
Implementation Ideas for the West Side.....	78	Overview.....	x.166
Implementation Ideas for the East Side.....	79	Community Voices - Summary Report.....	x.167
Rejuvenate Greenwood Ave.....	80	Overview.....	x.168
Connect Greenwood to School St.....	81	Strong Places.....	x.169
Supporting Plan Analysis.....	82	Weak Places.....	x.170
Understand the Scale & Catchment of the Area.....	82	Strong & Weak Places.....	x.171
Work with Key Property Owners.....	83	Community Voices - Opportunities.....	x.172
Incentivize Redevelopment.....	84	Opportunities for the future.....	x.172
Public Realm Strategies.....	85	Preliminary Broad Goals.....	x.173
Prioritize the Public Realm.....	87	Exit Survey Results.....	x.181
Create New Connections.....	88	Community Choices.....	x.182
Provide Scales of Open Space.....	89	Participant Responses.....	x.183
Phasing the Public Realm Strategies.....	90		

Downtown Bethel is distinguished by its historic heritage, village charm, and distinctive character. The plan vision is to build on these assets to re-energize the village center as a distinctive healthy, vibrant, dynamic, pedestrian friendly community; a wonderful place to call home, operate a business and truly enjoy.

This will be achieved by:

- **Adopting regulatory and procedural changes to incentivize redevelopment** by allowing higher densities of housing within the newly designated TOD area – the area within about ¼ mile walking distance of the train station;
- **Focusing on the restoration of existing historic buildings** in the heart of the downtown to enhance community character, while incorporating new, complimentary multi-level, mixed-use buildings, so that the downtown will include an eclectic mix of shops, offices, restaurants, and entertainment;
- **Creating new cultural and social opportunities** and building unique public and recreational spaces;
- **Making the necessary infrastructure improvements** to our roads, sidewalks, streetscape and downtown parking to provide connections and create a more pedestrian/bike friendly environment to accommodate such growth; and
- **Providing marketing assistance and financial tools** to support and foster existing business growth and drive new business start ups.

Preamble

TODs have become extremely popular to municipalities nationally due to their predictable tendency to raise adjacent property values and to attract the type of motivated residents and businesses that seek vibrant lifestyle, prosperity and innovation.

So guaranteed is the proven success of TODs that municipalities across the nation are paying tremendous sums to lay down new rail in order to enable and launch TODs within their municipal boundaries. So certain is development, absorption and rising land values around TOD, and therefore tax revenues to municipalities, that even rail-less municipalities around the country take on the initiative to install infra-structure improvements at their own substantial cost, in advance of the queues of developers soon to line up.

Connecticut's cities and towns are unique in that, unlike most States, Connecticut already enjoys rail lines in a huge web connecting all parts of the State. Unfortunately, many of these rail lines are abandoned. However, if leadership and citizens could be shown the potential for dynamic economic growth pursued so vigorously by rail-less municipalities in other parts of the country, perhaps Connecticut's abandoned rail lines might awake to be re-imagined.

As one of these Connecticut towns, Bethel seeks to embrace its train station location and successfully leverage it in its redevelopment efforts to strengthen its historic and charming downtown.

This Report creates a vision plan for the TOD area, with supporting revised zoning regulations, that reflect the public's interest, the recommendations of market studies, physical constraints and opportunities, environmental conditions, infrastructure capacity, the organic historic evolution of the town, and the prosperity and appeal that comes from walkable, complete neighborhoods.

This Report documents the work produced before, during, and subsequently to, the Bethel Forward Charrette, conducted in Bethel, Connecticut, November 16-19, 2015.

The charrette was part of a robust public outreach plan that proved invaluable to the team by tapping into resident's knowledge, engaging stakeholders directly affected by the plan, agreeing on consensus goals for the vision plan and establishing transparency of the results and process. The TOD process kicked off with information gathering and agreeing on a community out-reach plan. Three main events lead up to the charrette where stakeholders, property owners, town officials and residents were guided by the team's facilitator to establish the community's key goals to shape the Bethel Forward Plan for Downtown Bethel process. 1) Eight Stakeholder Group Interviews on September 16-17, 2015 provided context for a preliminary set of principles to guide the plan's development. 2) A Community Choices Workshop on October 1, 2015 asked residents to identify strong and weak places and opportunity sites for the future. 3) A Community Choices Workshop summarized input gathered to date, provided attendees with an analysis of existing conditions and economic findings and conducted an electronic keypad polling.

The most important agreed-upon goals coalescing out of the stakeholder interviews and public workshops were to:

- Enhance the pedestrian friendly qualities of Bethel by improving sidewalks throughout, adding bike lanes and paths, using the wetlands for exercise trails and recreation, and connecting different parts of downtown.
- Create a major "community gathering" place as well as distinctive smaller open spaces.
- Maintain and enhance Bethel's character, streetscapes, and visual appearance.
- Add downtown housing.
- Attract and strengthen retail, restaurants, and other businesses by leveraging Bethel's arts and events and marketing the town's unique assets.
- Improve the flow of traffic and parking.
- Address infrastructure and regulatory issues.

Building on these stated goals, the charrette itself was a four-day interactive planning workshop designed to guide the redevelopment of the 268-acre study area, located around the recently relocated train station, close to a mile from downtown. The charrette objective was to create multiple vision scenarios for growth and development in and around the train station, each supported by infrastructure and transportation capacity as well as potential market absorption based on current trends. Each scenario was developed with input from all major stakeholders, such as property owners, shops and businesses, municipal leaders/staff, and residents. The best ideas from each scenario were then further refined into a preferred master plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A second part of this effort was to identify market demand. Economic development research identified the potential capacity for retail, business and residential markets, including “voids,” which are markets sought by the locale, but not available, and therefore representing significant opportunities. The proximity to popular malls in nearby Danbury makes attracting national chain stores unwarranted. Instead, results indicate the focus should aim toward independent and specialty stores that fill identified “voids,” and therefore are poised to enjoy more assured success.

A third part of the pre-planning information gathering process involved identifying potential barriers to development, such as, but not limited to, code requirements, transportation barriers, street design, parking issues, environmental concerns, social concerns, historic preservation, infrastructure assets and liabilities, assessment of current sidewalks, streetscape, trees and lighting, municipal properties, development projects already underway, and issues presented by State and Federal agencies. Clearly coordination across agencies, coupled with the area’s physical lay-out, infrastructure capacity and constraints and regulatory framework requires careful attention so that implementable solutions can come out of this process.

The charrette sought to envision several scenarios of development resulting in an overall vision plan, which takes into consideration developer plans in the works. An objective of the plan is to allow development to be phased into low risk and highly affordable incremental and small growth. The plan is more easily implementable since it is not predicated on multiple property owners coordinating efforts or on requiring developers to assemble properties whose owners may resist involvement or demand unreasonable cost outlay.

Combining community wishes with team expertise, the vision for Bethel evolved into a close-knit “village” feel composed of walkable neighborhoods with small-scale buildings reflecting the established character of Bethel, and infill gaps between existing buildings, that create compact charming neighborhoods where needs and opportunities are met within easy walking distance. Neighborhoods need to offer diversity, where young professionals, middle age urban families, re-tiring Baby Boomers, and seniors all feel welcome and accommodated. Neighborhoods also need to attract the kind of small-scale businesses that can embed within residential streets without disruption. Planning should consider affordability, methods for achieving healthy tax revenues, and methods for raising the appeal of aging properties to make them join the vitality Bethel wants to become. Recommendations to cultivate and expand “Made in Bethel” businesses, particularly small manufacturing and craft industries, are also included.

Equally important was ensuring Bethel’s unique character be protected and enhanced. The plan seeks to capture the needs and desires of the existing population, as well as future target populations, which may be different from current populations after teasing out what current migrations of younger and older generations seek in today’s market. For example, to better accommodate visitors, potential residents and to satisfy one of Bethel’s voids identified in market studies as lodging, the plan includes an inn.

Based on Bethel’s current housing conditions, housing analysis suggest absorption of approximately 50 new units per year. This figure could trend upwards if new units are positioned to attract different markets from existing, i.e. the young and old markets mentioned above, both of which prefer more compact walkable neighborhoods, which generate considerable more housing in compact areas, as changing absorption may indicate. The plan is positioned to be appeal to a wide diversity of generations, especially to young adults who are the future of any community.

Across the country right now, a growing number of cities and towns are busy repositioning themselves to attract young adult, baby boomer and senior markets. Young adult markets seek affordable “complete” walkable neighborhoods where they can work within walking distance of where they live. The concept of multiple small companies would work well in the “village” atmosphere of Bethel. Additionally, permitting the kind of young adult oriented affordable compact neighborhoods to infill between existing industrial buildings, and entitling and attracting R&D with manufacturing appropriate to the scale of Bethel could present distinct national market advantages, drawing the unique class of innovative thinkers to Bethel.

The 1st key component of downtown repositioning, and highly relevant to Bethel’s revitalization, is the strategic location of its rail stop. The Report identifies the TOD’s power to raise value, stimulate economic development, and augment commercial prosperity. Ideally the TOD should support the downtown, not detract from it. Therefore, efforts were made to overcome the challenge of creating a strong synergy healing the half mile disconnect between the train station and downtown. Walkable and attractive proposals make the distance seem to disappear.

The 2nd key component of the Report is to target affordability and it ties directly into the 3rd key component of the master plan which is demonstrating how re-platting and Form Base Code (FBC) coding entitle and encourage building small for residential and commercial uses. The plan deliberately illustrates a greater mix of building types within a walkable, mixed-use neighborhood. It also shows small buildings for shops, restaurants and entertainment that are less expensive and less risky to build. They offer affordable rents and strong appeal to start-up enterprises. And they attract the type of desirable independent specialty stores to fill “voids” identified in the market study.

While the TOD area’s architecture is quite varied in style, it is also remarkably consistent in terms of its scale and height, with few buildings over three stories in height. The downtown is also blessed with a historic district along Greenwood Avenue, as well as PT Barnum Square and monument to name a few. Residents were adamant that they wanted to retain the charm of their downtown which is also characterized by small building footprints. As a result, the master plan and code incentivize and facilitate such small-scale buildings.

Because of the multiple assets of “small,” and in order to facilitate and enable development of small, the Report offers revised zoning regulations written to entitle and encourage re-platting large parcels into small lots, and zoning re-written to release impediments to robust prosperity at Bethel scale.

The 4th component of the report deals with transportation and infrastructure capacity and improvements. For Bethel to get the most out of its investment in rail, it must capitalize on building more homes, jobs and other services adjacent to, and within walking distance to its public transit infrastructure. This TOD master plan incorporates a rich mix of uses and building types that will support and facilitate all modes of circulation, including transit, walking and cycling. Unfortunately, the TOD area mobility is currently constrained by the Danbury Line railroad which severely limits the east-west travel to the single at-grade roadway/railroad crossing of Greenwood Avenue (Route 302). North of this crossing, the next east/west crossing is in Danbury over a mile away. The rail-road essentially divides the TOD area into two distinct areas and that needs to change. The plan suggests creating as dense a circulation network of streets and paths as possible. The most important connections involve prioritizing additional at-grade rail crossings that will greatly enhance the street network within downtown Bethel and provide much safer and convenient access to the train station. However, Bethel’s existing street network, with its discontinuous sidewalks, dead-end streets and relatively high volume of fast traffic, presents many challenges for such connectivity and safety. The plan proposes to make the vast majority of the TOD area a “slow zone” requiring a maximum speed of 20mph. This involves street retrofits, road diets and a robust and improved network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities that will allow citizens to participate in active modes of travel that are environmentally friendly, and that also greatly contribute to a physically and socially healthier lifestyle.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An extensive review of the infrastructure and environmental issues in the TOD area was conducted. The results of the review indicate that sanitary sewerage in this area can accommodate the envisioned scenario build-out capacity which falls under the threshold of the additional available town sewer capacity of 200,000 gallons/day. The Town is also planning significant improvements to address current supply constraints that should further enable future development within the TOD area.

Environmental resources in the TOD area constrain the extent of the development in the area west of the railroad tracks with significant inland wetlands and watercourse flood plains. The wetlands require careful redevelopment to minimize impacts and provide equitable mitigation. The master plan acknowledges these constraints with the proposal of a nature park. Finally, the several properties of moderate to high environmental risk that will likely require environmental remediation as part of the redevelopment are indicated.

Part of a “complete community” requires a high quality public realm. This means public investment in infrastructure must be closely coordinated with private development efforts in the implementation of the TOD plan. New streets, new trails, street trees, repaired and new sidewalks are all part of the suggested transportation improvements. Additionally, the Report proposes many types of common open spaces to be enjoyed. The transformation of the “necklace” of wetlands that thread through Bethel into a coveted asset is the most ambitious, directly connecting a potential nature park to the downtown. Delicate paths set lightly amongst planting thread through the “park” area, welcoming recreation, fitness and exploration of the wonders of nature.

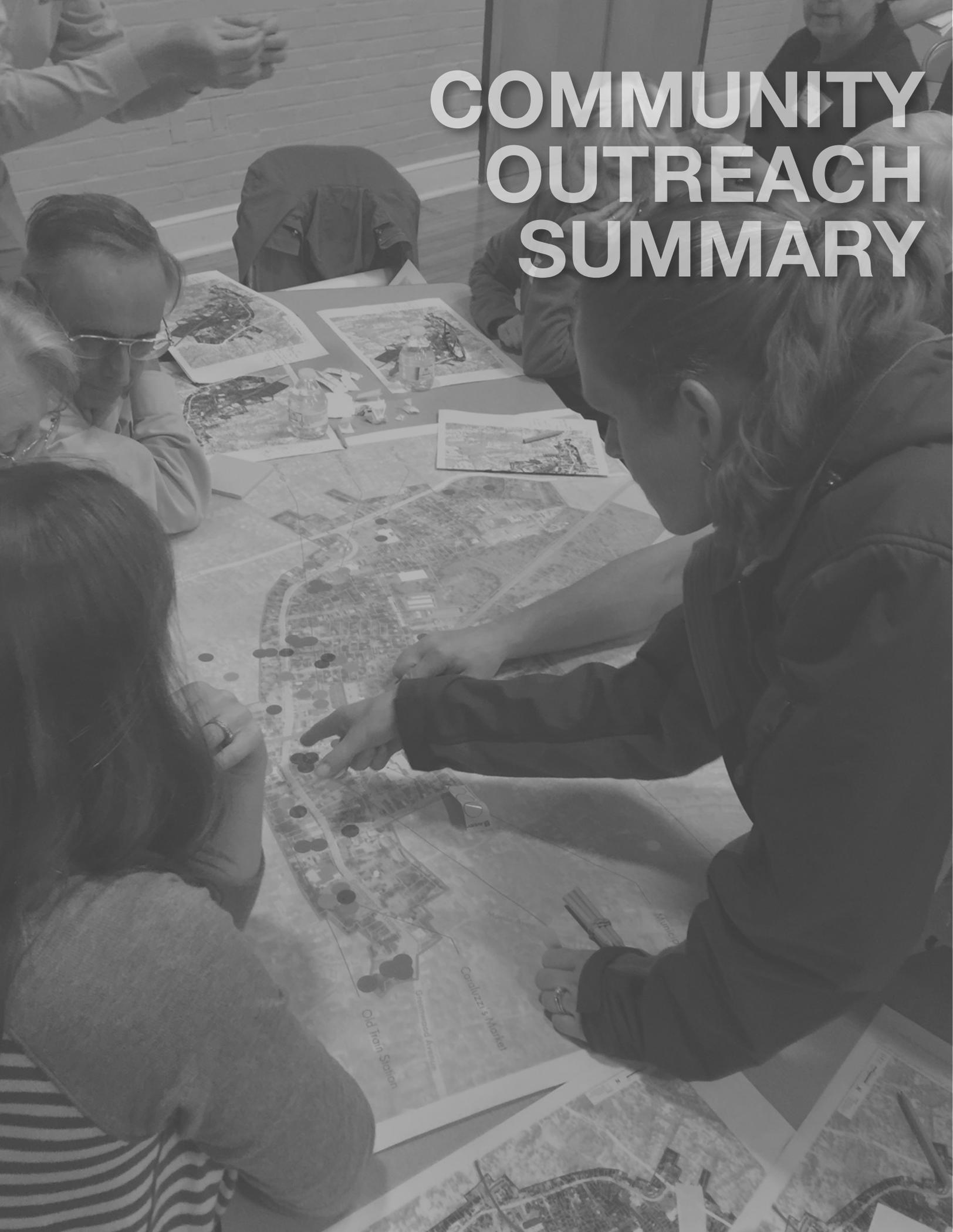
The economic, social and physical benefits of open space within urban areas are well documented and for Bethel, the transformation of the significant wetlands into a nature park could daylight such benefits as residents complained about the lack of open space and trails within the TOD area. The nature park could indeed generate many public benefits for the community at large. Bike and walking trails through the park, to downtown and to the train station will alleviate traffic congestion, reduce greenhouse emissions and improve air pollution, provide additional recreational opportunities and facilitate a healthier lifestyle for Bethel residents. The park’s flora and fauna could improve wildlife habitats, provide additional flood control and provide attractive open space views for the residential units that will face the park. Views of open space and recreational areas have a positive effect of residential property values and studies have shown that higher sale premiums of up to 20% can be achieved for such housing. In fact, studies have also shown that as park size increases, their positive impact on nearby property values also increases.

In summary, the Report aims to shape the growth of Bethel in ways that normative Bethel growth would have evolved anyway had the introduction of automobile-oriented patterns not shifted strategies so sharply away from Bethel’s long standing people-oriented patterns. Charming and affordable small lots and buildings will attract both young and old, while generating significant tax revenues for the town, thereby relieving tax pressures on all properties outside the study area.

By the same token, in addition to recovering long standing Bethel patterns, the Report looks ahead to propose whole new ways to redirect Bethel’s unique assets toward full preparedness embracing the oncoming demands of a new market ahead with the highest degree of success. A path forward as next steps describes specific implementation strategies required to carry out the master plan vision. Each strategy is further categorized according to three tools of urban enhancement: design, policy or management. Furthermore, each action item is assigned to their corresponding responsible parties.

We sincerely hope citizens of Bethel regard the Report with the same enthusiasm and optimism, as do we.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUMMARY



This section describes the public engagement process implemented to create the Bethel Forward plan. The process included four steps:

- Stakeholder interviews
- Community Voices Workshop
- Community Choices Workshop
- Bethel Forward Charrette.

Described here is what took place in those steps and what was learned. It reveals the public's preferences, concerns, and aspirations that ultimately shaped the Bethel Forward plan.

The steps were designed to ensure that the plan reflected what residents wanted. They provided extensive opportunities for input. They were also designed to ensure that the public's decisions were supported by facts. To accomplish that, the DPZ team conducted an extensive analysis of economic, demographic, transportation, land use, and environmental conditions, while simultaneously engaging the public.

The results of the conditions analysis were presented at the Community Choices workshop. During the workshop, participants were able to express their preferences and priorities and to weigh-in on issues and discrepancies.

Ultimately, the public outreach process proved invaluable to the consultant team. It tapped resident's knowledge, it engaged stakeholders directly affected by the plan, and it established the transparency of the results.

Early Steps

Early steps focused on informing residents about upcoming activities and inviting them to participate. In short order:

- The project Advisory Committee agreed on the name and tag-line for the effort: Bethel Forward – A Plan for Downtown Bethel.
- A press release announcing the program generated newspaper articles.
- The project website, hosted by the town, listed upcoming events.
- A save-the-date flyer was distributed through social media, e-mails, and downtown storefronts.



The Bethel Forward logo was created by Advisory Committee member Rob Wallace. Giving the process a name was the early focus of the committee, a 11-member citizen group appointed by the Town.

The project website became the repository of all information gathered from the public and from technical analysis. Documentation for all the steps mentioned in this chapter were posted immediately following each event and can be found Online at:

<http://www.bethel-ct.gov/content/117/8612/11809.aspx>

TIMELINE AT-A-GLANCE

This timeline highlights critical steps in the Bethel Forward public engagement process.

Early Steps

- Project kick-off (July 14)
- Press announcement (September 4)
- Web-site launch (September 8)
- Save-the-date-flyer (September 10)

Stakeholder Interviews (September 16 and 17)

Community Voices Workshop (October 1)

Community Choices Workshop – October 30

Charrette – November 16 to 20

OVERARCHING GOALS

The topic and subtopics gathered at the Community Voices and Choices workshops provided insight in areas that are critical to the plan. They suggest a number of goals which will drive the master plan vision. These are:

- **Enhance the pedestrian friendly qualities of Bethel by improving sidewalks throughout, adding bike lanes and paths, using the wetlands for exercise trails and recreation, and connecting different parts of downtown.**
- **Create a major “community gathering” place as well as distinctive smaller open spaces.**
- **Maintain and enhance Bethel’s character, street-scapes, and visual appearance.**
- **Add downtown housing.**
- **Attract and strengthen retail, restaurants, and other businesses by leveraging Bethel’s arts and events and marketing the town’s unique assets.**
- **Improve the flow of traffic and parking.**
- **Address infrastructure and regulatory issues.**

The goals were prioritized during the Community Choices workshop held on October 29.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUMMARY

OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

On September 16 and 17 the DPZ team conducted interviews with over 100 Bethel and downtown stakeholders. They included downtown business and property owners, Realtors, local builders architects, town employees, downtown residents, representatives of Bethel neighborhood associations, the art community, and community groups. On the same days, the team conducted meetings with Planning & Zoning Commission, Economic Development Commission, and Board of Selectman. From these interviews and meetings, the team gained an understanding of community strengths, attitudes, critical “hot button” issues, and opportunities.

What the Team Heard

This section summarizes the main recurring points made over the course of the interviews. They represent perceptions and beliefs based the stakeholders’ experience as businesses and property owners, developers, residents, and downtown advocates.

Downtown: There was great consensus that downtown is Bethel’s greatest asset. What makes it so is its history, charm, and walkable scale. It is an authentic place that developed organically over time. It is something that nearby communities do not have.

There was recognition, however, that downtown has declined with its empty storefronts, vacancies, and high business turnover. Among the reasons given for the decline were: no coordinated strategy for business attraction and marketing; high parking requirements that inhibit redevelopment and expansion of existing properties; and high rents that diminish opportunities for small business creation and survival.

Opinions were divided on parking but there was support for a strategy to share existing parking and for reducing parking requirements.

Development Climate: There was strong support, and even “eagerness,” for redevelopment in the downtown TOD area. Redevelopment was seen as an opportunity to increase the number and diversity of downtown residents; better connect various parts of downtown; provide for passive recreation; and improve the quality of the physical environment.

There were concerns about: redevelopment having a negative effect on existing downtown businesses; sewer capacity as a de-facto development cap; policy inconsistency between the Public Utility and the Planning and Zoning Commissions; affordability bonuses that by-pass local zoning regulations and increase development density; a permitting process that is lengthy and unpredictable.

Mobility: Connecting both sides of the railroad track with pedestrian or vehicular crossing was seen as critical to the success of the plan. There were also concerns about the current physical conditions of sidewalks including insufficient lighting, potholes, limited wheelchair accessibility, poor signage, and spotty ADA compliance.

Recreation: The significant amount of wetlands within the TOD area was seen as an opportunity to create a green amenity in downtown for passive recreation, walking, and biking.

The comments made through the stakeholder interviews provide context for a preliminary set of principles to guide and shape the plan. They are:

- Preserve and enhance the character of downtown Bethel.
- Create a welcoming and vibrant place within a high-quality public realm.
- Expand transportation choices and connect downtown with a safe street network for everyone.
- Attract residents to downtown with a range of housing choices
- Improve regulations to facilitate private investment and ensure predictable outcomes.

These principles were presented to the public during the Community Voices Workshop.



A screen capture of the interview with developers and area architects. Several DPZ team members participated to the interviews via remote links.

DETAILED RESULTS

Downtown is Bethel's greatest asset...

- Downtown is historic, charming, walkable, and well scaled.
- It has shops and restaurants that lend to an artsy, funky feel.
- It has businesses such as the cinema, bike shop, and bookstores that attract visitors from throughout the region.
- It is authentic and it developed organically over time.
- It is the one place that brings the community together, especially during special events. The Craft Beer Festival has been very successful. The annual soccer tournament attracts families from well outside Bethel.

Downtown is in decline...

- There are vacancies and empty storefronts.
- Business turnover is high.
- Businesses have shifted from selling goods to services, diminishing downtown draw.
- The Summer Festival is a good case study. It used to be a big attraction. It was lost because, toward the end, it drew more outside vendors than existing Bethel businesses.
- There is no coordinated strategy for business attraction and marketing.
- Parking requirements inhibit redevelopment and expansion of existing properties.
- Rents have increased as properties have changed hands.
- Higher rents diminish opportunities for small business creation and survival.
- The role of a business incubator was once a downtown strength.

There is need for more, or more convenient, parking...

- Parking supply in downtown is limited.
 - Events show that Bethel has a parking problem;
 - Connecticut DOT has recently removed on street parking along Greenwood Avenue compounding the problem.
- There is sufficient parking but it is poorly marked. Residents know where parking is. Visitors do not.
- Consolidation of parking behind buildings on both sides of Greenwood Avenue, first proposed in the 1958 Bethel Plan of Development, has not been pursued. It requires cooperation and agreement among property owners.
- Parking in the new development should not further burden downtown parking.

There is general support for redevelopment in the TOD study area...

Note: Interviews detected no major opposition to the TOD concept, with the exception of those downtown business and property owners who see the TOD as directly threatening downtown viability.

There may not be a clear understanding of what a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is and of the type of buildings, densities, and mix of uses likely to be included. A definition/explanation is required as we move to more public engagement activities. TOD redevelopment is seen as an opportunity to:

- Increase the number and diversity of downtown residents;
- Expand walkability and add bike paths and walking trails;
- Make the wetlands into a space for passive recreation;
- Improve connectivity between downtown and the rail station;
- Bring about visual and functional improvements.
- The area's property owners and developers are supportive of redevelopment and are "eager to be involved in the planning."

The TOD plan must not dilute the viability of downtown...

Note: Concerns about the TOD plan having a negative effect on downtown were expressed numerous times and in a variety of ways across all stakeholder groups.

- Retail in the new development should not be drawn from existing downtown business.
- The plan should include incentives needed to revitalize and modernize existing downtown properties.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUMMARY

- Businesses in the new development should be complementary to those in downtown.
- The plan should recommend the best (complementary) mix of uses for both downtown and the new development.
- Complementary business clusters mentioned include: the arts (expanding on three new art related initiatives), wellness (expanding on the success of Bethel Cycle), apparel to complement existing vintage clothing outlets, and bookstores (adding to the four bookstores already operating in Bethel)
- “Fix the town center first, then develop a new town center.”

Demand for downtown housing is strong...

- Rental housing is driving the market.
- Millennials have increased demand for rental housing but there is also a “huge demand for housing for baby boomers” who are downsizing and who cannot find the one floor living conditions they are looking for.

The ability of Bethel to support mixed uses is questioned...

Note: On several occasions, participants mentioned the need for an analysis of where residents shop and what type of businesses the Bethel market can support.

- It is tough to obtain financing for new business ideas.
- Only established businesses seem to be able to get financing.
- Banks value mixed use a lot less than the higher value residential.

There are regulatory barriers that the TOD plan should address...

- Sewer capacity is perceived as an insurmountable obstacle.
- The perception is that “Public Works says there is no more capacity.” And that “Unless allocation methods change no new residential can be built in the TOD area.”
- Sewer capacity is allocated to individual properties and acts as development cap.
- There is a disconnect between decisions made by the Public Utility Commission and decisions made by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- The plan “must resolve this conflict.”

Affordability bonuses are a source of concern...

- By providing deed restricted affordable housing developers can ignore zoning regulations and increase density in their development.
- If the plan requires affordable units, the Town should streamline the process for handling affordability requirements.

Permitting is lengthy and unpredictable...

- The permitting process is lengthy and needs to be streamlined.
- There is a lack of clarity and predictability in current development regulations, which lead to time consuming “tweaking of plans after submission.”
- The TOD plan should recommend that the adoption process be simplified.
- Projects that comply with the plan should require no special permits, just site-plan approval and, perhaps, architectural review.

Connecting both sides of the railroad tracks is critical...

Note: This is a key consideration made numerous times and in a variety of ways across all stakeholder groups.

- Must create gated pedestrian connections across train tracks.
- Unless pedestrian connections are established development west of the tracks will not be transit oriented.
- Town should push for establishing pedestrian crossings in the most cost effective and cost efficient way.

Better circulation should tie together various parts of downtown...

- The town center, the part of downtown that everyone loves, has the most character and should be integrated with the TOD development.
- Downtown is very stretched out from Grassy Plain to Chestnut Street.

- The TOD plan should bring together Grassy Plain and the Town Center.
- There are concerns about the current physical conditions of sidewalks including lighting, potholes, limited wheelchair accessibility, poor signage, and spotty ADA compliance.
- The plan's circulation study needs to make access to and circulation within downtown better.

Wetlands are a green resource...

- The study area includes significant wetlands. Watersheds converge north of the rail station from three different directions.
- Lack of elevation compounds problems and complicates storm management. A 50-year storm produces flooding.
- In addition to assisting in storm management, wetlands are an opportunity to create a park that:
 - Adds value to adjacent properties;
 - Enables the development of walkways and bikeways;
 - Creates a green public attraction similar to “the High Line in NYC” or “the town park in Rye, NY;”
 - Attracts younger residents to downtown.
 - “Bike paths have been very successful in other towns to create a draw to the town and also as recreation for people living in the town.”
 - “Would like to see an arboretum, more open space, bike and walking paths.”

Development will not require expanding schools...

- More development will not hurt the school system or require additional school buildings.
- There are 2,978 students now, down from a peak capacity of 3,900.

How tall is tall?

Note: When probed about building heights interviewees had a variety of reactions.

- Three stories are acceptable.
- Five stories could stick out like a sore thumb.
- It depends on the topography – could see taller buildings.
- The construction type is important. 5A construction type can be done, 3A is more expensive, 1A type construction is out of the question.
- We need to see the relationship of height versus massing and how it appears on the property.

PRELIMINARY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The summary comments made through the stakeholder interviews provide context for a preliminary set of principles to guide the plan's development. They are:

- Preserve and enhance the character of downtown Bethel.
- Ensure compatibility and mutual benefits between new development and downtown (in scale, connectivity, and economic opportunities).
- Expand the range of transportation options and designs.
- Improve the regulatory environment to facilitate private investments.

COMMUNITY VOICES WORKSHOP

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUMMARY

The Community Voices workshop took place on October 1, 2015. It was the first public meeting of the Bethel Forward community engagement process. The over 100 participants conducted two activities: *Strong Places, Weak Places* and *Opportunities for the Future*. Raw data from those activities is available on line at:

<http://www.bethel-ct.gov/content/117/8612/11809.aspx>

Strong Places, Weak Places

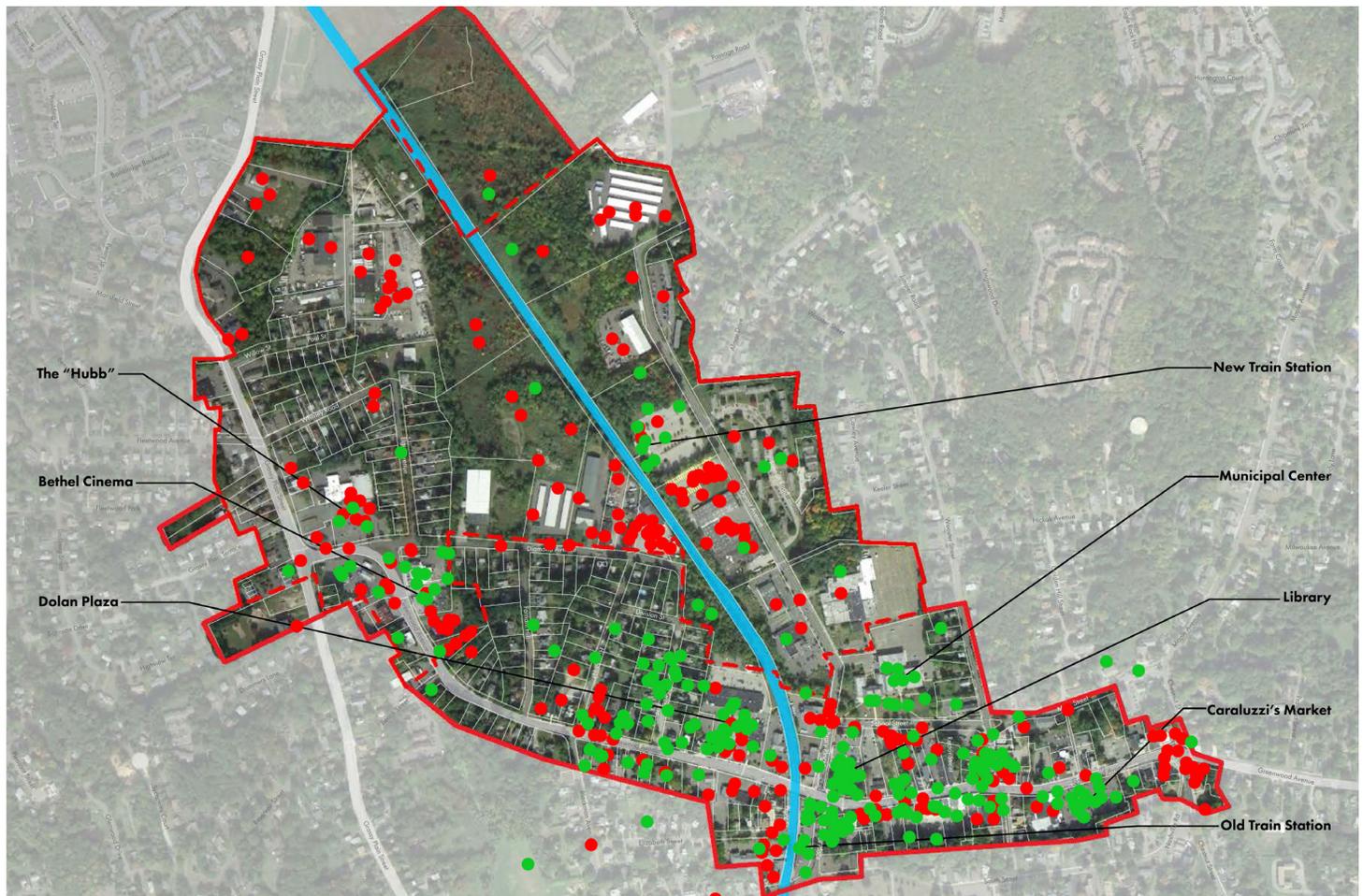
Participants, working in small groups of 10, identified places they liked (strong places) and places they did not like (weak places) within the TOD area. They marked the strong places with green dots and the weak places with red dots. They then talked about the reasons for their selections. A trained facilitator at each table collected and recorded this information. A total of 13 maps were compiled and digitized.

The identification of specific physical strengths and weaknesses enabled the DPZ team to better address those areas in the downtown plan.



Above – Volunteer facilitators at each table helped participants to agree on the three top strong and weak places. Doing so enabled them to define what made those places weak or strong.

Below – The map shows the combined results of the all 13 tables. It provides a detailed snapshot of physical conditions in the TOD area.



Opportunities for the Future

In *Opportunities for the Future* participants suggested ideas for improvements in the TOD area. A total of 208 ideas were collected and sorted according to 14 topics. This wealth of ideas led to the identification of nine preliminary goals.

Those goals were prioritized during the Community Choices workshop. They provide insights in areas that are critical to the plan and are listed below in order of priority. In parenthesis are the preference percentages.

- Attract and strengthen retail, restaurants, and other businesses by leveraging Bethel's arts and events and marketing the town's unique assets (59%).
- Maintain and enhance Bethel's character, streetscapes, and visual appearance (22%).
- Add downtown housing (8%)
- Enhance the pedestrian friendly qualities of Bethel – improve sidewalks throughout, add bike lanes and paths, use the wetlands for exercise trails and recreation, and connect different parts of downtown (8%).
- Address infrastructure and regulatory issues (1%)
- Create a major “community gathering” place as well as distinctive smaller open spaces (1%).
- Improve the flow of traffic and parking (0%) .

COMMUNITY VOICES

Below is a sample of public comments collected during the Community Voices workshop. They are presented verbatim.

- *Too much government money is involved. Who is funding this?*
- *I have high hopes for a well-thought-out, well-planned town with many open areas, greenways and cultural/community gatherings.*
- *I drive, so walkable is not a high priority.*
- *I am not alone in my need for affordable housing. Many, many of my friends are struggling to find a place to live in Bethel.*
- *I do not like high-density housing.*
- *I want to be able to use downtown Bethel, and it is useless now.*
- *I want to make Bethel the best it can be - reach it's full potential.*
- *Create a vital destination for residents and out-of-towners.*
- *I LOVE this town. It is a hidden gem. But small businesses are not surviving. We need more people on the streets.*



At the end of the evening, following the small group activities, each table reported the results of their work to the assembly.

COMMUNITY CHOICES WORKSHOP

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUMMARY

The Community Choices workshop took place on October 29, 2015. Attended by over 90 participants, it was the second public meeting of the Bethel Forward community engagement process. The purpose of the workshop was to transition from the input gathering to a more analytical phase of the project, in preparation for the charrette. The workshop consisted of two parts: updates and electronic keypad polling of participants.

Updates included a review of the Community Voices workshop's results; preliminary economic findings; land use observations; and an overview of sewer, water, and transportation findings.

Polling took place after each update and addressed 26 questions probing participants' support for elements of the plan. The results of each question were shown on a large screen, providing immediate and transparent feedback. The keypads proved to be a highly interactive method to engage Bethel's participants and to continue the wide-ranging conversation started by the interviews and the Community Voices workshop.

Even though the polling sample was limited, the results provided a snapshot of community preferences and were consistent with ideas and opinions expressed through all the public engagement activities.

Polling overview

Below is a brief summary of responses. More extensive data from this activity is available on line at: <http://www.bethel-ct.gov/content/117/8612/11809.aspx>

- **The largest group of participants, nearly 49%, were in the 45 to 64 age range...** This is not unusual as those cohorts are generally more engaged in community activities and tend to participate more. Interestingly, 23% of the participants were from the 25 to 44 age range, the most difficult to bring out to public meetings because of family demands or job mobility.
- **Participants knew Bethel...** 77% of the participants had lived in the Bethel area between 10 and 49 years. 10% had lived in the community more than 50 years. 13% had lived in the Bethel area for less than ten years. That knowledge gave authority and perspective to the results.
- When asked if they feared additional growth and development a majority of participants responded **not at all** (53%), fewer responded **a little** (36%), and 11% responded **yes**.
- In the economic arena, participants viewed the biggest problem facing downtown Bethel to be a **lack of a coordinated retail development and recruitment strategy** (43%), followed by **lack of community interest** (31%), and by **building appearance** (14%). They wanted **more independently owned businesses** (89%), than national chains (11%). They also wanted to see **restaurants** (42%), **clothing stores** (29%) and **specialty groceries** (25%) added to downtown.

- Regarding the area's character, 63% of workshop participants mentioned that what they liked most about Greenwood Avenue was the fact **that it is walkable**. And 67% of them believed that **connecting sidewalks throughout town** would most enhance the pedestrian friendly qualities of Bethel.
- They also believed that **improving the exterior maintenance of buildings** (39%), **limiting industrial development downtown** (23%), and **burying downtown power lines** (20%) would most improve the appearance of Bethel.
- A strong majority (68%) agreed that the **plan should preserve as a public amenity the extensive wetlands in the TOD area**. 80% wanted them to be **accessible to the public for passive recreation**.
- 81% believed it was somewhat important to very important to **connect the east and west sides of the track at or near the train station with a pedestrian/bike crossing**.
- 63% believed that in the past five years traffic has **gotten worse**. 38% believe that **no parking along Greenwood Avenue** would most improve the flow of traffic, followed by **better public transportation**, (20%), and **adding roundabouts at either end of Greenwood Avenue** (17%).



The Advisory Committee met regularly with the DPZ team, helped identify stakeholders to interview, facilitated the two workshops, reviewed preliminary goals, and acted as a sounding board to proposals and ideas.

The Community Choices and Voices public events which culminated on a larger, week long public design session, called a charrette. Previous studies, base data and information was collected and analyzed prior to the charrette.

The drawings and illustrations included in this Report are the result of a DPZ-led four-day public charrette held in Bethel Town Hall from November 16 - 19, 2015.

A charrette is an intensive planning workshop wherein designers and stakeholders collaborate on a shared vision for development. It provides a forum for ideas and offers the unique advantage of giving real-time feedback to the designers as planning proposals are developed. More importantly, it allows participants to be contributors to the Plan.

DPZ Partners (DPZ) led a team comprised of the following consultants, herein after referred to as the DPZ Team.

- **Gianni Longo & Associates:** for public outreach;
- **Robert Orr:** local architect and CT TOD expert;
- **CDM Smith:** for transportation planning and infrastructure;
- **CLUE Group:** for market analysis and positioning;
- **Catherine Johnson:** local CT planner; and
- **Massengale & Co.:** for street design.

The DPZ Team, and the Town of Bethel jointly kicked-off the charrette. Upon arrival, the DPZ Team toured Bethel, while documenting its character. The subsequent days were spent designing and discussing alternatives for the site, as well as sketching an architectural character fitting for Bethel’s history and climate. As a public and open charrette, interested residents and stakeholders were invited to drop by the studio during the entire week to provide input or catch up on design ideas. Additionally, there were two key presentations of the master plans: a mid presentation on day two and a final charrette presentation on day four. Photos of the charrette events are included in the following page.

The results of the stockholder interviews, and public workshops (Community Voices and Community Choices) were used as a foundation to guide the designs produced during the charrette. The seven goals defined by the community underpinned the evolution of the master plan and greatly influenced the proposals.

BETHEL FORWARD CHARRETTE SCHEDULE

	Monday November 16, 2015	Tuesday November 17, 2016	Wednesday November 18, 2015	Thursday November 19, 2015
9:00 AM	Team Travel & Set-Up Studio	DPZ Team Briefing	DPZ Team Briefing	DPZ Team Briefing
10:00 AM		TOD area Property Owners Meeting	Architects, Builders, and Engineers Meeting	Design / Production
11:00 AM				
Noon	Site Tour	Design	Design	
1:00 PM	CTDOT Transportation Meeting			
2:00 PM		Design	Community Groups Meeting	Design / Production
3:00 PM			Client Project Briefing	
4:00 PM	Design Session	Design	Design	Design / Production
5:00 PM				
6:00 PM				
7:00 PM	Commission & Board Meeting	Opening Presentation	Client / DPZ Progress Review	Final Charrette Presentation
8:00 PM	Advisory Committee & Town Staff Meeting			

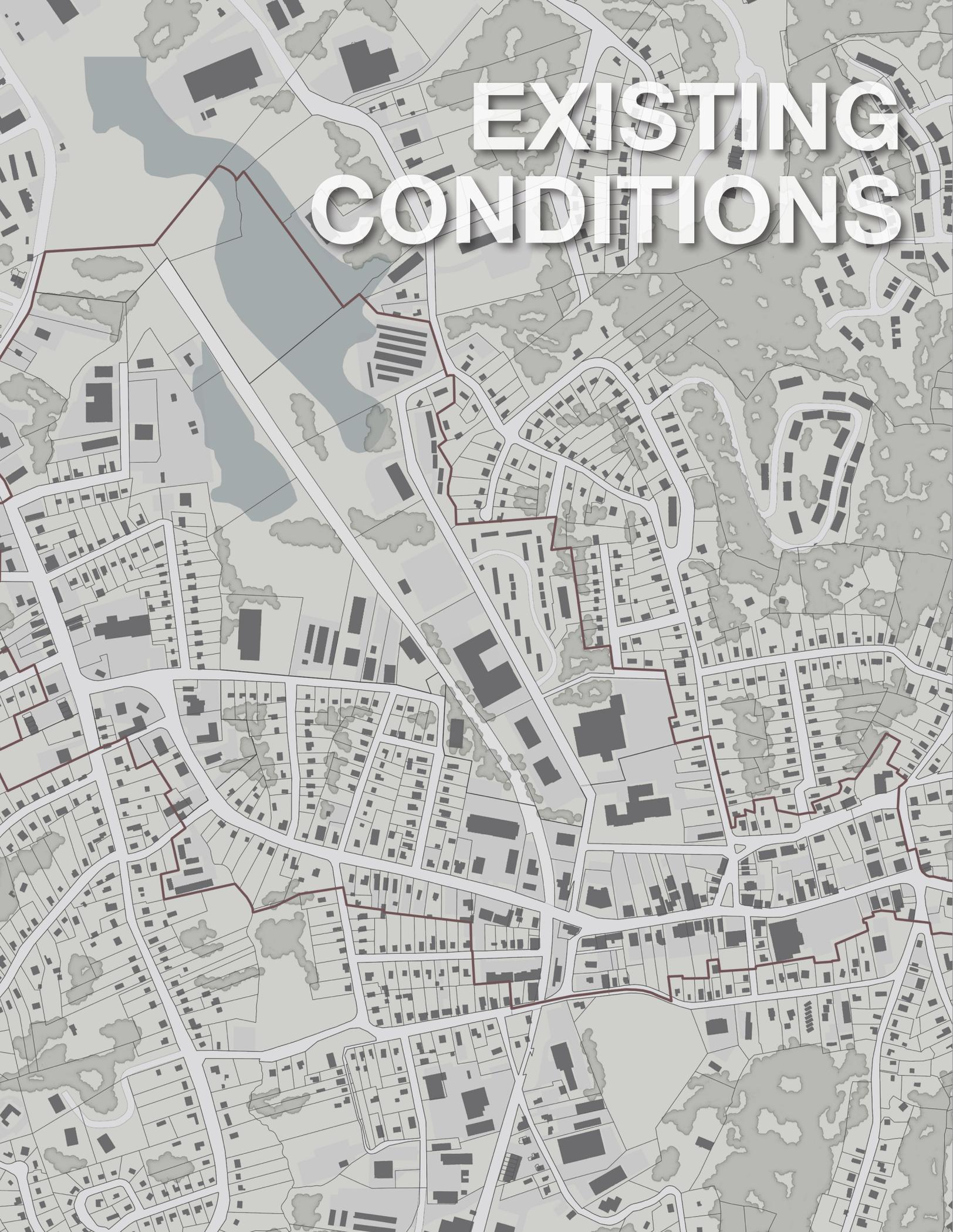
COMMUNITY CHOICES WORKSHOP

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUMMARY

CHARRETTE DESIGN SESSIONS & MEETINGS



EXISTING CONDITIONS



This section puts Bethel into its regional context followed by illustrations of existing conditions on the ground, documenting constraints and opportunities within the TOD area. These include: rights-of-ways, streets, plots, existing buildings, transit options and connectivity, zoning, etc. These include, in order, regional and local transit, regional and local context TOD boundary, environmental analysis, physical analysis and zoning



- Metro North Rail Line
- Stops & Stations

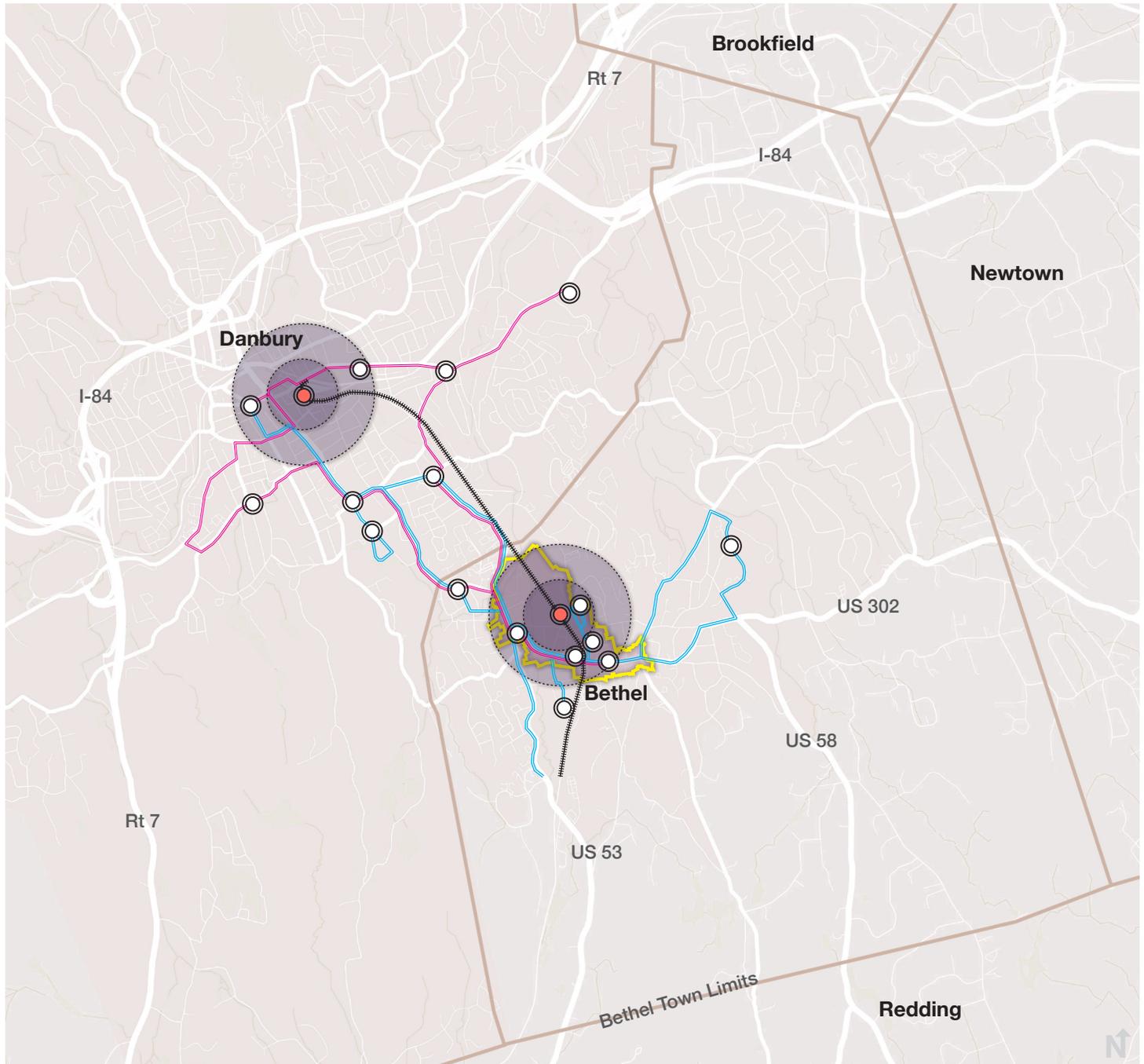
METRO NORTH REGION

The Town of Bethel is located along the Metro North Line and is roughly a 60-minute ride to NYC. It is the second to last stop on the line.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

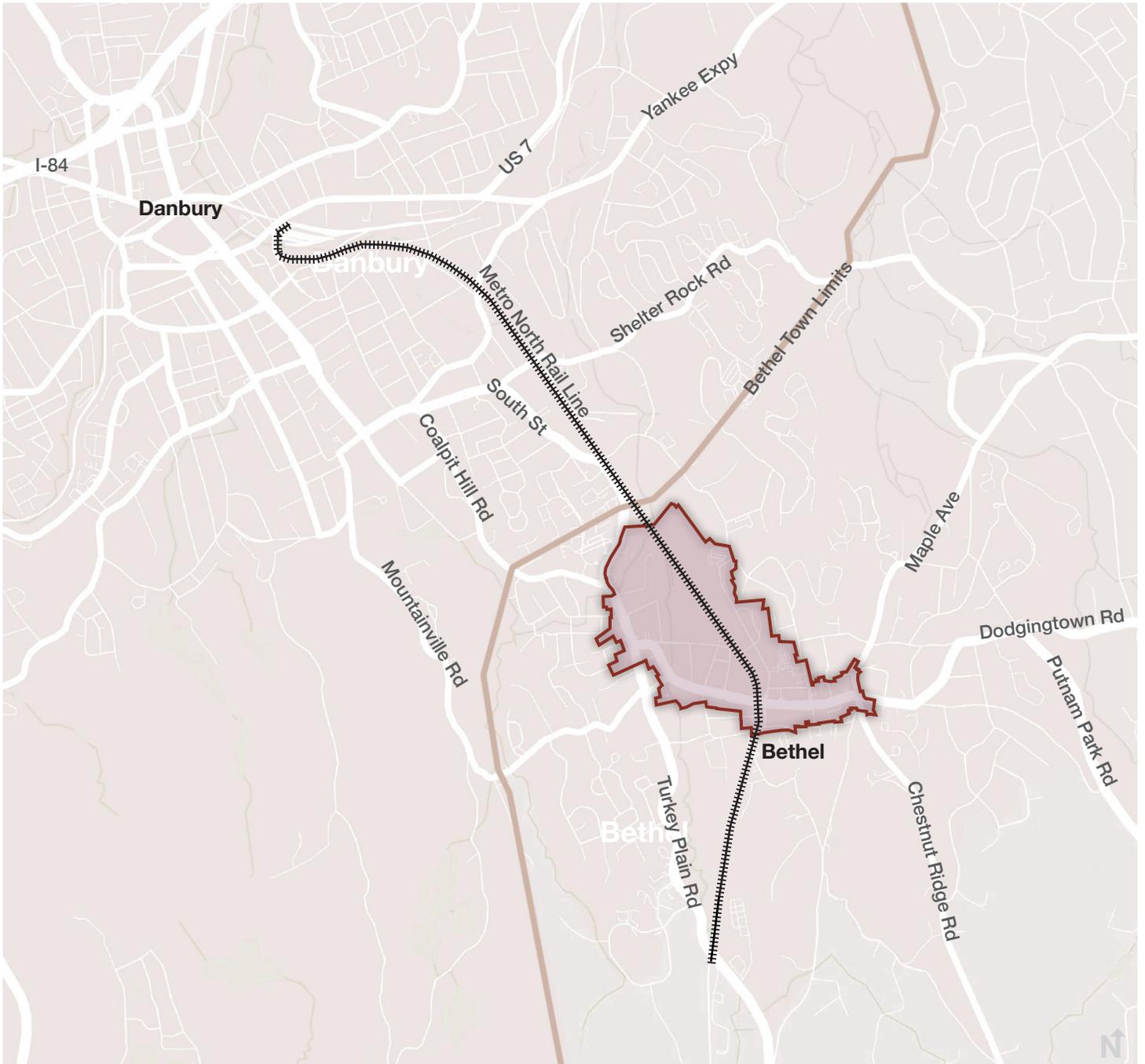
EXISTING CONDITIONS

LOCAL TRANSIT ROUTES



- Bethel Center Bus Route
- Newtown Road-Bethel Loop
- Metro North Rail Line
- Bus Stops
- Rail Stations
- TOD Area Boundary (268.7 ac)
- Pedestrian & TOD sheds (1/4 mile & 1/2 radii)

Within the TOD area there are five Bethel Center Bus Stations, which are at: Dolan Plaza, the Municipal Center, the Sycamore Diner, PT Barnum Sq and Bishop Curtis, all important destinations.



- Metro North Rail Line
- TOD Area Boundary (268.7 ac)

The closest town to downtown Bethel is Danbury, which is approximately 2.5 miles away.

The TOD area represents 2.5% of Bethel's land area.

TOD AREA

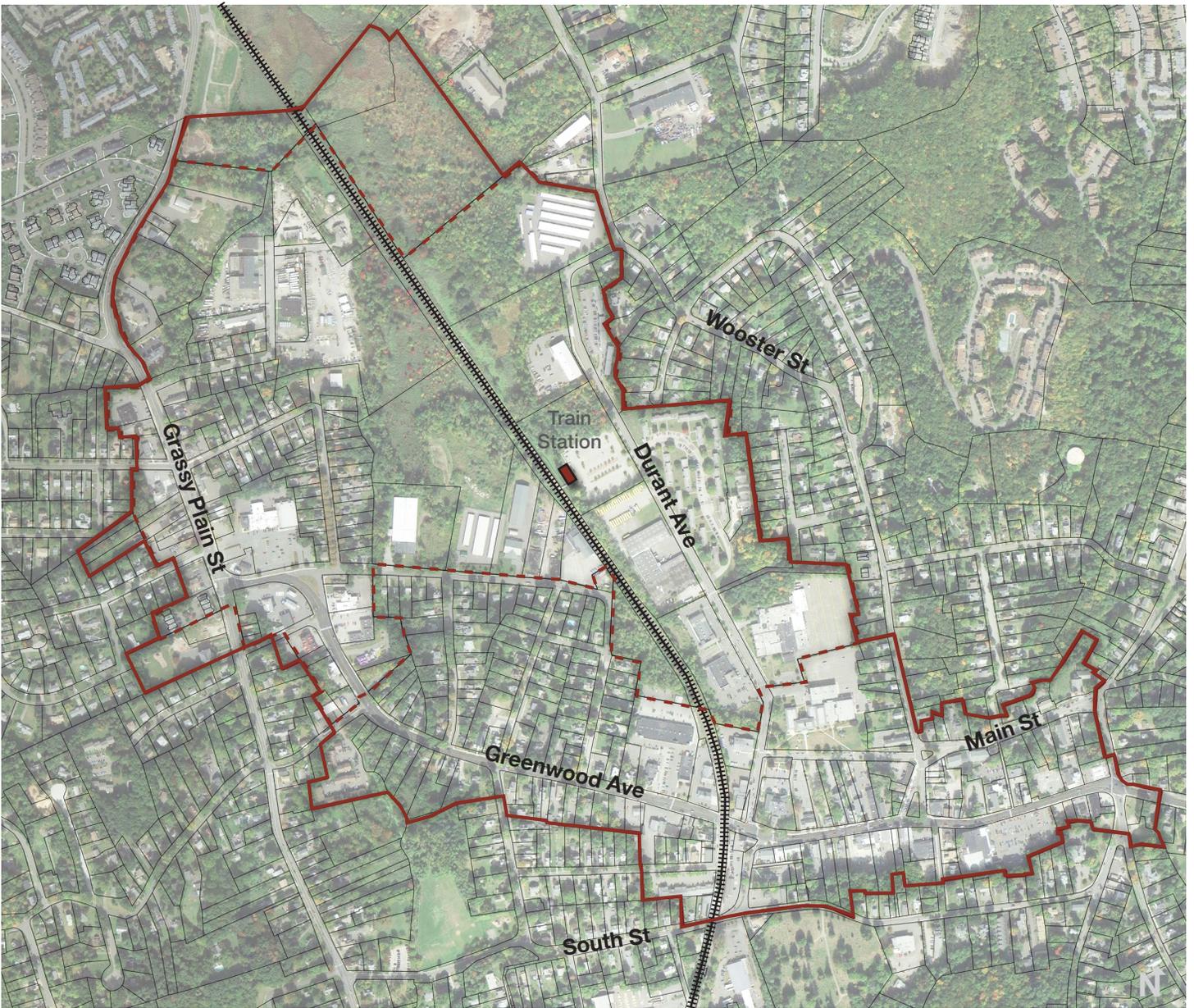
EXISTING CONDITIONS

ORIGINAL TOD BOUNDARY



— Original TOD Area Boundary (154.4 ac)

▨▨▨▨▨ Metro North Rail Line



— TOD Area Boundary (268.7 ac)

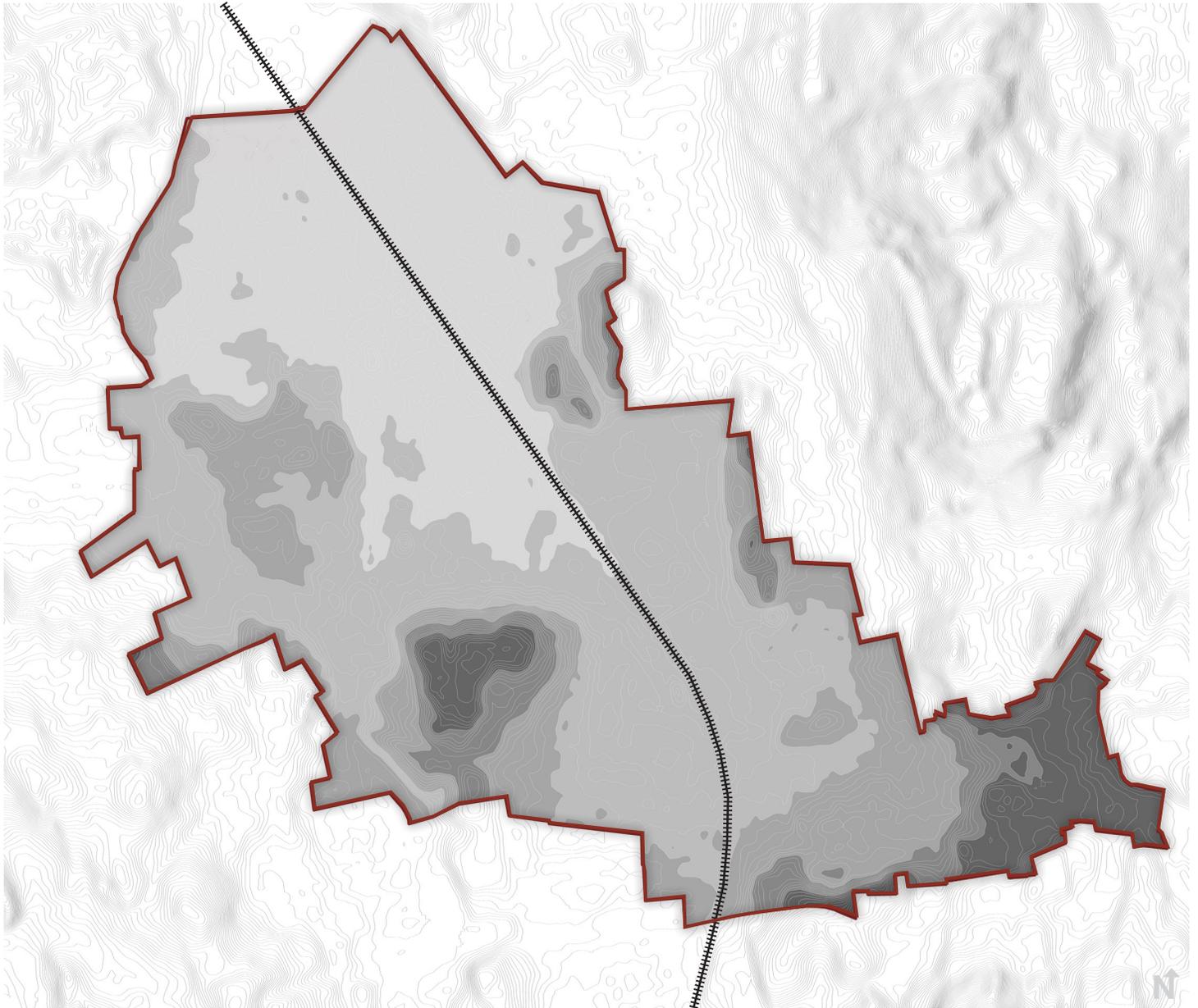
▨▨▨▨ Metro North Rail Line

The boundary for the TOD area was significantly expanded, (doubled) to include a greater part of Bethel's downtown.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

TOPOGRAPHY



- 0
- +14 ft
- +28 ft
- +42 ft
- +56 ft
- TOD Area Boundary (268.7 ac)
- Metro North Rail Line

The site gently slopes from the south-east corner down to the north-west corner and wetlands. The gradation of dark areas represent the highest point, while the lightest show lower draws. There is about a 50-ft. difference in elevation across the entire site, mostly due to two predominant hills.

OPEN SPACE



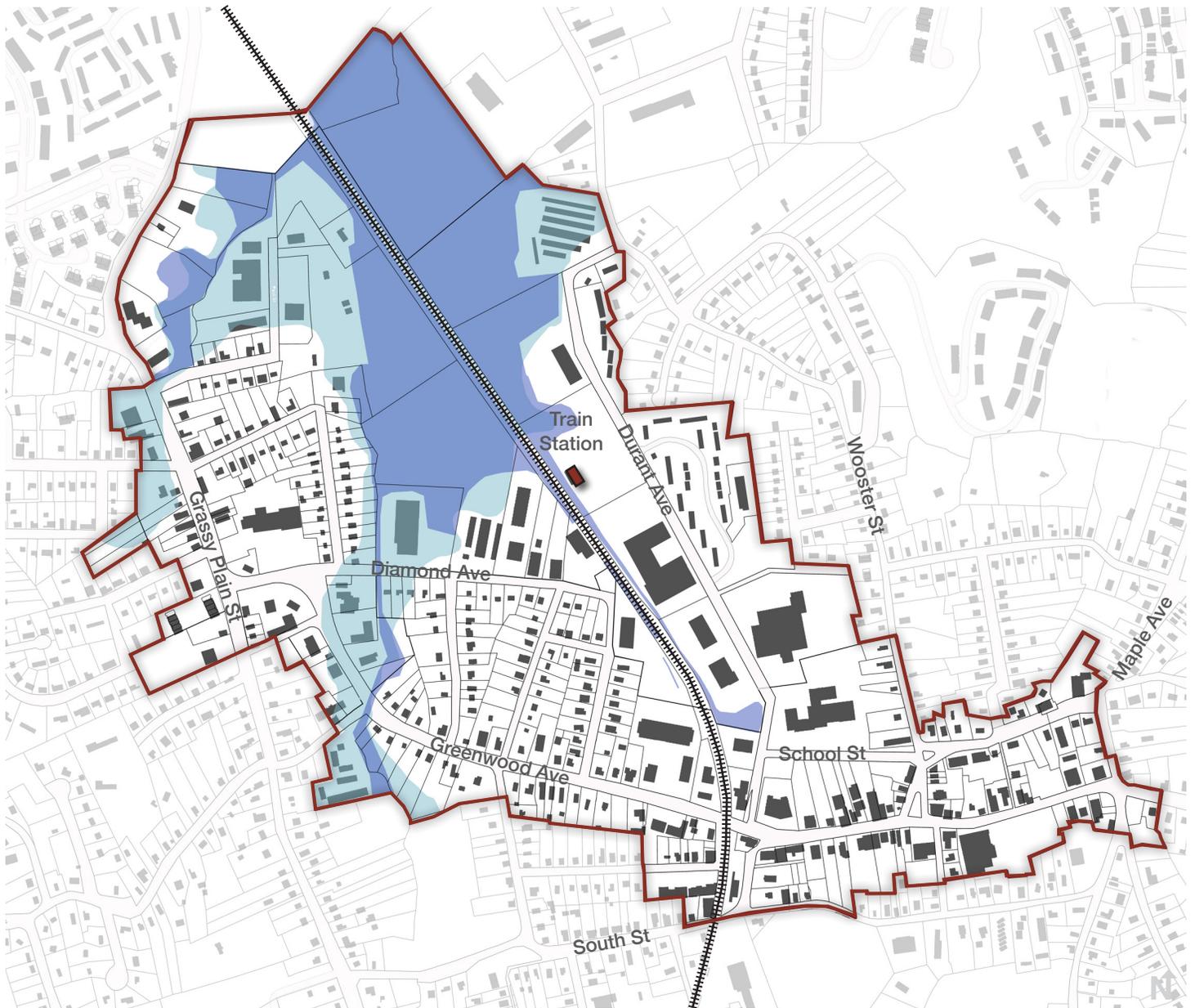
- Existing Buildings
- Existing Civic Open Space (1.9 ac)
- TOD Area Boundary (268.7 ac)
- Metro North Rail Line

Highlighted here are the civic public open spaces as they existed in November, 2015. In addition to PT Barnum Square there are two greens on civic sites: the first fronting the Municipal Center and the other, the library, all within the same general area. Public consensus indicated a lack of available open space within the TOD area.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

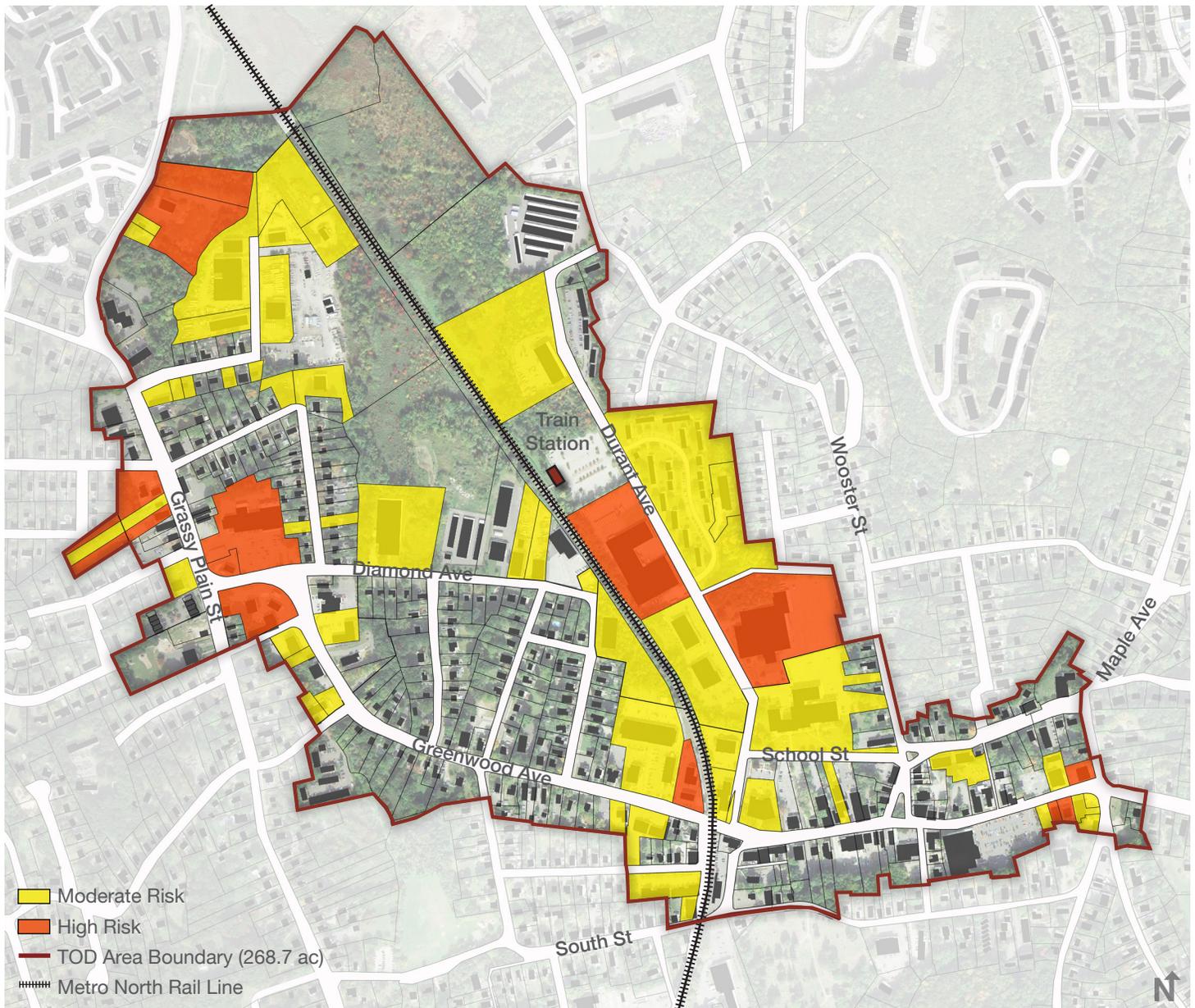
WETLANDS



- Existing Buildings
- Wetlands
- Flood Plain
- TOD Area Boundary (268.7 ac)
- Metro North Rail Line

The existing mapped wetlands have been confirmed as both wetlands and floodplain that are associated with the Sympaug Brook and its tributaries. Field reviewed wetlands extend beyond what has been mapped as hydric soils.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT



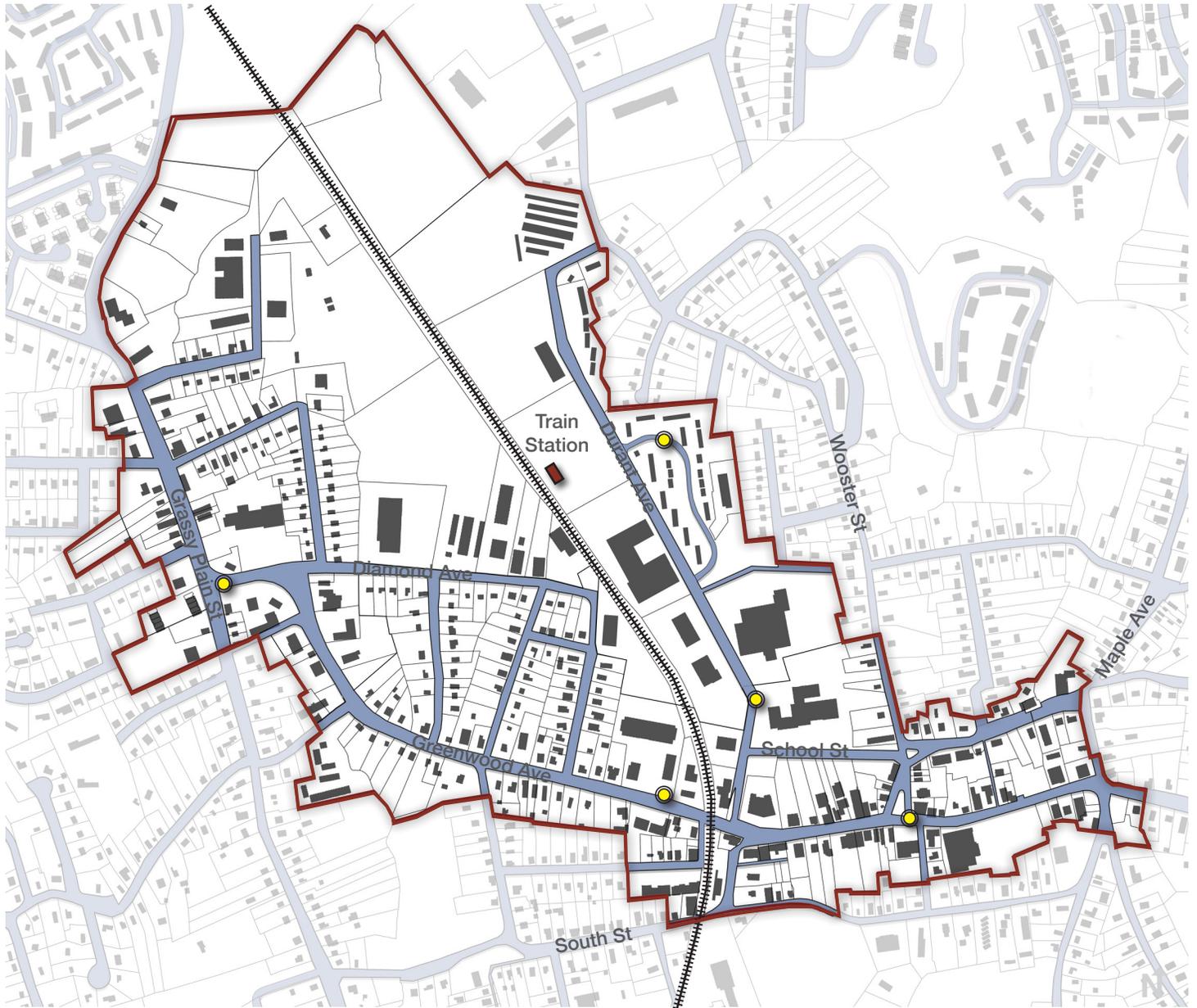
Based on the information collected from the site reconnaissance and review of the Environmental Data Resources (EDR) Report, each property within the TOD area was assigned an environmental risk of low, moderate or high. Properties classified with a low environmental risk did not have known environmental records and did not present visual evidence of environmental concern. They did not have any known environmental history (e.g. reported leaks, spills, releases, NOVs, etc.), were not formerly or currently used for a higher environmental risk activity (e.g. gas station, dry cleaner, industrial activity) and did not, based on a visual site review, present any reason to suspect environmental concern. This will include most of the residential and light-commercial properties (e.g. restaurants, boutiques, etc.) and undeveloped wetland/open space areas.

Properties with a moderate classification include properties with a potential for environmental concern due to the current use of the property or a record of a prior spill or leaking underground storage tank. Properties categorized as having a higher potential risk for environmental concern during development include current and former gas station properties, current and former dry cleaning establishments and industrial/commercial properties with a known history of prior releases to the environment. For the medium to high risk properties, the State and EPA should be looked at for Brownfield assessment grants and loans. As the projects progress, additional brownfields funding is possible for investigation and remediation activities.

PHYSICAL ANALYSIS & DOCUMENTATION

EXISTING CONDITIONS

STREET NETWORK



- Existing Buildings
- Existing Streets
- Train Station
- Bus Stops
- TOD Area Boundary (268.7 ac)
- Metro North Rail Line

The diagram illustrates the network of existing streets. The network is rather sparse and disconnected throughout the TOD area, with the exception of the immediate vicinity of the downtown.

Most importantly, there is only two railroad crossing within this area, (lower Greenwood Ave) greatly hindering the full potential of a TOD plan.

BUILDINGS



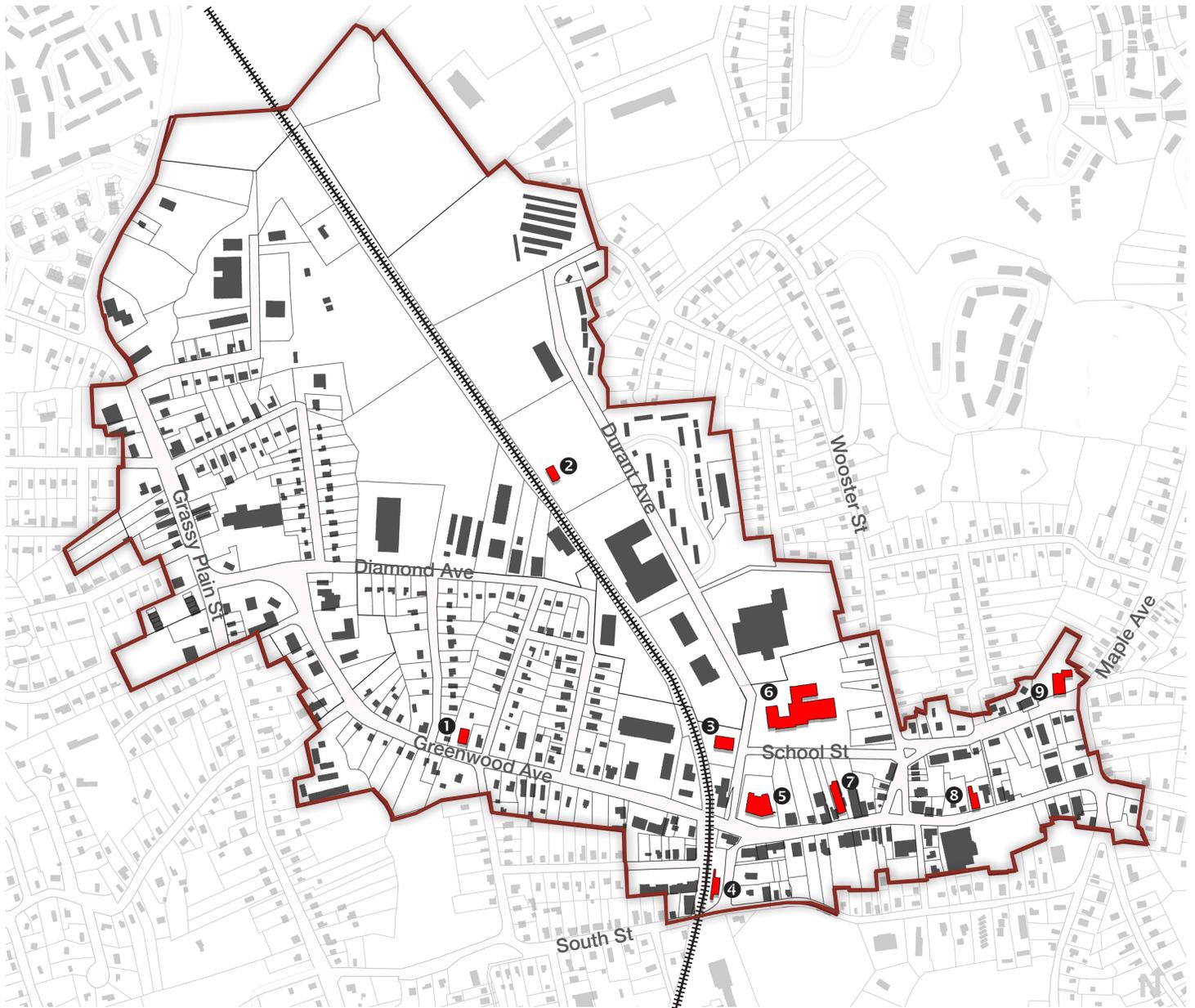
- Existing Buildings
- Train Station
- TOD Area Boundary (268.7 ac)
- Metro North Rail Line

There is a variety of buildings within the TOD area including within the historic downtown area, stable residential neighborhoods and transitioning industrial areas. They include single-family homes, multi-family homes, commercial buildings, retail buildings, industrial buildings, civic buildings and mixed-use buildings.

PHYSICAL ANALYSIS & DOCUMENTATION

EXISTING CONDITIONS

CIVIC BUILDINGS

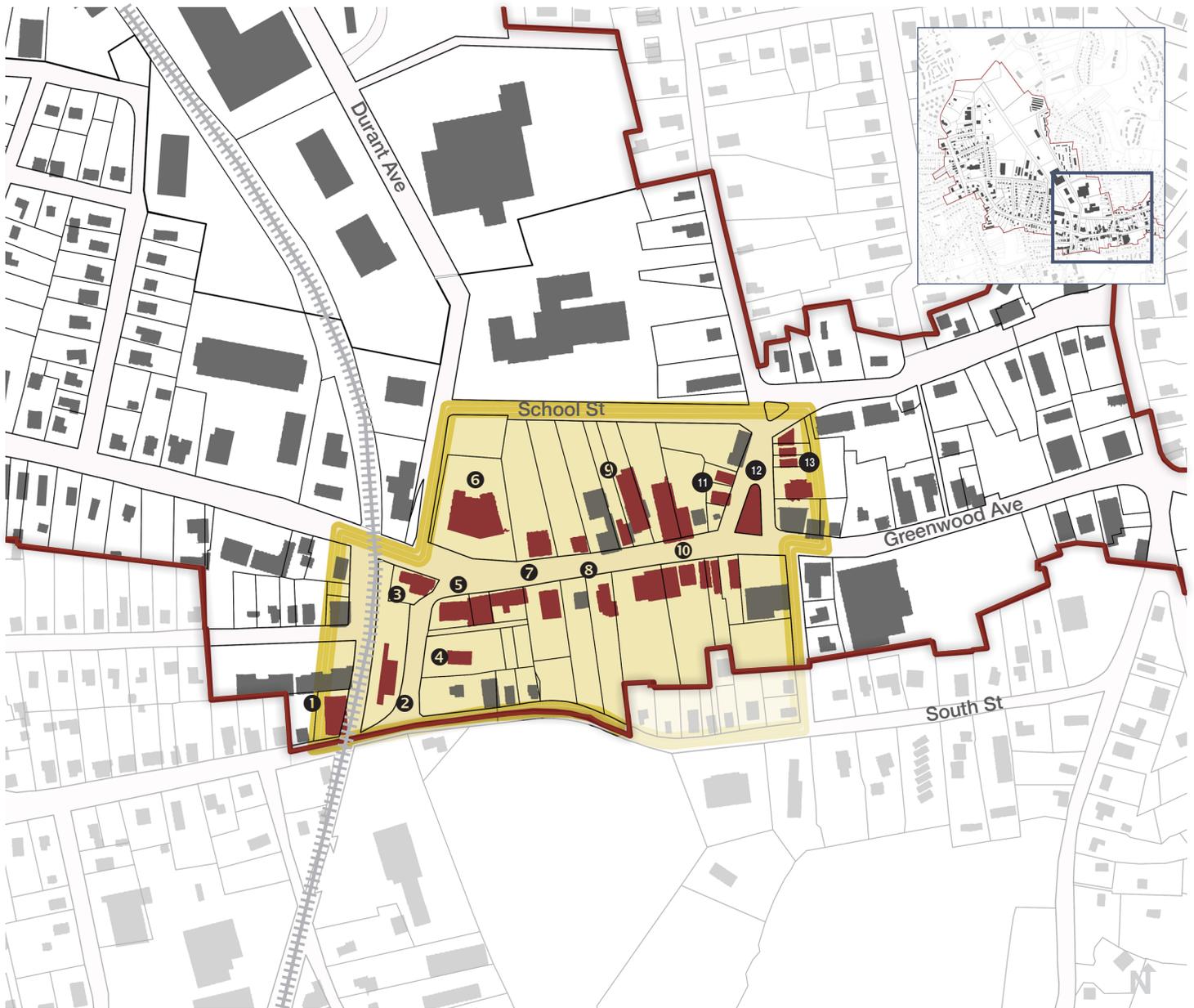


- Existing Buildings
- Existing Civic Buildings
- TOD Area Boundary (268.7 ac)
- Metro North Rail Line

This diagram highlights the civic buildings within the TOD area.

1. Bethel Seventh Day Adventist Church
2. Train Station
3. Post Office
4. Old Train Station
5. Bethel Library
6. Bethel Municipal Center
7. Bethel United Methodist Church
8. St Thomas Episcopal Church
9. First Congregational Church

HISTORIC DISTRICT



- Existing Buildings
- Historic / Contributing Buildings
- Historic District Boundary (20.9 ac)
- TOD Area Boundary (268.7 ac)
- Metro North Rail Line

1. 77 South St
2. 5 Depot Pl
3. 190 Greenwood Ave
4. 12 Depot Pl
5. 170-188 Greenwood Ave
6. 189 Greenwood Ave
7. 158 & 159 Greenwood Ave
8. 154 & 153 Greenwood Ave
9. 125-141 Greenwood Ave
10. 126-146 Greenwood Ave
11. 6 & 8 PT Barnum Sq
12. PT Barnum Sq
13. 9-23 PT Barnum Sq

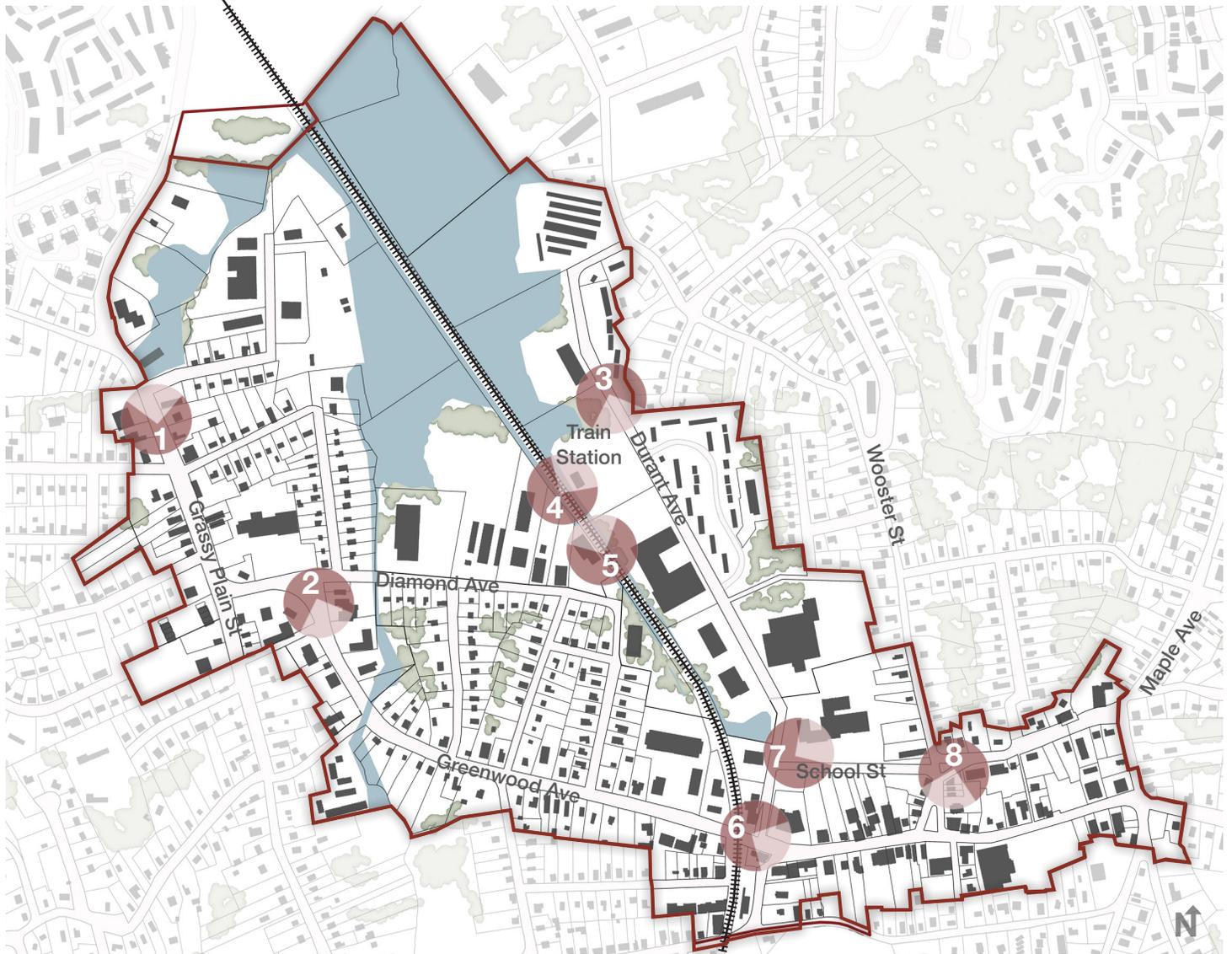
The highlighted area is on the National Register of Historic Places - Greenwood Avenue Historic District. The red buildings are the contributing buildings within the historic district.

Historic tax credits are available for the adaptive re-use of these buildings.

PHYSICAL ANALYSIS & DOCUMENTATION

EXISTING CONDITIONS

SITE PHOTOS & KEY



1. Grassy Plain St & Willow St



2. Greenwood Ave

PHYSICAL ANALYSIS & DOCUMENTATION

EXISTING CONDITIONS



3. Durant Ave near Bethel Station



4. Bethel Station



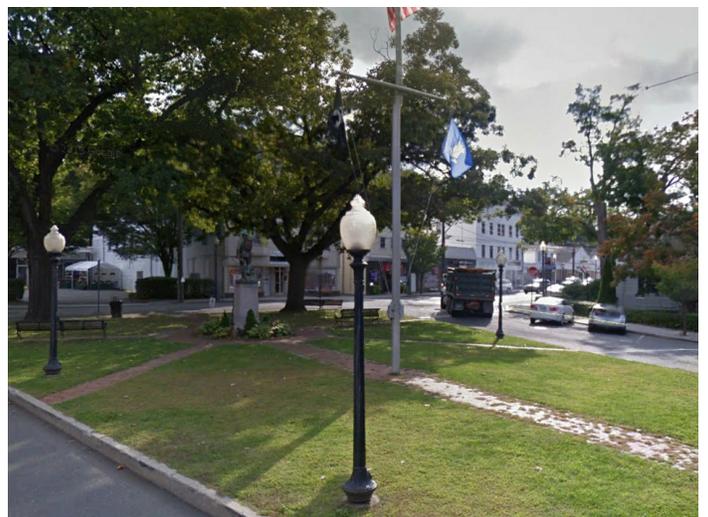
5. Metro North Line



6. Greenwood Ave across from the library



7. Municipal Center

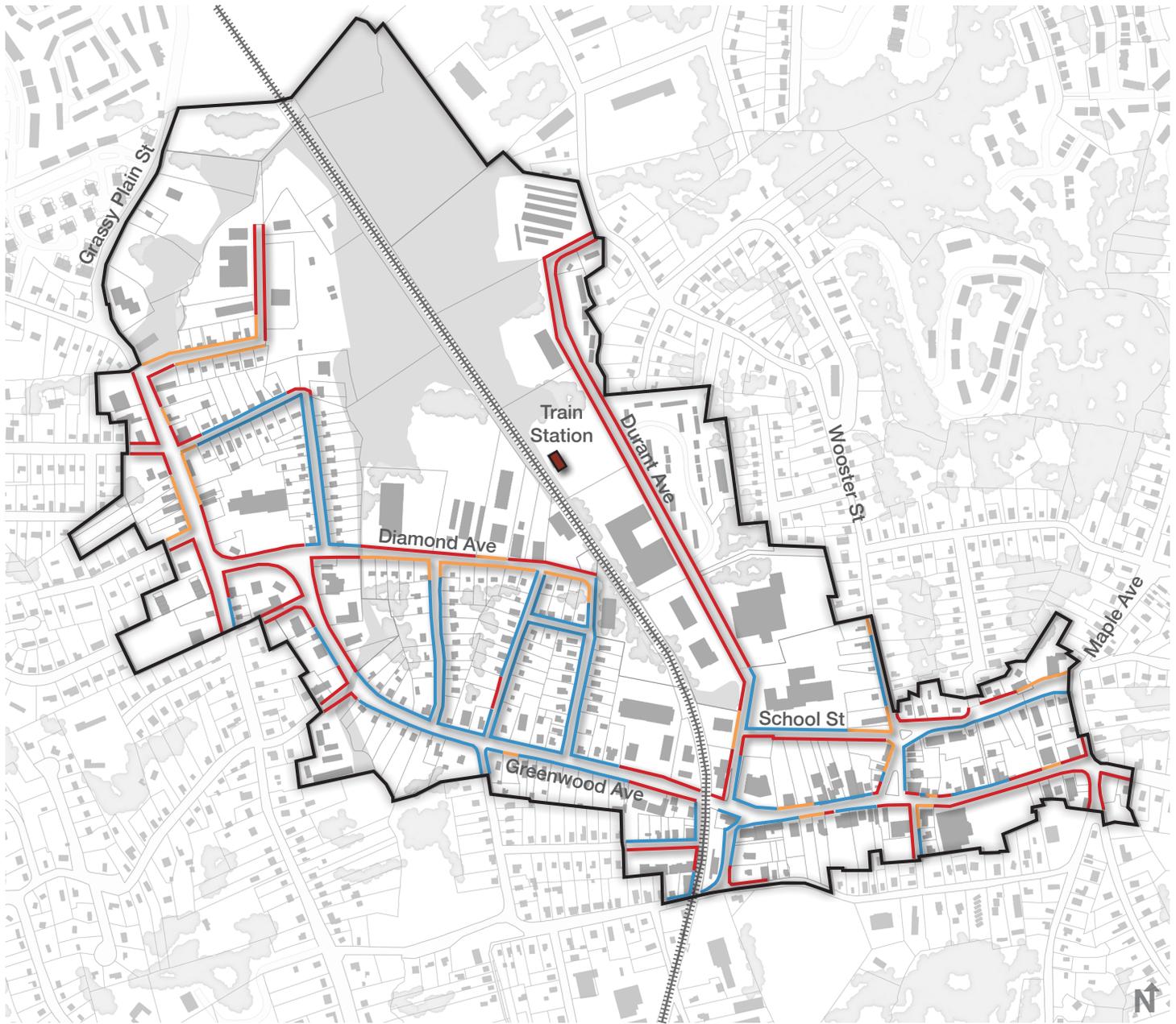


8. PT Barnum Square

PHYSICAL ANALYSIS & DOCUMENTATION

EXISTING CONDITIONS

FRONTAGE ANALYSIS



- Existing Buildings
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- TOD area Boundary (268.7 ac)
- Metro North Rail Line

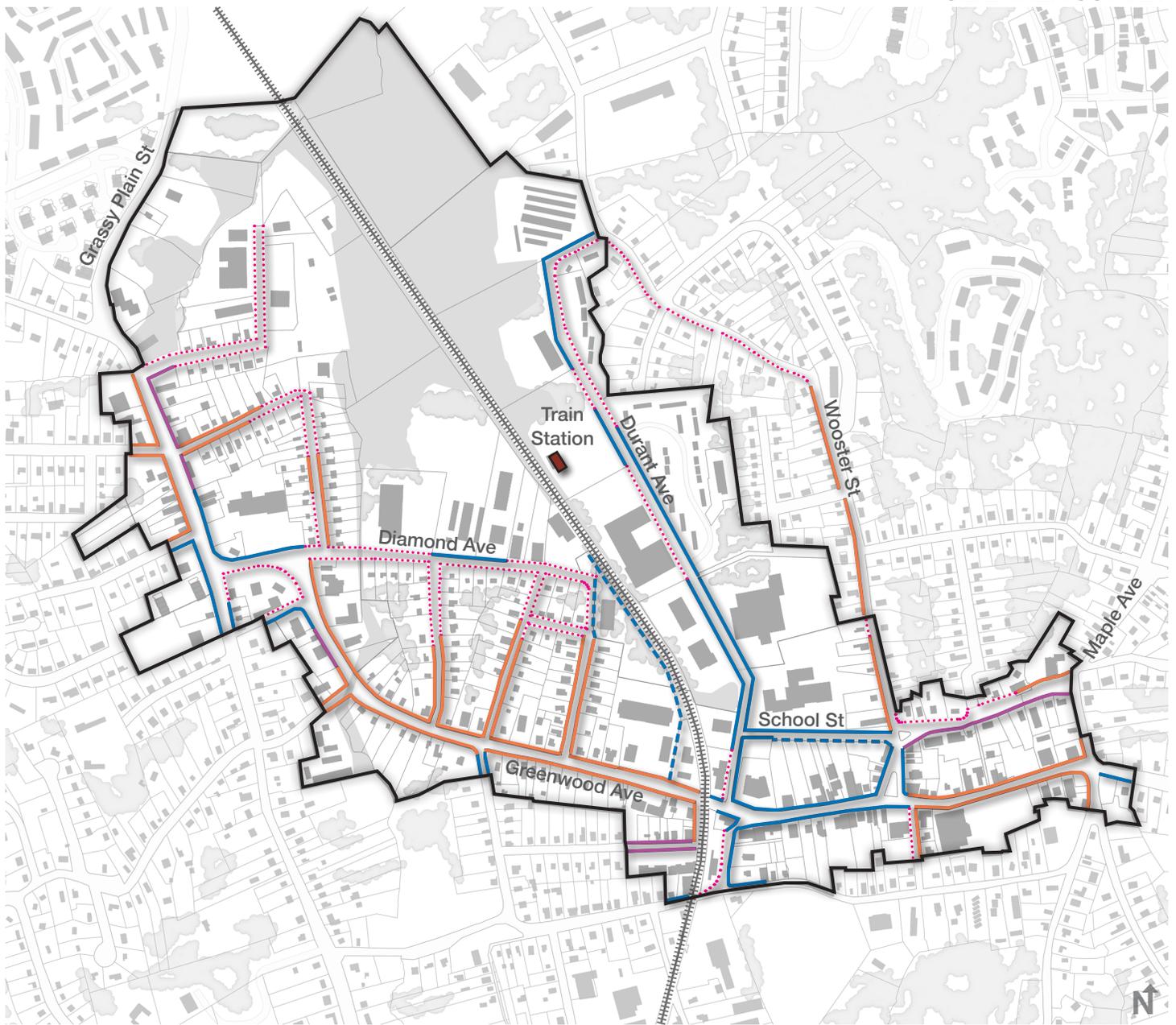
Street frontages were assessed throughout the TOD area and classified into three categories:

Good: Those frontages which have a consistent urban fabric with sidewalks and street trees and need little to no help and are generally pedestrian friendly. Investments here should capitalize on existing assets.

Fair: These frontages are acceptable, but could be improved through small-scale interventions or maintenance such as: filling gaps along sidewalks, street planting and cleaned up retail frontages. Investments in areas along good frontages first should be prioritized in order to complete good streets.

Poor: These frontages are not pedestrian friendly; they lack any consistent urban fabric, many have interrupted sidewalks and/or are simply not favorable to a comfortable pedestrian experience. These areas will require the greatest efforts in public and private investment.

SIDEWALK SURVEY



- Existing Buildings
- No Sidewalk
- Sidewalk in Poor Condition
- Sidewalk in Fair Condition
- Sidewalk in Good Condition
- New Sidewalk Planned
- TOD area Boundary (268.7 ac)
- Metro North Rail Line

Critical voids and deficiencies in the downtown sidewalk network within the TOD area have been identified. To create a successful TOD, there must be the necessary infrastructure to support it. Establishing a safe, accessible, convenient and pedestrian friendly sidewalk network is the first, most basic and significant step in creating a public transportation network to the train station and throughout the TOD area. Providing the sidewalk network infrastructure and critical connections will promote the redevelopment of parcels within the TOD area and surrounding the train station. And, as TOD development occurs, the sidewalks will promote a healthy lifestyle, increase social interaction and provide convenient routes to adjacent commercial areas thereby promoting economic development.

PHYSICAL ANALYSIS & DOCUMENTATION

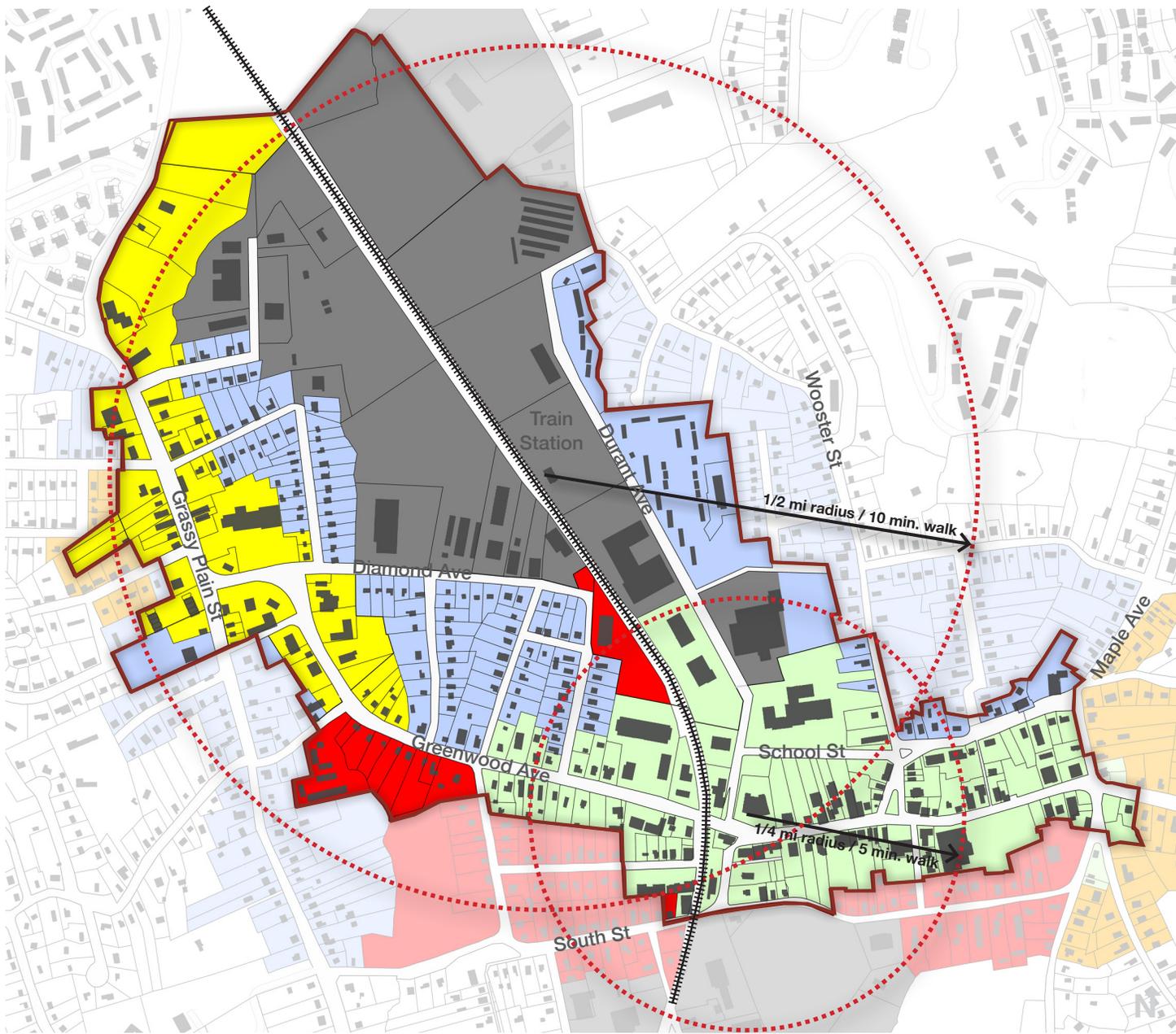
EXISTING CONDITIONS

EXISTING STUDY AREA



- Existing Buildings
- Wetlands
- Tree line
- TOD area Boundary (268.7 ac)
- Metro North Rail Line

The TOD area indicating plot lines, streets, rights-of-ways, wetlands, existing buildings and large tree areas.



- RR-10 (Multi-Family Residential)
- RMO (Professional Office)
- C (Commercial)
- VC (Village Center)
- I (Industrial)

- TOD area Boundary (268.7 ac)
- Metro North Rail Line
- Pedestrian & TOD Sheds (5 min. & 10 min. walk)

In and around the new train station, the site is predominantly zoned industrial, which will likely be rezoned to accommodate more TOD friendly uses. The remainder of the TOD area is more appropriately zoned and accommodates: commercial, retail, mixed-use buildings and residential uses of varying densities.

SCALE COMPARISON

EXISTING CONDITIONS

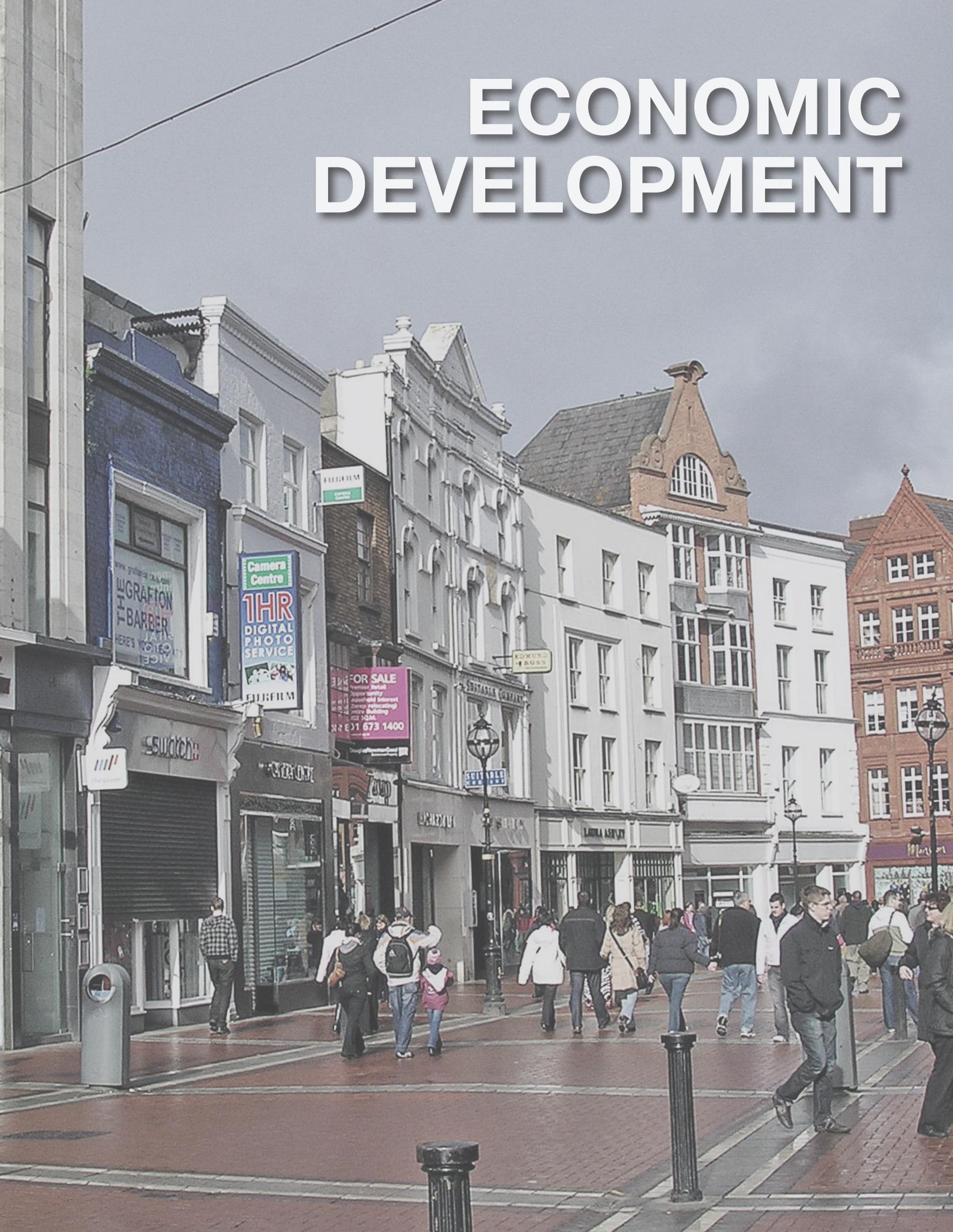
A scale comparison is an effective tool used by planners to demonstrate similarities in the size and character of existing and recognized towns and communities to the site in question.

It provides a greater understanding of local context beginning with an exploration of existing or similar settlements from contemporary developments in the region or from around the country.

For this project, two comparisons were made. The 268 acre Bethel TOD area is superimposed onto two Connecticut small towns with a train station within their downtown area. They are Meriden and Milford.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



INTRODUCTION

This section provides an overview of demographic and economic characteristics and trends that have shaped Bethel in recent years and that will likely shape the community over the next several decades.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS & TRENDS

Population growth: Bethel’s population is growing at a modest rate – a 3.8 percent increase between the 2010 Census of Population and the Census Bureau’s 2014 American Community Survey, or just slightly less than one percent annually (Table 1). This is roughly the rate of growth the town has experienced since 2000, and roughly in line with the rates of growth of Fairfield County. All three jurisdictions – the town, county, and state – grew at a fast clip in the early- and mid-20th century, absorbing commuters from the New York metropolitan area. All three are still growing, but no longer at the blistering speed of the past.



TABLE 1:

Population change between 1940-2014 in Bethel, Fairfield County, and the State of Connecticut.
 Source: US Census Bureau, Census of Population and American Community Survey.

Year	Bethel		Fairfield County		Connecticut	
	Population	% Change	Population	% Change	Population	% Change
1940	4,105		418,384		1,709,242	
1950	5,104	24.3%	504,342	20.5%	2,007,280	17.4%
1960	8,200	60.7%	653,589	29.6%	2,535,234	26.3%
1970	10,495	33.5%	792,814	21.3%	3,031,709	19.6%
1980	16,004	46.2%	807,143	1.8%	3,107,576	2.5%
1990	17,541	9.6%	827,645	2.5%	3,287,116	5.8%
2000	18,067	3.0%	882,567	6.6%	3,405,565	3.6%
2010	18,377	2.9%	905,342	3.9%	3,545,837	4.9%
2014	19,078	3.8%	934,215	3.2%	3,592,053	1.3%

Sources: US Census Bureau, Census of Population and American Community Survey

Households: Bethel’s rate of household formation is also growing at a modest rate (Table 2). The town added 701 households between 2010-2014 – a 3.8 percent increase, versus 3.2 percent in Fairfield County and a 1.3 percent increase in the overall state. Every new household generates roughly \$19,500 in new demand for retail products and services, so the 701 households it added between 2010-2013 brought \$13.7 million in new retail demand to the community.

Age: The median age of Bethel’s and Fairfield County’s residents increased slightly between 2010-2014, by 1.94 percent and 1.3 percent, respectively (Table 2). The median age of a Connecticut resident increased by 2.0 percent during this time period, from 39.5 years to 40.3 years.

Employment: The number of Bethel residents in the labor force grew between 2010-2014, with increases in both those in the labor force who are employed and unemployed (Table 4). The number of residents not in the labor force (meaning those who are not employed and who are not looking for work) dropped by 20 percent.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TABLE 2: Various demographic characteristics for Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut, 2010-2014.

Characteristic	Bethel			Fairfield County			Connecticut		
	2010	2014	% Ch	2010	2014	% Ch	2010	2014	% Ch
Total Population	18,377	19,078	3.8%	905,342	934,215	3.2%	3,545,837	3,592,053	1.3%
Median Age	41.7	42.3	1.4%	39.1	39.6	1.3%	39.5	40.3	2.0%
Total Households	6,590	7,071	7.3%	331,782	333,502	0.5%	1,359,218	1,356,206	-0.2%
Average Household Size	2.68	2.67	-0.4%	2.52	2.74	8.7%	2.52	2.56	1.6%
Median Household Income	\$83,483	\$85,589	2.5%	\$81,268	82,283	1.2%	67,740	69,899	3.2%

Sources: US Census Bureau, Census of Population and American Community Survey

TABLE 3: Educational attainment of residents of Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut, 2010-2014.

Educational Attainment	Bethel			Fairfield County			Connecticut		
	2010	2014	% Ch	2010	2014	% Ch	2010	2014	% Ch
Pop. 25 Years and Over	12,792	13,053	2.9%	607,347	630,525	3.8%	2,398,283	2,455,577	2.4%
Less than High School Grad	6.3%	6.6%	4.8%	11.7%	10.8%	-7.7%	11.6%	10.5%	-9.5%
High School Graduate	29.0%	25.2%	-13.1%	23.8%	22.5%	-5.5%	28.6%	27.6%	-3.5%
Some College	23.3%	26.9%	15.5%	20.9%	21.2%	1.4%	24.6%	24.9%	1.2%
Bachelor's Degree	25.5%	24.1%	-5.5%	24.6%	25.5%	3.7%	19.9%	20.6%	3.5%
Graduate or Prof. Degree	15.8%	17.2%	8.9%	19.0%	20.0%	5.3%	15.3%	16.4%	7.2%

Sources: US Census Bureau, Census of Population and American Community Survey

TABLE 4: Employment status of residents of Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut, 2010-2014.

Employment Status	Bethel			Fairfield County			Connecticut		
	2010	2014	% Ch	2010	2014	% Ch	2010	2014	% Ch
Pop. 15 Years and Over	14,553	15,407	5.9%	703,812	736,025	4.6%	2,820,837	2,895,925	2.7%
In Labor Force	10,012	11,552	15.4%	475,682	504,177	6.0%	1,919,849	1,963,437	2.2%
Employed	9,328	10,451	12.1%	439,341	455,599	3.7%	1,765,549	1,766,514	0.0%
Unemployed	6.9%	9.5%	38.1%	5.1%	9.6%	27.7%	5.2%	9.4%	23.6%
Not in Labor Force	31.2%	25.0%	-19.8%	32.4%	31.5%	-2.8%	31.9%	32.2%	0.9%

Sources: US Census Bureau, Census of Population and American Community Survey

Occupations: Almost half of Bethel's residents (43 percent) work in management, business, science, and arts occupations, with sales and office occupations accounting for more than one-quarter of the town's jobs (Table 6). Jobs in service occupations grew by the largest percentage between 2010-2014, though – a 37 percent increase. Jobs in natural resources, construction, and maintenance dropped by about 2.5 percent.

Industries: Businesses in the educational services, health care, and social assistance industries are Bethel's largest employers, accounting for almost one-quarter of all the town's jobs (Table 7). Three other industry groups – manufacturing, retail trade, and professional, scientific, management, administration, and waste remediation – each account for around 12-14 percent of the community's jobs. Most industry groups added jobs between 2010-2014; only two lost jobs, and only one of those – wholesale trade – experienced significant job loss, dropping from 307 jobs in 2010 to 151 in 2014.

TABLE 5: Class of worker of Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut residents, 2010-2014.

Class of Worker	2010	2014	% in 2014	% Change
Private for-profit wage and salary workers	6,666	8,323	71.9%	12.7%
Private non-for-profit wage and salary workers	737	930	8.9%	26.3%
Government workers	1,240	1,275	12.2%	2.8%
Self-employed and unpaid family workers	690	449	4.3%	-34.9%

Sources: US Census Bureau, Census of Population and American Community Survey

TABLE 6: Occupations in which residents of Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut are employed, 2010-2014.

Occupation	2010	2014	% in 2014	% Change
Management, Business, Science, Arts Occupations	4,188	4,510	43.2%	7.7%
Service Occupations	1,096	1,506	14.4%	37.4%
Sales and Office Occupations	2,527	2,859	27.4%	13.1%
Natural Resources, Construction, Maintenance	752	733	7.0%	-2.5%
Production, Transportation, Material Moving	760	843	8.1%	10.9%

Sources: US Census Bureau, Census of Population and American Community Survey

TABLE 7: Industries in which residents of Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut are employed, 2010-2014.

Industry	2010	2014	% in 2014	% Change
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing/Hunting, Mining	9	34	0.3%	277.8%
Construction	567	713	6.8%	25.7%
Manufacturing	1,261	1,207	11.5%	-4.3%
Wholesale Trade	307	151	1.4%	-50.8%
Retail Trade	1,293	1,317	12.6%	1.9%
Transportation	319	371	3.5%	16.3%
Information	263	342	3.3%	30.0%
Finance/Insurance, Real Estate/Rental/Leasing	749	785	7.5%	4.9%
Professional, Scientific, Mgmt, Admin & Waste Mgmt	1,231	1,452	14.0%	18.8%
Education Services, Health Care/Social Assistance	2,231	2,335	22.3%	0.6%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation; Accommodation, Food Services	567	837	8.0%	47.6%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	351	674	6.4%	92.0%
Public Administration	175	222	2.1%	26.9%

Sources: US Census Bureau, Census of Population and American Community Survey

EXISTING CONDITIONS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Household income: Household income in Bethel grew at a modest 2.3 percent between 2010-2014, from a median of \$83,483 to one of \$85,377. By comparison, median household income for Fairfield County was \$83,163 in 2014; for Connecticut, it was \$69,899, and for the overall US median household income was \$53,482. Bethel's relative affluence is evident in other household income characteristics, as

well. For example, 87 percent of its households listed “earnings” among their sources of income – nearly 10 percentage points higher than those of households in the overall US. And slightly more than one percent of Bethel's households receive cash public assistance, versus nearly three percent for the nation.

TABLE 8: Industries in which residents of Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut are employed, 2010-2014.

Household income characteristics	Bethel			% Change	
	2010	2014	% change	County	State
Households	6,590	7,071	7.3%	0.5%	-0.2%
Median household income	\$ 83,483	\$ 85,377	2.3%	1.1%	3.2%
Sources of income in past 12 months:					
Earnings	5,778	6,180	7.0%	-0.7%	-2.2%
Social Security income	1,607	1,799	11.9%	3.1%	3.3%
Supplemental Security income	1,179	1,144	-3.0%	39.9%	31.0%
Cash public assistance	81	73	-9.9%	30.7%	26.6%
Retirement income	91	121	33.0%	0.5%	0.3%
Food stamps/SNAP benefits	259	330	27.4%	60.8%	60.8%

Sources: US Census Bureau, Census of Population and American Community Survey

Commuting: The overwhelming majority of employed Bethel residents commute to work by car, truck, or van (Table 9). Most of them drive alone, although those who carpool is increasing at a rate far outpacing that of the County or State. A small percentage use public transportation or walk to work. A surprisingly small percentage – only 4.4 percent – work from home-based businesses, although, the number of Bethel residents working from home-based businesses grew by a hefty 17.4 percent between 2010-2014, outpacing growth in home-based workers in the County and State.

Travel time: The mean amount of time it takes for employed Bethel residents to commute to work was 29.5 minutes in 2014, an increase of just over seven percent over 2010, when the mean travel time was 27.5 minutes (Table 9).

TABLE 9: Industries in which residents of Bethel, Fairfield County, and Connecticut are employed, 2010-2014.

Commuting to Work	Bethel			% Change	
	2010	2014	% Change	County	State
Workers, 16 Years & Older	9,095	10,229	12.5%	4.0%	0.5%
Car, truck, or van – drove alone	7,648	8,454	10.5%	3.2%	0.0%
Car, truck, or van – carpooled	540	728	34.8%	11.0%	-1.1%
Public transportation (excluding taxicabs)	271	330	21.8%	5.7%	6.9%
Walked	193	143	-25.9%	-14.3%	1.3%
Other means	64	129	101.6%	3.4%	-4.4%
Worked at home	379	445	17.4%	13.2%	7.9%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	27.5	29.5	7.3%	2.5%	2.0%

Sources: US Census Bureau, Census of Population and American Community Survey

EXISTING BUSINESS DISTRIBUTION

Largest industry groups: In terms of numbers of workers, the health care and social assistance industry group is Bethel’s largest. But manufacturing produces, by far, the most revenues.

Retail trade, hotels, and restaurants: Retail trade accounts for only 10.4 percent of Bethel’s business entities, which is surprisingly low for a community of Bethel’s size. Nationally, 14.3 percent of all business establishments are retail businesses. Similarly, a small percentage of Bethel’s businesses are hotels or restaurants (“accommodation and food services”) – 6.1 percent, versus 8.9 percent nationally.

The low percentages of businesses in these two industry groups, relative to the overall US, can be partly accounted for by Bethel’s relatively large percentage of manufacturing businesses – but only partly. Bethel also faces stiff competition from nearby communities – particularly Danbury – for retail shops, hotels, and restaurants. Nonetheless, assuming Bethel is experiencing unmet consumer demand in these categories, there are likely opportunities to create new businesses in these categories, reversing some or all of the likely sales leakage.

TABLE 10: Distribution of business entities in Bethel according to North American Industry Classification System

NAICS	Industry	Businesses	Workers	Revenues
11	Agriculture, forestry, fishing/hunting	0.3%	0.4%	2.3%
21	Mining, quarrying; oil/gas extraction	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%
22	Utilities	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%
23	Construction	14.2%	8.1%	9.7%
31-33	Manufacturing	7.1%	17.4%	34.6%
42	Wholesale trade	4.2%	3.5%	24.5%
44-45	Retail trade	10.4%	10.5%	8.0%
48-49	Transportation and warehousing	1.4%	3.0%	1.7%
51	Information	1.4%	1.5%	1.0%
52	Finance and insurance	4.6%	2.5%	1.7%
53	Real estate and rental/leasing	4.0%	3.5%	2.9%
54	Professional, scientific, technical services	9.3%	5.3%	2.8%
55	Mgmt of companies and enterprises	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
56	Admin/support; waste mgmt./remediation	5.8%	4.2%	4.7%
61	Educational services	2.3%	5.4%	0.1%
62	Health care and social assistance	9.5%	19.2%	2.4%
71	Arts, entertainment, recreation	1.0%	0.9%	0.2%
72	Accommodation and food services	6.1%	6.1%	1.7%
81	Other services (except public administration)	11.7%	4.7%	0.9%
92	Public administration	3.9%	3.3%	-
99	Unclassified establishments	2.3%	0.3%	0.1%

Source: InfoUSA

EXISTING CONDITIONS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

RETAIL CONTEXT

Shopping center inventory: We compiled an inventory of shopping centers over 25,000 square feet and within 15 miles of the Bethel Public Library. We found that shopping center space is relatively limited within three miles of the Library – a total of just 267,899 square feet. But within five miles, there are nearly 3 million square feet of shopping center space (including Danbury Fair) and, within 15 miles, 7.2 million square feet. In addition, this 15-mile radius contains more than one million square feet of freestanding retail shops and restaurants.

Largest shopping centers: The largest shopping centers within 15 miles of the Public Library are Danbury Fair Mall (1.3 million square feet) and Westfield Trumbull (1.1 million square feet). With the exception of these two regional enclosed shopping malls, most shopping centers within 15 miles of the Public Library are open-air community shopping centers anchored by grocery stores and/or big-box stores.

TABLE 11: The 12 largest shopping centers within 15 miles of the Bethel Public Library

Dist	Name/Address	SF	Representative Tenants
3.4	Danbury Fair Mall 7 Backus Ave; Danbury	1,289,000	Lord & Taylor, Forever 21, Chipotle
13.8	Westfield Trumbull 5065 Main St; Trumbull	1,130,472	Macys, Target, JCPenny, Lord & Taylor
11.6	Highlands Center 100 Independent Way; Brewster BY	377,000	Michaels, Marshalls, Kohls, Home Depot
3.3	Eagle Rd Shopping Center 2 International Drive; Danbury	319,789	Lowe's, Cinema Theater, Best Buy
12.9	Southbury Shopping Plaza 100 Main St; Southbury	300,000	Kmart, DressBarn, Panera, Stop & Shop
12.3	Litchfield Crossings 169 Danbury Rd; New Milford	228,000	Big Lots, Home Goods, Kohls
12.5	New Milford Plaza 164-176 Danbury Rd; New Milford	226,762	Walmart, Super Stop & Shop, Dollar Tree
3.7	North Street Shopping Center 1 Padanaram Rd; Danbury	211,460	Dollar Tree, Burlington Coat Factory
4.5	Candlewood Lake Plaza 14 Candlewood Lake Rd; Brookfield	210,734	Raymour & Flanigan, Bed Bath & Beyond
3.8	Danbury Square 15 Backus Ave; Danbury	194,032	Toys R Us, Kids R Us, Barnes & Noble
13.4	Putnam Plaza Shopping Center 1936 US Rt 6; Carmel NY	193,000	Starbucks, Rite Aid, NY Sports Club
9.1	Lakeview Plaza 1511-1515 Rte 22; Brewster BY	185,006	Sleepys, Rite Aid, Citizens National

Source: ICSC. "Global Shopping Center Directory."

SALES VOIDS

Sales void analysis measures the difference between the amount of money that residents of a given area are likely to spend on products and services, based on their demographic characteristics, and the sales that businesses within that given area are attracting. Generally speaking, a negative value represents sales leakage –

meaning, typically, that residents are shopping in other communities and/or online. A positive value represents a sales surplus – meaning, typically, that shoppers who live outside the given area are making purchases within that area.

TABLE 12: Retail sales voids in Bethel.

NAICS	Store Category	Supply	Demand	Void
441	Motor Vehicles & Parts Dealers	\$6,031,000	\$25,135,000	-\$19,104,000
442	Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$411,000	\$3,165,000	-\$2,754,000
443	Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$258,000	\$3,930,000	-\$3,672,000
444	Building Materials, Garden Equip & Supply Stores	\$6,215,000	\$4,079,000	\$2,136,000
445	Food & Beverage Stores	\$18,808,000	\$27,016,000	-\$8,206,000
446	Health & Personal Care Stores ¹	\$88,353,000	\$11,524,000	\$76,829,000
447	Gasoline Services	\$2,476,000	\$10,278,000	-\$7,802,000
448	Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$1,982,000	\$9,692,000	-\$7,710,000
451	Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	\$3,019,000	\$3,089,000	-\$70,000
452	General Merchandise Stores ²	\$19,952,000	\$15,372,000	\$4,580,000
453	Miscellaneous Store Retailers ³	\$1,900,000	\$3,907,000	-\$2,007,000
454	Nonstore Retailers ⁴	\$21,157,000	\$9,242,000	\$11,915,000
Total Retail		\$170,562,000	\$126,429,000	\$44,133,000
722	Food Services & Drinking Places	\$14,981,000	\$14,855,000	\$126,000
TOTAL RETAIL & FOOD/DRINK		\$185,543,000	\$141,284,000	\$44,259,000

Sources: ESRI, US Census Bureau, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, CLUE Group.

¹ The “Health and Personal Care Stores” category includes drug stores and pharmacies, optical goods stores, health supplement stores, and stores that sell cosmetics and beauty supplies. It also includes specialized health-related retail stores, such as hearing aid stores, prosthetics stores, and convalescent supplies and equipment. In addition to including freestanding retail pharmacies, the category also includes institutional pharmacies.

² The “General Merchandise Stores” category includes department stores, discount department stores, warehouse clubs, supercenters, variety stores, dollar stores, general stores, and catalog showrooms.

³ The “Miscellaneous Store Retailers” includes florists, used merchandise stores, pet stores, office supply stores, gift and souvenir stores, art dealers, tobacco stores, and mobile home dealers.

⁴ The “Nonstore Retailers” includes businesses that sell products and services via venues other than traditional stores, such as by mail order, door-to-door sales, in-home demonstrations, or vending machines, or by making direct deliveries, as is the case with home-delivered newspapers or heating oil.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We conducted sales void analyses for the Town of Bethel, then for the areas within ¼ mile, ½ mile, 1 mile, 2.5 miles, and 5 miles from the Bethel Public Library.

Bethel: Not too surprisingly, given that retail businesses comprise only 10 percent of Bethel’s business entities, Bethel is experiencing sales leakages in almost all store categories. It has a very substantial surplus in the “health and

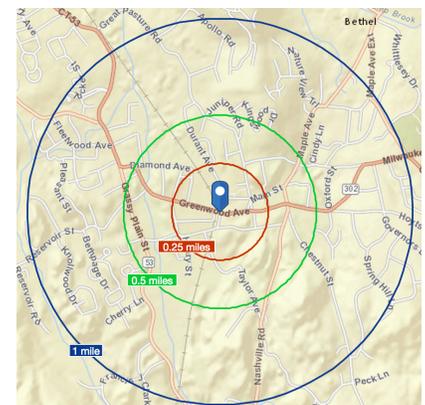
personal care stores” store category that offsets sales leakages in most other categories, giving the community a net sales surplus. But there are numerous categories in which it could be possible to recapture sales leakages by adding new product or service lines or new businesses to the downtown district, including furniture/home furnishings, specialty groceries and beverages, and – under certain circumstances – clothing/clothing accessories.

TABLE 13: Retail sales voids in the areas within ¼, ½, 1, 2.5, and 5 miles of the Bethel Public Library.

NAICS	Store Category	Distance from Bethel Public Library				
		¼ Mile	½ Mile	1 Mile	2.5 Miles	5 Miles
441	Motor Vehicles & Parts Dealers	-\$1,062,000	-\$4,097,000	-\$17,073,000	-\$9,585,000	\$159,179,000
442	Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	-\$136,000	-\$526,000	-\$2,453,000	-\$3,568,000	\$5,698,000
443	Electronics & Appliance Stores	-\$169,000	-\$722,000	-\$3,311,000	-\$9,282,000	\$75,661,000
444	Bldg Materials, Garden Equip & Supply Stores	\$1,900,000	\$2,499,000	\$2,428,000	-\$865,000	\$16,656,000
445	Good & Beverage Stores	\$9,964,000	\$9,313,000	-\$5,563,000	-\$59,436,000	-\$69,232,000
446	Health & Personal Care Stores	-\$492,000	\$3,746,000	\$77,983,000	\$68,000,000	\$46,696,000
447	Gasoline Services	-\$441,000	-\$2,175,000	-\$6,875,000	-\$20,479,000	-\$47,200,000
448	Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$284,000	-\$981,000	-\$6,799,000	-\$19,994,000	\$76,252,000
451	Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	\$391,000	\$181,000	\$154,000	-\$4,863,000	\$11,805,000
452	General Merchandise Stores	\$13,942,000	\$15,607,000	\$6,134,000	-\$2,155,000	\$107,794,000
453	Miscellaneous Store Retailers ¹	\$354,000	-\$24,000	-\$1,624,000	-\$3,946,000	-\$3,190,000
454	Nonstore Retailers ²	\$5,979,000	\$8,785,000	\$12,323,000	\$15,286,000	-\$7,718,000
Total Retail		\$30,514,000	\$31,606,000	\$54,694,000	-\$50,286,000	\$372,941,000
722	Food Services & Drinking Places	\$3,056,000	\$3,475,000	\$1,473,000	-\$7,063,000	\$755,000
TOTAL RETAIL, FOOD/DRINK		\$33,570,000	\$35,081,000	\$56,167,000	-\$57,349,000	\$373,696,000

Sources: ESRI, US Census Bureau, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, CLUE Group.

Radii: The sales void analysis of the ¼-mile to 5-mile radii from the Bethel Public Library demonstrates the enormous market impact of the Danbury Fair Mall and the smaller shopping centers and big-box stores near it. Within the ¼ mile radius (which essentially covers downtown Bethel and parts of adjacent neighborhoods), there are a number of sales surpluses. But, with each successive radius, these surpluses gradually erode. This suggests that there might be some opportunities to recapture sales leakages for community-serving goods and services from neighborhoods closer to the downtown area.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Bethel’s housing market has been relatively stable for almost two decades. Between 2000-2010, for example, the community gained just 165 new housing units, with the overall vacancy rate fluctuating between a modest 0.5 – 1.2 percent for owner-occupied units and hovering just slightly above three percent for renter-occupied units.

But, the past several years have seen an increase in housing production. Between 2010-2014, Bethel added 570 new housing units, and 2014 vacancy rates were a very low 0.3 percent and 1.4 percent for owner-occupied and renter-occupied units, respectively. Most of this growth occurred in the past two years.



TABLE 14: Numbers of vacant and occupied housing units in Bethel, 2000-2014.

	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total housing units	7,092	6,818	6,991	7,092	7,139	7,388
Occupied housing units	6,838	6,590	6,740	6,838	6,818	7,071
Vacant housing units	254	228	251	254	321	317
Homeowner vacancy rate	0.5%	1.2%	1.0%	0.5%	0.6%	0.3%
Rental vacancy rate	4.5%	3.2%	2.8%	4.5%	3.9%	1.4%

Sources: US Census Bureau, CLUE Group.

Housing occupation:

- 77.5 percent of Bethel’s housing units are owner-occupied, and 22.5 percent are renter-occupied. This represents a very slight shift towards greater renter occupancy; in 2010, 21.2 percent of Bethel’s housing units were renter-occupied.
- Of Bethel’s 317 vacant housing units, 146 are rental units and 82 are for sale. The remaining 89 units are units that have been rented or sold but that remain unoccupied or that are for seasonal, recreational, or other occasional use.

Physical characteristics:

- Detached housing units account for more than two-thirds of Bethel’s housing stock and for more than 80 percent of its owner-occupied housing (Table 15).
- Three-quarters of Bethel’s housing units were built before 1980, and more than one-third were built before 1960 (Table 16).

- Bethel’s housing units tend to be larger than the state or national norm. Nearly three-quarters of its housing units contain six or more rooms. Fifty-nine percent contain two or three bedrooms, and 32 percent contain four or more bedrooms (Table 17).
- As is generally the case, Bethel’s renter-occupied housing units tend to have fewer rooms and bedrooms than its owner-occupied units. For instance, two-thirds of the community’s renter-occupied units have five rooms or fewer, versus only 20 percent of its owner-occupied units. And all but eight percent of its renter-occupied units have three bedrooms or less, while almost 40 percent of its owner-occupied units have four or more bedrooms (Table 17).
- A small number (21) of Bethel’s housing units lack complete plumbing facilities and are considered substandard.

TABLE 15: Percentages of housing units in Bethel by the number of units per structure, 2014.

Units in structure	Total	Owner-occupied	Renter-occupied
Occupied housing units	7,071	5,483	1,588
1 unit, detached	69.1%	83.5%	19.3%
1 unit, attached	7.7%	7.8%	7.4%
2 units	9.2%	2.2%	33.4%
3 or 4 units	3.0%	0.2%	12.7%
5 to 9 units	6.4%	4.4%	13.4%
10 or more units	4.5%	1.8%	13.9%

Sources: US Census Bureau, CLUE Group.

TABLE 16: Percentages of housing units in Bethel by the year the structures were built, 2014.

Year structure built	Total	Owner-occupied	Renter-occupied
2010 or later	0.8%	0.6%	1.3%
2000 to 2009	5.6%	6.9%	1.0%
1980 to 1999	18.2%	19.0%	15.5%
1960 to 1979	41.2%	41.7%	39.6%
1940 to 1959	16.1%	16.9%	13.3%
1939 or earlier	18.0%	14.7%	29.3%

Sources: US Census Bureau, CLUE Group.

TABLE 17: Percentages of housing units in Bethel by the number of rooms and bedrooms per structure, 2014.

Rooms and bedrooms	Total	Owner-occupied	Renter-occupied
Rooms			
1 room	2.3%	0.2%	9.6%
2 or 3 rooms	6.1%	0.6%	25.0%
4 or 5 rooms	19.8%	15.4%	35.2%
6 or 7 rooms	39.4%	44.3%	22.4%
8 or more rooms	32.4%	39.5%	7.8%
Bedrooms			
No bedroom	2.5%	0.2%	10.5%
1 bedroom	6.3%	0.2%	27.5%
2 or 3 bedrooms	59.3%	60.9%	53.5%
4 or more bedrooms	31.9%	38.6%	8.5%

Sources: US Census Bureau, CLUE Group.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

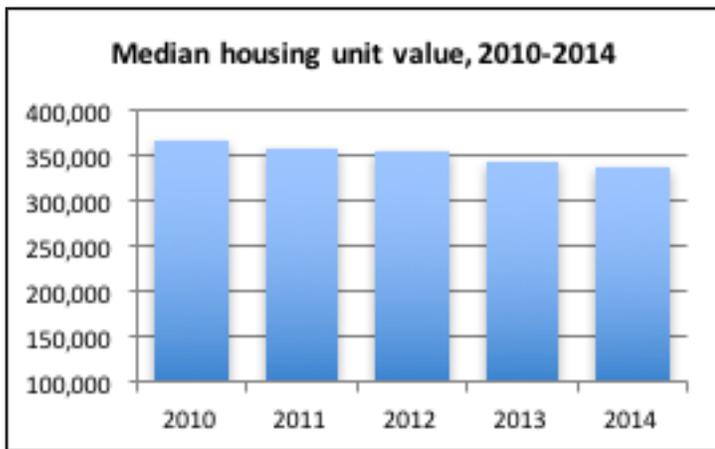
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Housing value: The median value of Bethel's owner-occupied housing units declined slightly every year since 2010, from \$366,300 that year to \$337,000 in 2014 (Table 18).

TABLE 18: Numbers of housing units, by housing value, and median housing value in Bethel, 2010-2014.

Housing value	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total owner-occupied units	5,191	5,333	5,335	5,225	5 483
Less than \$50,000	13	12	12	62	126
\$50,000 to \$99,999	26	25	10	0	7
\$100,000 to \$149,999	74	74	98	110	148
\$150,000 to \$199,999	126	199	254	309	433
\$200,000 to \$299,999	1167	1227	1303	1371	1366
\$300,000 to \$499,999	2891	3029	2948	2718	2745
\$500,000 to \$999,999	877	755	687	616	609
\$1 million or more	17	12	23	39	49
Median value	\$ 366,300	\$ 359,200	\$ 353,600	\$ 342,400	\$ 337,000

Sources: US Census Bureau, CLUE Group.



Housing costs: Median monthly housing costs dropped slightly between 2010-2011, from \$1,877/month to \$1,728/month (Table 19). However, median monthly rent increased by 10.6 percent, from \$1,176/month in 2010 to \$1,301/month in 2014 (Table 20).

TABLE 19: Median monthly housing costs (owner-occupied and renter-occupied units, combined) in Bethel, 2010-2014.

Characteristic	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total occupied housing units	6,590	6,740	6,838	6,818	7,071
Median monthly housing costs	\$ 1,877	\$ 1,945	\$ 1,921	\$ 1,831	\$ 1,728

Sources: US Census Bureau, CLUE Group.

TABLE 20: Numbers of renter-occupied housing units, by gross monthly rent, and median rent paid in Bethel, 2010-2014.

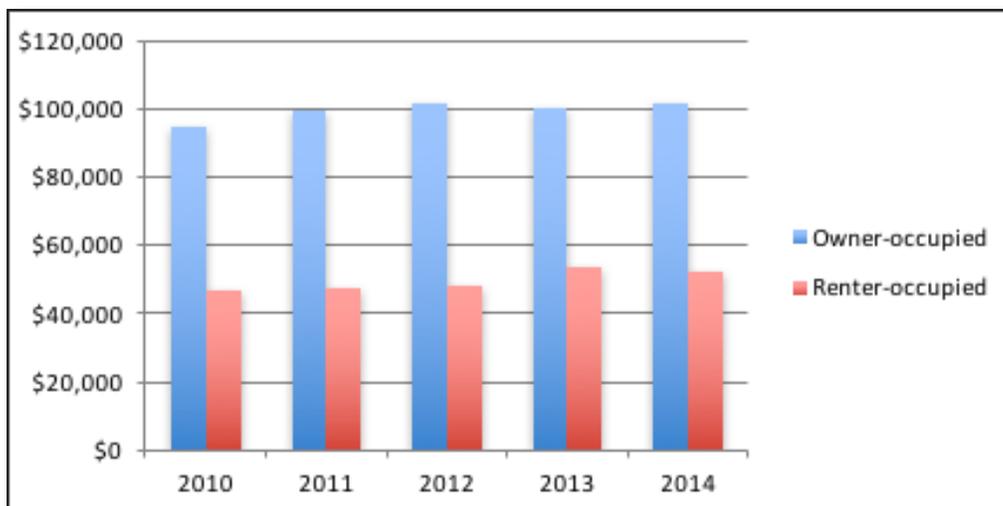
Gross monthly rent	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Occupied units paying rent	1,343	1,328	1,390	1,513	1,524
Less than \$200	0	32	44	39	0
\$200 to \$299	23	23	18	12	67
\$300 to \$499	113	67	24	24	29
\$500 to \$749	17	41	39	52	46
\$750 to \$999	271	198	241	242	246
\$1,000 to \$1,499	543	645	741	761	779
\$1,500 or more	376	322	283	383	357
Median rent	\$ 1,176	\$ 1,248	\$ 1,304	\$ 1,309	\$ 1,301
No rent paid	56	79	113	80	64

Sources: US Census Bureau, CLUE Group.

TABLE 21: Number of owner/renter-occupied housing units & median household incomes of occupants in Bethel, 2010-2014.

Characteristic	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total occupied housing units	6,590	6,740	6,838	6,818	7,071
Owner-occupied housing units	5,191	5,333	5,335	5,225	5,483
Renter-occupied housing units	1,399	1,407	1,503	1,593	1,588
Median household incomes					
Owner-occupied housing units	\$ 94,404	\$ 99,646	\$ 101,250	\$ 100,182	\$ 101,605
Renter-occupied housing units	\$ 47,068	\$ 47,745	\$ 48,994	\$ 53,321	\$ 52,425

Sources: US Census Bureau, CLUE Group.



Household incomes of occupied housing units: The median household incomes of both home owners and home renters in Bethel increased between 2010-2014 (Table 21). Renters' median household incomes are roughly half of those of Bethel's home owners.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Affordable housing: According to the Connecticut Department of Housing’s 2014 Affordable Housing Appeals List, Bethel has a total of 794 housing units receiving some form of assistance, accounting for 5.4 percent of its total number of housing units as of the 2010 Census of Population (the most recent reference date the Department of Housing provides as a benchmark) (Table 22).

TABLE 22: Numbers of housing units in Bethel providing some sort of affordability assistance

Total housing units (as of 2010 Census)	7,310
Governmentally assisted	252
Tenant rental assistance	15
Single family CHFA/USDA mortgages	66
Deed restricted units	64
Totally assisted units	397
Percent affordable	5.43%

Source: Connecticut Department of Housing.

HOUSING DEMAND

Based on Bethel's residential growth trends of the past 15 years, we believe it is likely that the community can support an average of 50 new housing units annually. This projection is based on several factors:

- Between 2000-2014, Bethel gained 1,011 new residents, an annualized growth rate of 0.40 percent. But between 2010-2014, Bethel's annualized growth rate accelerated a bit, to 0.66 percent. It is realistic to expect that, if conditions remain unchanged, Bethel would absorb new housing units at a rate somewhere between these two growth rates. But the TOD development outlined in this plan will likely solidify Bethel's attractiveness to new residents, particularly to those looking for walkable, transit-accessible places to live and work, pushing the likely housing absorption rate closer to 0.66 percent annually, or around 46-50 new housing units annually for each of the next 20 years.
- Bethel's current household size has decreased very slightly since 2000 and is virtually unchanged since 2010, even though the household sizes of both Fairfield County and the overall state have grown. So, it is realistic to assume that Bethel's new residential growth will translate into demand for roughly one new housing unit per 2.6 – 2.7 new residents.

In terms of the types of housing units for which demand is likely to exist, several factors offer guidance:

- The median age of Bethel's residents (42.3) is slightly older than that of the County (39.6) or state (40.3).
- Bethel is relatively affluent, with a 2014 median household income (\$83,483) far outpacing that of the state (\$67,740) and nation (\$53,482).
- More than four percent of Bethel's working residents work from home-based businesses – not a huge number, but one that has grown by more than 17 percent since 2010 and is likely to continue growing in the years ahead, given national trends towards independent work and increased entrepreneurship.
- Bethel's existing housing stock consists largely of detached units, and they tend to be somewhat larger than the state and national norms – but, with its median household size declining and its median resident age increasing, it is likely that demand for smaller housing units will grow. And, with improved transit accessibility, improved walkability, and a stronger downtown business mix, it is very likely that demand will grow for housing closer to the downtown core, with demand for both detached and attached units.

RETAIL DEMAND

Based on our analysis of unmet market demand in Bethel, we believe that, conservatively, existing businesses within the TOD area can absorb \$150,000 of new sales and that existing restaurants can absorb an additional \$3,036,000 in new sales right now. Doing so would require only some relatively modest changes in merchandising, visual merchandising, and store hours.

As Bethel's population grows, demand for retail goods and services will grow, also. In current year dollars, we anticipate demand for an additional 47,400 square feet of retail space and 4,700 square feet of restaurant space from new residents. Assuming the TOD area succeeds in attracting non-resident visitors and workers, demand for retail products and services would also increase.

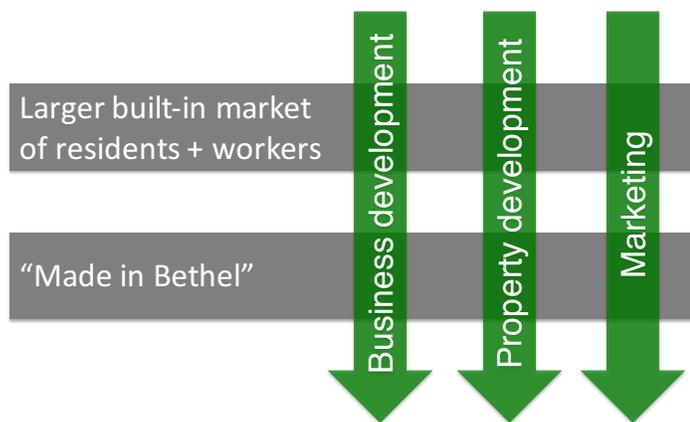
Time frame	New hsg units	Restaurants	Retail	2013	2014
		Demand	Est SF	Demand	Est SF
5 years	230	\$ 527,000	1,100	\$ 3,954,000	11,300
10 years	467	1,070,000	2,300	8,027,000	22,900
15 years	712	1,631,000	3,400	12,237,000	35,000
20 years	965	2,211,000	4,700	16,583,000	47,400

RECOMMENDATIONS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We recommend building a revitalization program for the TOD area around two primary economic development strategies:

- **Expand the built-in market:** Expand the built-in market of workers and nearby residents and develop businesses and services that meet their daily shopping, dining, and entertainment needs. This will involve creating new housing units in and near the district, both in new buildings and in the upper floors of existing ones. It would also involve developing new businesses, and adding product lines to existing businesses, of particular interest to people who live and work in and near the district, such as additional daytime restaurants, evening restaurants, convenience products (gifts, greeting cards, small hardware items, and snacks, for instance), and personal services (hair care, dry cleaning, tailoring, and daycare, for example).



- **“Made in Bethel”:** Cultivate and expand businesses that make things in Bethel, particularly small manufactures and crafts industries, and concentrate them within the TOD. Examples might include businesses that primarily serve customers within the region (such as a craft brewery or distillery) as well as those that appeal to area residents, visitors, and online shoppers (such as hat making, which has strong historic roots in Bethel. Examples might also include specialized small or craft industries that derive from or complement existing industries within the region, such as businesses that manufacture and supply specialized components or other materials to larger Bethel-based manufacturers.

Pursuing these strategies will require focused work in four major categories:

- **Rehabilitating older commercial buildings:** The district’s commercial buildings – particularly those along Greenwood Avenue – must be rehabilitated. Greenwood Avenue’s older and historic commercial buildings are crucial components of the community’s visual identity and market distinctiveness, but many of them are no longer attractive to new businesses because of their deteriorating condition. And, given their condition, their rental rates are too high, relative to comparable commercial properties within the region.

- **Improving the retail mix:** Property owners within the TOD area must more deliberately focus their leasing activities in order to, together, create a strong retail mix that clearly differentiates downtown Bethel from other shopping alternatives and in which businesses generate significant foot traffic and visibility for one another.
- **Offering targeted tools and resources for business and property development:** The public and private-sector entities involved in business recruitment, retention, and development in Bethel must ensure that adequate and effective tools and resources are in place to guide, stimulate, and support business and property development within the TOD area (and particularly along Greenwood Avenue).
- **Animating the district:** The district’s storefronts and public spaces should be made more attractive and lively to better attract public attention and interest.

Some specific recommendations for activities in these four major categories:

1. **Adopt and support a strategic business mix plan for downtown Bethel.** Many, if not most, of the owners of commercial property within the TOD (and, in particular, along Greenwood Avenue) rent property to viable business candidates who approach them, rather than actively seeking out candidates based on their ability to strengthen the district’s overall retail mix or fill in critical gaps in the district’s offerings. Based on our analysis, we recommend that these types of businesses receive highest priority for development or recruitment:

- High-quality restaurants that, together, offer a broad range of cuisines (e.g., seafood, Mexican, Thai, Indian, vegetarian, bakeries)
- Apparel and apparel accessories stores that act as destination stores by offering products, services, and/or experiences that are unique within the region
- Arts and entertainment-related businesses, such as a live theatre

Some of these might be developed as new businesses, but in other instances existing businesses might reposition their merchandise and/or add new merchandise to take advantage of these market opportunities.

The image shows two crowdfunding campaign screenshots. The top one is for 'Bring Back the White Hart' on Indiegogo, with a goal of \$11,101 and a 'CAMPAIGN CLOSED' status. The bottom one is for 'The first artisan bakery in downtown Oakland, California' on Kickstarter, showing 102 backers, \$21,337 pledged, and a goal of \$20,000.

example of start-up capital through 'kickstarter'

**CITY OF WATERVILLE
DOWNTOWN FORGIVABLE LOAN PROGRAM**

I. PROGRAM SUMMARY

The City of Waterville has established a Downtown Forgivable Loan Program to provide financial assistance to business and property owners for the creation of a new business or significant expansion of an existing business within the established Downtown District (see attached map).

II. FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION

Funding for the Downtown Forgivable Loan Program will come from the City of Waterville's Downtown Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Fund. The administration of the Downtown Forgivable Loan Program will be carried out by Waterville Main Street (WMS) and the Kennebec Valley Council of Governments (KVCOG) according to the procedures and guidelines outlined in this document. The administration and operation of the Program shall conform to all federal, state, and local codes.

III. PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND ELIGIBILITY

FUNDING AMOUNTS & TERMS

- Minimum loan amount: \$15,000; Maximum loan amount: \$50,000 (depending on funding availability).
- The loan amount may not exceed 50% of the total investment and must be matched 1:1.
- The loan will be structured with a 5-7 year term, depending on the type of collateral offered and projected cash flows; the interest rate will be fixed at 7%.
- The borrower will make interest only payments; principal will be forgiven annually if borrower meets pre-established conditions.
- All payments must be made by the due date; if any payments are late over the course of the year, both principal and interest payments will be required the following year.
- Fees:
 - Application Fee (once candidate has passed pre-application screening): \$250
 - Commitment Fee: 1% of the borrowed amount
- Borrower must submit annual financial statements & tax returns over the term of the loan; must show cash flow to debt ratio of 1.25 as determined by the lender.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Funds may be used to support a new business start up or an expansion of an existing business.
- The business must be located within the Downtown District to be eligible.
- Funds may be provided either directly to the business owner or to the property owner in support of the business(es) located or to be located at that site.
- Priority will be given to entities that fill 1st floor vacancies.
- Retail, restaurant, and office uses will be eligible; however, applications will be prioritized based on existing market research, including consumer, business, and employee surveys.

ELIGIBLE USES FOR FUNDING – FIXED ASSETS:

- Exterior improvements
 - Signage, storefront improvements, lighting
- Business related expenses:

example of incentive program (#2)

2. **Support active development of high-priority businesses through incentives.** Many older commercial districts have been successful in attracting and developing new high-priority businesses by offering targeted incentives to entice entrepreneurs. For example, Waterville, Maine offers forgivable loans of \$15,000-\$50,000 to entrepreneurs interested in opening a priority business downtown and to owners of existing businesses interested in a significant expansion downtown. Loans must be matched on at least a 1:1 basis. Borrowers make interest-only payments for the 5-7 year loan term, with a portion of the principal forgiven each year if the borrower meets certain benchmarks. The program is funded by Tax Increment Financing. The Dauphin Street commercial district in Mobile, Alabama offers a similar forgivable loan program, adding the requirements that participating businesses must agree to be open at least 48 hours per week and to keep their storefront window displays fresh.

A growing number of new businesses are finding start-up capital through crowdfunding platforms like Kickstarter and Indiegogo. Crowdfunding has also helped many businesses expand or make needed improvements (such as converting older projection equipment to digital equipment in downtown theatres).

3. **Use Tax Increment Financing to stimulate business development.** Tax Increment Financing (TIF) makes it possible to use future property tax revenue to pay for current improvements within a designated redevelopment area. TIF investments stimulate development that would not take place without the up-front improvements that TIF can provide. TIF is a powerful and effective downtown development tool throughout the United States – but, until recent changes in Connecticut's TIF legislation, it has not (yet) been used much in Connecticut. The changes have streamlined the process through which municipalities can establish TIF districts and have made it possible for entire districts (rather than single projects) to generate revenue and benefit from TIF investments, among other things. In order to create a TIF district, a municipality must demonstrate that the area is blighted, in need of revitalization, and/or a targeted type of development, such as a downtown or a TOD. Downtown Bethel would almost certainly be eligible. Initially, tax abatement and TIF might seem to be incompatible with each other as development incentives – but they can be used in tandem, for different types of projects. We recommend tax abatement as an incentive for rehabilitating historic commercial buildings and TIF for new construction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We therefore recommend that Bethel create a TIF district in the TOD, using the revenues generated to support and incentivize development of high priority businesses and buildings. Potential business incentives that might be supported by TIF revenues include:

- **A forgivable loan program for high-priority new businesses.** As mentioned in #2, above, forgivable loans can serve as a powerful incentive to entrepreneurs willing to open and operate a high-priority business for the district, helping defray start-up costs. The program also provides some leverage for the city in setting some basic operating guidelines for participating businesses, such as location, open hours, and visual merchandising requirements.
 - **An annual business plan competition.** Business plan competitions encourage business owners to think about specific ways to improve their operations. Each year's competition could be focused on a different aspect of business operation, such as adding new product lines, developing or improving an online storefront, or creating a new product distribution method (such as deliveries, cross-merchandising with other stores, or wholesaling one or more products to other retailers).
 - **A pop-up program,** with a dedicated storefront space for pop-ups and a small amount of seed funding for competitively-selected pop-ups. Pop-up shops offer many benefits, such as helping new businesses get established, testing the viability of new product lines, and keeping the shopping environment fresh for consumers. We suggest that the city create and manage a pop-up program, with responsibility for developing pop-up concepts, identifying potential entrepreneurs, pairing entrepreneurs with property owners, streamlining temporary utility and insurance processes, and marketing the pop-ups. Districts that offer seed funding for competitively-selected pop-ups have found that the seed funding is an effective tool for helping attract businesses, particularly those that might not have enough cash on hand to cover inventory and other costs, and for ensuring high quality experiences for shoppers.
4. **Stabilize and expand existing businesses by adding new product/service lines and/or new distribution channels.** Until ground-floor retail occupancy has improved and foot traffic has increased, downtown Bethel's businesses will remain vulnerable to weak sales. We suggest that the district's existing retail businesses consider developing secondary businesses that can be operated during less busy store hours and that do not rely on walk-in traffic. A few examples from other communities:
- An antique store in Iowa operates a small assembly business in its back room, buying municipal water supply and sewage pipe fittings in bulk and assembling them as individual sets, by pipe size, to small towns that could not otherwise afford to buy the minimum quantities manufacturers typically require.
 - A theatre in Virginia makes the majority of its income by renting its costumes and scenery to other theatres throughout the country.
 - A candy store in New Hampshire operates a pack-and-ship business in its basement, a business that grew out of the store's own need to fulfill online orders for its products.
- We also suggest that existing businesses consider adding new distribution channels in order to reach more customers and make shopping more convenient for them (for example, making local deliveries, cross-merchandising with compatible stores, or developing or improving an Online storefront).
5. **Shift store hours from 9am-5pm to 10am-6pm:** People with 9-5 jobs are rarely able to shop during their work hours. Shifting store hours one hour later – from 10am-6pm – can significantly increase store sales. This should be bolstered by district-wide promotional events taking place between 5-6pm.
6. **Develop and actively promote a robust set of incentives to stimulate downtown commercial property improvements.** There are many options. Some specific ideas that might work well for downtown Bethel include:
- Property tax abatement on the improved value of rehabilitated property for five years, declining by 20 percent each year. So, for example, if a commercial building is worth \$250,000 more after rehabilitation, the property tax on that \$250,000 of new real estate value would be waived completely in the first year after the rehabilitation is complete, then by 80 percent in the second year, then by 60 percent, 40 percent, and 20 percent in years 3-5, respectively.
 - Façade improvement grants of up to \$10,000, on a 1:1 matching basis. Ideally, these would be made available within a limited time window, to encourage property owners to act quickly, and would be accompanied by pro bono design assistance.
 - Grants of up to \$25,000, on a 1:1 matching basis, for the costs of bringing "contributing" historic buildings up to code, particularly with regard to accessibility and fire safety. Grants might be used for sprinkler systems, installation or repair of passenger elevators, interior staircase enclosure, and similar accessibility and fire safety improvements.
- The façade improvement grants and code-correction grants could be funded by TIF revenues or by other sources of funding, such as Community Development Block Grants or foundation grants. Property tax abatements would have no cost to the City and, by helping stimulate property improvements that would likely not

otherwise take place, would begin generating new revenue for the city after the abatement program's first year.

7. **Encourage downtown property owners to use federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits to help pay for building rehabilitation.** To encourage the owners of historic commercial buildings to rehabilitate their buildings, the federal government offers a federal income tax credit equal to 20 percent of a project's qualified rehabilitation expenses. The tax credit can be carried back one year and/or carried forward 20 years, making it a very powerful incentive. The tax credit program is administered jointly by the National Park Service and the Internal Revenue Service. A few program guidelines:

- In order to be eligible, a building must be an income-producing building. It can contain rental housing – but, if it includes owner-occupied housing, the owner-occupied housing unit must be excluded from the tax credit calculations.
- The building must be “historic”, meaning that it is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places (a list maintained by the National Park Service) or is a “contributing” building in a National Register-listed historic district or is eligible for listing in the National Register. Fortunately, downtown Bethel has a National Register-listed historic district, encompassing many of the older buildings on Greenwood, roughly between the Library and Caraluzzi's.
- The tax credit is for “qualified rehabilitation expenses”, which include most bricks-and-mortar rehabilitation costs, architects' and engineers' fees, and construction-period utilities and financing costs. Site improvements (such as landscaping and sidewalks), new additions, and any components not physically attached to the building (like removable chairs in a theatre) are not considered “qualified”.
- The rehabilitation must be “substantial”, meaning that qualified rehabilitation expenses must equal or exceed the adjusted basis of the building (the original purchase price, plus the value of improvements, minus depreciation) or \$5,000, whichever is greater.
- The tax credits can be “syndicated”, meaning that they can be transferred to another taxpayer in exchange for an equity investment in the rehabilitation project. This can be useful if the property owner does not have enough income tax liability to fully use the credit her/himself, for example, or if having up-front cash would make the rehabilitation more viable than a tax credit.
- Tax credits are awarded the year the building is placed in service.
- To claim tax credits, the property owner must complete and file a three-part form with the National Park Service. Part 1 certifies that the building is

“historic” and therefore eligible for the credit. Part 2 outlines the rehabilitation plans in detail and is filed before rehabilitation begins. Part 3 is completed after the rehabilitation is finished, certifying that the rehabilitation was completed as explained in Part 2.

- Generally speaking, rehabilitation must be completed within 24 months (there is an option for “phased rehabilitation”, with all work completed within 60 months).
- In addition to the 20 percent credit, the federal government offers a 10 percent income tax credit for non-historic income-producing buildings built before 1936.
- Rehabilitation must comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, a set of general guidelines for building rehabilitation (for example: “Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced”).

In addition to the federal credit, the State of Connecticut offers a state-level historic rehabilitation tax credit. In most respects, the state tax credit program echoes the major requirements of the federal tax credit program. A few differences:

- The state credit is equal to 25 percent of qualified rehabilitation expenses. If the project includes development of affordable housing, it is a 30 percent credit.
- While there is no ceiling on federal historic rehabilitation tax credits, there is currently a statewide ceiling of \$31.7 million annually, with a per-project limit of \$4.5 million.

The federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits can be combined, offering property owners, developers, and syndication partners a very attractive financial incentive. The federal tax credits can also be combined with federal low-income housing tax credits.

In addition to the federal and state credits for historic rehabilitation projects, there is also a federal tax credit available for non-historic income-producing buildings built before 1936, equal to 10 percent of qualified rehabilitation expenses. It is likely that several buildings within the TOD area might be eligible for this credit. The building owner must simply certify that the building is not historic (and therefore not potentially eligible for the 20 percent credit).

8. **Consider creating a downtown development corporation to encourage and provide hands-on assistance with business and property development.** Developing and attracting new businesses requires the time and attention of a dedicated person or group of people who can identify entrepreneurial talent, identify financing, identify ideal locations for specific types of

RECOMMENDATIONS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

businesses, work with property owners, coordinate timing, help develop model leases, and much more. Providing assistance to property owners with building rehabilitation and new construction also requires dedicated focus. We therefore encourage the Town to consider creating a specialized downtown development corporation whose job it would be to work with business owners, property owners, entrepreneurs, and financial institutions to increase downtown occupancy, improve business mix, and help put together property rehabilitation and construction deals. Once occupancy has increased a bit and some downtown commercial buildings have been rehabilitated, we recommend exploring the possibility of creating a business improvement district to generate income to support the development corporation, organize special events and ongoing marketing for the downtown area, and augment municipal services to the district. There are currently more than a dozen business improvement districts in Connecticut (including one in downtown Danbury).

Finally, we encourage Bethel’s business and property owners and civic leaders to work towards a “hat trick” goal of achieving these three benchmarks within the next 3-5 years:

1. Develop 50 new housing units downtown (both upper-floor housing in existing buildings and housing in new, infill buildings);
2. Develop a small, high-quality boutique inn within the TOD (ideally on or very near Greenwood Avenue); and
3. Achieve a 92 percent ground floor occupancy rate on Greenwood Ave.

Refer to “Economic Recommendations & Action Items” on page 140 for specific recommendations.



RETAIL DEVELOPMENT FOCUS AREAS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

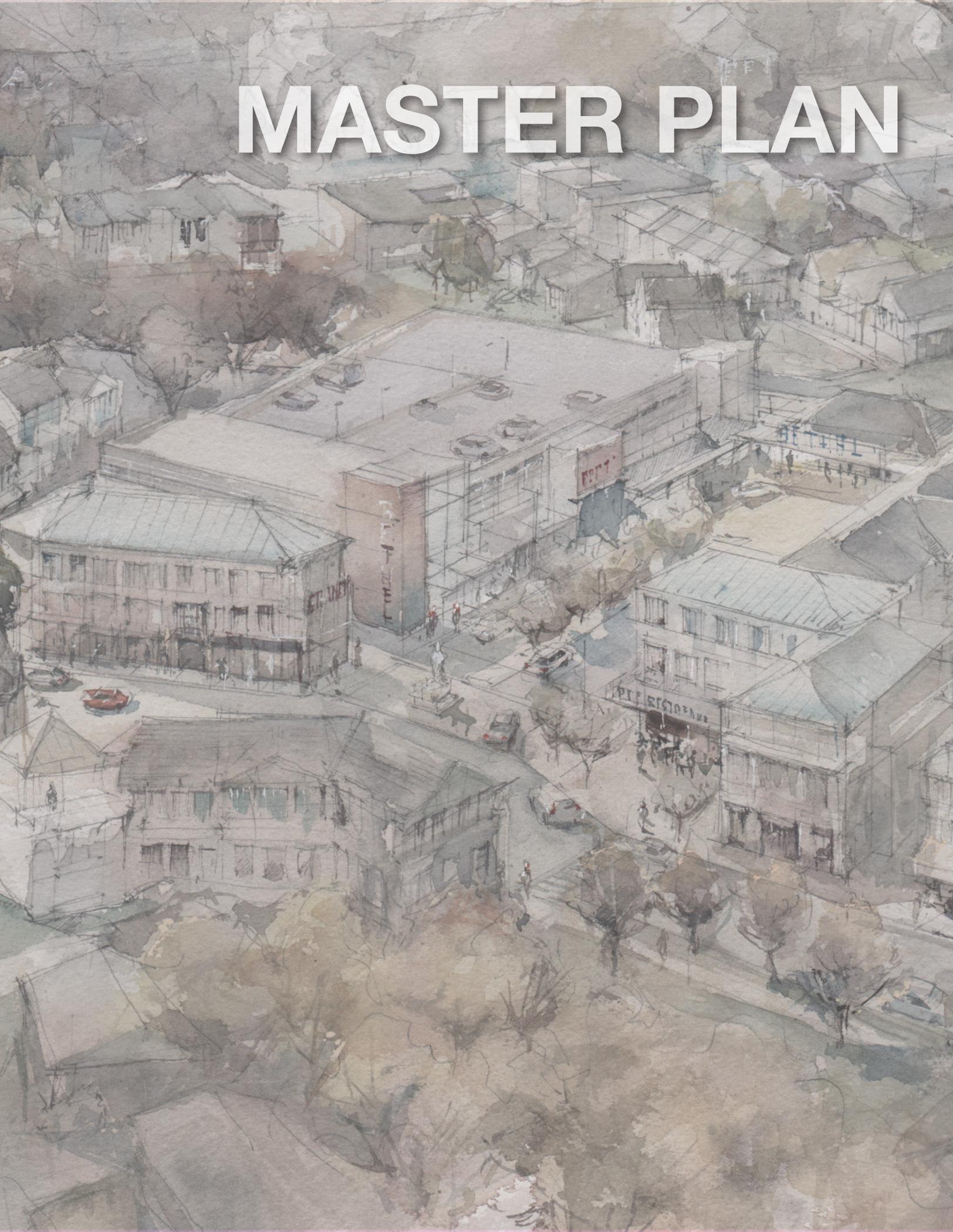


- First Priority
- Second Priority
- Third Priority
- Existing Buildings
- TOD area Boundary
- Railroad

Retail development should initially focus between the intersection of Durant and Greenwood. Durant and Greenwood is the natural 100% corner, and it would be ideal for development to radiate outward from there. If the momentum might be elsewhere, the pendulum should swing east by a block. Caraluzzi's is a natural anchor and, if business composition were stronger between there and Durant, the gaps would fill in quickly.

If the old train station site were open to making changes, that might shift the center of gravity westward. With several years of diligent work, the ground-floor spaces would fill in, along a couple of blocks of this intersection. After that, business development could grow either north or east, both would be good.

MASTER PLAN





THEORY & PRACTICE

Across the country right now, a growing number of cities and towns are repositioning themselves to attract young adult, baby boomer and senior markets. Unlike middle age markets, those with families of young children, who prefer the spaciousness of suburban living, young adult markets seek affordable “complete” walkable neighborhoods. Complete neighborhoods are those where working, shopping, dining and entertainment are all within easy walking distance to a compact town center’s narrow residential streets and bustling commercial life. Moreover, many companies are relocating from suburban locations with abundant parking to town-center locations with limited to no parking in order to find and retain young employees necessary to replace retiring workforces.

Today’s young adults prefer to work within walking distance of where they live. Contributing to that propensity are results from MIT’s recent and thorough Production in the Innovation Economy (PIE) study. The PIE study compiled deep research culled from the US, Europe, China and Brazil. The study’s conclusions reveal a clear change that’s happened in manufacturing. Former vertical orientation of companies, such as Ford, AT&T, General Electric, etc., in which all aspects of the manufacturing process were handled within the four walls of the company, has changed to a horizontal orientation, in which aspects of the manufacturing process are handled by multiple small companies, scattered yet connected through internet media. The concept of multiple small companies would work well in the “village” atmosphere of Bethel.

Furthermore, in the multi-company environment, innovation and R&D that used to reside within the four walls of giant vertical companies, now find the best results when small companies are close to one another, such that fledgling ideas from one company can become infected by disparate fledgling ideas from nearby companies.

The PIE Study’s biggest discovery revealed that the most productive R&D occurs when the actual manufacturing process intertwines with R&D, where innovation and ramping up to production work in concert. Under such conditions the outcome of combined R&D and manufacturing yield major breakthroughs along the lines of a Xerox PARC or a Bell Labs.

Therefore, permitting the kind of young adult oriented affordable compact neighborhoods to infill between existing industrial buildings, and entitling and attracting R&D with manufacturing appropriate to the scale of Bethel could present distinct national market advantages, drawing the unique class of innovative thinkers to Bethel. Such approach could also engineer reverse commutes on the rail line, where people and spending consumption from surrounding communities would seek Bethel’s innovative, unique and vibrant opportunities, rather than the other way around.

Part of a “complete community” involves the inclusion of many types of open spaces to enjoy. Just as Fredrick Law Olmstead did with Boston a century ago, the Bethel For-

ward Report proposes methods to engage the “necklace” of wetlands that thread through Bethel, re-envisioning them as positive attributes. The Report illustrates transforming the wetlands from a burden, to a coveted asset. Delicate paths set lightly amongst planting thread through the “park” area, welcoming recreation, fitness and exploration of the wonders of nature. The wetlands raise value of abutting property rather than detracting value.

The 1st key component of downtown repositioning, and highly relevant to Bethel’s revitalization, is the strategic location of its rail stop, especially since rail stops have proven to be the most successful stimulant to launch complete neighborhoods springing up within walking proximity to stations. This stimulant is called Transit Oriented Development, or TOD. TODs are complete neighborhoods that include retail, business and residential uses all combined compactly together.



Society Hill, Philadelphia

The 2nd key component of the plan is to target affordability. Currently most downtown housing, across the country, is directed solely toward the wealthy and the qualified financially challenged, not to the middle class. If housing is too expensive, even in new walkable complete neighborhoods, it excludes a significant portion of the desired markets outlined above. Middle class young adults, Baby Boomers and seniors will simply turn elsewhere.

Affordability does not mean unattractive housing-project style enclaves. In fact, early American affordable housing is quite attractive, such as Beacon Hill in Boston and Society Hill in Philadelphia. Both were designed for affordability through small size, low construction cost and low rent/ownership. Surprisingly, while being so affordable, such small-scale projects yield alarming tax revenues.

INTRODUCTION

MASTER PLAN

Based on local values, \$220,000 per acre for compact .03-acre Beacon Hill-type neighborhoods (that is, nascent Beacon Hill. Mature Beacon Hill fetches tax revenues of more than \$1,300,000/acre), compared to \$8,000 per acre for local 1-acre-minimum suburban-type neighborhoods. This jarring comparison highlights the financial importance for Bethel to relieve tax pressure on the greater community by encouraging compact development downtown. The low construction, affordable rent/purchase, and higher value and tax revenue make compact development a win-win-win for all concerned.



Beacon Hill, Boston

The 3rd and last key component of the master plan is demonstrating how re-platting and form-based codes entitle and encourage building small. In addition to the benefits of building small outlined above, building small turns out to offer the same positive impact on commercial environments. Small buildings for shops, restaurants and entertainment carry less expensive and less risk to build. They offer affordable rents and strong appeal to start-up enterprises. And they attract the type of desirable independent specialty stores to fill “voids” identified in the market study.

However, just as outlined for residential examples, small commercial buildings also pay significantly higher taxes per acre, especially where there is little to no parking. Comparing pre-car-oriented small commercial buildings to new car-oriented large models, the charming 2-story Opera House on .16-acres pays approximately \$133,000 taxes per acre, while just up the street and equally liked, but car-oriented, Caraluzzi’s Market on 2.94-acres pays approximately \$34,700 taxes per acre. If the Caraluzzi’s property were re-platted to 15 small lots with buildings the size of the Opera House, the town would reap roughly \$100,000 more tax revenue from the same property.

Caraluzzi’s certainly is an exceptional grocer, well loved by the community, but future land-hungry car-oriented models might be better located in places that don’t compromise the town’s highest producing tax resources. Free parking is not free, especially on high value land.

Because of the multiple assets of “small,” and in order to facilitate and enable development of small, the Report offers revised zoning regulations written to entitle and encourage re-platting large parcels into small lots, and zoning re-written to release impediments to robust prosperity at Bethel scale, such as:

- Minimum lot sizes,
- Minimum lot dimensions,
- Minimum frontage requirements
- Set back minimums,
- Parking minimums,
- Block Standards, and
- Entitling a greater range of building types as illustrated in the TOD Zoning Code.

In addition to zoning, the Report does not incorporate, but recommends consideration of additional measures, such as a reduction in impact fees, amendments to possible TOD impediments in adopted Bethel fire code, adoption of TOD friendly National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) street standards, and investigating other measures that assist building small, such as abbreviating permitting requirements to allow self-certification (and liability) by licensed architects — building permit issued by the architect with required notification of the municipality to keep the assessor’s records current.

SPECIFIC TO BETHEL

Bethel's TOD area has the potential to undergo a significant transformation in the next couple of decades. The study area is already quite unique, with an enviable main street character, good housing stock in parts and many historically noteworthy structures and interesting styles which greatly contribute to a pedestrian-friendly environment. Additionally, Bethel's traditional urban fabric provides a stable foundation and inspiration for the physical improvements of the rest of the area. The urban fabric in downtown Bethel is compact and continuous, with only a few empty lots, and it boasts a variety of lot sizes and building types.

Unfortunately, the block and street connectivity gets lost quickly as one moves away from Greenwood Avenue. Its single-use, disconnected and car-centric development patterns of more recent decades are less successful, further degrading downtown Bethel's pedestrian-friendly quality, and threatening the vitality and economic success of the TOD area, particularly in and around the new train station.

The illustrative master plan allows the community to see what it will look like if all properties were redeveloped as shown and visually understand what the study area's potential could physically look like. The illustrative master plan must thus be viewed not as a specific development scenario showing development exactly as it may occur, but rather as a conceptual vision of a possible built-out scenario compatible with the project's stated goals.

The master plan attempts to reverse the recent patterns of development and provides a vision and structure aligned with the principles of smart growth - a TOD area that is compact, mixed-use, walkable and economically resilient. The master plan shows development scenario that is in keeping with the project's goals developed during the community input workshops and charrette. Proposed new development is generally shown on vacant or underutilized properties, or in locations where redevelopment is likely to occur based on property owner desires or projected market trends. The purpose of the master plan is not to show development exactly as it may occur, but to:

- Help identify opportunity sites;
- Illustrate appropriate development patterns aligned to Bethel's scale, character and compatibility with the community's objectives;
- Provide a full range of housing options within the TOD area to appeal to as great a market segment as possible, including Millennials and baby boomers who are converging on smaller, more affordable units nationwide;
- Design a higher-quality public realm that provides a vibrant, walkable and connected downtown; and
- Ensure public improvements is aligned to private investment.

We believe the master plan accurately reflects the community's aspiration so clearly defined by the robust community outreach efforts. The seven goals defined by the community were:

OVERARCHING GOALS

The topic and subtopics gathered at the Community Voices and Choices workshops provided insight in areas that are critical to the plan. They suggest a number of goals which will drive the master plan vision. These are:

- **Enhance the pedestrian friendly qualities of Bethel by improving sidewalks throughout, adding bike lanes and paths, using the wetlands for exercise trails and recreation, and connecting different parts of downtown.**
- **Create a major "community gathering" place as well as distinctive smaller open spaces.**
- **Maintain and enhance Bethel's character, street-scapes, and visual appearance.**
- **Add downtown housing.**
- **Attract and strengthen retail, restaurants, and other businesses by leveraging Bethel's arts and events and marketing the town's unique assets.**
- **Improve the flow of traffic and parking.**
- **Address infrastructure and regulatory issues.**

The goals were prioritized during the Community Choices workshop held on October 29, 2015.

The master plan proposed here is the result of feedback received on prior plans by the Town, charrette participants and stakeholders. Those plans are included in the Appendix of this Report.

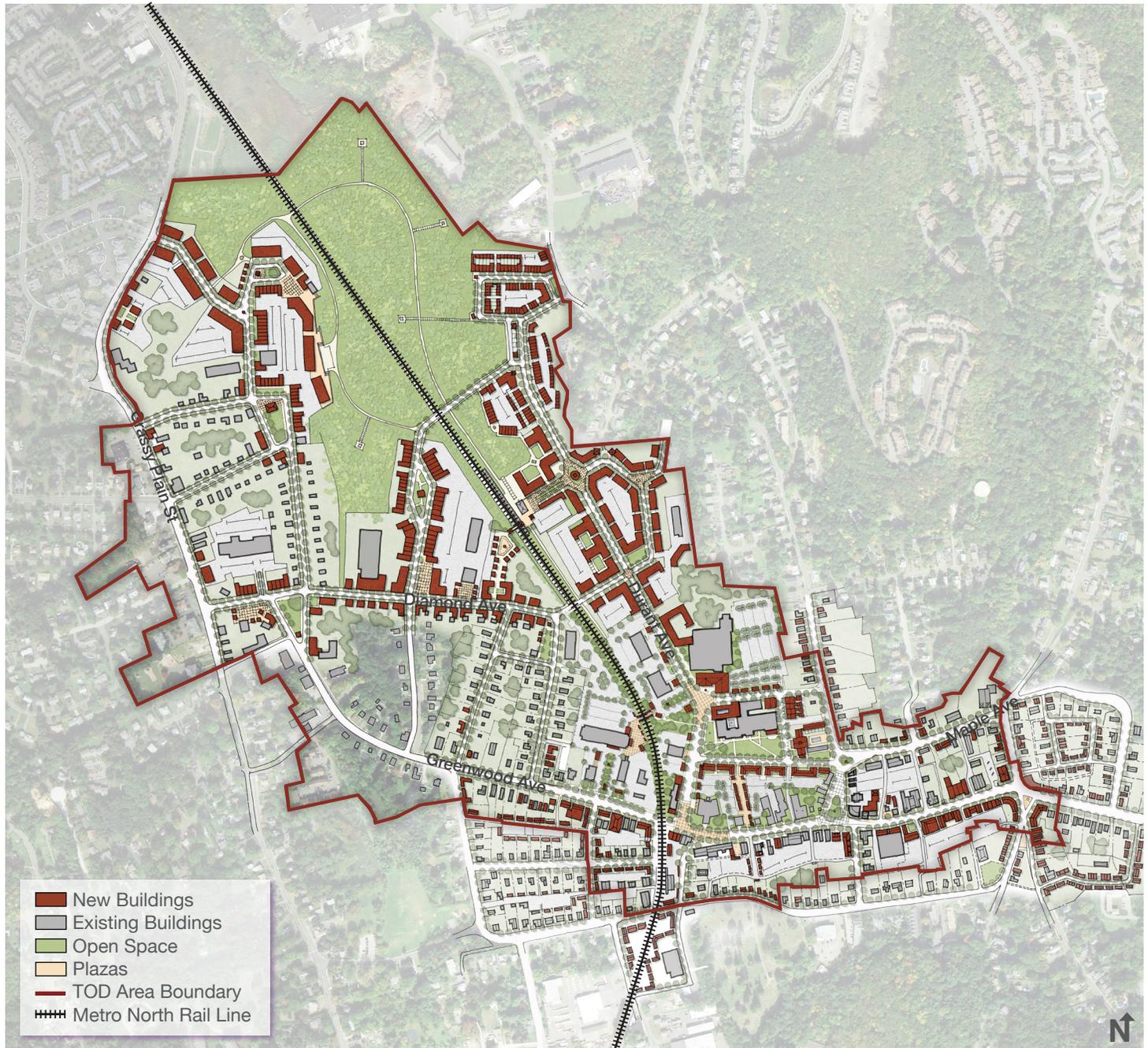
Finally, specific revitalization strategies and suggested action items by responsible parties are listed in "Master Plan Recommendations & Action Items" on page 144 to help guide the Plan's implementation.



CONCEPT VISION PLANS

MASTER PLAN

ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

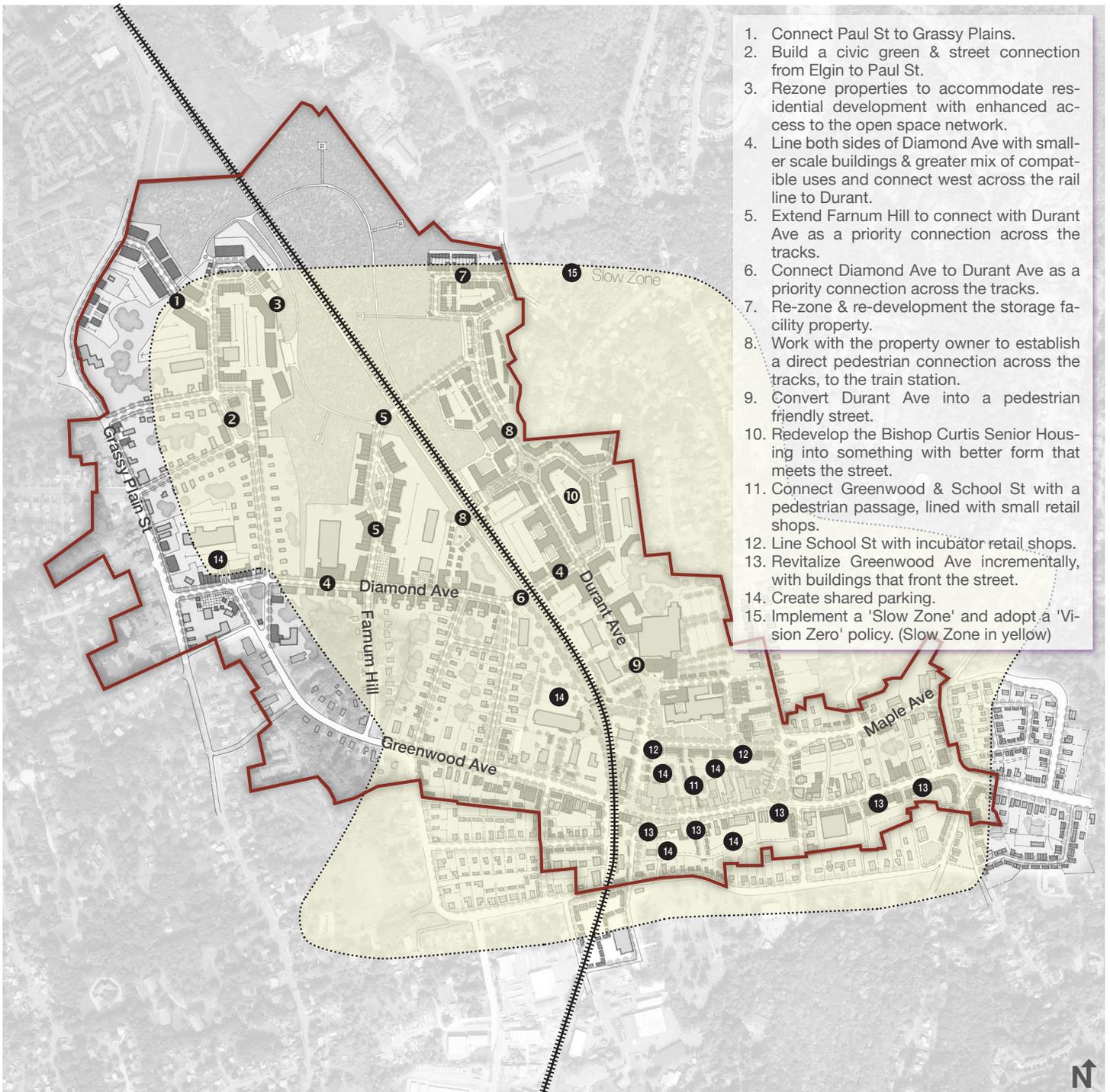


This plan combines the most compelling ideas from the prior sketch plans into one illustrative master plan.

General Design Goals:

- Work within existing plot lines to ensure each proposed development can be developed independently.
- Incentivize small-scale, incremental development, in keeping with the urban character, and market aspirations of Bethel.
- Leverage development around the train station in its current location, as the most fiscally conservative, and realistic option.
- Connect the wetlands to the trains station and downtown with a regional "bike destination and nature trail".
- Propose four at grade railroad crossings, two vehicular and two pedestrian ones, for necessary enhanced street network.
- Generally, infill buildings along streets to provide a more consistent urban fabric along sidewalks.
- "Implement a "Slow Zone" where cars will travel 20 miles per hour, slowed by a combination of placemaking, thoughtful street design, and traffic enforcement."
- Align public infrastructure improvements to public developments

KEY DESIGN IDEAS



1. Connect Paul St to Grassy Plains.
2. Build a civic green & street connection from Elgin to Paul St.
3. Rezone properties to accommodate residential development with enhanced access to the open space network.
4. Line both sides of Diamond Ave with smaller scale buildings & greater mix of compatible uses and connect west across the rail line to Durant.
5. Extend Farnum Hill to connect with Durant Ave as a priority connection across the tracks.
6. Connect Diamond Ave to Durant Ave as a priority connection across the tracks.
7. Re-zone & re-development the storage facility property.
8. Work with the property owner to establish a direct pedestrian connection across the tracks, to the train station.
9. Convert Durant Ave into a pedestrian friendly street.
10. Redevelop the Bishop Curtis Senior Housing into something with better form that meets the street.
11. Connect Greenwood & School St with a pedestrian passage, lined with small retail shops.
12. Line School St with incubator retail shops.
13. Revitalize Greenwood Ave incrementally, with buildings that front the street.
14. Create shared parking.
15. Implement a 'Slow Zone' and adopt a 'Vision Zero' policy. (Slow Zone in yellow)

CONCEPT VISION PLANS

MASTER PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION IDEAS FOR THE WEST SIDE



Design strategies for the west side are:

- Connect Elgin Avenue north to Paul Street and continuing to Grassy Plains Street at the intersection of Bainbridge Blvd.
- Build at grade railroad crossing to connect Farnam Hill to tie into Durant Avenue. A row of rear-loaded townhouses could provide an attractive street front along the Farnam Hill extension.
- Rezone industrial parcels to accommodate medium density residential developments comprised of a mix of townhouses, 4 & 6-plex units and multi-family buildings.
- Permit the redevelopment of lots on the south side of Diamond Avenue to accommodate a small commercial “work” component; such as live-works, in keeping with the light industrial character of the area.
- Incentivize redevelopment on both sides of Diamond Avenue and capitalize on its proximity to the train station by providing compatibles uses and affordable workplaces.
- Build a civic intersection at Elgin Avenue and Paul Street to create a formal green.
- Redesign the intersection of Diamond Avenue and Greenwood Avenue to a formal civic square, with attractive building facades up against the sidewalk and parking hidden in the back.
- Provide an enhanced façade to the popular Bethel Cinema building, fronting a newly formed green at the intersection of Greenwood and Diamond Ave.

IMPLEMENTATION IDEAS FOR THE EAST SIDE



Transform Durant Avenue into a vibrant street to:

- Create a formal entry around a green to the train station that is framed by mixed-use buildings along a green.
- Line the parking lots and structures in the rear, along the tracks to help deflect noise from the train away, and shield the parking from the street.
- Redevelop the Bishop Curtis Senior Housing site with a series of buildings elegantly lining the street, and provide a usable open space at its entrance.
- Encourage all properties to infill private development along Durant Avenue with mixed-use, residential and commercial buildings fronting the street, to enhance the pedestrian and bicycling experience.
- Provide the east-west pedestrian crossings as often as feasible.
- Propose a new, at grade, railroad crossing to connect Diamond Avenue to Durant Avenue.
- Develop the Sympaug Brook wetlands area into a nature park with elevated trails.
- Redesign Durant Avenue as recommended in the "Infrastructure & Transportation Needs" section of this Report.
- Urbanize Durant Ave by lining buildings along both sides in and around the train station, with parking in rear to also buffer from train noise.
- Redevelop the bus depot site with multi-family courtyard buildings. Retail at grade would activate Durant Avenue.
- Re-clad the Eaton façade terminating Durant Ave to create a more formal entry and allow for the building to expand along Durant Ave.
- Allow for small incubator retail pavilions in front of the CVS building, to partially shield the parking lot.

CONCEPT VISION PLANS

MASTER PLAN

REJUVENATE GREENWOOD AVE



- New Buildings
- Existing Buildings
- Open Space
- Plazas
- TOD Area Boundary
- ▬▬▬ Metro North Rail Line

Revitalize Greenwood Avenue into an economically thriving and exciting main street by following these recommendations:

- Incentivize redevelopment and re-use of buildings along Greenwood Avenue through historic tax credits, revised zoning code to allow small-scale buildings in keeping with the town center character, and a retrofitted thoroughfare section.
- Reorganize the rear-lot parking on both sides of Greenwood Avenue to become common parking lots, with shared driveway cuts and alleys where possible.
- Revise zoning regulations to remove all impediments to small-scale, incremental urban development.
- Improve signage along Greenwood Ave to help wayfinding and ease perceived traffic and parking problems.

CONNECT GREENWOOD TO SCHOOL ST



- New Buildings
- Existing Buildings
- Open Space
- Plazas
- TOD Area Boundary
- Metro North Rail Line

School Street has historically held a prominent place in Bethel’s history with the Municipal Center, one of the most important town buildings, facing it. Currently it is unbalanced and slightly degraded as it is fronted by surface parking lots at the back of the commercial buildings along Greenwood Avenue.

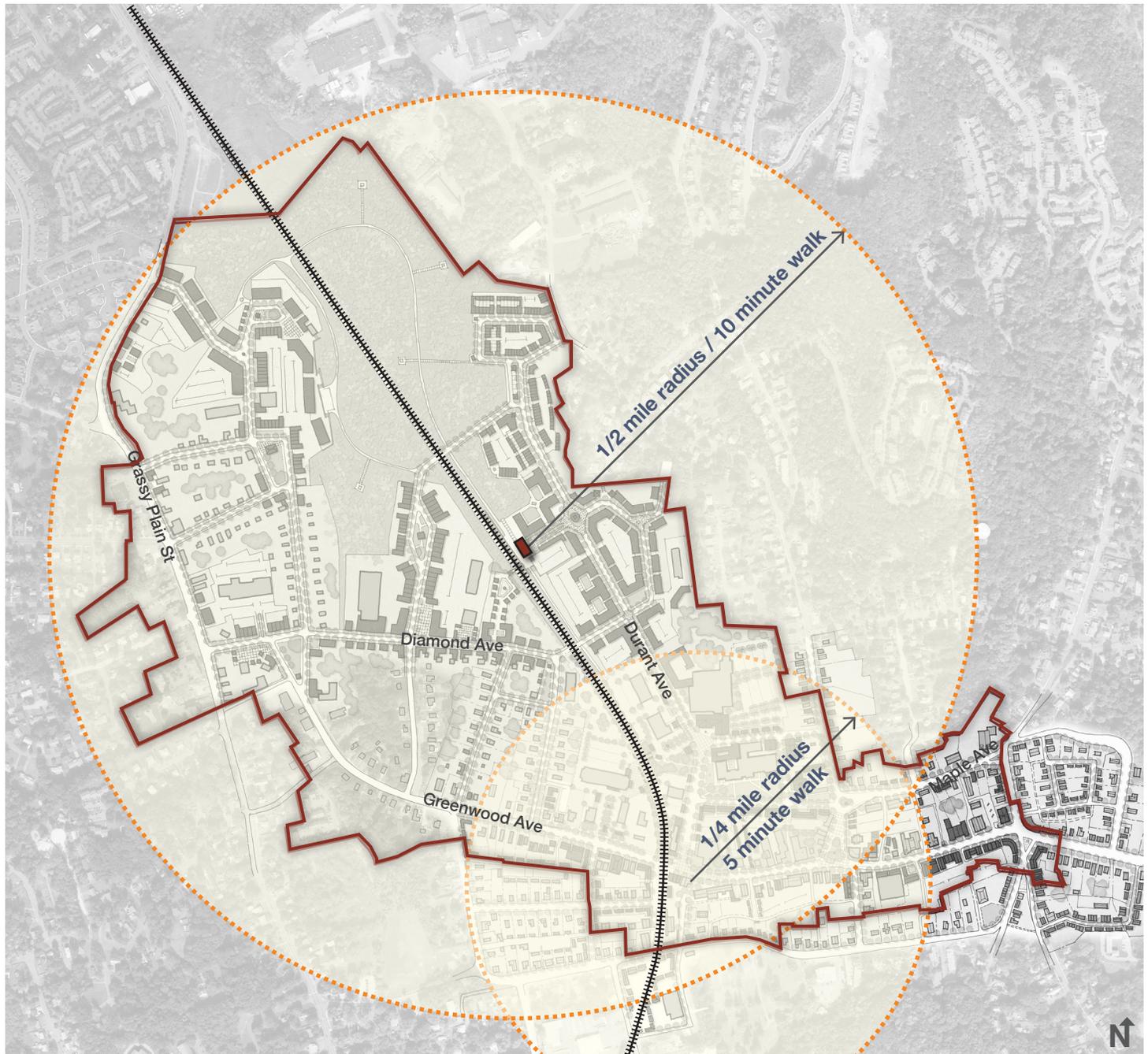
- Provide a narrow, 20ft wide pedestrian passage lined with small incubator retail buildings on both sides should connect Greenwood Avenue to School Street. The passage should visually terminate on the Municipal Center’s front portico.

- Consolidate individual parking lots into one large parking area, fronted with liner buildings that shield the parking, creating the higher quality attractive frontage School Street deserves.
- A potential location for a Bed and Breakfast is suggested on the east side of the Municipal green. This design proposes shrinking the Municipal Center’s parking lot, introducing a new street, lined with townhouses. The Bed and Breakfast would face this new street to provide a fitting anchor on the east side of the Center’s green.

SUPPORTING PLAN ANALYSIS

MASTER PLAN

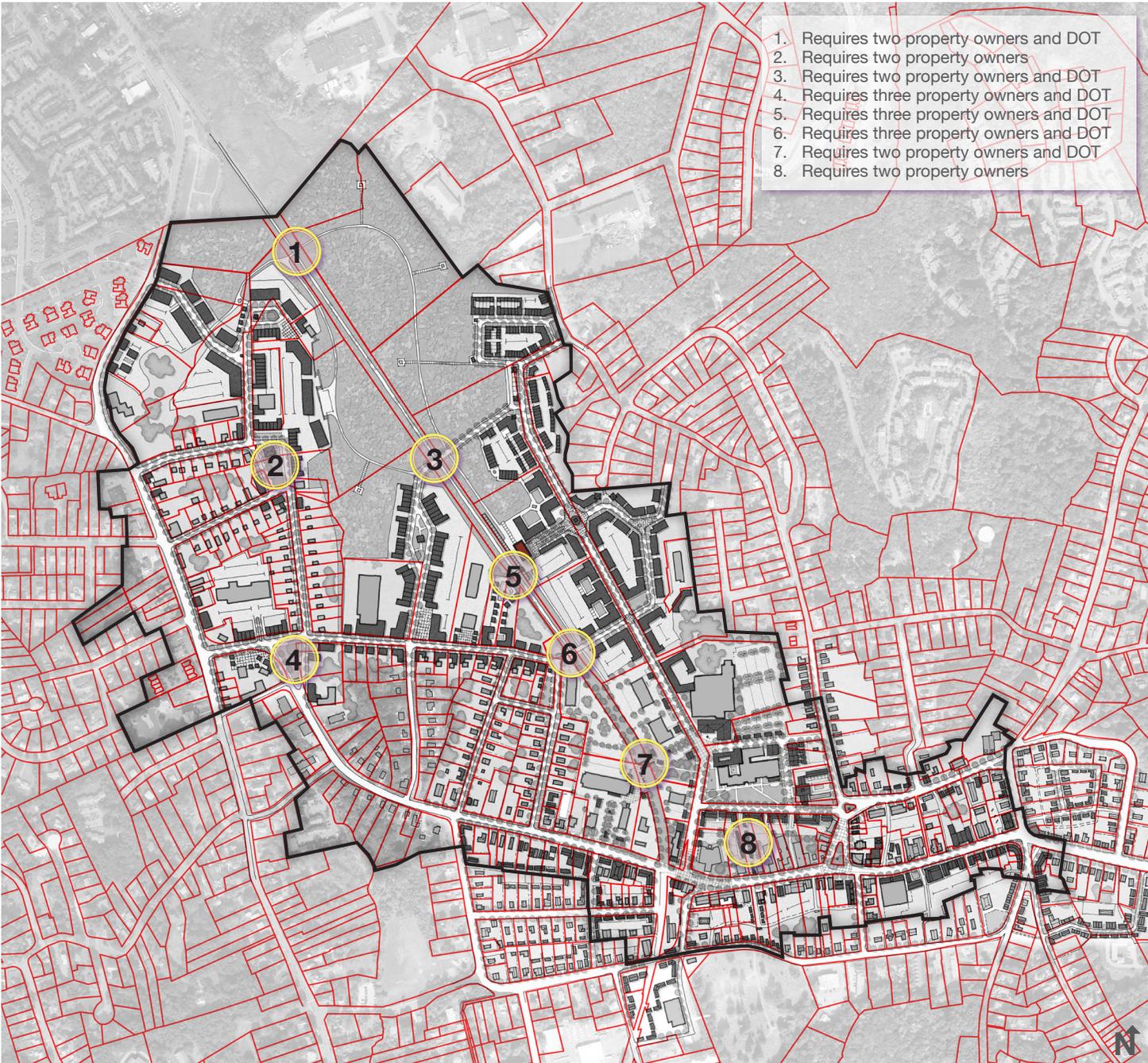
UNDERSTAND THE SCALE & CATCHMENT OF THE AREA



- Existing Buildings
- New Buildings
- TOD Area Boundary
- Metro North Rail Line
- Pedestrian & TOD Shed (5 & 10 minute walk)

Neighborhood size is determined not by population, but by an area wherein the majority of the residents are likely to walk to a neighborhood square or center, which could contain a corner store and a bus stop. The size is based upon 1/4 mile radii, which represents the five-minute walk that a majority of people will choose to walk before deciding to drive. The TOD area is twice the scale, with transit users being willing to walk a 1/2 mile radius (a 10-minute walk) if conditions are right. The Town has the enviable benefit of already having the train station located within the TOD shed of the downtown. The necessary amenities and critical mix of uses already exist in Bethel, so a primary focus should be to improve the overall walkability of this TOD area, through connecting streets and an enhanced pedestrian network.

WORK WITH KEY PROPERTY OWNERS



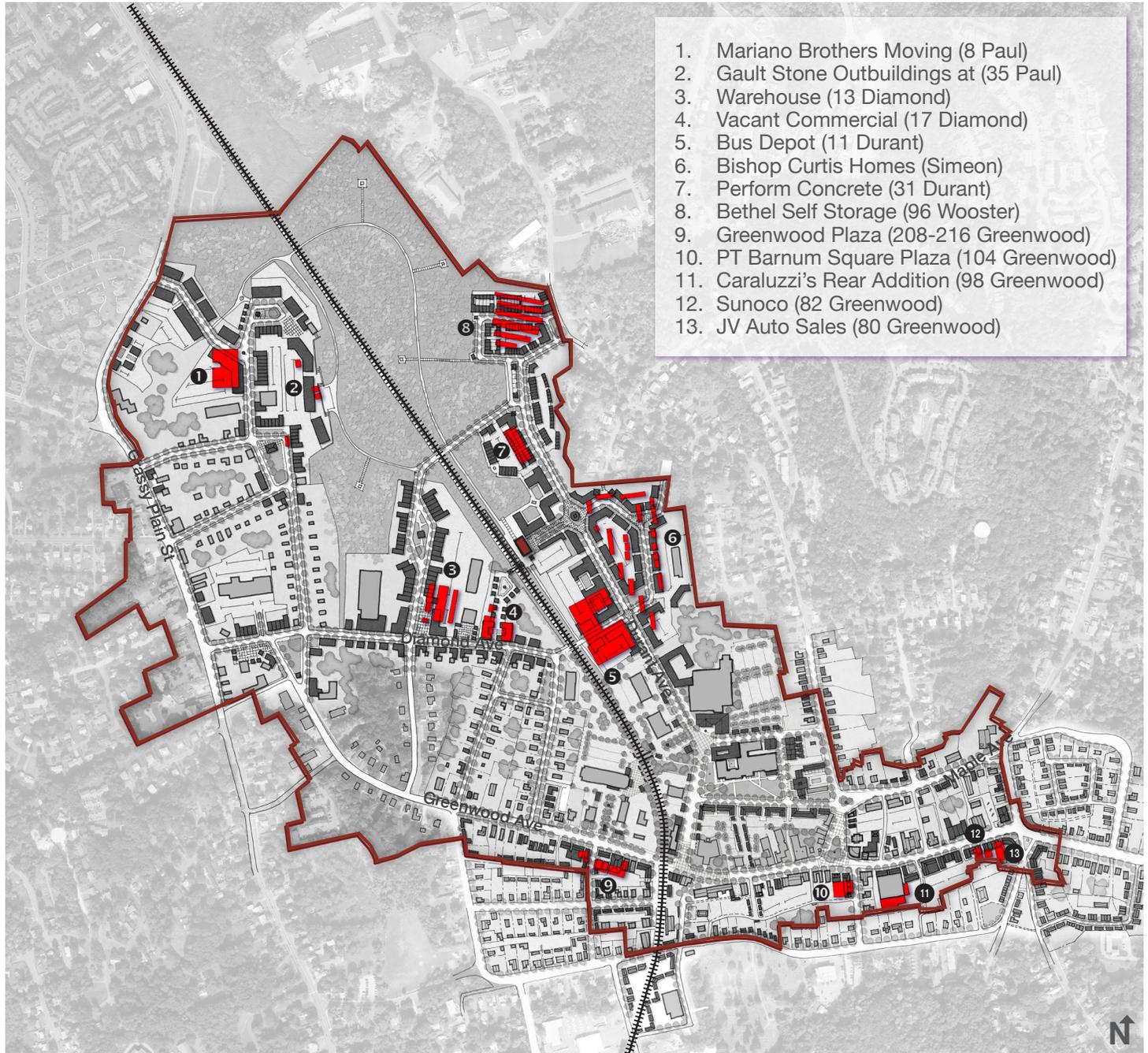
- Existing Buildings
- New Buildings
- Property Lines
- Areas which require collaboration (property owners and/or municipality)
- TOD Area Boundary
- Metro North Rail Line

The proposed designs for Bethel’s TOD area principally work with, and within existing property lines to facilitate the implementation of this vision plan. In a few instances, the coordination of multiple property owners may be required to ensure new streets can fully connect as proposed, or public open space can be provided where indicated. Where property lines are aggregated, there is single ownership of the property.

SUPPORTING PLAN ANALYSIS

MASTER PLAN

INCENTIVIZE REDEVELOPMENT



- Existing Buildings
- New Buildings
- Affected Buildings
- TOD Area Boundary
- Metro North Rail Line

The red buildings are those that may be demolished when property owners decide to redevelop their properties following the design of the vision plan. It is important to note that not a single building will need to be demolished in order to accommodate new streets or provide new open spaces.

PRIORITIZING THE PUBLIC REALM

The drawing on page 87 highlights an enhanced public realm and open space network. It should be considered the principal amenity for residents and visitors alike, and critical to a thriving downtown. One of the biggest challenges facing downtown Bethel is the lack of a consistently good urban experience which is in large part due to the quality of the public realm and in particular to the relationship between the streets and their adjacent building frontages. Studies are now clear – the benefits of walkable downtowns cannot be overstated. They spur economic development, encourage social interaction, and by extension, strengthen community life, promote a healthy lifestyle and improve the environment by lowering greenhouse emissions. For downtown Bethel to become an attractive, walkable environment, significant improvements must be made to the public realm. That is principally the responsibility of the public sector. In order to incentivize and continue to attract private investment and revitalization efforts, public investment will need to be aligned to private development. Such improvements are organized into four categories:

1. Complete streets to improve access, safety and comfort;
2. New streets to improve connectivity; and
3. An enhanced open space network.
4. Connections from east to west side of tracks.

COMPLETE STREETS

Most of the streets within the TOD area have to be retrofitted from those that exclusively prioritize the flow of traffic to those that equally prioritize the requirements of pedestrian and cyclists as well. This means a greater percentage of their right-of-way is designated for pedestrians and cyclists to feel comfortable, safe and most importantly, connected to other meaningful destinations.

Such measures involve targeted changes and retrofits within the existing curb-cuts such as: widening sidewalks, reducing travel lanes, providing on-street parking, introducing bicycle lanes, and adding trees. Different streets should be held to different urban standards depending on their primary function. If the street, such as Greenwood Avenue or Durant Avenue is intended to be walkable, they should be held to the highest level of frontage quality. Buildings along them should present a continuous urban frontage to the street, sidewalks should be generous, harmonious street furnishings, good lighting and parking, loading, utilities and trash equipment should be concealed from view. On the other hand, if the street is principally intended to carry traffic, such as Grassy Plains Street, they do not need to be held to such rigorous urban design standards.

CONNECTED STREETS

Moreover, in addition to providing more “complete streets”, it is equally important to stitch together a connected, fine-grained network of streets and blocks to provide more connections that encourage walking and cycling, alleviate congestion and improve access between the east and west sides of the rail line. As a result, the circulation network has been laid out based on the following criteria:

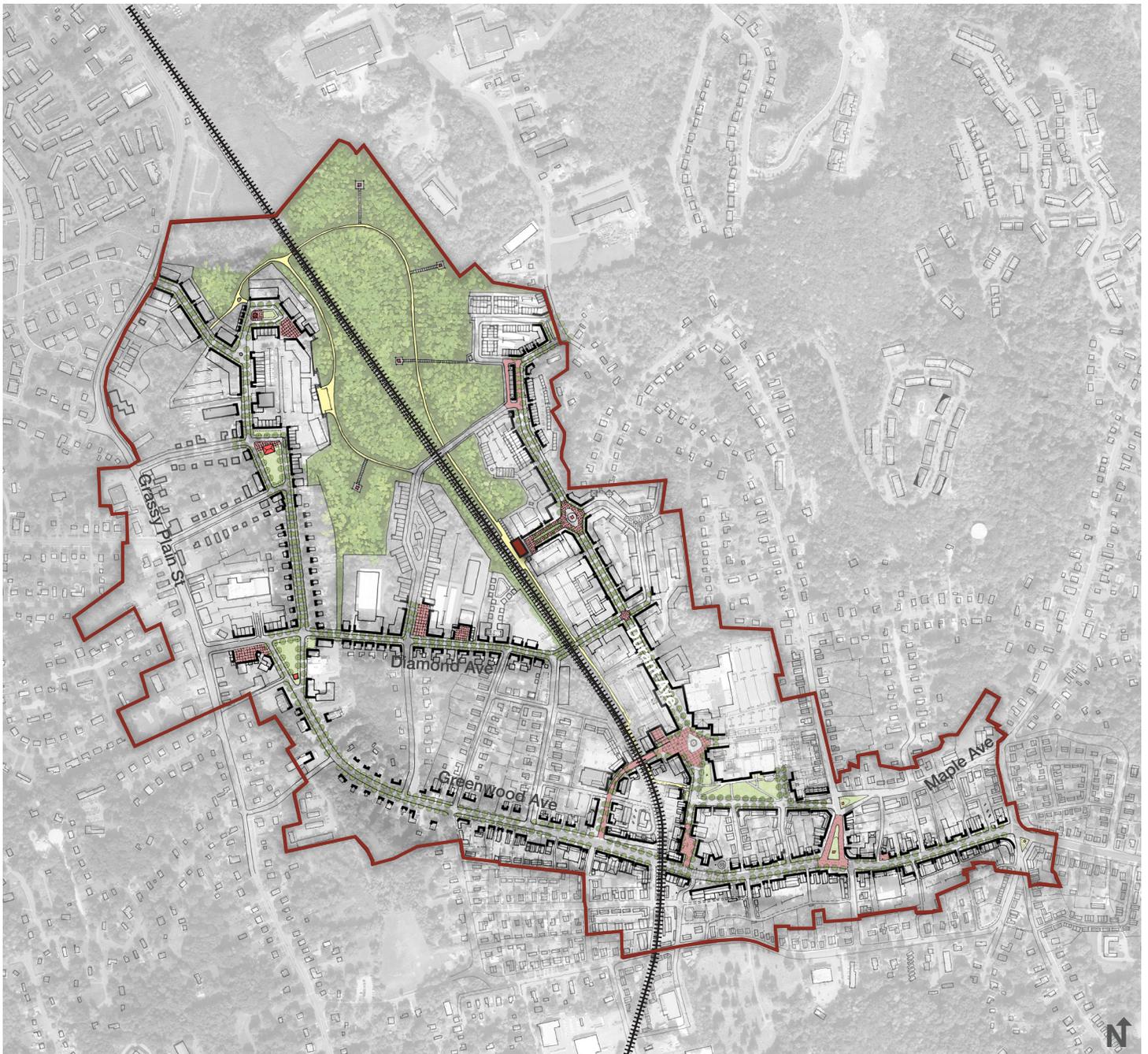
- Connecting the west side to the east side of Bethel with a minimum of two additional vehicular at-grade crossing, and three pedestrian crossings to greatly facilitate access to the train station and incentivize the study area’s full potential as a TOD.
- Extending existing streets to connect to the greater Bethel grid and avoid dead-end streets;
- Minimizing impacts on private land and buildings for all new street dedications;
- Repaving and completing the sidewalk network within the area as needed;
- Designating the downtown area as a “slow zone”
- Retrofitting streets in such a manner as to not impact on the right-of-way between the curbs, such as introducing bike lanes;
- Introducing a new pedestrian street to connect Greenwood Avenue and School Street;
- Improving key intersections with higher grade pavers; and
- Improving alley access behind Greenwood Avenue to improve loading and parking access.

OPEN SPACE NETWORK

Lastly, the existing open space network within the TOD area needs to be improved. The Sympaug Brook wetlands area is envisioned to be transformed into a nature park with elevated trails that also connect to Bethel’s downtown while providing a passive recreational amenity for the Town. A series of public spaces have also been distributed across downtown. They are:

- A green at the intersection of Greenwood Avenue and Diamond Avenue to anchor the neighborhood center, but also to provide a more direct connection to Elgin Street.
- A square that now connects Elgin Street to Paul Street to alleviate the congestion along Grassy Plains Street and also provide a play area for the new residences fronting it.
- A linear park in front of the train station.
- Pedestrian access crossing through/over wetlands.

PRIORITIZE THE PUBLIC REALM

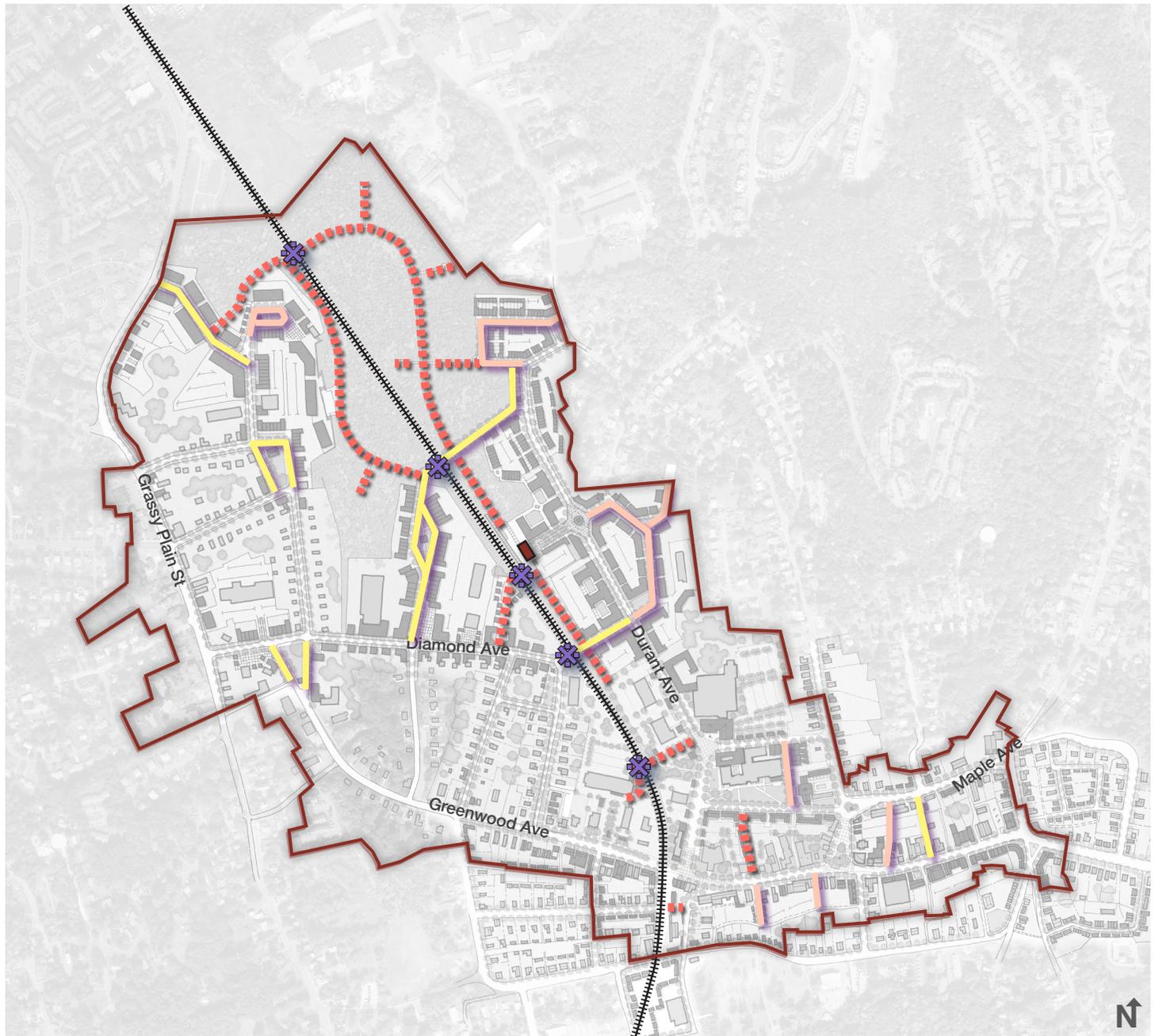


- Civic Buildings
- Plaza
- Green Space
- Primary Frontage
- TOD Area Boundary
- Metro North Rail Line

PUBLIC REALM STRATEGIES

MASTER PLAN

CREATE NEW CONNECTIONS



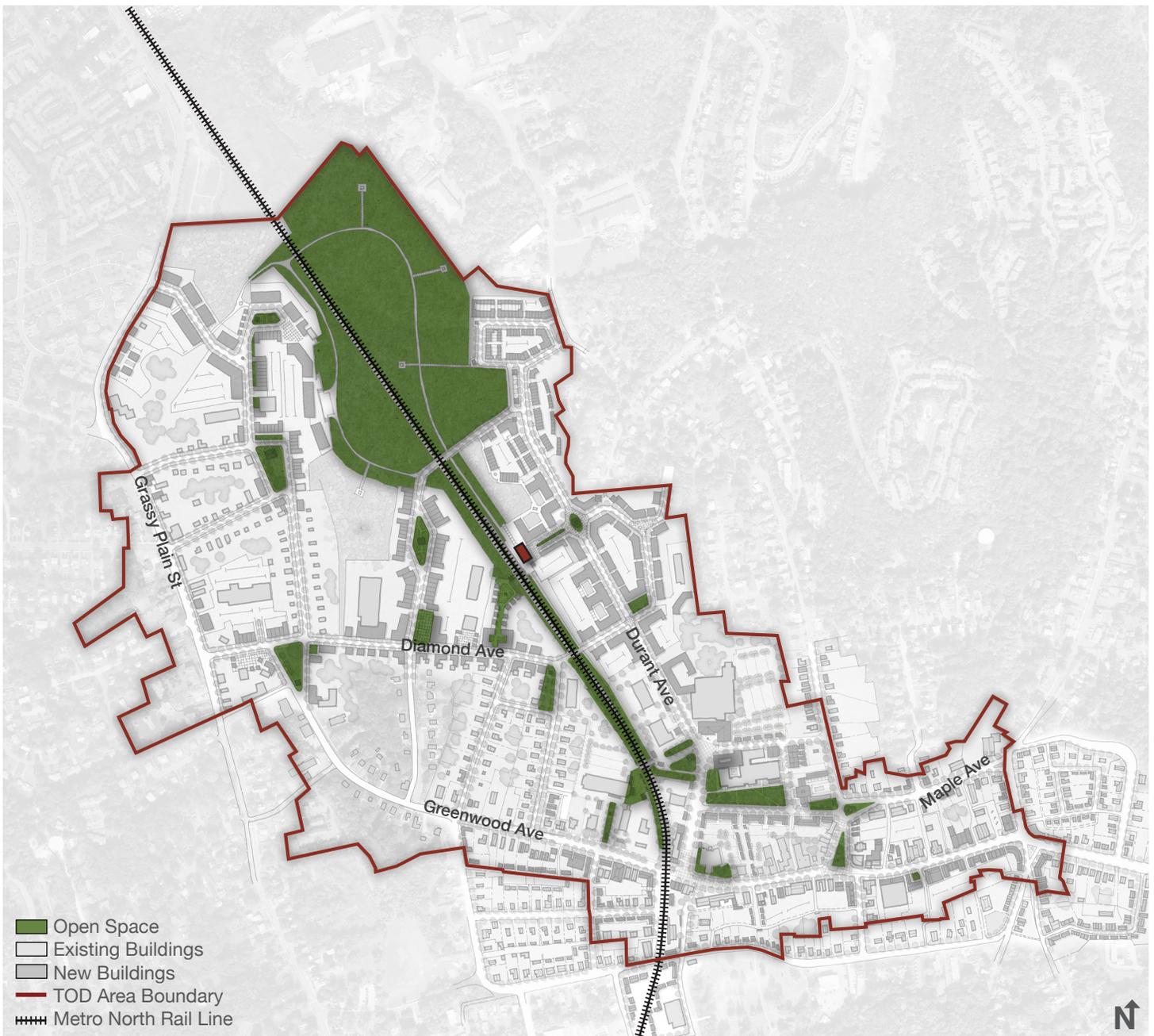
- - - Proposed Pedestrian Ways (6,396 ft.)
- Proposed Streets (*10,786 ft.)
- Discretionary Streets & Alleys
- ✱ Critical Rail Line Crossings
- Existing Buildings
- New Buildings
- TOD Area Boundary
- Metro North Rail Line

* Combined length of new and discretionary streets proposed

New streets should be built in those locations where they create the least amount of impact, where they are necessary to connect interrupted streets, where they partially already exist, and where they provide the greatest benefit to a more connected circulation network. New streets and paths across the train tracks is critical to tying the east and west sides together to fully encourage the development of the TOD area to its full potential. This plan shows where the most important new streets, pedestrian ways and critical rail line crossings are.

Finally discretionary streets and alleys that aren't necessary to the success of the plan but contribute to the vision are also suggested.

PROVIDE SCALES OF OPEN SPACE



As the community identified, the TOD area is currently underserved by public open space. If additional residents are going to move to downtown, a greater variety of open space will be needed throughout.

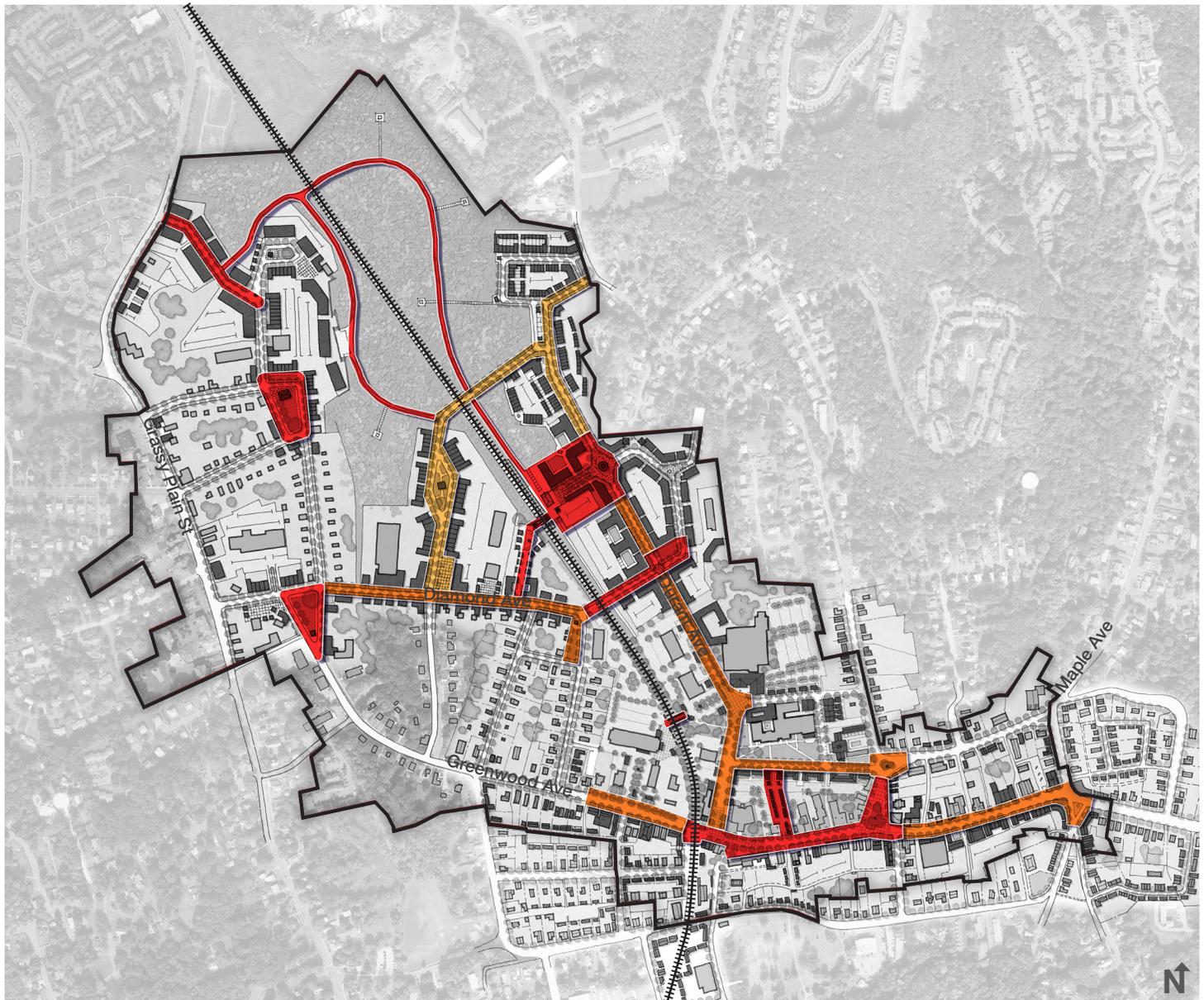
The open spaces recommended are:

- Improve Sympaug Brook wetlands area and transform it into a nature park with trails extending to downtown;
- A green at the intersection of Greenwood Avenue and Diamond Avenue, where a new neighborhood center should be;
- A linear green facing the train station;
- Improve greens at all civic locations, including the Bethel Library and Municipal Center;
- Create semi-public open spaces for large-scale new residential projects, including the future redevelopment of the Bishop Curtis site, and along the extension of Farnam Hill;
- Convert the residential lot or abandon a portion of Grand St to a playground or pocket park to provide a needed transition buffer from the new multi-family buildings recently added to the neighborhood; and
- Enhance Dolan Plaza shopping center to include a square.

PUBLIC REALM STRATEGIES

MASTER PLAN

PHASING THE PUBLIC REALM STRATEGIES



- Priority Phase 1
- Priority Phase 2
- Priority Phase 3
- TOD Area Boundary
- Metro North Rail Line

Three public infrastructure phases are proposed to prioritize the suggested improvements. The list is long, varied and complex and some improvements are necessary while others are optional. All contribute towards a better public realm however. Some of these improvements may be initiated and shouldered by the private sector and happen opportunistically, while others may require a more direct intervention by the Town. The Town will have to actively work and coordinate with the public sector to take advantage of all options. Strategies include:

- Acquire the parcels required for new streets;
- Require property owners to provide dedications or easements for the new streets for fair compensation;
- Incentivize the construction of suggested improvements through a Public Benefit Program that provides additional development capacity to developers in exchange for fees paid into a Public Benefit Fund. (See implementation strategies)
- Develop other potential funding sources or tax credits (TIF, PPPs) to help pay for the suggested improvements (See economic development strategies)

Public realm improvements have been prioritized into three phases to assist the Town in their efforts to direct available funds to the most critical areas where the results would most immediately be felt.

Priority Phase 1 Items:

- Incentivize the pedestrian passage connecting Greenwood to School St.
- Develop rezoned properties closest to the train station.
- Build pedestrian connections across the rail line at Dolan Plaza, the train station, and at the north end of the site connecting to the open space.
- Build vehicular connections, connecting Greenwood, Elgin, and Paul st. as well as the extension of Diamond to Durant.
- Public realm and thoroughfare upgrades along Greenwood Ave, specifically narrowing travel lanes, adding on-street parking and widening sidewalks. See page 125.

Priority Phase 2 Items:

- Public realm and thoroughfare upgrades along Durant Ave between the train station south to Greenwood Ave.
- Public realm improvements along Schools St. which include: sidewalk repair, parking consolidation, and signage.
- Continue public realm and thoroughfare upgrades along Greenwood Ave, specifically narrowing travel lanes, adding on-street parking and widening sidewalks. See page 125.

Priority Phase 3 Items:

- Continue public realm and thoroughfare upgrades along Durant Ave., north of the train station.
- Extend Farnum Hill north east across the rail line to Durant Ave.



Pedestrian connection to School St



Development around the train station



Redevelopment along Diamond Ave

MASTER PLAN CAPACITY & BUILDING MIX

MASTER PLAN



- Single-Family & Duplex
- Townhouse
- Urban Villa & Multi-Family
- Live/Work, & Mixed Use*
- TOD Area Boundary
- Metro North Rail Line

* Includes incubator retail, maker space, etc.

This diagram proposes one of many possible options in terms of building type mix that is generally aligned to the 20-year build-out capacity.

It is not the intention of this plan to designate specific locations for certain building types as that should be left to market demand, zoning, demographic changes and developer preferences. Rather, this diagram is intended to highlight the importance of a mix, greater densities around the train station, and how the form of the buildings themselves address the street and shape space. The new zoning regulations will provide property owners with the needed flexibility of type, while also providing the community with a certain predictability of form and character.

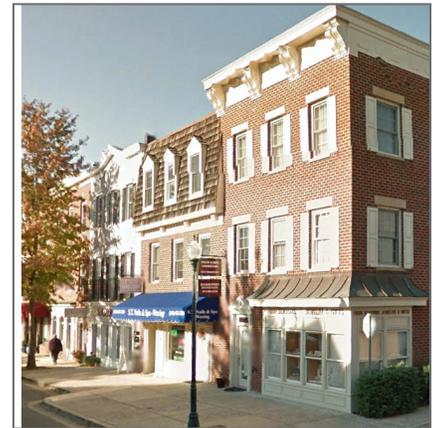
MASTER PLAN CAPACITY & BUILDING MIX

MASTER PLAN

Frontage (linear ft)	Single-Family	Duplex	Townhouse	Urban Villa (6-pack)	Multi-Family	Live/Work	Mixed-Use	Totals
Mix	5%	5%	40%	20%	17%	5%	8%	100%
Linear Frontage (ft)	864	864	6,909	3,455	2,936	864	1,382	17,273
Lot Width (ft)	72	72	24	72	100	24	100	
# of Lots	12	12	288	48	29	36	14	439
Units/lot	1	2	1	6	10	1	10	
# of Units	12	24	288	288	294	36	138	1,080
Retail s.f. (40' depth)						34,546	55,273	

The table above shows the possible mix of building types based on the amount of linear frontage available for development in the TOD area. The assignment of types of the master plan is based on context, proximity to the train station, a build-out and infrastructure capacity, developer plans for redevelopment, and the potential rezoning of industrial properties.

Equally important, this build-out capacity for Bethel generally follows the market absorption recommendation of 966 +/- units over a 20-year period, with an additional 72,000 sf +/- of retail. The capacity also takes into account the maximum capacity that the infrastructure can handle, restrained by sewer. The sewer capacities are: 1,030 +/- residential units and 114,500 sf +/- of commercial.



Examples of suggested building types. From left to right: Townhouse, Urban Villa, Live-Work

AT-GRADE CROSSING STUDY

MASTER PLAN

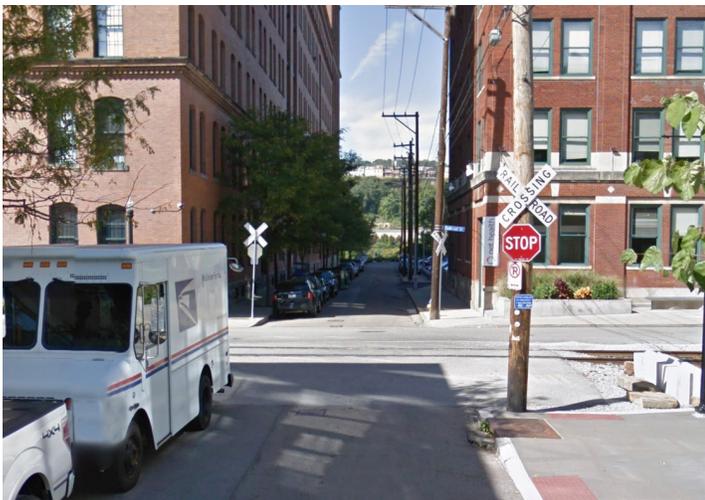
LOOK TO NATIONAL PRECEDENTS & STATISTICS



Park Ridge, IL



Ft. Worth, TX



Pittsburgh, PA

Work with CTDOT to permit additional at grade crossings

Safety concerns are legitimately cited as one of the greatest impediments to the provision of additional at-grade crossings. However, DOTs around the county are now more aggressively reviewing safety through a larger lens that also considers the revitalization opportunities that come from complete streets and enhanced connectivity. Should the Town pursue this track, a legislative act would be required to approve additional at-grade crossings. CTDOT has indicated that their willingness to even consider this option would first be predicated on an adopted TOD master plan, fully supported by the community.

Bethel's leadership should aggressively pursue this route as soon as the Plan and Code are adopted.

Using safety alone to justify no additional crossings would be seriously detrimental to the realization of the TOD area's full potential as it is currently greatly hindered by the lack of connectivity. Its merits must be measured and evaluated against all the benefits the master plan.

Additionally, evidence shows that the risk of death at crossings (excluding suicides) is actually much lower than people believe. The Table shown here extrapolates data from across the US and demonstrates that there is a 1.7% risk of a fatality over the next 25 years with two additional crossings.

At-Grade Crossings in the US	
At-Grade Crossings	38,000
Train Crossings per Day	212,000
Avg. Annual Deaths: at-Grade Crossings	270
Trains Crossing at-Grade Per Year	77,380,000
Chance of Crossing Fatality Per Crossing	.000349%
Chance of Crossing Fatality at 2 Additional Crossings after 25 Years	1.7%

Source: Federal Railroad Administration

PRIORITIZE RAIL CROSSINGS IN BETHEL



1. Greenwood Ave Crossing



2. South St Crossing



3. Taylor Ave Crossing



4. Great Pasture Crossing



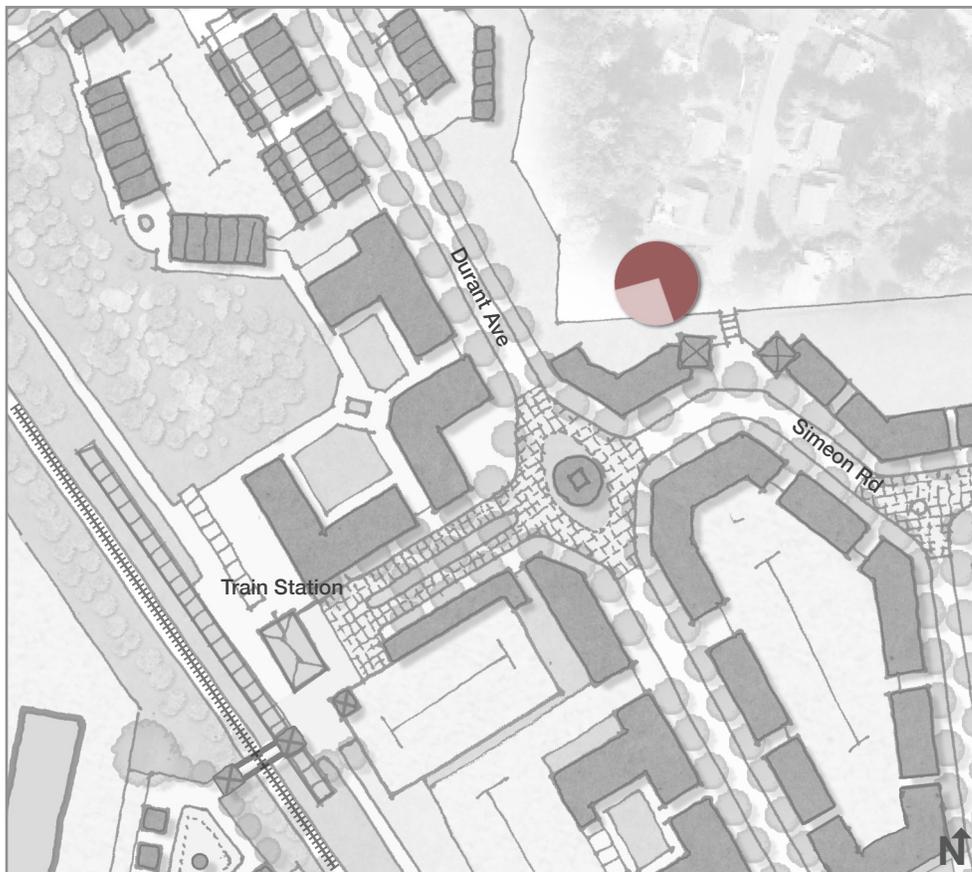
The two closest at-grade crossings from the train station are 1.1 miles apart. However, there are crossings within Bethel that are less than 500 feet from each other. The two proposed additional crossings, excluding pedestrian crossings, are a minimum of 450 feet from each other. Connecticut has many precedents for CTDOT to look at, where intersections are more regularly spaced than conservatively shown here. We recommend the noted crossings be coordinated with CTDOT and implemented in the initial phase.

Bethel At-Grade Crossing Locations	Distance Between Crossings
1. Greenwood Ave	445 ft
2. South St	445 ft
3. Taylor Ave	430 ft
4. Great Pasture Rd	5,896 ft

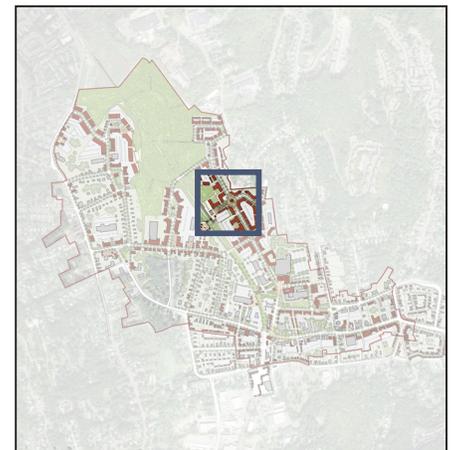
ENVISIONED CHARACTER

MASTER PLAN

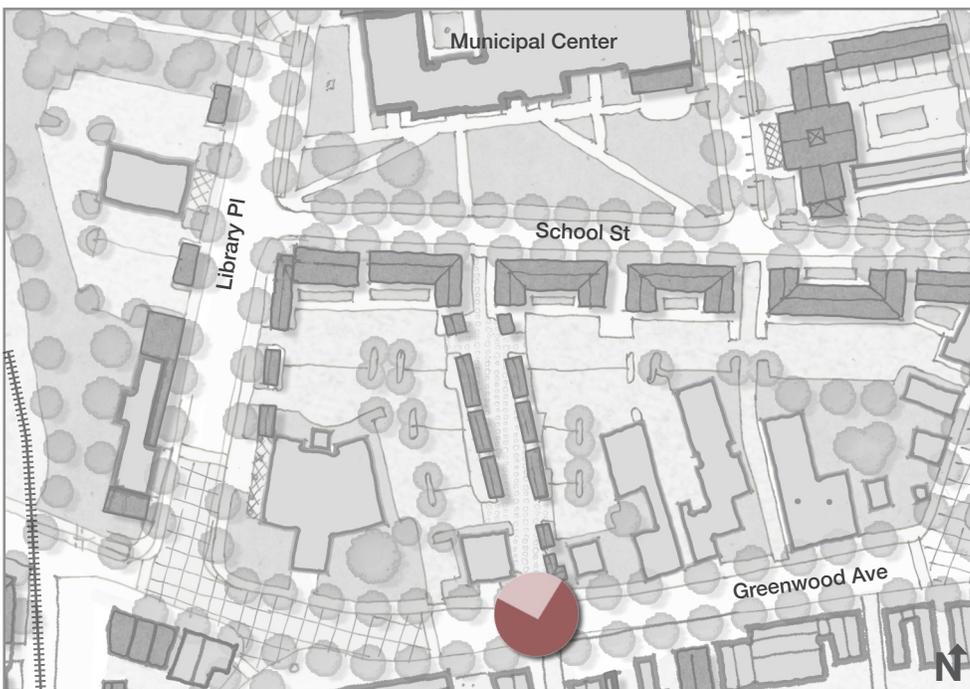
DEVELOPING AROUND THE TRAIN STATION



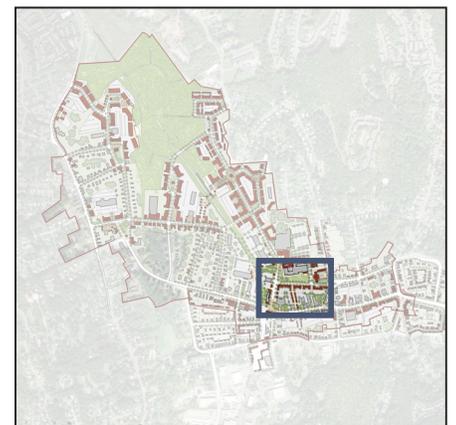
View of the proposed infill development around the train station, including a variety of mixed use buildings, multi-family buildings, small scale incubators and parking liners. Durant Ave is envisioned as a high-quality street with buildings close to the sidewalk.



BUILD A 'SKINNY' STREET



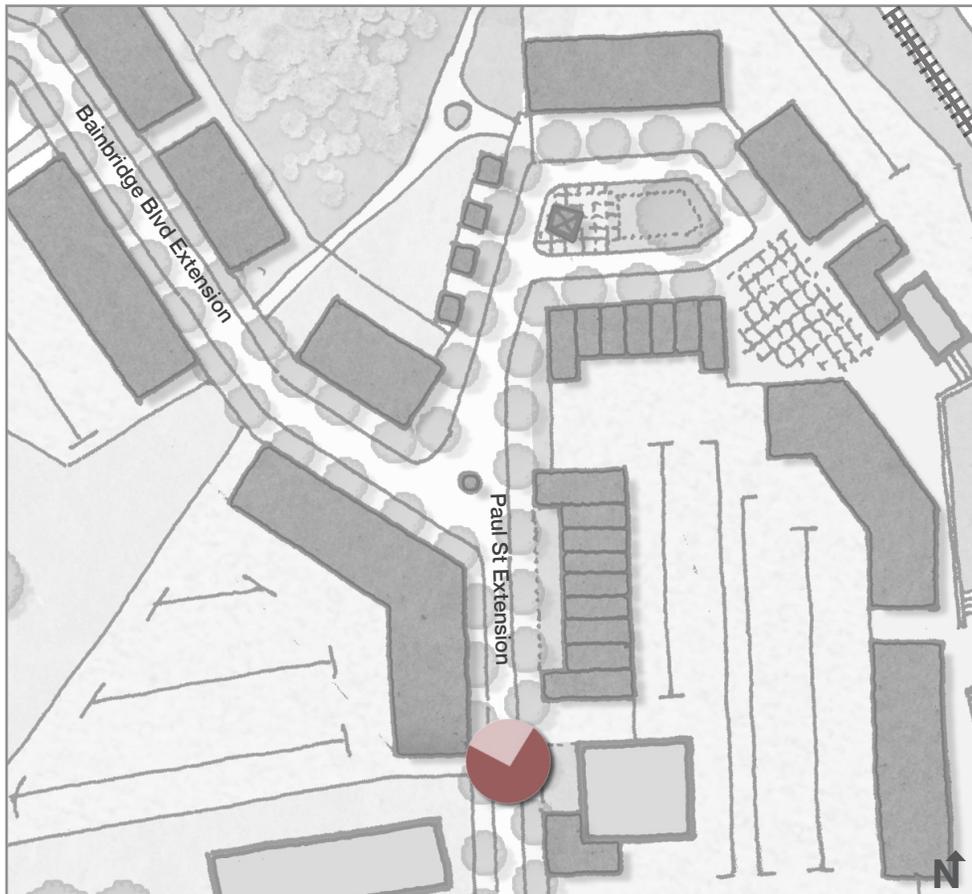
A view down the proposed mid-block pedestrian passage lined with one-story incubator retail shops and small restaurants. Envisioned as a funky, lively passage, it connects two main Town streets and dramatically terminates onto the Municipal Center's entry portico.



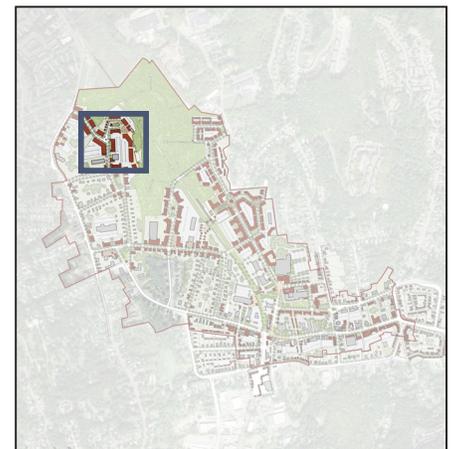
ENVISIONED CHARACTER

MASTER PLAN

USE PEDESTRIAN SCALED INTERSECTIONS



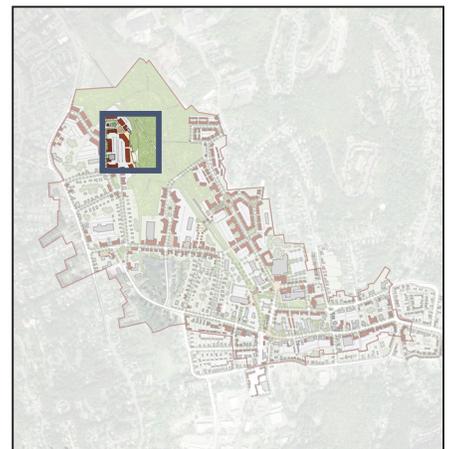
A rendering of a charming new residential street surrounded by two and three story buildings, connecting west to Bainbridge Avenue. A small civic roundabout punctuates the street.



CELEBRATE THE OPEN SPACE & MAKE IT PUBLIC



A view of a pedestrian path running along the edge of the enhanced Sympaug Brook wetlands. It is elegantly fronted by townhouses and small multi-family buildings.



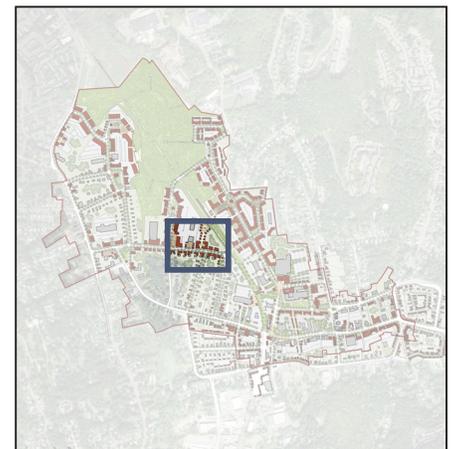
ENVISIONED CHARACTER

MASTER PLAN

REVITALIZE DIAMOND WITH COMPATIBLE USE & FORM



View of the revitalization along Diamond Ave, creating a cohesive frontage of similar, compatible uses that is pedestrian and bicycle friendly.



TAX/ACRE THEORY & PRACTICE

Under normal conditions, acreage can change quite a bit depending on its location. Some acreage is very valuable, other acreage is less valuable.

One might compare valuable and invaluable acreage to farming. On a farm, some of the land has high amounts of organic matter and produces healthy and prodigious crops. Other land on the farm has low amounts of organic matter, its soil is rocky. Such soil produces unhealthy crops and not much of them. A farmer knows to set aside the rich soil for his most prodigious crop production, leave the poor soil for least productive uses, and use the soil in between for its best use along a curve according to shifting values of soil.

Like a farmer, a town has a finite amount of "fertile land" from which to raise revenues ("crops"). On a farm, if the farmer wastes his most fertile land by letting it go fallow or placing inappropriate use on it, and if his expenses remain constant, it will take 5, 10, 50 times the amount of less fertile land to make up the difference to meet the expenses, depending on how limited the amount of fertile land is.

The tax/acre numbers on the following pages demonstrate how property values, and therefore tax revenues, increase as one proceeds from the edge to the center of town, with the town center having the highest values. The tax/acre numbers also demonstrate how property size and the extent to which buildings fill their properties have an even greater impact on values, and therefore on tax revenues, with the smallest footprint properties/buildings contributing the highest value, and therefore tax revenue.

Just as for the farmer, to let the most "fertile land" (the land with the highest potential "crop yield"/acre) go fallow, and if its expenses remain constant, it will take 5, 10, 50 (depending on how limited the amount of "fertile land" is) times the amount of "infertile land" to make up the difference to meet the expenses.

But then, if the crop yield on the "infertile land" isn't sufficient to make up the difference from abandoning "fertile land," the town (and the farmer) are left with no choice but to raise the price of their smaller crop yield until expenses are covered. Trouble is, raising prices loses customers.

Compounding the value of land is the amount of land unused by the building on the land, say to make room for parking or just setbacks from property lines, open space.

So why the fuss? It's all about appropriateness.

The problem comes when a low tax/acre use gets "planted" on the most "fertile land," wasting opportunity. It's easy to see how lost opportunity affects farming, not so much for town-making, especially when so confused by the automobile. But opportunity should be considered.

Of course, unlike the farmer, in addition to "crop yield," the town has additional things to worry about, such as enriching social capital, creating neighborhoods. Social capital works just like financial capital, and it's second tier impact on financial value, but that's another story.

How is this relevant to Bethel?

Bethel example: According to the Assessors Office (illustrated on the following page), the typical land value for 5 acres is ±\$615,000, or \$123,000/acre. If the property owner were to divide each acre into 30 plots, the simple math of dividing \$123,000 20 ways yields land values of ±\$6,150/lot.

However, at such small sizes, the price/acre measurement no longer makes sense. It would be completely reasonable to sell such plots for a fixed price, say, \$12,300 per plot. At 20 dwelling units per acre the replatting favors townhouses.

Now let's work the \$12,300 small lot Bethel price backwards, up to 5 acres. 20 plots at \$12,300 would come to \$246,000/acre. And 5 acres would come to \$1,230,000. In other words the property owner could make 200% on his land by simply re-platting. If he/she subdivided into 30 plots, they could make 300%.

REALIZING THE VISION

MASTER PLAN

RE-PLANT FERTILE LAND

Tax / Acre Analysis

5 acre Durant Parcel Tax Study	whole land value	size (acre)	\$/acre	# of Lots/acre	\$/lot	Conclusion
Value Based on Large Land Parcel	\$615,000.00	5	\$123,000.00	20	\$6,150.00	Resultant \$/lot is unrealistic - too low
Working based on the value of the 5-acre parcel on Durant						
Value Based on Small Lot Value	\$1,230,000.00	5	\$246,000.00	20	\$12,300.00	land values are 200% higher by re-platting.
Working backwards from the average value of a small lot in Bethel.						

TAX/ACRE EXAMPLES IN BETHEL

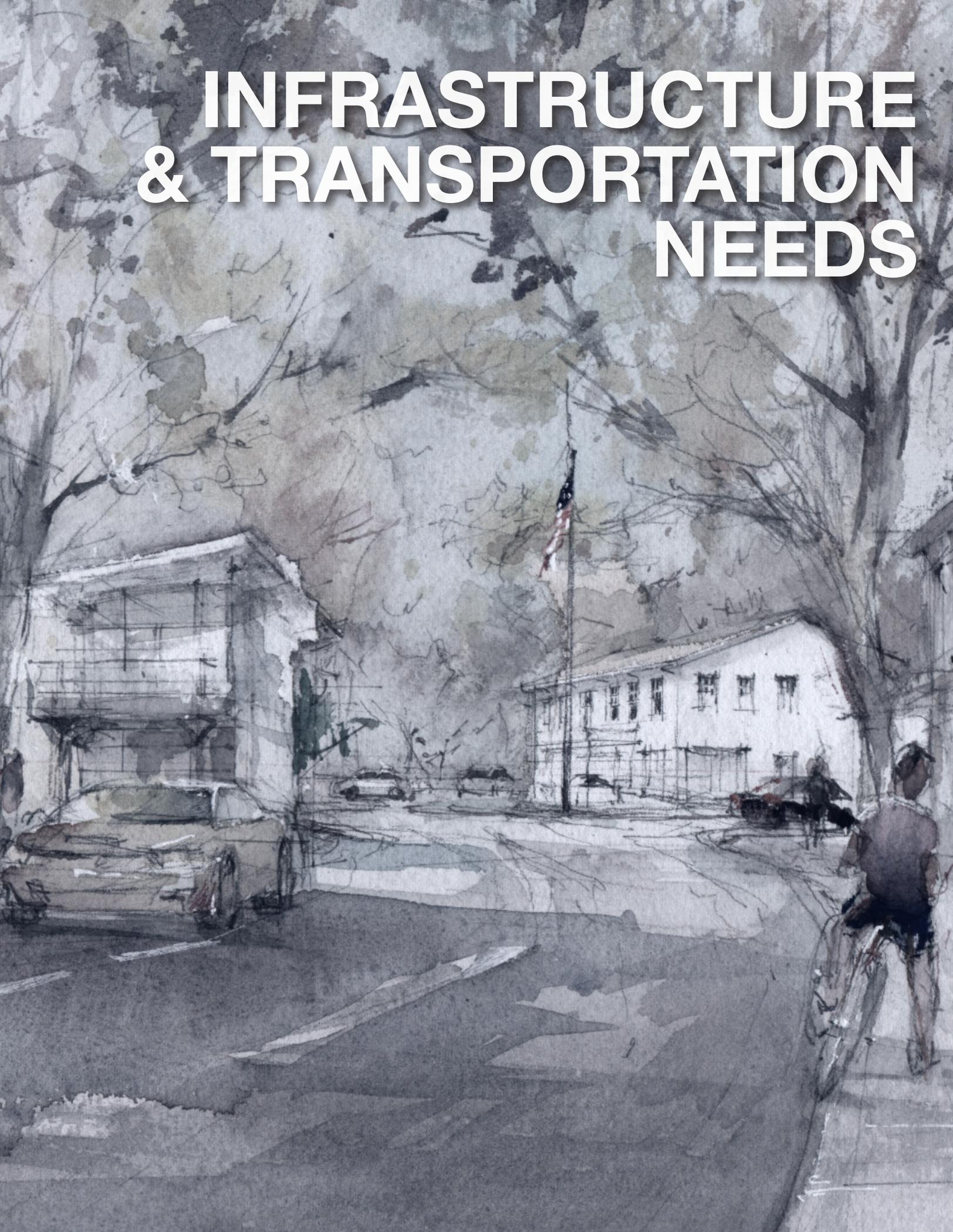


Under-utilized land



Effectively utilized land

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS



INTRODUCTION

CDM Smith supported the TOD team and an extensive review of the infrastructure and environmental issues (wetlands and properties of concern) in the TOD area including:

- Sanitary Sewer infrastructure
- Transportation infrastructure
- Environmental resources (wetlands and waterways)
- Environmental risk (properties of concern)

The following sections summarize the findings of the infrastructure review conducted. In addition, while not specifically in the scope of work, obtaining information from the Town staff on the water supply improvements planned by the Town was useful in understanding the sanitary sewer limitations for supply in the TOD area. Relevant water supply information is provided.

The results of the review indicate that sanitary sewerage in the TOD area can be available up to approximately 200,000 gallons per day of influent to the Town sewer system for future development. The Town is planning significant improvements to address current supply constraints that should enable future development within the TOD area.

Environmental resources in the TOD area constrain the extent of the development in the area west of the railroad tracks with significant inland wetlands and watercourse/flood plains. The wetlands will require careful redevelopment to minimize impacts and provide equitable mitigation.

There are several properties of moderate to high risk due to past spills of contaminants on the properties and/or they are high risk uses that will likely require environmental remediation as part of the redevelopment.

The TOD area mobility is constrained by the Danbury Line railroad which bisects the area and severely limits the east/west travel to the single at-grade roadway/railroad crossing of Greenwood Avenue (Route 302). North of this crossing, the next east/west crossing is in Danbury over a mile away. The railroad essentially provides two distinct areas in the TOD area, with the eastern portion of the Town Center area, with the municipal complex, library and assortment of street level retail shops and restaurants along Greenwood Avenue. West of the railroad, development is more suburban with the Dolan Plaza retail center and more diverse residential and commercial development extending to the Grassy Plain area. The infrastructure is supportive of the motorized traffic to flow through the Town, with State and local roadways providing mobility with congestion limited to the peak hours and trains crossing Greenwood Avenue. Pedestrians are accommodated throughout the TOD area with sidewalks along most roadways, however better connectivity of the sidewalks and compliance with ADA requirements is needed. The sidewalk surfaces and ramps are non-compliant in many locations. In addition, vehicle speeds and volume indirectly limit the mobility of pedestrians and directly impact the mobility of bicyclists in the entire TOD area.

Furthermore, the Town Center lacks a gateways along the roadways to announce to entering visitors they are traversing the Town Center. The review of the infrastructure has revealed several recommendations for improving the mobility of all users in the Town Center through specific intersection and roadway recommendations and general ideas on Complete Streets, improved bicycle mobility and slow zones.

ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

CDM Smith conducted field reconnaissance in Bethel, CT within the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) area. The purpose was to document state and federal wetland resource areas within the TOD area to assist in the development of a TOD for downtown Bethel, CT. The results from the field reconnaissance are presented below.

Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) Soil Survey

The NRCS soil survey for the TOD area was examined prior to field reconnaissance. Depth to water table, drainage class, flooding frequency class, ponding frequency class, and hydric soil ratings were examined for each soil unit in the TOD area. Raypol silt loam (12), Timakwa and Natchaug soils (17), Catden and Freetown soils (18), and Saco silt loam (108) are soil map units within the TOD area that consist of a high percentage of soil series that exhibit hydric soil characteristics, see Soil Map Figure. These hydric soils are predominately located on the undeveloped parcels in the northern portion of the TOD area and are associated with Sympaug Brook.

Field Reconnaissance

The TOD area was walked to determine the accuracy of the soil survey. The NRCS soil surveys are used to provide information as a planning tool and often needs to be adjusted with an onsite investigation.

Sympaug Brook Wetlands

The northern portion of the TOD area is a large wetland associated with Sympaug Brook and a tributary to Sympaug Brook. A Palustrine emergent (PEM) wetland dominated by broadleaf cattail (*typha latifolia*) and common reed (*Phragmites australis*) borders Sympaug Brook and its tributary. The PEM soils are mapped as Timakwa and Nutchug soils, Catden and Freetown soils, and Saco silt loam. Up-gradient of the PEM is a Palustrine forested wetland dominated by broad-leaved deciduous trees (PF01). The dominant species in the PF01 wetlands include red maple (*Acer rubrum*), green ash (*Fraxinus Pennsylvania*), and glossy buckthorn (*Frangula Alnus*). The PF01 wetland soils are mapped as Raypol silt loam, Timakwa and Natchaug soils, Catden and Freetown soils, and Saco silt loam. Portions of the PFO extend into areas where soils are mapped as Framinton-Nellis complex 15 to 35 percent slopes, very rocky (94E), Agawam-Urban land complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes (229B), and Udorthents-Urban land complex (306), see wetlands figure for approximate wetland boundary.

The tributary to Sympaug Brook is located between the railroad right-of-way and the rear of 7, 9, 11, and 13 Durant Avenue. Between 7 Durant Ave. and 10 Library PI the stream flows through a culvert under the road. A PEM wetland dominated by common reed borders on the tributary between the parking lots of 7 Durant Ave and 10 Library PI.

These wetlands would both have jurisdiction on the state level by having positive indicators of hydric soils and on the federal level by having positive indicators of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology. A wetland delineation would be required prior to filing of wetland permit applications.

ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS
INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

	Stream		Bordering Vegetated Wetland	
	Class	Width (ft.)	Class	Width (ft.)
	Perennial	5	---	---
	Intermittent	1	PEM	5-10
	Perennial	3-5	PEM	120
	Intermittent	1-3	PEM	100
	Intermittent	1	---	---
	Perennial	2-8	---	---
	Perennial	3-10	PEM	3-10
	-----	-	PEM	50-100
	Intermittent	1	PEM	50-80
	Intermittent	1-3	---	---
	Perennial	3-5	PEM/PFO	100
	-----	-	PEM	300-500
	Intermittent	1-3	PEM	200
Total	6 Intermittent/ 5 Perennial	33 12	PEM PEM/PFO	1020 200

SOILS LEGEND

Area of Interest (AOI)

 Area of Interest (AOI)

Soils

 Soil Map Unit Polygons

 Soil Map Unit Lines

 Soil Map Unit Points

Special Point Features

-  Blowout
-  Borrow Pit
-  Clay Spot
-  Closed Depression
-  Gravel Pit
-  Gravelly Spot
-  Landfill
-  Lava Flow
-  Marsh or swamp
-  Mine or Quarry
-  Miscellaneous Water
-  Perennial Water
-  Rock Outcrop
-  Saline Spot
-  Sandy Spot
-  Severely Eroded Spot
-  Sinkhole
-  Slide or Slip
-  Sodic Spot

-  Spoil Area
-  Stony Spot
-  Very Stony Spot
-  Wet Spot
-  Other
-  Special Line Features

Water Features

 Streams and Canals

Transportation

-  Rails
-  Interstate Highways
-  US Routes
-  Major Roads
-  Local Roads

Background

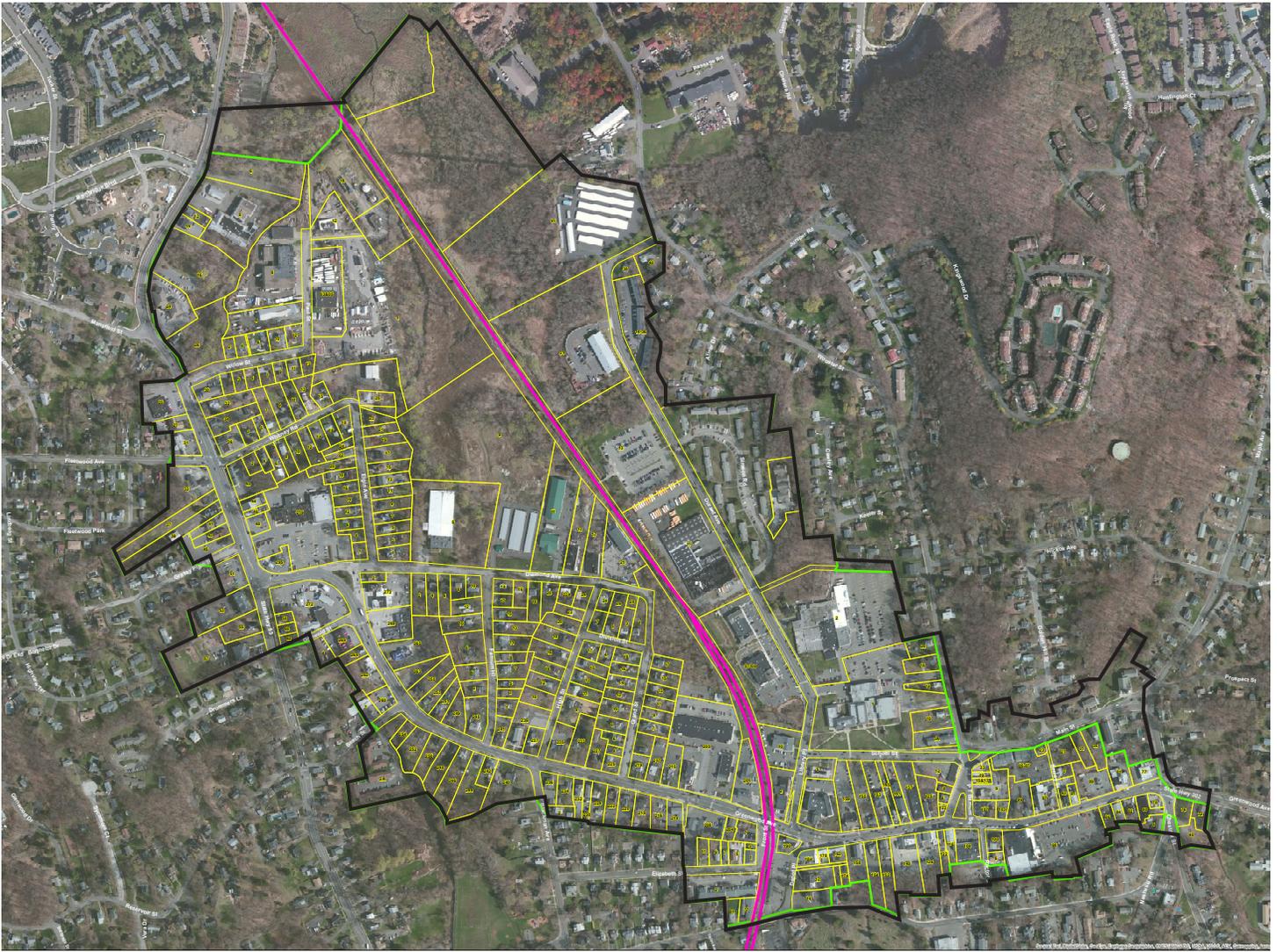
 Aerial Photography

State of Connecticut (CT600)			
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
3	Ridgebury, Leicester, and Whitman soils, 0 to 8 percent slopes, extremely stony	2.9	0.3%
12	Raypol silt loam	49.6	5.0%
13	Walpole sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	6.2	0.6%
15	Scarboro muck, 0 to 3 percent slopes	5.6	0.6%
17	Timakwa and Natchaug soils	23.4	2.3%
18	Catden and Freetown soils	22.5	2.3%
21A	Ninigret and Tisbury soils, 0 to 5 percent slopes	3.6	0.4%
29A	Agawam fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes	3.4	0.3%
29B	Agawam fine sandy loam, 3 to 8 percent slopes	35.1	3.5%
29C	Agawam fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes	2.0	0.2%
38C	Hinckley gravelly sandy loam, 3 to 15 percent slopes	11.6	1.2%
38E	Hinckley gravelly sandy loam, 15 to 45 percent slopes	9.6	1.0%
46C	Woodbridge fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes, very stony	12.7	1.3%
62D	Canton and Charlton soils, 15 to 35 percent slopes, extremely stony	8.8	0.9%
73C	Charlton-Chatfield complex, 3 to 15 percent slopes, very rocky	9.2	0.9%
73E	Charlton-Chatfield complex, 15 to 45 percent slopes, very rocky	14.8	1.5%
75C	Hollis-Chatfield-Rock outcrop complex, 3 to 15 percent slopes	7.3	0.7%
75E	Hollis-Chatfield-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 45 percent slopes	57.3	5.7%
76E	Rock outcrop-Hollis complex, 3 to 45 percent slopes	34.1	3.4%
84B	Paxton and Montauk fine sandy loams, 3 to 8 percent slopes	0.1	0.0%
86D	Paxton and Montauk fine sandy loams, 15 to 35 percent slopes, extremely stony	5.6	0.6%
94C	Farmington-Nellis complex, 3 to 15 percent slopes, very rocky	8.1	0.8%
94E	Farmington-Nellis complex, 15 to 35 percent slopes, very rocky	18.4	1.8%
108	Saco silt loam	24.5	2.4%
221A	Ninigret-Urban land complex, 0 to 5 percent slopes	48.1	4.8%
229B	Agawam-Urban land complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes	60.3	6.0%
229C	Agawam-Urban land complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	22.9	2.3%
238C	Hinckley-Urban land complex, 3 to 15 percent slopes	87.4	8.7%
245C	Woodbridge-Urban land complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	2.5	0.3%
260B	Charlton-Urban land complex, 3 to 8 percent slopes	8.4	0.8%
260C	Charlton-Urban land complex, 8 to 15 percent slopes	18.3	1.8%
273C	Urban land-Charlton-Chatfield complex, rocky, 3 to 15 percent slopes	14.7	1.5%
273E	Urban land-Charlton-Chatfield complex, rocky, 15 to 45 percent slopes	17.1	1.7%
276E	Urban land-Chatfield-Rock outcrop complex, 15 to 45 percent slopes	0.7	0.1%
284D	Paxton-Urban land complex, 15 to 25 percent slopes	1.6	0.2%
305	Udorthents-Pits complex, gravelly	40.7	4.1%
306	Udorthents-Urban land complex	239.2	23.9%
307	Urban land	62.9	6.3%
Totals for Area of Interest		1,001.4	100.0%

ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

WETLANDS MAP



Wetlands Field Reconnaissance identified the following:

1. Raw land within the TOD area is:
 - Confirmed as wetlands and floodplain; and
 - Associated with Sympaug Brook and its tributaries.
2. Field reviewed wetlands extend beyond mapped hydric soils; and
3. Floodplain and floodway of Sympaug Brook.

ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

WETLAND IMPACT PERMITTING

Wetland Impact Permitting subject to the following:

1. **Permits:** Depending on the extent of the impacts, permits/approvals may be required:
 - Bethel IWWA
 - CT DEEP
 - US Army Corps of Engineers
 - USFWS - Bats
2. **Minimizing Impacts:** striving to limit direct impact to wetlands to less than 1 acre; and
3. **Mitigation:** Wetlands mitigation can be costly and may require a maximum 2:1 replacement, depending on impact.

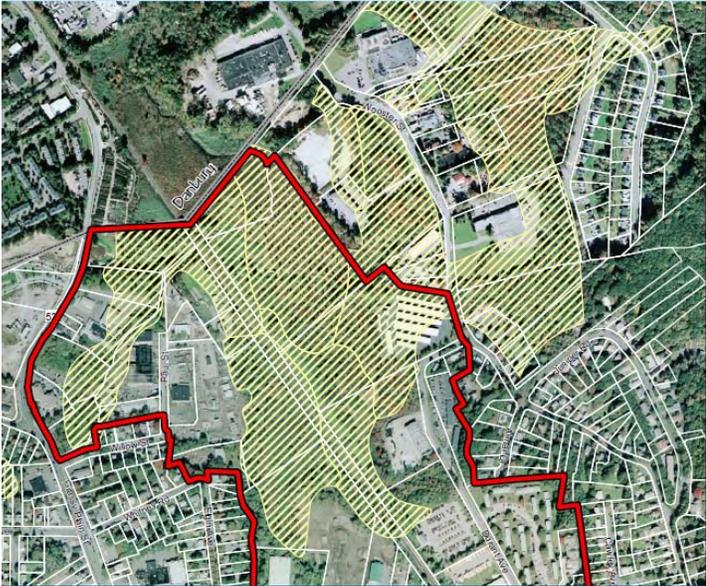
The field review of the inland wetlands and updating of the previous Town mapping to show generally the revised wetlands confirms the TOD Study area is constrained by both wetlands and flood plains as shown on the figures.

These resources constrain the potential redevelopment, however they do not preclude it. Wetland impacts can be mitigated depending on the location and amount of direct and indirect impacts. For example, where impacts can be limited to under one acre, the development may not require subsequent State and Federal agency reviews and approvals

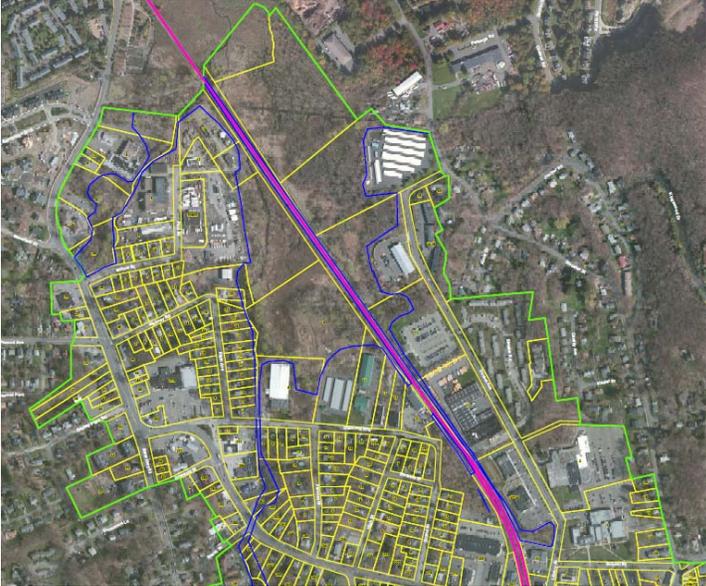
In addition, where the impacts can be mitigated with replication of wetlands at a 2:1 replacement, developments can proceed when conducted in a thoroughly development wetland impact management plan.

Furthermore, depending on the quality of the wetlands and type of impact, replication may be considered for less than 2:1 mitigation.

The presence of the wetlands is considered a constraint, but not a hindrance to redevelopment.



Original Wetlands mapping from Town

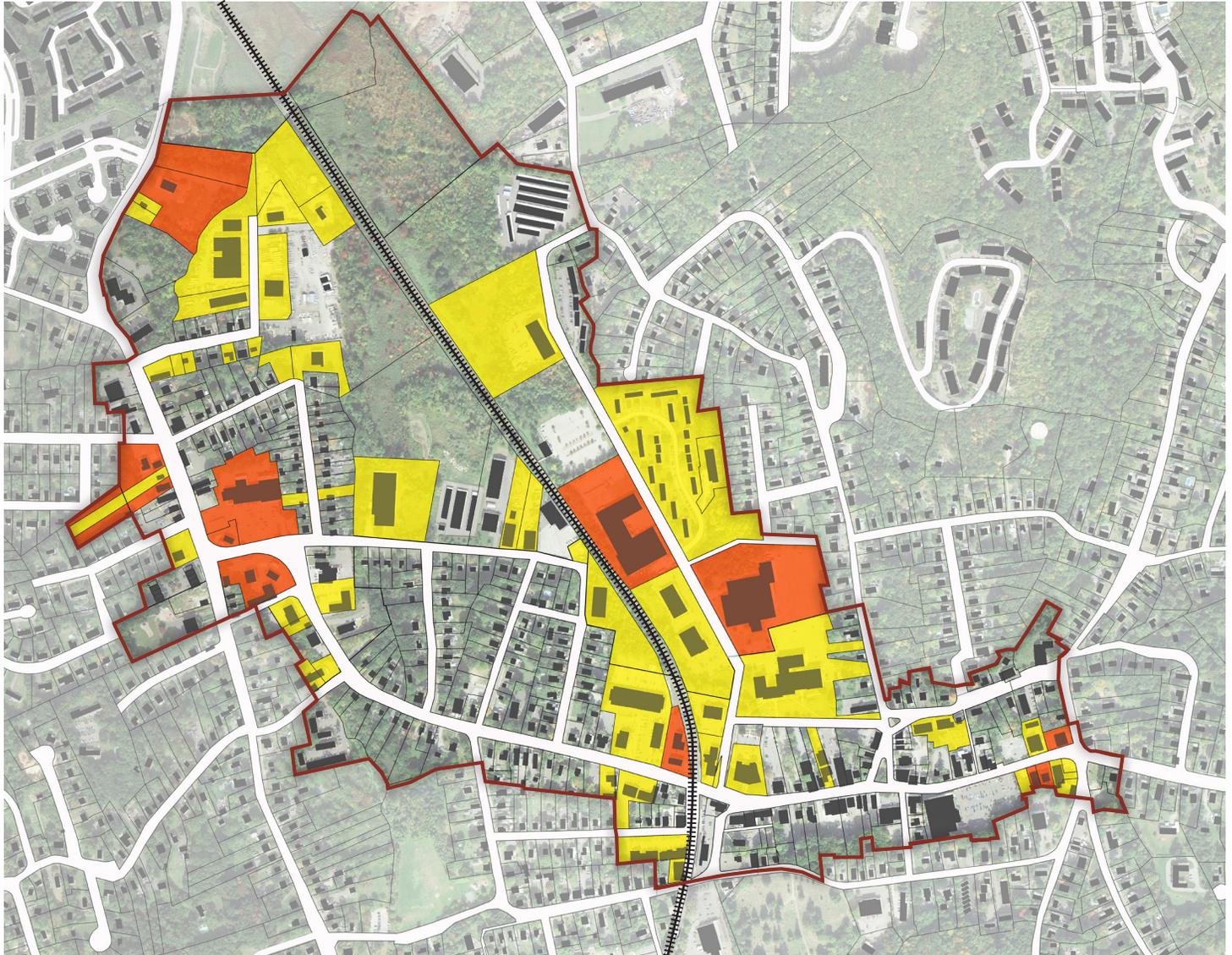


FEMA mapping showing flood zones in the TOD area

ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

ENVIRONMENTAL RISK SITES



- Moderate Risk
- High Risk
- Existing Buildings
- TOD area Boundary
- Metro North Rail Line

An environmental database search was conducted for the TOD area through:

- Windshield surveys and a review of databases comparing TOD area parcels; and
- Site assessment - sites were assessed as high, moderate, or low risk based upon historical and current data.

Risks Defined

- Low Risk - No found environmental records/visual evidence; All other sites were considered Low Risk based upon available information
- Moderate Risk - Current use or prior spill/leaking underground storage tank; and
- High Risk - Current/former gas stations, dry cleaners, and industrial/commercial uses with known history of prior releases to the environment.

INITIAL ANALYSIS

An assessment of the sanitary sewer infrastructure was conducted to understand the current system and constraints. It was understood prior to the review that the Town sanitary sewer system was potentially limiting development through the According to the plan, the estimated capacity is only an estimate as there are many factors which can increase the current flow without the addition of a new connection to the sewer system. At this time the DPUC has determined that a reserve of 50% of the estimated remaining capacity should be held unallocated until more complete analysis of the system can be made and accurate projections of Bethel's needs are completed.

Of the three collection systems in Bethel approved to send a combined 2 MGD to Danbury, the Paul Street pump station serves the TOD study area at the northwest portion of the study area. This station is allocated 1.3MGD pumping to the City of Danbury and presently uses less than 1 MGD with an approximately remaining capacity of .4MGD presently unused. Based upon the Town recommendations, a 50% reserve is desired for remaining capacity at the Paul Street station and the TOD study area, resulting in a .2MGD capacity for TOD study area.

Approximately 3,500 customers served by the Bethel wastewater collection system. Bethel Public Works Department maintains collection system. The system is managed by the Inter-municipal agreement with the City of Danbury. This agreement allows the Town to send wastewater to the Danbury Water Pollution Control Plant (DWPCP). Bethel is permitted to discharge 2 million gallons per day (MGD) average flow to the facility.

Service Areas in Bethel and Flow Limitations

Service Area	Average Daily Flow Limit (GPD)	Max. Daily Flow Limit (GPD)
Berlsjore	80,000	201,600
Paul Street	1,330,000	4,032,000
Payne Road	590,000	1,872,000
Total	2,000,000	6,105,600

- 3 Collection System Service Areas in Bethel
- Each area is flow limited by terms stipulated in the IMA

SANITARY SEWER ANALYSIS

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

Paul Street Pumping Station Average Daily Flow and Remaining Capacity

Pumping Station	Average Daily Flow (GPD)	Estimated Remaining Capacity (GPD)
Paul Street	928,841	400,000

- TOD area Served by Paul Street Pumping Station
- Average Daily Flow = 928,000 gallons per day (gpd)
- Estimated remaining capacity = 400,000 gpd
- Highest capacity need for TOD planning estimated at 200,000 gpd

Initial Analysis

- Estimated remaining capacity = difference between Inter-municipal agreement permitted flow versus current average daily flow
- Flow Allocation is half of the remaining capacity
 - Factor of safety - 50% reserve capacity
 - Flow allocation pending Town's 1 and 1 Study and Site Specific Development Analysis (wetlands, floodplain, setbacks, etc.)

Analysis Summary

- 200,000 gpd potentially available for future development
- 40 specific parcels reviewed for potential for redevelopment
 - Sewer generation calculations
- 200,000 gpd can support:
 - Desired housing density
 - Professional Offices
 - Restaurants
 - Small Retail/Commercial Establishments

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT CALCULATIONS

Utilizing the proposed development program in the TOD Master Plan, a sanitary sewer usage summary was developed showing the TOD Master Plan will generate 0.182MGD of sewerage, under the .2MGD in the remaining Paul Street station capacity. The table below shows the summary of the sewerage analysis:

SEWER FLOW ESTIMATES										
	Single-Family	Duplex	Town-house	Urban Villa (6-pack)	Multi-Family	Live/Work Apartments	Mixed-Use Apartments	Live/Work Retail	Mixed-Use Retail	Totals
Category Used For Sewer Flow Estimates	3 BR Single-Family Detached Residence	2 BR Apartment	2 BR Apartment	2 BR Apartment	3 BR Apartment	1 BR Apartment	2 BR Apartment	Retail Store (dry goods)	Retail Store (dry goods)	
Per-unit* Assumed Average Daily Flow (gpd)	225	150	150	150	200	100	150	75	75	*(flow for retail is per 1000 sq. ft)
Residential Units or Retail KSF	12	24	288	288	294	36	138	34.5	55.3	
Estimated Average Daily Flow (gpd)	2,699	3,599	43,182	43,182	58,728	3,599	20,727	2,591	4,145	182,451

It should be noted that while the analysis indicates there is sufficient capacity in the Paul Street station to accommodate the projected sanitary sewerage flows from the TOD plan, supplying the water for the TOD Plan needs to be considered. As there may be constraints today, the Town is planning improvements to water supply in the future.

WATER SUPPLY ANALYSIS

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

The Town of Bethel public water service areas are shown on the attached figure, as referenced from the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development, dated October 15, 2007. The figure depicts the extent of the Town's public water supply and the neighborhoods within the service area. Below is a summary of the findings.

Water Supply

- "Current water system is stressed in the summer time at peak demands"
- Town addressing summer peak demand

Low Service Area

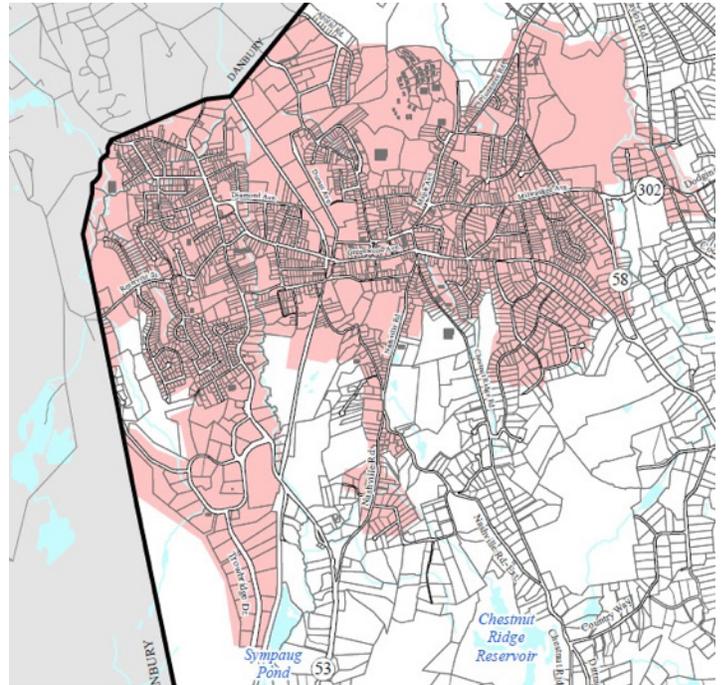
- Maple Avenue Wells #1 & #2
 - Each design capacity 400 gallons per minute (gpm)
 - Operating at reduced capacity - clogging issues
 - Replacement wells scheduled to return to 400 gpm each
 - Town project underway
- Eureka Lake WTP (off-line and used only as an emergency backup for the wells)
 - Design capacity is 1 MGD

Storage Facilities

- New 750,000 gallon storage tank
- Being constructed at Eureka Lake
 - Scheduled to be on-line next Summer/Fall
 - Service low service area - TOD area
 - Buffer peak summer demands

Water Supply Future Planning

- Town is exploring new groundwater supplies
- East Swamp Aquifer
- Third Production Well - Maple Avenue well field
 - Testing underway
- Both to increase water supply sources
- Support future development - TOD



The Town is planning to implement significant supply improvements to the water infrastructure to remove the current limitations on water supply and ensure the town will have sufficient water supply in the future including the proposed TOD Master Plan. As indicated in the sanitary sewer analysis, nearly 190,000 gallons per day of sewer discharges will be generated to the Paul Street pump station.

MULTI-USE STREETS: A MORE WALKABLE & BIKABLE BETHEL TOWN CENTER

The current preferred mode of travel in Bethel is by private automobile. The use of commuter rail transit and bus transit services represent a very small percentage of total vehicle trips and non-motorized transportation (walking and bicycling) is also limited. However, increasingly, citizens are demanding more and better pedestrian and bicycle facilities so they may participate in active modes of travel – modes that are environmentally responsible since they require no burning of fossil fuels and contribute greatly to more active and healthy lifestyles.

In addition to the safety, health, and environmental benefits of active transportation, there are economic benefits to making downtown streets more conducive to walking and bicycling. Several recent studies of retail sales volumes of merchants that are proximate to new bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian improvements indicate notable increases in sales volume post construction of these facilities. These increases have been attributed to increased accessibility of stores, restaurants and other retail outlets to a new customer base (e.g. teenagers and older citizens who may not drive or have ready access to cars) and high recreational use of bicycle facilities by families and others who apparently spend more on retail services because they are in a more leisurely state-of-mind and therefore are more inclined to dine out or purchase leisure-oriented products or services.

The town center of Bethel and the TOD area are relatively compact places with commercial businesses, professional services, civic and religious institutional uses and residences within centralized area in the town center. This traditional land use pattern enables convenient and efficient pedestrian and bicycle travel among the diverse community uses if safe pedestrian and bicycle accommodations are provided.

However, Bethel’s existing roadway network, with its narrow rights-of-way and limited paved shoulders, numerous commercial driveways, somewhat discontinuous sidewalks and high volume of relatively fast traffic, presents many challenges for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and safety. Bicycle travel is further complicated by the limited number of continuous or direct corridors suitable for bicycle travel between Bethel Town Center and common destinations such as the train station and outside the town center, the Town’s school campus for all elementary, secondary and high school.

Other communities with a similar density of traffic generating facilities and similar design challenges have constructed safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle facilities. They have found that there is a latent demand for walking and cycling that results in high levels of walking and biking and reduction in the use of motor vehicle travel. Further, as greater numbers of people use the non-motorized facilities, this activity attracts others to use them. The presence of pedestrian and bicycle facilities often results in more responsible motor vehicle driving behavior either because the construction of the pedestrian and bicycle facilities included a “road diet” whereby vehicle lane widths were reduced (several studies have shown that the real or perceived reduction of operating space for motor vehicles causes motorists to drive slower), or because the presence of increasing numbers of pedestrians and cyclists remind motorists that they need to share the road, yield to them in crosswalks and drive more cautiously to protect pedestrians and cyclists.

As part of the TOD process, resident comments were tabulated at several meetings and they are summarized below:

Top Public Comments on Bethel Town Center Streets

	General Comments	No. of Comments
Walkability	Provide better sidewalk, improve walkability	24
Off-Street Parking	Provide better or more off-street parking	16
Bicycles	Provide bike lanes & new bicycle facilities	8
Traffic	Provide relief from traffic congestion	7
Greenway	Create greenway through wetlands north of RR station	7
Transit	Provide better transit	6
On-Street Parking	Remove existing on-street parking for better safety	6
RR Station	Provide better pedestrian links to the RR station	5
Car-Free Spaces	Convert specific streets to car-free public spaces	4
Parks	Improve or provide new parks or public spaces	3

Shown above, a more walkable and bikable town center for Bethel is of great importance and priority for Bethel residents and visitors.

TRANSPORTATION SUMMARY

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

Providing a more walkable town center will involve the upgrade of the sidewalks with current ADA standards for ramps, widths, material types (concrete versus brick pavers) and connectivity. As shown on the street and sidewalk network figure, there are sidewalks on nearly every street within the study area with some notable exceptions. For example some streets have sidewalks on one side such as in front of the municipal center, or sidewalks that do not extend the full length of street on Grand Avenue. Adding sidewalks and connecting sidewalks is recommended to maximize the benefit for pedestrians walking in the town center.

In particular, at Barnum Square below, the sidewalk ramps need to be upgraded to ADA standards and include detectable warning strips at the recessed curb side. This is a typical improvement throughout the TOD study area. Notice also the lack of a bus shelter at the Housatonic Area Regional Transit (HART) bus stop sign. Consideration for providing aesthetic bus shelters in the context of the locations to maximize transit usage.

Similarly on the west side of the study area, at the Sycamore Restaurant on Greenwood Avenue, sidewalks exist on the north side of the roadway and are discontinuous on the south side as shown in the photo below. This example of discontinuous sidewalks also highlights the need for improving access to transit and the HART bus stop with no provisions for sidewalks to accommodate bus riders.

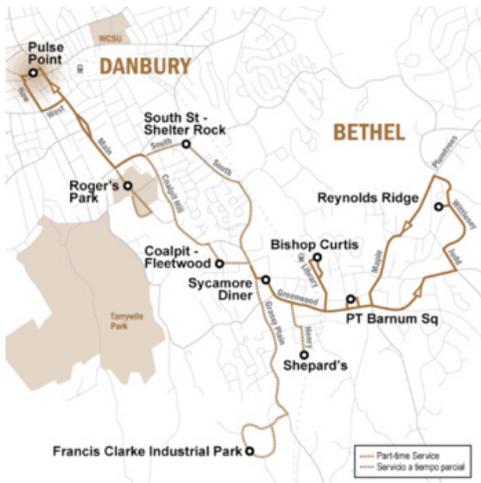
SHARED PARKING

With the expansion of TOD in the area of the train station and Town Center, the Town should consider reducing parking requirements for TOD uses that will support the train station as well as allowing for shared parking. For example, previous TOD studies have shown that residential development in TOD areas require less parking than typical residential development. The TOD area should include provisions for allowing reduced parking minimums to support the TOD uses and reduce the generation of traffic flow in the TOD area during peak hours. TOD land uses have been shown to generate 30% less traffic during the peak hours. Shared parking can be considered with non-competing land uses in the TOD area, such as office uses parking demand complementing residential use parking demand. The TOD area should allow for reduced and shared parking ratios.



TRAFFIC FLOW & GENERATION ANALYSIS

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS



To best understand the traffic operations of motorized and unmotorized transportation modes in the study area, field visits were conducted during the peak hours and traffic data collected from the Town, previous studies, Western Connecticut Council Of Governments (WCCOG), formerly the Housatonic Valley Regional Council Of Elected Officials (HVCEO). Traffic data was also obtained from the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDO) and a traffic model was developed for the town center area for major roadways and intersections.

Based upon the data obtained, Greenwood Avenue carries approximately 14,000 vehicle per day and over 1,200 vehicles during the peak hours. Grassy Plain Road carries just over 11,000 vehicles per day, highlighting the significant traffic volume accessing the town center on a daily basis.

These 14,000 vehicles per day cross the at-grade railroad crossing on Greenwood Avenue, with train crossings and subsequent stoppage of traffic flow generally once per hour during the weekdays. This infrequent train service does not significantly impact the flow of traffic during the peak hours although the crossing is closed for a minimum of 2 to 3 minutes during this time.

The Greenwood Avenue/Grassy Plain Street corridor has four traffic signals in the study area, including Chestnut Street, Library Place/Durant Avenue, Grassy Plain Street and Whitney Street. All four signalized intersections operate with some noticeable delays during the peak hours, however no significant queuing. Most signalized intersections clear out the queued traffic after one or two cycles of the signals.

Bethel train station has service to South Norwalk between 530am and 1030pm with 250 average weekday passengers and plans to increase ridership through a doubling of the parking facilities planned by CTDOT in the near future.

In addition HART buses run with 30 minute headways from 530am until 630pm daily with reduced service on Saturdays between the town center and the downtown Danbury pulse point.

The traffic model was developed for the major intersections and known traffic volumes from the collected data. The traffic model simulates existing traffic flows and demonstrates the operations of the intersections for vehicular traffic.

Based upon the traffic analyses conducted as part of the TOD study, traffic congestion is not prevalent in Bethel Center during the peak hours. While traffic is queued on Greenwood Avenue during the at-grade railroad crossings, the queued traffic clears quickly with no significant effects to the overall town center. In the future with the TOD development, traffic generation impacts to Greenwood Avenue and Grassy Plains Road corridors can be mitigated by the recommended improvements including modern roundabouts at the critical access intersections. The Durant Avenue intersection with Greenwood Avenue, while not large enough to accommodate a roundabout, can be revised to improve traffic flow during the peak hours with the TOD development.

TRAFFIC FLOW & GENERATION ANALYSIS

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

While the existing transportation infrastructure serves the existing travel demands of motorized users in the town center, the potential impact of the increase in vehicular traffic from the TOD Master Plan was evaluated using the traffic model. This evaluation included an assessment of the total traffic generation from the residential and retail components of the proposed plan.

The traffic generation was based upon the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, an industry-wide accepted reference for estimating traffic generation for hundreds of land uses based upon thousands of prior studies of land uses.

The following table highlights the potential traffic generated using the ITE manual and excludes any credits for reduced traffic demand for TOD uses.

TRIP GENERATION ESTIMATES										
	Single-Family	Duplex	Town-house	Urban Villa (6-pack)	Multi-Family	Live/Work Apartments	Mixed-Use Apartments	Live/Work Retail	Mixed-Use Retail	Totals
Category Used For Trip Gen.	S.F. Homes	Res. Condo / TH	Res. Condo / TH	Res. Condo / TH	Rental TH	Rental TH	Rental TH	Shopping Center	Shopping Center	
	210	230	231	232	224	225	226	820*	820*	

TOTAL GENERATED TRIPS										
Daily	115	139	1,673	1,673	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,403	4,619	11,623
Peak Hour AM	9	11	127	127	206	25	97	82	109	791
Peak Hour PM	12	12	150	150	212	26	99	312	428	1401

* Equation

As shown in the above summary, based upon ITE trip generation rates, the proposed master plan can be expected to generate between 800 and 1100 vehicle trips in the peak hours and over 11,000 vehicles per day. These new trips will be distributed to the existing roadway network primarily along Greenwood Avenue, Grassy Plains Street, with connections to Maple Street and Durante Avenue for points north.

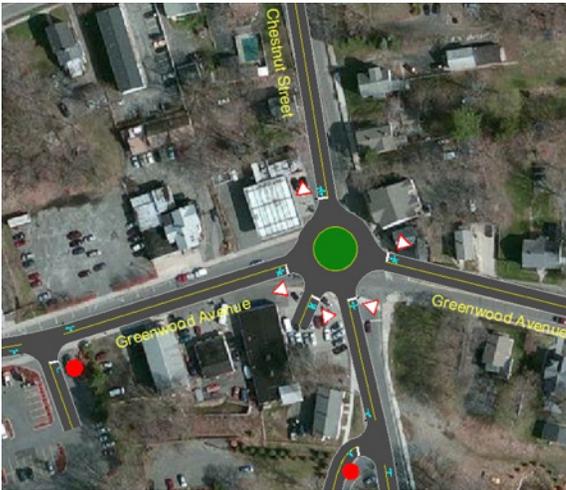
Based upon historical benefits of TOD projects, the ITE generated traffic volumes are expected to be 30% less than the developed rates as the TOD benefits result in reduced traffic generated by proximity to the train station, enhanced use of transit and a more walkable and bikeable town center. In addition the 30% reduction includes any shared trips and passby trips for existing traffic on the network accessing the TOD study area.

Considering these reductions, the TOD is expected to add between 400 and 800 new vehicles to the roadway network during the peak hours, predominately generated by the residential land uses with a significant retail component. Overall the daily generation will be less than 8,500 daily vehicles.

The traffic model was reviewed with the increased traffic demand and capacity improvements considered to accommodate the additional traffic flow projected under the TOD plan. In addition, stakeholder comments from the advisory committee meetings and the charrette were considered in developing recommendations for improvements. These improvements include the following specific improvements:

TRAFFIC FLOW & GENERATION ANALYSIS

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS



Greenwood Avenue at Chestnut Street

- Construct modern roundabout
- Reduces queuing, accommodates development at Caraluzzi's
- Provide a gateway to the town center with landscaped center island in the roundabout
- Provides for reduced travel speeds – 15-18 mph on the approaches and within the circulating flow



Greenwood Avenue at Library/Depot Place

- Convert Depot Place to one-way southbound away from intersection
- Revise westbound Greenwood Avenue stop bar closer to Library Place
- Retime traffic signal operations to maximize intersection operations
- Enhance pedestrian crossings with countdown pedestrian signals

Greenwood Avenue at Blackman Avenue/High Street

- Construct a mini-roundabout to slow speeds on Greenwood Avenue and improve access for side streets
- Mini-roundabout (max. 80' diameter) to accommodate large trucks and fire apparatus



Greenwood Avenue at Diamond Avenue/Hubb Shopping Center

- Revise intersection to control and redirect traffic and accommodate a 'gateway' element. An option includes reconfiguring the skewed intersection and shopping center driveway into a modern roundabout while maintaining the green island area, providing enhanced access to Diamond Avenue and the shopping center.
- Provide a gateway to the town center with a landscape center island
- Provides for reduced travel speeds – 15-18 mph on the approaches and within the circulating flow

These vehicle centric recommended improvements will facilitate traffic flow through the study area and accommodate the future traffic demand from the TOD study area. The traffic models reveal acceptance operations during the peak hours with these improvements.

In addition, the roundabout intersections will provide for reduced speeds at the gateways to the town center on the east and west boundaries and provide safer operations than traditional traffic signalized control. The vehicle queuing at the existing intersections will be reduced with the roundabouts and bicyclists can also navigate the roundabouts.

STREET DESIGN

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

INTRODUCTION

The implementation of ‘Complete Streets’ improvements can help Bethel create more walkable and bikable streets in its Town Center. Complete Streets is a set of principles where streets are designed to enable safe and convenient access and travel for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and motorists. More and more, towns and cities across the country recognize that public investment in Complete Streets infrastructure in the vicinity of transit stations complements and incentivizes private investment in Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), enhances transit ridership, improves safety and helps to build vibrant, economically viable communities.

The Complete Streets Toolbox prepared by the DPZ Team (see Appendix) depicts a series of traffic calming measures or strategies aimed at improving safety for all roadway users and improving walkability, bikability and transit connectivity. The measures are organized into four user categories: vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists and transit. The team has reviewed the Toolbox with residents and discussed how these measures have been successful in other communities.

The implementation of appropriate Complete Streets or traffic calming measures in Bethel Town Center will allow for the moderation of traffic speeds to promote pedestrian, bicycle and motor vehicle safety as well as accommodate and encourage new TOD.

In response to the need to implement safer streets that have the flexibility to meet the needs of multiple users and complement new land uses, the DPZ Team grouped streets under a new paradigm of design, within five categories or street typologies, illustrated on page 123:

1. Slow Streets
2. Bicycle Priority Streets
3. Shared Spaces
4. Greenway Trails

This flexible street typology not only considers traditional factors such as traffic volumes and the function of streets within the overall street network, but also considers target vehicle speeds, appropriate traffic calming tools, place-making, parking location, and principal users and land uses that the streets will serve.

Each street type prioritizes certain users or modes of travel, including non-motorized travel. The following recommendations observe a hierarchy where streets range from high motor vehicle and transit use to high bicycle and pedestrian use. In this way, the design of streets directly correlates with neighborhood character and activity levels, changing from commercial to residential and from bustling downtown activity to quiet neighborhoods, as appropriate. A hybrid of measures is needed to provide a connected pedestrian-bicycle network that offers many route options to numerous destinations and provides access for various levels of bicycling proficiency.

Summary of Improvement Strategies Complete/Converted Streets

- Reduced Speeds – More 20mph Streets
- Safer, Walkable/Bikable
- On-Street Parking/Traffic Calming

Improving Connectivity

- Bicyclists – Bike Lanes/Sharing
- Pedestrians - Sidewalks!
- Passive Recreation - Multi-use path/boardwalk wetlands
- Town Center Connected Streets

Traffic Flow – All Users

- Modern Roundabouts – Greenwood Avenue Gateways
- Chestnut Street – High Street Intersections
- Safer than Traffic Signals
- Safe for all users
- Attractive and Sustainable – Green Transportation



Example of bicycle priority street

STREET TYPES



1. Slow Streets

Slow Streets acknowledge the dominant mode of travel on the most heavily trafficked streets leading to the Town Center – motorized vehicles – but also recognize the critical need to make town center streets safer and more conducive to walking and bicycling by superimposing pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the street rights-of-way, often within current motor vehicle travel lanes.

Pedestrian safety improvements would include many of the tools in the “Complete Streets Toolbox” including: High Visibility Crosswalks, Mid-Block Crosswalks, Pedestrian Crossing Signals, and Street Trees. Traffic controls from the Toolbox could include On-Street Parking (where appropriate), Speed Tables, Curb Radius Reduction and Narrow Travel Lanes.

Bicycle safety Improvements on Slow Streets would include one of three bicycle facilities from the Toolbox: Sharrows, Bike Lanes, or Cycle Tracks, depending on available right-of-way width, presence of on-street parking and traffic intensity.



2. Bicycle Priority Streets

Bicycle Priority Streets (often referred to as “Bicycle Boulevards”) are a new breed of bike facility where existing local streets (with low vehicular traffic volumes and low travel speeds) are converted to “shared streets” that create a safe and convenient cycling environment for cyclists of all ages and skill levels. Bicycle Priority Streets utilize various traffic calming treatments (such as pavement markings, speed tables, speed humps, chokers or chicanes and mini traffic circles) that enforce vehicular travel speeds that do not exceed the speed of cyclists. These treatments prioritize travel for cyclists and discourage through travel by motor vehicles while maintaining access for local motorized traffic.



3. Shared Spaces

Shared Spaces are slow streets located in areas of densely populated, mixed-use districts (e.g. downtowns) that experience high pedestrian, bicycle and automobile activity levels. They would be particularly beneficial on streets in Bethel Town Center since these streets are too narrow to accommodate separate facilities for each mode of travel (i.e. sidewalks, bike lanes, on-street parking and vehicular travel lanes).

Shared Spaces (sometimes called a ‘living streets’ or a ‘naked streets’) are streets where all users have equal priority and equal responsibility for each other’s safety - the priority and dominance of motor vehicles is diminished by careful design.

A Shared Space is created by removing all lane markings, curbs and road signs and allowing all road users to use any part of the road. Without the reliance on conventional controls, experience shows that all users, particularly motorists, reduce their speed substantially (to no greater than 10 to 15 mph) and establish eye contact with other users. Results from implementations of Shared Spaces around the world show significant accident reductions and little to no change in overall vehicular travel times. In addition to traffic safety benefits, Shared Spaces result in increased economic activity and greater community cohesion; presumably because town centers converted to Shared Spaces are more tranquil which promotes active transportation (walking and bicycling), encourages more leisurely shopping, entertainment and dining, and results in more social interaction in public spaces.



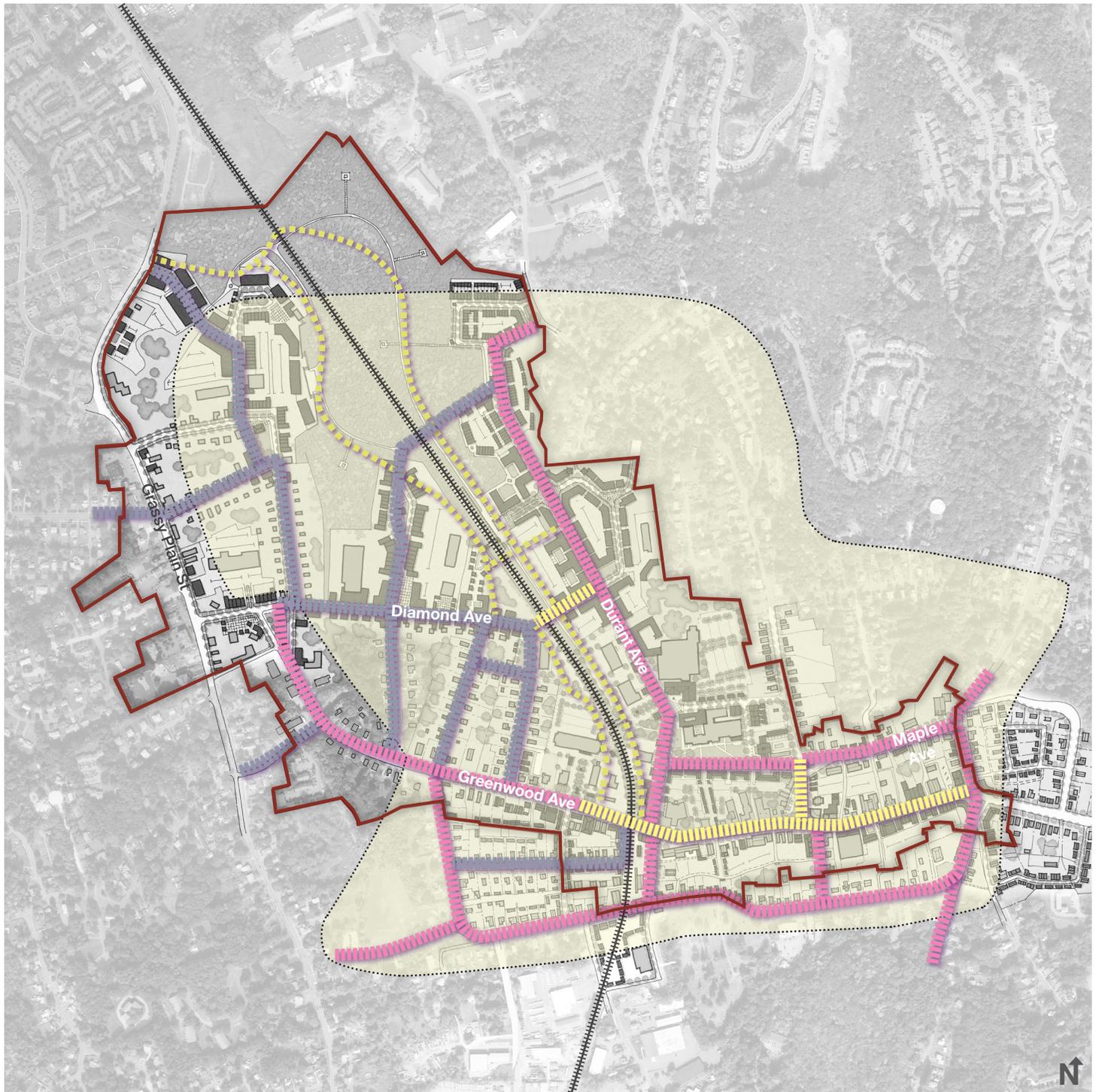
4. Greenway Trails

A Greenway Trail or shared use path traverses a route that is independent of a street network (often through open space, along an abandoned rail line or along a river corridor). These facilities allow for shared use by bicyclists, pedestrians and skateboarders or roller-bladers. Pathways tend to be recreational in nature, although they are sometimes used for commuting and daily, routine trips.

STREET DESIGN

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

SLOW STREETS

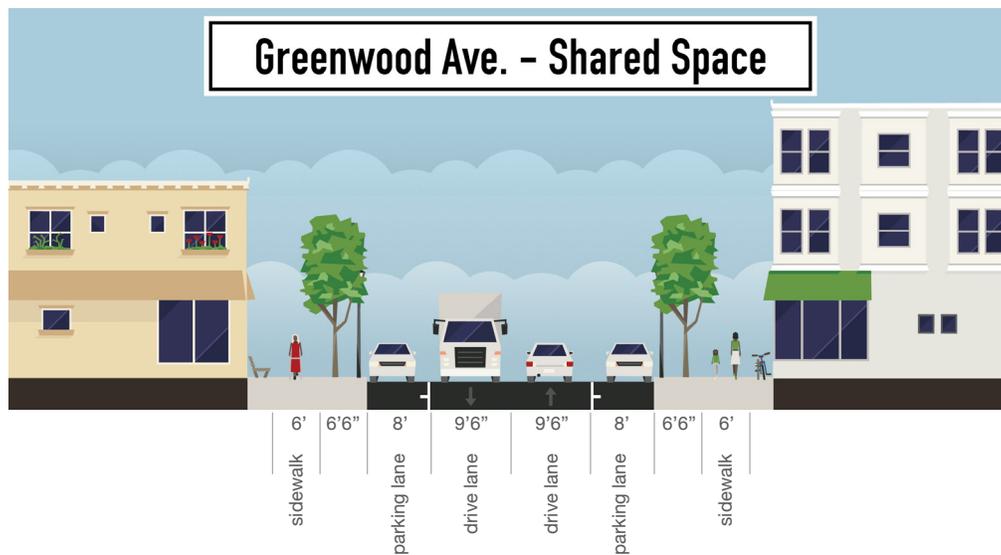
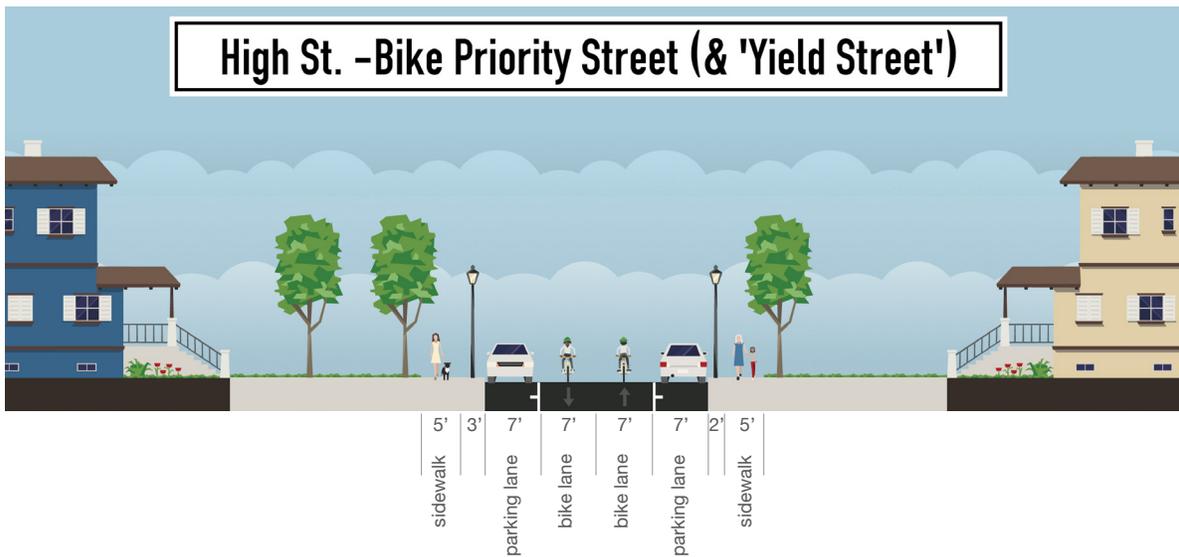
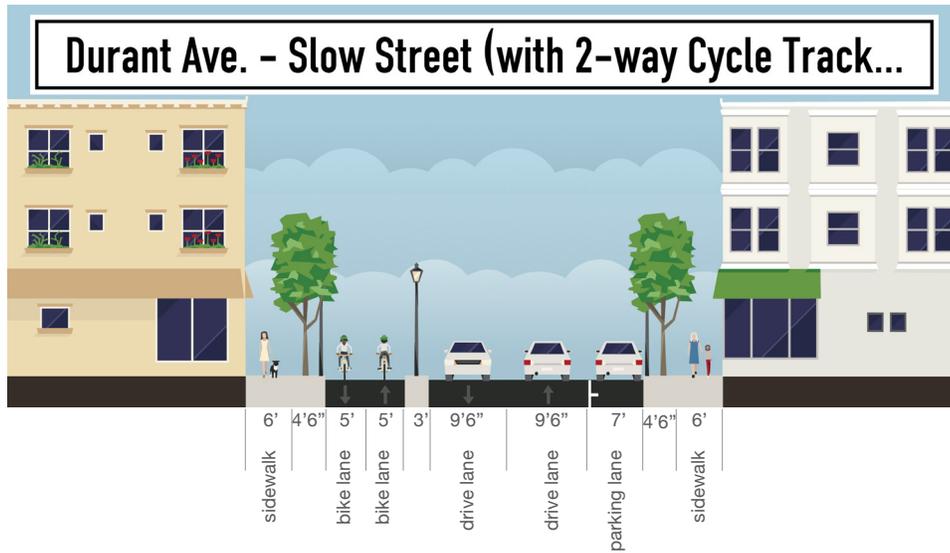


- Greenway Trails
- Slow Streets
- Bicycle Priority Streets
- Shared Street
- Slow Zone
- Existing Buildings
- New Buildings
- TOD area Boundary
- Metro North Rail Line

5. Slow Zones

A slow zone is an area dedicated to less than 20 mph vehicle speeds and shown below. This zone will be dedicated to reduced posted speed streets to accommodate non-motorized users and envelope the slow streets shown.

STREET SECTIONS



STREET DESIGN

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

SLOW ZONE & VISION ZERO

A clear message during the visioning for the Bethel Forward Charrette was that Bethel wants to become a more walkable, sustainable, and less auto-dependent town. During the charrette the town embraced the idea of a central Slow Zone, where cars would drive 20 miles per hour or slower.

We have known for years that anyone hit by a car going 30 miles per hour or faster will usually suffer severe injuries or be killed.* That is why cars must travel 20 mph when they are near schools. But a new trend is to extend this to all streets where people are likely to be walking or cycling. Many of those will be young children, who gain independence when they are able to make their own way in the world. Adults too benefit from less daily dependence on the car, which contributes to climate change and soaring rates of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.

The Bethel Forward Plan proposes the Slow Zone. At the heart of the plan is a three-block section of Greenwood Avenue, where the street will be modified to slow cars down to a target speed of 20 mph or below. The new street will have narrower traffic lanes, wider sidewalks, new street trees, and parking between sidewalk extensions which will visually and psychologically connect both sides of the street, making the downtown more of a place. Urban designers call this type of space an “outdoor room.”

In the future, the new street trees will form a majestic canopy over the street, further uniting it and bringing in nature to make the space more attractive for people. Part of the plan for slowing the cars down on this short stretch of Greenwood Avenue will be to remove many of the traffic engineering devices that are there now to speed the cars up. Just as many cars will be able to move along Greenwood as every hour as do now, but it will take them a minute or two longer to get through the town, as the balance between pedestrians is recalibrated. Greenwood Avenue merchants will benefit too: the street will become a place where people want to park their cars to walk and shop in the historic town center. Mature trees have proven economic value, for both merchants and homeowners.

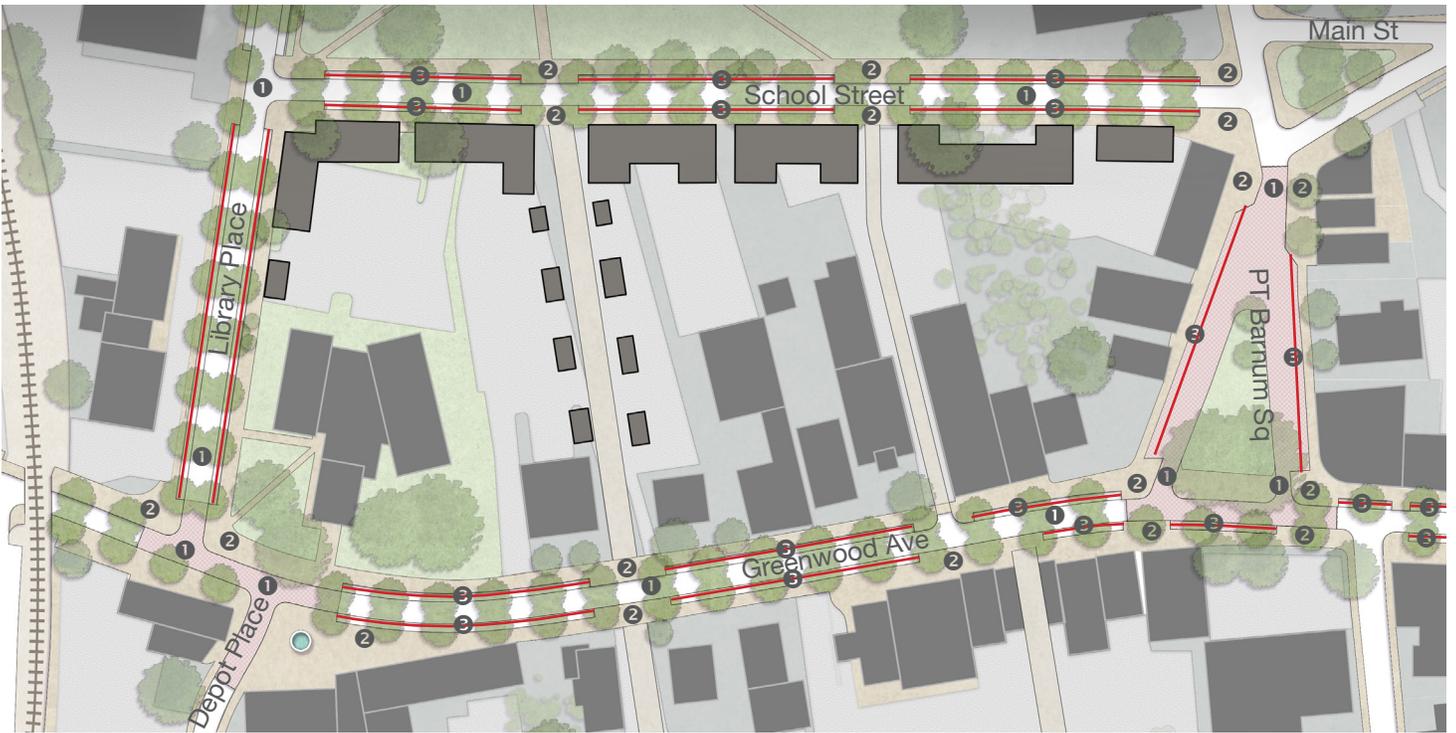
Most of the streets in the Slow Zone will be residential. Some of them already have speed limits of 20 and even 15 mph, but some of those streets are very wide. The charrette has proposed some inexpensive, simple techniques for visually narrowing the roadbed to naturally slow cars down.

The most important of these comes as part of the proposed network of protected bike lanes. These will allow cyclists, especially children, to ride around and into the center of town safely. The lanes will take the parking lane on a single side of some of the wider residential streets for a two-way bike lane protected by simple but attractive divider that will call attention to the lanes, even at night.

The DPZ team recommend that Bethel adopt a Vision Zero resolution. Vision Zero is a Swedish movement to design roads for zero traffic fatalities. Since they adopted Vision Zero goals, their traffic deaths have dropped by 80%: their traffic fatality rate per capita is one-third of the death rate in America and is even better for children. Sweden’s fatality rate from traffic accidents for children is one-tenth of ours.

Since 1912, eleven American cities have adopted the Vision Zero pledge to reduce traffic deaths to zero within ten years. More than a quarter of the cities adopted the plan just this year, and Bethel could be the first town in America to do so. We also recommend the movement called “20 Is Plenty,” which draws attention to the importance of driving 20 miles per hour with an easy-to-remember slogan.

PROPOSED PLAN FOR GREENWOOD AVENUE



Recommendations:

1. Narrow Travel Lanes*
2. Widen Sidewalks *
3. On-Street Parking*
4. Plant Street Trees
5. Bury Overhead Utility Lines

(per proposed street sections on page 125)



5. Bury Overhead Power Lines



ROUNDBABOUTS

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

INTRODUCTION - AN ENGINEERS PERSPECTIVE

This new street typology and related set of ‘Complete Streets’ measures can be augmented by another, highly effective traffic-calming device from the Toolbox - Modern Traffic Roundabouts. Roundabouts are an alternative form of intersection that can improve intersection capacity while slowing travel speeds and greatly reducing accident rates. They are gaining favor as a viable replacement for traditional signalized traffic intersections throughout the U.S.

Roundabouts are very different in design from “old school” traffic circles or rotaries that have been in use for many years. Specifically, roundabouts can be differentiated from traffic circles by two basic principles: 1) yield-at-entry, which gives the right of way to vehicles in the circle and requires other vehicles to yield before entering; and 2) deflection for entering traffic, which means that no traffic stream can move straight through the intersection because the central island deflects vehicles to the right, thus requiring low speeds - typically, not faster than 15 mph. Other benefits of modern traffic roundabouts include:

- Roundabouts are safer than conventional intersections: Recent studies have shown that roundabouts are substantially safer than traditional stop sign or signal-controlled intersections. For example, “By converting from a signalized intersection to a roundabout, a location can experience a 78 percent reduction in severe (injury/fatal) crashes and a 48 percent reduction in overall crashes.” Safety of roundabouts is attributed to the fact that vehicles travel in the same direction and at lower speeds. This eliminates right-angle, "T-bone," left turn, and head-on collisions, and reduces rear-end crashes because there are no abrupt stops at stop signs or changing traffic lights.
- Also, roundabouts are safer for pedestrians because they are designed so that pedestrians cross only one lane of traffic at a time, stopping at a protected island in the middle of the crosswalk; they would also have

considerably fewer traffic lanes to cross since roundabouts obviate the need for left and right turning lanes. Much shorter crossing distances combined with lower vehicle speeds reduce pedestrian crashes.

- Roundabouts improve traffic flow and reduce delay: A 2005 study of new roundabouts by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety concluded that average intersection delays during peak hours at the three roundabout sites were reduced 83-93%; delays on the intersection approaches with the greatest delay were reduced by 79-96% .
- Roundabouts reduce vehicle emissions: The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety reports that since roundabouts improve the efficiency of traffic flow they reduce vehicle emissions and fuel consumption. Their 2005 study concludes that constructing roundabouts in place of traffic signals can reduce fuel consumption by about 30% .
- Roundabouts reduce pavement and facilitate walking and cycling: The function of roundabouts preclude the need for multiple lanes at intersections (i.e. through lane, right and left turn lanes at approaches) since all turns are accommodated in the central circle. Therefore, considerable pavement or operating space currently devoted to vehicles can be re-purposed for use by pedestrians and cyclists, used for on-street parking or simply used to provide green space.
- Roundabouts provide attractive gateways: Roundabouts can also serve as attractive and landscaped gateways and distinctive entry points into downtown. Often, the center circular island of a roundabout is landscaped or contains a dynamic sculpture, fountain or monument. They can also serve as a traffic-calming gateway for managing speed and creating a transition area that moves traffic from a higher-speed state highway to a low-speed environment in a town center.



PROPOSED LOCATIONS



West side Bethel



East side Bethel

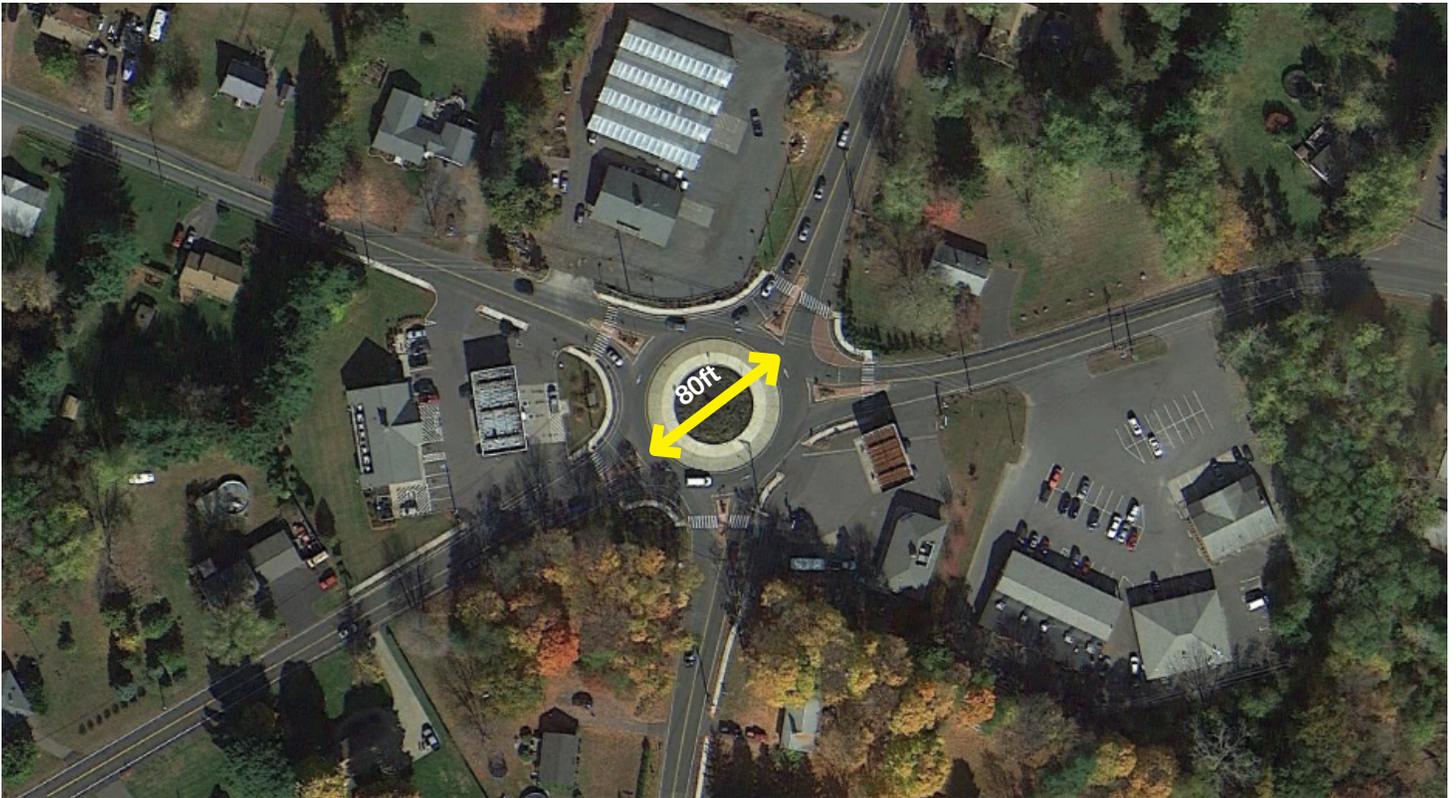
ROUNDBABOUTS

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

EXAMPLES



PRECEDENTS



Ellington, CT



Hamburg, NY

COMPLETER STREETS

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

STREETS FOR PEOPLE - A PLANNERS PERSPECTIVE

“If you plan towns for cars and traffic, you will get cars and traffic. If you plan for people and places, you get people and places.” — Fred Kent, Project for Public Spaces.

Moving forward, Bethel must decide whether the downtown should serve cars or people. Road Diets and traffic calming make bad streets less bad for pedestrians. To make streets where people want to get out of their cars and walk—and to make places where it is safe to do that—requires placemaking instead of traffic calming and urban design instead of traffic engineering.

That is what we call “Completer Streets.” These are places that are destinations rather than transportation corridors. They require a good public realm where public life can take place. A Complete Street can give more than 75% of the public right of way to the use of motor vehicles, but in Completer Streets, the public realm is the space between the buildings, designed like an outdoor room.

Suburban corridors have a strict separation between machine space and human space. That enables cars to move quickly without injuring or killing pedestrians. When cars, pedestrians, and cyclists come in close proximity—as they do in downtown Bethel—the design details must change, so that drivers slow down and drive differently.

Elements that make drivers comfortable going quickly—such as signs that can be read at high speed, and bold arrows and striping on the pavement—must be changed or even eliminated, so that drivers slow down to a safe speed for all. The traditional goal of making safer for cars to go faster has to reverse when cars and people come together.

Even if pedestrians aren’t consciously aware of what is happening, when they see large traffic signs and bold graphics and bold graphics on the road they realize that they are in a space made for cars. Other design elements the “splitter islands” in modern roundabouts have a geometry that gives pedestrians the same message. The shapes that ease cars through a turn is very different than the geometry that makes an outdoor space that is comfortable to stand in. Similarly, the vast scale of a modern roundabout makes pedestrians feel uncomfortable. For these reasons, any roundabouts built by Bethel should be outside the periphery of the Slow Zone, so that they don’t discourage walking in or to the Slow Zone.

Details make the difference in all new roads, whether inside or outside the Slow Zone. Bethel has many rural roads, like Chestnut Ridge Road, that are narrow and have no curbs. Any traffic calming or intersection interventions on these roads should have an appropriate character. “God is in the details,” as the architect Mies Van Der Rohe famously said.

Similarly, new Slow Zone streets can have a character appropriate for Connecticut or New England small towns. The Utrecht street shown on the following page is a new street with an informal character. The raised area with cobblestones used to be a parking lot. It looks and feels very different than “Shared Space” slow streets in cities, as illustrated in the ‘Complete Street’ image on the following page. In the words of architect Mies Van Der Rohe, “God is in the details.”

COMPLETER STREETS

INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS



Utrecht Street



Typical 'Complete Street'

IMPLEMENTATION



In order to fulfill the vision of the master plan, a clear implementation strategy for town leadership should be in place to guide planned growth that best reflects the vision of the master plan as efficiently and cost effectively as possible.

First, it is critical to understand that, despite all the work that went in to engaging the local community and forge a joint process, and despite all the expertise of the charrette team that went in to establishing such a vetted and supported master plan vision for a new, vibrant and prosperous Bethel, realization of the vision does not just happen. One must remind oneself constantly that investors, developers and property owners who had little to no involvement in the town-wide visioning process, or who attended but still don't grasp intentions, may have little to no idea about what the town wants to do. Therefore, the town needs to develop strategies that guide the process and target the highest priorities you determine are in the best interest of the community.

Second, while this report provides a map, the hard work now begins. The charrette report, master plan and TOD code are the map. But to get there from now on will depend entirely on the Town's own efforts in implementing the vision. It will need leadership, strategic partnerships and well-considered strategies to steer the course through established priorities, toward realization of the full master plan.

Third, to assuage concerns for what may seem a daunting task, we assembled in this section targeted recommendations and action items to assist you in your task of "getting there," of assembling implementation strategies with the best chances for success. Hopefully, they are adequate to guide your efforts toward building effective results-driven strategies that will direct efforts within your own responsibility to get to where Bethel wants to be. The town should determine where best to start development for their own best interest. Early development should offer the greatest stimulus to capture and inspire future development. Select the most susceptible and implementable place where development can embrace both sides of a new or existing street so that future developers/investors can quickly see and understand the street-oriented/neighborhood vision of the TOD district.

METHODS TO STIMULATE ACTIVITY

IMPLEMENTATION

A strategy to address methods that spur the willingness and ability of private property owners to develop their properties in accordance with the TOD master plan and code must be clearly defined. Engagement and action by local interests demonstrate “skin in the game,” and will be key components to assuage concerns by outside investment who may fear they will be up against community opposition. Property owners may be capable of pursuing development on their own, or they may be inexperienced with development procedures. However, the value of properties owned by locals represent considerable leverage to attract lenders as well as to attract buy-in from local citizenry. Consequently, they also represent lowered risk to prospective developers with whom they may form limited partnerships for post-construction/absorption reward.

Understanding potential complications incumbent upon unpredictable conditions, the proposed master plan takes great care to minimize the number of affected plots required to bring the vision to reality. For remaining affected plots, the Town could plan to acquire such plots and develop themselves, or compensate and incentivize the property owner to develop their own plots following the master plan, or, as noted above, educate owners of such plots in negotiating favorable limited partnerships with more experienced and capitalized development interests from outside the community. Furthermore, the plan does not rely on demolition of any permanent structures outside of the transitioning industrial plots, to further assuage local concerns.

Finally, sometimes, despite guidance from the Town, development interests prefer to select their own locations, not recommended by the town. Not wanting to scare off potential investment asset, the town needs to develop strategies for dealing with non-critical-path procedures.

In order to stimulate activity, the recommendations /action items across all categories should be measured against the following goals:

- Measure each submitted project against the intentions of the master plan and ensure adherence to project goals;
- Try to make the leap to connect non-critical-path projects as best as possible with the vision and direction of critical-path projects, at least so that non-critical-path projects don't challenge or defeat critical-path pursuits;
- Recognize that, just as TOD impacts development priorities, all other efficient and reliable public transportation also impacts development priorities. Basically developers and investment interests know that efficient and reliable transportation nodes raise the value of property closest to the nodes. Therefore, take care to align public transportation and infrastructure investments in ways that guide private development investment toward the best interests of the Town and of the vision of the master plan. Prioritize infrastructure improvements and public projects as immediate, short-term or long-term within the three priority phases defined;
- Take care to understand the critical methods and physical elements, perhaps by engaging experts, or attending classes or workshops, that ensure the most prosperous business and retail environments. Another approach would be to establish a special services district, with a retail-expert director, paid for by all the businesses within the district who see the economic benefits a revitalized downtown Bethel can bring and may be willing to make such an investment in their collective future. In addition, ensure plans for development are phased to be in concert with Bethel-centric market feasibility potential, future demand scenarios, short and long-term development absorption rates and regional demographic trends established by The CLUE Group. Observe on-going development, and how transformations might recognize when it is time to conduct new market studies in response to Bethel's altered environment;
- Capitalize on downtown's walkability appeal every time you can. The proposed physical improvements to the public realm environment is conducive to incentivizing different circulation modes, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, further reducing the number of daily car trips residents are typically forced to make. Additionally, parking once and walking within the study area to different destinations will become more viable;

- Identify catalyst prototypical projects that will have a compounding impact on the regeneration of successful businesses along Greenwood Avenue;
- Establish recommended benchmark and performance measures to evaluate and monitor master plan recommendations, identify areas requiring change and recommend modifications;
- Ensure development meets with the new zoning regulations intended to remove barriers for private development and reassure the public of a general predictability of built form consistent with the TOD master plan; and
- Ensure adopted strategies are compatible with Bethel's Plan for Conservation and Development, as well as Connecticut's Department of Transportation priorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS

The strategies to carry out the master plan vision and goals are organized into three main categories in the implementation matrix: 1) urban design and zoning; 2) economic development and 3) transportation & infrastructure. Additionally, each strategy is then further categorized according to the three main tools of urban enhancement: design, policy and management. Strategies for adopting Affordable Housing and other necessary public benefits are listed separately.

The Design proposals of the Plan are for a mixed-use TOD district focused on small-scale, incremental development, characterized by pedestrian-friendly walkable streets and low-rise buildings. One of the key concerns in the revitalization of the TOD area is to promote additional residential uses and encourage the development of retail and work activities close to the train station. Specific design projects are suggested by the colored renderings in the Report, and reinforced by the plan with form-making design regulations guiding its intentions. Public and private, big and small, short and long-term projects are described.

The Policy proposals provide the regulatory basis for the plan's implementation promoting the physical predictability of the place as it redevelops, an important consideration for property owners, and for the overall town.

Management proposals describe how to structure the physical and regulatory environment for ease of implementation, maintenance and creation of long-term value. It includes methods to stimulate activities geared to supporting the vision plan.

The matrix is intended to serve as a guide to help organize and track the progress of the plan's implementation. As recommendations/action items are met or completed, the matrix should be updated regularly to reflect progress. This implementation matrix is predicated on the formal adoption of Bethel's Forward Plan by the Town leadership.

Parties responsible for, or affected by, the implementation of each action item are indicated in their corresponding columns. They include:

- State of Connecticut Department of Transportation: CTDOT
- State of Connecticut Office of State Transportation Administration – OSTA
- Municipality of Bethel, including Public Works, Enforcement, Economic Development, etc. – Municipality
- Planning & Zoning Commission – P&Z Commission
- Wetlands Commission
- Public Utilities
- Business and Civic Associations, such as Chamber of Commerce – Associations
- Private merchants or developers - Private

ECONOMIC RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

IMPLEMENTATION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS		RESPONSIBLE / AFFECTED PARTIES							
		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	S&W Commission	Affordable Housing	Associations	Private
Design									
1	<p>Encourage owners of “contributing” buildings in the downtown National Register-listed historic district to use federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits to help finance the redevelopment of their buildings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite staff from the State Historic Preservation Office to visit Bethel, tour the National Register-listed historic district, provide a workshop for interested property owners, and meet with town staff to explore ways to encourage use of federal and state tax credits in downtown Bethel. Add town staff capacity to help property owners maneuver the tax credit process, either by staff appointment or by contract with a rehabilitation tax credit expert. Meet individually with owners of “contributing” buildings to introduce and discuss the tax credit concept. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	<p>Provide additional incentives to encourage property owners to rehabilitate older/historic commercial buildings in the TOD. In particular, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abating property taxes on the improved value of rehabilitated property for five years, declining by 20 percent each year. Offering facade improvement grants of up to \$10,000, on a 1:1 matching basis Offering grants of up to \$25,000, on a 1:1 matching basis, for the costs of bringing “contributing” historic buildings up to code, particularly with regard to accessibility and fire safety. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	<p>Improve storefront window displays.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institute annual consultation with a visual merchandising consultant to improve storefront displays and to maintain the visual harmony of Greenwood Avenue. Animate vacant storefront windows. Organize periodic window display competitions. Encourage downtown merchants to cross-merchandise with other downtown merchants via storefront window displays. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ECONOMIC RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

IMPLEMENTATION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS		RESPONSIBLE / AFFECTED PARTIES							
		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	Withds Commission	Public Utilities	Associations	Private
Policy									
1	<p>Adopt two strategies to transform the economy of the TOD area and, in particular, of the historic downtown core:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Built-in market: Expand the built-in market of workers, nearby residents, and commuters, and develop businesses and services that meet their daily shopping, dining, and entertainment needs. ✦ “Made in Bethel”: Cultivate and expand businesses that make things in Bethel, particularly small manufactures and crafts industries, and concentrate them within the TOD. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	<p>Prioritize development of businesses (a) for which unmet market demand exists and (b) that help expand and solidify the TOD area’s market position with regard to one or both of these two strategies. Businesses that meet these criteria include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ High-quality restaurants that, together, offer a broad range of cuisines (e.g., seafood, Mexican, Thai, Indian, vegetarian, bakeries) ✦ Arts and entertainment-related businesses ✦ Apparel stores that offer products and services that are unique within the region (e.g., that do not duplicate products available at national retail chains) and that can therefore serve as regional destinations. Some examples of apparel-related businesses that can function as regional destinations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Unique and custom leather goods ✦ Custom-designed scarves and clothing accessories ✦ Fabric, yarn, and other supplies for making clothing ✦ Big and tall menswear ✦ Plus-size women’s wear ✦ Athletic clothing and accessories ✦ Infants’ and toddlers’ clothing and equipment re-sale and consignments ✦ Designer handbag sales and rentals ✦ High-end clothing re-sale ✦ Clothing made from hemp and other natural fabrics 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Develop a comprehensive marketing campaign for each of these two strategies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<p>Create a TIF district in the TOD, using the revenues generated to support and incentivize development of high priority businesses and buildings. Potential business incentives that might be supported by TIF revenues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ A forgivable loan program for high-priority new businesses ✦ An annual business plan competition to encourage existing businesses to add new product lines, develop an online storefront, or make other operational improvements ✦ A pop-up program, with a dedicated storefront space for pop-ups and a small amount of seed funding for competitively-selected pop-ups 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	<p>Actively promote and encourage the retention of small, locally owned businesses in the TOD area. Activities might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Technical assistance to help interested businesses add a new sales distribution channel (such as making deliveries, launching or improving an online storefront, cross-merchandising with other TOD businesses, or wholesaling products made by the business to other retailers) ✦ A business transition program to help business owners interested in selling their businesses find qualified new buyers 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Encourage TOD businesses - particularly retail businesses - to remain open until 6pm on weeknights.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Allow pop-up retail shops and kiosks along the new pedestrian path. Consider them as open air retail kiosks or food trucks for zoning and safety purposes to encourage their use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ECONOMIC RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

IMPLEMENTATION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE / AFFECTED PARTIES							
	CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	WtHnds Commission	Public Utilites	Associations	Private

Policy		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	WtHnds Commission	Public Utilites	Associations	Private
8	<p>Encourage and assist in the development of a small, high-quality boutique inn within the TOD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Identify an existing building that could be redeveloped for this purpose or a well-situated infill site where a new building could be developed. ✦ Conduct a specialized market analysis to verify the feasibility of a small boutique hotel. ✦ Identify an operator (or owner-operator). ✦ Actively move the project forward by providing assistance with business plan development, permitting, identifying sources of financing, and shaping a marketing strategy. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ECONOMIC RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

IMPLEMENTATION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS		RESPONSIBLE / AFFECTED PARTIES							
		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	Withds Commission	Public Utilities	Associations	Private
Management									
1	Assign a responsible person or entity to each public initiative and establish communication protocols to coordinate development and track progress between agencies, outside interests, partners and major stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Create a new nonprofit organization, with broad stakeholder representation at the board of directors level, to plan and coordinate marketing, event programming, parking management, wayfinding, and stakeholder communication within the entire TOD area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Institute annual consultation with visual merchandising consultants to improve storefront displays and maintain the visual harmony of Greenwood Avenue.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Create a new position within the town for a Historic Preservation Officer to assist property owners with their application for Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits and, when applicable, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Designate a town staff member to coordinate TOD small business development and recruitment activities, working actively with property owners, realtors, and other district stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

IMPLEMENTATION

URBAN DESIGN & ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS		RESPONSIBLE / AFFECTED PARTIES							
		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	Wtands Commission	Public Utilities	Associations	Private
Design									
1	Identify and reserve the parcels required for the two at-grade vehicular rail line crossings required to improve east-west connections and enhance walkability. † Design the southernmost crossing extension of Diamond Avenue eastward towards Durant Avenue through the northern corner of the Grand Building property. † Design the northernmost extension of Farnam Hill through the one industrially-zoned property. Make the rezoning contingent on the right-of-way dedication.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Break up the superblocks of industrially zoned parcels and introduce new streets to enhance walkability and connectivity throughout the TOD area. Require this of property owners who seek rezoning to ensure compliance with master plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Acquire, negotiate an easement or enter into a partnership or agreement with Wells Fargo for a minimum 20-foot wide, mid-block path from Greenwood Avenue north to School Street. This new pedestrian street will provide a crucial link through downtown and can act as a visualizer of “what could be” as illustrated in the Report.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Allow property owners on the north side of Greenwood Avenue to add liner buildings (up to 600 sf) along the south side of School Street to create a more fitting street wall facing the Municipal Center. Eliminate parking requirements for all liner buildings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Improve walkability & cycling on existing streets by: † Completing gaps and repave sidewalks where needed to create a continuous sidewalk network. † Providing on-street parking where indicated. † Adding new trails and paths, connected to the sidewalk network, as shown in the open space plan. † Adding bicycle facilities and dedicated bike lanes where indicated. † Developing a bicycle master plan to ensure a continuous bicycle network in Bethel, beyond downtown. † Preserving and enhancing the street canopy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Design a parking management plan for the TOD area with the following strategies: † Retrofit Greenwood Avenue to permit on-street parking, as per the proposed thoroughfare section. † Consolidate access points for parking. Require parking for Greenwood Avenue buildings be accessed from existing curb cuts, shared driveways and proposed alley locations in order to prevent additional curb cuts. Property owners should be encouraged to also share driveway and access cuts wherever possible. † Provide better parking signage. A fair number of parking lots are successfully hidden behind buildings, especially in the heart of the town center. However, because they are poorly marked and in some cases difficult to access, public perception is falsely assigned to a lack of parking. Parking, especially along Greenwood Avenue, should be clearly marked and visible. † Encourage shared parking: Given the character and mixed-use nature of the study area, shared parking behind stores on both sides of Greenwood Avenue should be implemented. Shared parking can help lessen the need to add additional spaces, especially in the short-term.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Encourage façade improvements along Greenwood Avenue, following the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

IMPLEMENTATION

URBAN DESIGN & ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS		RESPONSIBLE / AFFECTED PARTIES							
		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	Wtands Commission	Public Utilities	Associations	Private
Design									
8	Incorporate the wetlands park and trail system into Bethel's Open Space Plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Prepare specific streetscape designs and engineering for the streets of the TOD area according to the Plan.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Bury all overhead utilities underground along Greenwood Avenue, between Durant Avenue and Chestnut Street in the first phase, and west to Grand Avenue in the second phase.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Redesign a retrofitted Durant Avenue from an arterial to a more walkable street to create better connections between downtown and the train station.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Improve the intersection of Greenwood and Diamond Avenue as a new neighborhood center area. Require buildings close to the street as properties redevelop.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13	Identify locations appropriate for new housing options and/or mixed-use development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14	Preserve Bethel's "village character" by retaining a three-story height limit throughout. Allow exceptions for four-stories in specific locations only and tied to the provision of public amenities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

IMPLEMENTATION

URBAN DESIGN & ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS		RESPONSIBLE / AFFECTED PARTIES							
		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	WtHnds Commission	Public Utilities	Associations	Private
Policy									
1	Seek approval and adoption of the TOD area master plan, inclusive of suggested circulation (pedestrian and vehicular) and open space networks by the Sewer Commission and Planning and Zoning Commission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Incentivize the provision of the pedestrian at-grade rail line crossings through the rezoning of the affected properties that will provide additional density, or a bonus density equivalent to the gross amount of land deeded to the public right-of-way crossing.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Negotiate the new street connections on the west side in exchange for higher density. † Elgin Street to Paul Street impacts three properties, two of which are industrially zoned. The third property is zoned RR-10 and provides for a park. † Paul Street out to Grassy Plains Street impacts two properties, one commercially zoned and one industrially-zoned.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Establish a partnership with CTDOT (or form a Public Private Partnership) to develop the train station property as illustrated in the master plan. In the long-term, this includes a linear square or green connecting the station to Durant Avenue, structured parking instead of surface parking and the inclusion of mixed-use buildings lining the parking to mitigate its construction cost.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Adopt a public infrastructure improvement plan to prioritize all infrastructure improvements (for street retrofits, new streets or crossings and open spaces) by priority phases I, II or III.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Allow pop-up retail shops and kiosks along the new pedestrian path, connecting Greenwood to School St. Permitting should be easy, procedures uncomplicated and buildings built affordably. These flexible spaces can allow business owners to experiment on this new location with minimal upfront costs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Remove barriers to small-scale development. Zoning is vital to redevelopment efforts of an implementable TOD Plan. Revise and adopt the new zoning regulations that are specifically calibrated to the the TOD area. † Leverage the rezoning and redevelopment of large, single-owner parcels around the train station to support higher density, mixed-use walkable development. † Create a new TOD zoning category for the redevelopment of industrial properties according to the master plan. Allow a by-right zoning that is_ at minimum double the current commercial density of 10 du/acre. Allow an additional bonus density of 30 du/acre, and a maximum height of four stories, if contributions are made to improve the public realm as shown in the master plan. Increase permitted density must be supported by the transportation and infrastructure capacity analysis. † Reduce minimum dimensional standards such as lot size, lot width and setback requirements in existing zoning categories. Increase dimensional standards such as lot coverage. † Permit greater mix of uses, in so far as they do not intrude into residential areas. † Permit greater flexibility of use and management for accessory units.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Adopt a “slow zone” area within the TOD study area.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Coordinate a pedestrian and bicycle priority network, integrated to the infrastructure plan to ensure parks and green linkages are aligned to pedestrian and bicycle priorities.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

IMPLEMENTATION

URBAN DESIGN & ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS		RESPONSIBLE / AFFECTED PARTIES						
		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	Wtrnds Commission	Public Utilities	Associations

Policy									
10	Adopt the proposed “ <u>Complete Streets</u> ” Toolbox that has been customized for Bethel and prioritize areas within the right-of way in order to facilitate implementation by the various municipal departments. These tools should be further tailored to the type of streets in which they occur. Street retrofits should avoid moving curb lines to avoid heavy cost implications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Initiate the shared parking plan behind the buildings on both sides of Greenwood Avenue. Consider metered parking with assurances to the property owners that the fees collected will be reinvested in the downtown TOD area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Adopt the proposed reduced parking requirements: The study area is over-parked. Over 50% of the existing parking spaces (on-street and off-street) within the study area were observed to be unused even during peak parking demand during the charrette week, which is indicative of a parking oversupply. Ideally, the number of occupied parking spaces should approach the “sweet spot” of an 85% parking utilization target. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Proximity to the train station and a more balanced mix of building uses will further reduce vehicular use: Studies indicate that automobile ownership will be lower within a ½ mile radius of the train station, if the area is developed into a walkable, compact, mixed-use neighborhood. ✦ Capitalize on the walkability of Bethel: The proposed physical improvements to the public realm environment is conducive to incentivizing different circulation modes, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, further reducing the number of daily car trips residents are typically forced to make. Additionally, parking once and walking within the study area to different destinations will become more viable. ✦ Provide a 50% additional reduction in parking requirements for affordable housing units. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Revise the permitting process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Modify the Town of Bethel’s permitting process to institute an accelerated approval process for designs adhering to the master plan. ✦ Revise the Site Plan Permit to administratively approve projects that are built in accordance with the master plan, including the provision of any necessary dedications of open space and/or new street connections. ✦ Modify Special Permit requirements to require public hearings only for projects greater than 3,000 sf. Permit administratively any application that meets the Code and adheres to the master plan vision, if under a threshold of 3,000 sf, not 1,000 sf. ✦ Pre-negotiate with the Office of State Traffic Authority (OSTA) state permit requirements for the entire TOD study based on a study area traffic impact analysis. ✦ Pre-negotiate with the Sewer Commission and Water Pollution Control Authority sewer connection permits for the TOD area in accordance with the zoning. The TOD area master plan should have by-right sewer permit options available to property owners. ✦ Consider permit fee exemptions or expedited permitting for neighborhood-oriented services at the neighborhood center. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Acquire available, underutilized or vacant properties for use as open space, community amenities or essential pedestrian connections, specifically if illustrated in the master plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

IMPLEMENTATION

URBAN DESIGN & ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS		RESPONSIBLE / AFFECTED PARTIES							
		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	WtHnds Commission	Public Utilities	Associations	Private
Policy									
15	<p>Develop an open space and community facilities master plan to secure locations for such amenities. Institute a “give-back” option of open space to the community and require developer contributions towards these amenities through the rezoning process. Require property owner contributions at time of development, in lieu of private open space requirements on their own parcels, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Convert the Sym Paug Brook into a nature park for passive recreational opportunities. Connect proposed raised trails to the pedestrian circulation network. ✦ Develop the neighborhood-scaled public spaces distributed throughout the study area as shown on the master plan. ✦ Enhance existing green spaces. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
16	Encourage the activation of vacant storefronts in the short-term along Greenwood Avenue.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
17	Develop a one-page set of permitted activities to allow downtown businesses and residents to program and use the green in front of the Municipal Center.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
18	Work with property owners to establish a program that permits temporary or short-term leases for artists or business incubators. Develop a sample leasing contract with merchants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
19	Develop an evaluation matrix listing criteria to be reviewed as per the approved master plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

IMPLEMENTATION

URBAN DESIGN & ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS		RESPONSIBLE / AFFECTED PARTIES							
		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	Wtrnds Commission	Public Utilities	Associations	Private
Management									
1	Designate a senior planner to manage and coordinate the implementation of the TOD Plan, and act as a liaison to all stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Negotiate the four at-grade rail line crossings.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Institute annual consultation with visual merchandising consultants to improve storefront displays and maintain the harmony of Greenwood Avenue.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Create a new position within the Town for a Historic Preservation Officer to assist property owners with their application for Historic Tax Credits. The officer could also make recommendations for facade improvements that visually improve the building facades.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Institute an “Art in Public Places” program with a local art’s school or consortium. Identify art placement locations within the TOD area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Coordinate parking recommendations with plan proposals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Strictly enforce the “slow zone” until it becomes the cultural norm.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Assemble a citizen’s committee tasked with programming quarterly community-wide recreational and social activities in the downtown’s public spaces, that are consistent in promoting the economic development strategies the community adopts for the TOD area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Explore all redevelopment grants and tax credits that are available from the Federal Government and State of Connecticut for brownfield remediation and infill TOD development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Encourage a strong alliance between the Chamber of Commerce and regionally-based commercial brokers to identify and market vacant properties on Greenwood Avenue and aggressively market downtown to potential entrepreneurs, investors and business owners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Create, organize and promote a “shop local” campaign twice a year, as an critical element to ensure downtown’s successful revitalization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Adopt a Public Benefit Program that provides developers with a bonus development capacity and height in exchange for a public benefit contribution to the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13	Encourage low cost, high impact tactical interventions that will energize the community and lead to long term change. Interventions such as pop-up kiosks, pavement-to-parks, build-a-better block, guerrilla gardening, etc...can create an immediate positive change.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14	Coordinate with merchants a “keep Bethel clean and safe” day in spring when property owners, residents, merchants clean and spruce up the sidewalks and plant flower boxes in front of all shopfronts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
15	Organize bi-monthly roundtable discussions and speaker series to learn from experience and generate excitement for the Bethel Forward Plan.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
16	Hold regular coordination meetings to assess and track implementation strategies and recalibrate and amend them as needed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

IMPLEMENTATION

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Encouraging affordable housing throughout the TOD area was also a key goal of this effort and a variety of possible solutions are embedded into the master plan and regulations.

The provision of affordable housing is shaped by a variety of procedures, funding sources, design requirements, maintenance costs, regulations and policies at state and local levels, each with their own cost implications. Public perception also has a galvanizing effect on where affordable housing can be located. While many factors drive up the cost or time to build affordable housing, this section here is focused exclusively on the impact zoning codes and design have on the provision of affordable units.

Too often, affordable housing is provided in the same familiar building type - large multi-family buildings, that are out of scale with their surroundings, and poorly located in car-centric places where walking can be very challenging. The proposed master plan takes a different, and more holistic approach to where and how affordable housing should be provided, especially in forms other than multi-family buildings. Cottages, duplexes, townhouses and four or six-pack buildings should be explored in the pursuit of long-lasting and dignified housing choices in Bethel. It is important to emphasize that the provision of affordable housing units must be viewed as one of many elements required to sustain a complete neighborhood and must be tackled on multiple fronts. This primarily means ensuring that a full range of housing types can be supported, in concert with a range of services and small businesses since a diversity of people demands a diversity of housing choices, shops, services, and workplaces.

Additionally, it also requires increased mobility choices for a majority of residents who likely may not have cars. This means housing dispersed throughout the community within as robust and connected network as possible. Finally, ensuring the construction of such units means modifying the zoning code to provide options for housing type diversity and removing code barriers that may hinder affordability, such as reducing parking requirements, relaxing accessory unit standards and streamlining the review process.

Specific recommended strategies are included on the following page.

Any new project within the TOD area with 10 dwelling units or more shall be required to provide a minimum of 10% of all proposed new units as affordable units that meet 80% of the median income as defined under 8-30G. Affordable housing shall mean housing available to families which meet the qualifications as established by the town. If a property owner chooses to exceed the 10% requirement, they should be able to avail themselves of incentives and bonuses available through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and/or a Public Benefits Program.

PUBLIC BENEFITS PROGRAM

Affordable housing is not the only public benefit Bethel will need in its pursuit of implementing the TOD master plan. A public benefits program should be established to allow bonus development capacity in the TOD area, in exchange for the developer's contributions to specific Town programs that provide benefits to the public. The Town could establish a Public Benefits Trust Fund to manage all cash contributions towards such benefits. The targeted allocation of collected funds towards each public benefit should be determined at the discretion of the Planning and Zoning Commission. Initially, the program could be restricted to the TOD zoning category exclusively, until a time when the Commission decides to apply it to the entire TOD area.

Additional development capacity and up to an extra story of height would only be allowed above the maximum as-of-right, if it is in exchange for contributions to the Town for the following public benefits:

- **Affordable Housing:** Within the TOD zoning category only, developers should be authorized additional development capacity and up to an extra story of height for the provision of affordable housing units in excess of the 10% requirement.
- **Open Space:** Provision of, or contribution towards a public space or trail system as shown on the Open Space Master Plan.
- **Infrastructure improvements:** Provision of, or contribution towards a right-of-way improvement, as shown on the "Infrastructure & Transportation Needs". Elements include: new connections across the train tracks, the new pedestrian street, new greens, street furnishing, burying of utilities, etc....

Cash contributions could be determined based on a percentage of the market value of the per square foot price for the intended use where the proposed project seeking the bonus is located, or more simply, on a weighted average sale price per square foot of the entire TOD area. The Town should adjust cash contributions annually to reflect market conditions.

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

IMPLEMENTATION

URBAN DESIGN & ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE / AFFECTED PARTIES						
	CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	Winds Commission	Public Utilities	Associations

Affordable Housing		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	Winds Commission	Public Utilities	Associations	Private
1	<p>Proactively pursue the integration affordable housing more evenly throughout the TOD area and encourage the design of different building types as a tool for maintaining affordability. Pursue a targeted approach involving different strategies that are location-specific and tied to the intensity of development potential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Encourage development of mixed housing types by level of intensity related to proximity to transit, including multi-family housing, 4 and 6-packs, and compact small row houses. In particular, encourage developers to consider these "missing middle" housing types that support walkability, can be built affordably and maintain housing affordability. ✦ Ensure the zoning code provides options and incentives for housing type diversity. Smaller units, including tiny cottages or micro-units should be permitted. The use or building of accessory units for affordable housing should be allowed by right in all existing neighborhoods within the study area. Large lots should be permitted/ incentivized to subdivide into smaller lots. ✦ In higher intensity areas close to the train station, proactively encourage mixed-income, mixed use projects as proximity to daily needs and services is essential to sustaining affordable housing effectively. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Require new projects within the TOD area with more than 10 dwelling units to provide a minimum of 10% of all units as affordable as defined in 8-30G	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Assist developers who choose to provide more than 10% affordable housing units through incentives and bonuses available through the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and/or by the establishment of a Public Benefit Program.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Incentivize affordable workplaces as a component of affordable housing. Allow homes to function as live-works to encourage entrepreneurship and employment options. Permit work-lives to incentivize advanced light-manufacturing, especially in transitioning areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Optimize density by strategically rezoning industrial lands around train station to promote a mixed-use, complete community. It is important to establish a process that determines a fair exchange of necessary public benefit improvements for the increased property value creation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

IMPLEMENTATION

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS		RESPONSIBLE / AFFECTED PARTIES							
		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	Wtinds Commission	Public Utilities	Associations	Private
Design									
1	Convert the existing Greenwood Avenue traffic signal intersections to modern roundabouts at the gateways to the Town Center: Chestnut Street; Diamond Avenue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Provide a mini-roundabout intersection at the Greenwood Avenue with High Street/Blackman Avenue	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Replace and upgrade the sidewalks in the Town Center and TOD study area to ADA standards and provide new sidewalks for improved connectivity.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Improve walkability & cycling on existing streets by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Completing gaps and replace sidewalks for ADA conformance to create a continuous sidewalk network. ✦ Providing on-street parking where indicated. ✦ Adding new trails and paths, connected to the sidewalk network, as shown in the open space plan. ✦ Adding bicycle facilities and dedicated bike lanes where indicated. ✦ Developing a bicycle master plan to ensure a continuous bicycle network in Bethel, beyond downtown. ✦ Preserving and enhancing the street canopy. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Upgrade all signs to current standards within the TOD study area.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Coordinate with CTDOT on next repaving project to narrow lanes to 11' and maximize shoulders.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Prepare specific streetscape designs and engineering for the streets of the TOD area according to the Plan.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Revise signal phasing and timing for Library Place intersection to remove exiting traffic from Depot Place.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION ITEMS

IMPLEMENTATION

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS		RESPONSIBLE / AFFECTED PARTIES							
		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	WtHnds Commission	Public Utilities	Associations	Private

Policy		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	WtHnds Commission	Public Utilities	Associations	Private
1	Provide bus shelters at HART stops.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Develop a bicycle master plan for Bethel, coordinated to the TOD area's 'Slow Zone'	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<p>Adopt the proposed reduced parking requirements: The study area is over-parked. Over 50% of the existing parking spaces (on-street and off-street) within the study area were observed to be unused even during peak parking demand during the charrette week, which is indicative of a parking oversupply. Ideally, the number of occupied parking spaces should approach the "sweet spot" of an 85% parking utilization target.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Proximity to the train station and a more balanced mix of building uses will further reduce vehicular use: Studies indicate that automobile ownership will be lower within a ½ mile radius of the train station, if the area is developed into a walkable, compact, mixed-use neighborhood. ✦ Capitalize on the walkability of Bethel: The proposed physical improvements to the public realm environment is conducive to incentivizing different circulation modes, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, further reducing the number of daily car trips residents are typically forced to make. Additionally, parking once and walking within the study area to different destinations will become more viable. ✦ Provide a 50% additional reduction in parking requirements for affordable housing units. ✦ Adopt a shared parking ratio. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION ITEMS		RESPONSIBLE / AFFECTED PARTIES							
		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	WtHnds Commission	Public Utilities	Associations	Private

Management		CTDOT	OSTA	Municipality	P&Z Commission	WtHnds Commission	Public Utilities	Associations	Private
1	Prior to conversion of intersections to roundabouts, upgrade traffic signal control equipment at all signalized intersections through planned upgrades by CTDOT.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				

MOVING FORWARD, SOME ITEMS TO KEEP IN MIND:

Disclaimer: Moving Forward recommendations are typically not deliverables of the planning process. However, reasons for their inclusion are compelling, especially because such recommendations address advocacy services beyond the scope of normative municipal services. Many of the Moving Forward recommendations require additional specialized consultants, or additional services on the part of municipal staffs, beyond the scope of their job descriptions. Nonetheless, experience has proven that lack of Moving Forward strategies places municipal administrations at disadvantage in the environment of pro-active vision-oriented growth and development. History demonstrates that little gets done. Moving forward on the ground, one needs to know that one has to act and think like a developer. One needs to learn how to do that. Therefore, the following is a sensible start, never initiated to date, at gathering useful recommendations for Moving Forward that guide municipal officials on how best to ride the crest of the vision and enabling tools detailed in the report toward getting stuff done.

Therefore, the following are some nascent suggestions for moving forward.

- Efforts should be made by town and community leadership, based on Bethel opportunities and assets identified in the Report, to come up with marketing ideas and strategies for attracting the most desirable markets to Bethel. Often experienced professionals can assist with branding efforts.
- Fill the many empty storefronts before prioritizing retail uses elsewhere to create to conditions necessary to attract catalytic investment. It is important to support existing businesses and residents first before recruiting new ones.
- Encourage the merchants along Greenwood Ave. to get active with their merchant’s association. While often a difficult proposition, it will become necessary for business owners in the TOD area to be proactive and organize themselves so that they can develop a plan for: branding, attracting new tenants, sharing resources, identifying a merchandising strategy, and keeping the area clean and safe.
- Point development toward creating projects that most fully visualize the key elements of the master plan, such that future developers can actually see and understand what’s wanted as your vision for Bethel. Determine all the best areas to easily build the clearest description of the vision and guide potential developers/investors toward those locations. Examples include:
 - Point development to that which most boosts downtown businesses along Greenwood Avenue, such as infilling gaps with 20 to 30-foot frontages of small-scale live-work buildings where shopkeepers can live above their stores. Since we know that shoppers tend to be stopped by 30 foot gaps with “blanks or banks”, filling in gaps will dramatically expands the shopping range. Shopkeepers living above their shops also strengthens the trust citizens have for their downtown, and the frequency of their visits.
 - Point development of rezoned industrial properties towards compact lots with a mix of smaller building types. Encourage developers willing to develop multi-family housing close to the train station to consider the often overlooked two and three-story urban villas, instead of the more typical, large-scale multi-family buildings that require greater upfront costs and risks. These urban villas can be phased incrementally more easily, can be parked in the rear of the lots with no need for parking structures, have minimal shared spaces and offer an elegant, well-lit multi-family living choice, with windows on three sides of the units.

- Point general development toward the most compact and the smallest property areas as well. Encourage developers to create compact small lots, 20-30' frontages, 2 to 3 sometimes 4-story buildings, possibly mixed-use, on both sides of a skinny "place-making" street that offer affordability and walkable proximity to needs, to services and to alternative (to automobile) transportation modes. Rowhouses are inexpensive to build and offer the quickest charm and desirability for others to see. Tour Beacon Hill in Boston to observe inexpensive-to-build row houses in action. Also, consider the diversity of architectural style and buildings evident in Bethel and surrounding communities. Pick the best out, and ask developers/investors to visit them, use them for inspiration. Architectural variety makes the best neighborhoods.
 - Point development to engage the new train station, defining the arrival square and new network of skinny streets fronted by 20-30' wide 2 to 3, sometimes 4-story, sometimes mixed-use buildings as illustrated in the Report rendering.
 - Point development to engage new or existing small light-advanced-manufacturing facilities (absent of obnoxious fumes or noise), demonstrating how such facilities can be embedded into residential neighborhoods so that young entrepreneurs can kick-start advanced-manufacturing interests (use of technology to create salable products) in close walkable proximity to where they live.
- Build the new skinny street visualized in the Report rendering connecting Greenwood Avenue and the Municipal Center might be such an accomplishable place to start. With relatively few property owners with whom to form agreements, with most of the land cleared for parking, and with locating attached to the most bustling part of Greenwood Avenue, this new street and buildings offers many positive assets for moving forward.
 - Identify where government interventions will be required to ensure necessary implementation of thoroughfare connections and infrastructure improvements, and/or how the town itself can assume such costs through methods, such as future value capture, TIF, etc., and/or how partnerships might be negotiated with private interests that fund infrastructure while not burdening private interests to the point they have to raise rents and sales prices beyond levels appropriate to project goals.
 - Use the color renderings to target areas depicted in the renderings, with the renderings acting as visual guidance denoting expectations. The charrette team carefully selected each rendering for its comprehensible execution, and for its ability to set standards for all other development.
 - For each area selected to kick off examples of the Bethel vision, consider all the issues that will confront a prospective developer/investor, such as dealings with property owners or owners of adjacent properties, community support, embracing lending institutions, infrastructure costs, and the permitting process. Arrive at solutions to all potential issues so that when a developer/investor arrives, already one has answers to the most probable questions.
 - Start establishing how the most expensive parts of projects can be implemented with minimum impact on the developer's/investor's bottom line. Remember that the cost of a project translates into rents and sales costs for future citizens. Reduced costs, and rents and sales, are in the best interest of the town. Become familiar with methods of "value capture," Tax Incremental Financing (TIFs), and other instruments that reduce costs for developers and bring tax revenues to the town as quickly as possible.

NEXT STEPS

IMPLEMENTATION

- Regarding retail and the commercial areas, finding the right mix is difficult due to the diversity of unanticipated shops seeking Bethel's location. One can hire a retail/commercial property expert (Realtor) to assist in attracting the types of retail wanted. Also, if this person is good, they will know the right mix and will reach out to appropriate businesses to assemble the best mix. Remember that it's in the retailers' interest to be on the street most appealing to customers. That's the goal. So seek existing retailers' input on types they might want.
- Animate retail frontages, such as getting retailers to agree on opening/closing hours, lighting storefronts for maximum appeal and charm, and changing windows at least once a week. Get the retailers to organize a merchants associating so the techniques for maximizing business can be discussed, shared, and improved. The success of one store depends on the success of all stores. Visit Montpelier, VT, where such measures have produced a thriving retail economy.
- Similarly, signage, parking and shop-local campaigns need to be internally generated, or through the expertise of a trained professional.
- Tax abatements should be used strategically and carefully. The type of small buildings envisioned by the plan should not need any subsidies or abatements. Therefore, save abatements and subsidies only for those projects where inducements are necessary to get what one wants, having exhausted all other avenues. Talk to other similar size towns to understand their approach(es), and then determine if those approaches are right.
- Jump start economic activity through low cost, high impact tactical interventions that will energize the community. Create buzz and excitement by planning semi-annual community-wide activities within the TOD area, such as a 5k run, a "main street dinner under the lights", a specialty fair that does not exist within a certain radius of the Town, a "keeping us safe and clean day", a shop local day that rewards downtown shoppers, etc. to reintroduce downtown to residents and attract new visitors from neighboring towns.
- Although the details of streetscape were not included in the scope, the easiest solution is to visit the most charming communities, take lots of pictures. Then enlist one's most supportive and competent landscape and lighting contractors to install streetscapes according to the pictures. Alternatively, hire a good landscape architect.
- Organize regular round-table discussions, designed to invite interested builders, developers, investors and town citizens to come and learn about what's going on, what's special, different, and directly in the interest of builders, developers, investors, citizens, regarding on-going implementation of the new Bethel TOD code and the vision for future Bethel. These round-tables would make for good PR, for good attraction of growth sector people to Bethel, and for improving the understanding and skills of town staff leading the charge.

Best luck! The widely recognized charm and character of Bethel already has a well established start.

APPENDIX



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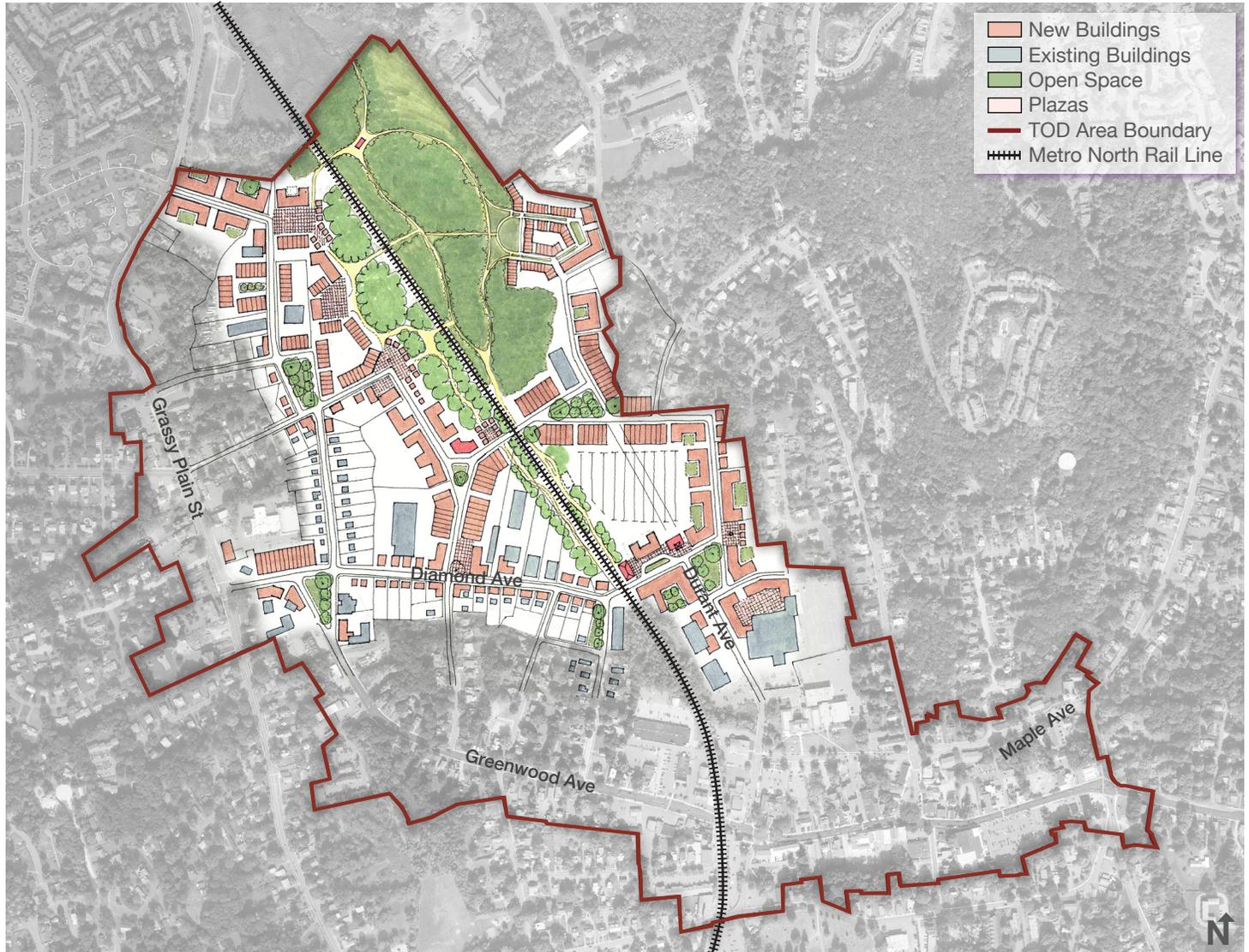
Over the intensive four-day charrette, the DPZ team explored design options, presenting them formally and informally to the public and residents of Bethel, through public meetings, desk visits, and presentations. Feedback was gathered each day and the plans were adjusted accordingly. This chapter looks at the stages of design from the first preliminary designs produced through to the final vision plan which was presented on the final night of the charrette, to the post-charrette analytical diagrams and character illustrations, helping define the envisioned scale and character of Bethel.

Early on two sketch plans and one detail plan “dreamed big” and deliberately and provocatively did not discard any design ideas as outlandish as they may appear. They all have general New Urbanist principles in common, including connecting street networks and filling in the gaps in the urbanism. They list big-picture design concepts. The best ideas of each sketch plan were consolidated into the overall illustrative master plan.



NORTH AREA CONSERVATION SKETCH PLAN

APPENDIX



Big Picture:

- Work within all existing plots to ensure proposed development is stand-alone but also aligned to the TOD area's goals.
- Relocates train station south to be closer to the downtown, but far enough to not block Greenwood Ave.
- Connect the wetlands to the station and downtown with a regional "bike destination" & nature trails.
- Two new vehicular at-grade railroad crossings proposed.
- Durant Ave is realigned to provide a formal termination on the station and to create a large block that allows Bishop Curtis Senior Complex more efficient shared parking with the train station.

East side of tracks:

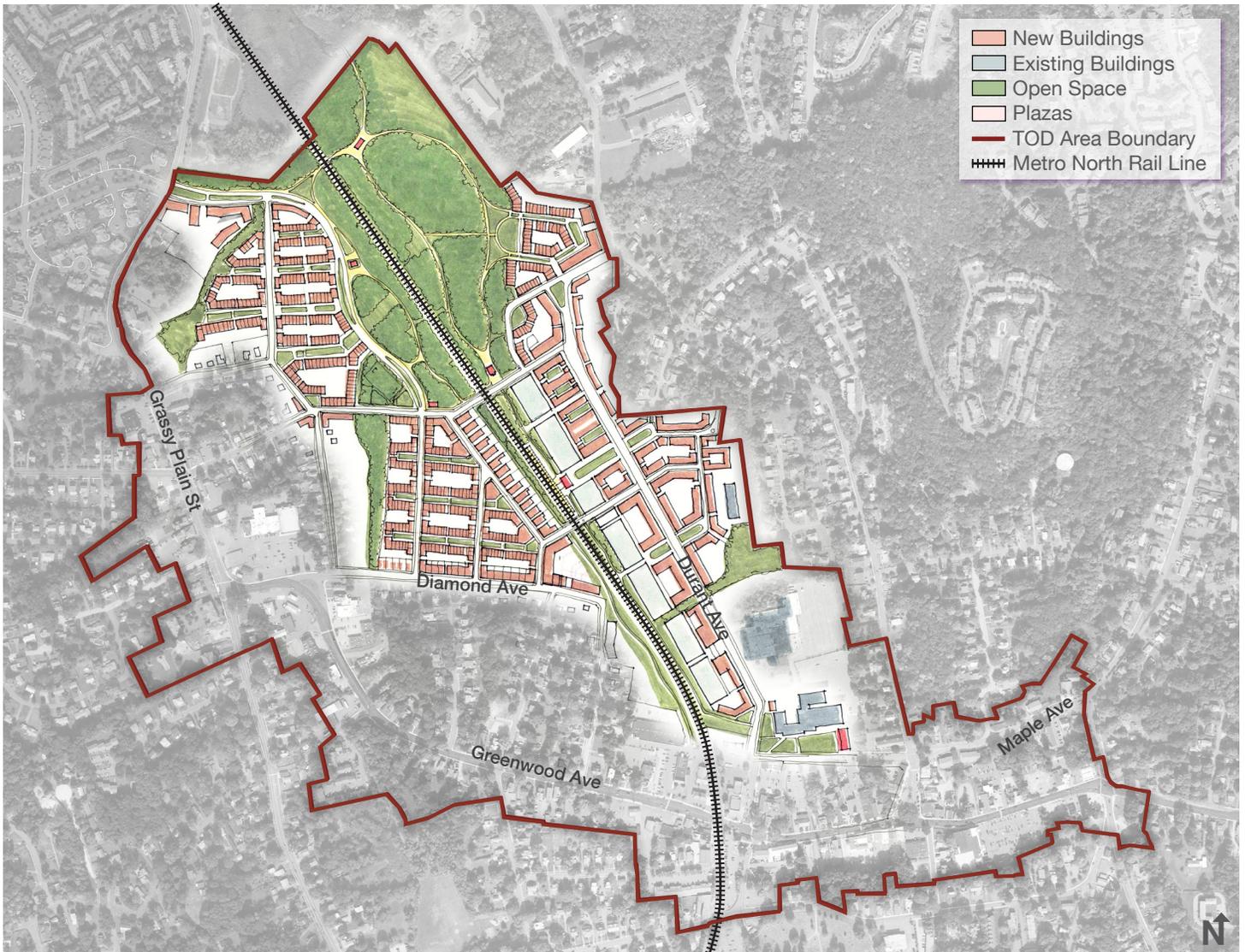
- Provide parking between the train tracks and new

development along Durant Ave. Use parking as buffer for train noise.

- Urbanize Durant Ave with the redevelopment of the Bishop Curtis Senior Complex, with buildings lining the street.
- Connect bike trail system to the Municipal Center.

West side of tracks:

- Connect Greenwood north as an additional network - tying into Grassy Plains at Bainbridge Blvd.
- Connect Elgin and Paul Streets and create a small civic neighborhood green.
- Redevelop industrial parcels with small scale, mixed-use buildings.
- Fill in vacant lots and work with property plats to ensure buildable development
- Create a civic green space at Grassy Plain and Greenwood to create a more memorable and urban neighborhood center.



Big Picture:

- Maintains train station in current location.
- Connect the proposed wetlands to the station and downtown. Use the park as a catalyst and amenity for new development.
- Create a regional “bike destination” with natural trails and small town urbanism.
- Three new railroad crossings proposed. Two are shown as street crossings, and the northern-most crossing is bike/pedestrian.

East side of tracks:

- Parking between the tracks and new development along Durant Ave. Use parking as buffer for train noise.
- Treat parking garages with green wall, or line with "maker spaces" at the sidewalk level.
- Urbanize Durant Ave and align some of the cross streets on each side of Durant Ave to connect

both sides of development.

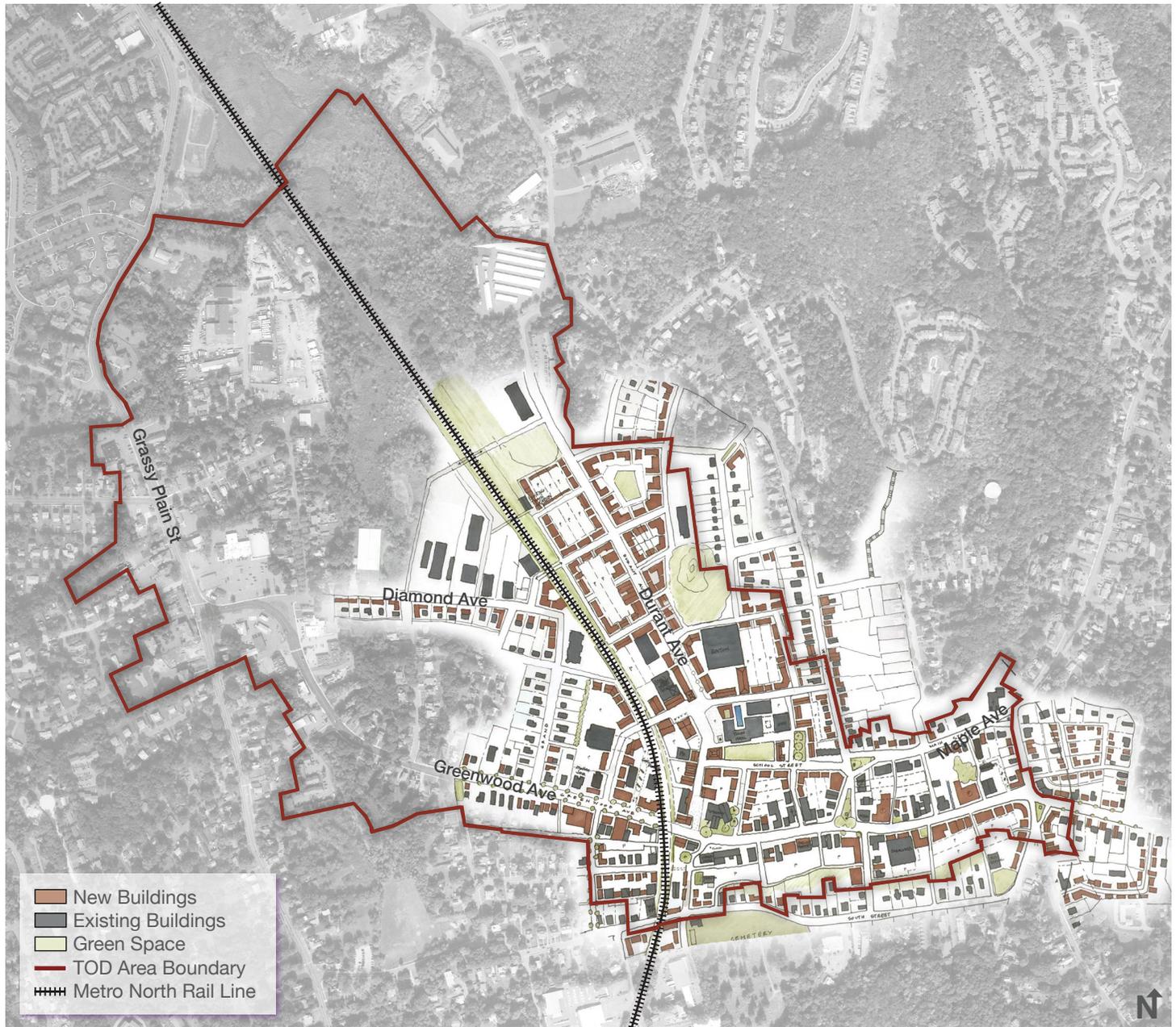
- Connect bike trail system to the Municipal Center.

West side of tracks:

- Extend Bainbridge Blvd. as a parkway along the proposed park.
- Extend Paul Street to connect to Bainbridge Blvd.
- Connect Elgin and Paul Streets.
- Create a new street network in the industrial area to organize and connect new development.
- Line streets with a variety of townhouses and multi-family and mixed-use buildings.
- Retrofit development at Grassy Plain and Greenwood to create a more urban neighborhood center.
- Propose an alternating system of streets and green streets.

SOUTH GREENWOOD AVE RETROFIT SKETCH PLAN

APPENDIX



South Greenwood Ave

Proposed redevelopment strategies include:

- While ambitious, consider relocating train station to within a two to three-minute walk of Greenwood Avenue to provide commuters with quicker access to downtown;
- Create a gridded network of streets and blocks north and south of Greenwood Avenue, and link parking together in the center of the blocks with alleys;
- Incentivize infilling empty lots along Greenwood Avenue- across from P.T. Barnum Square and along Caraluzzi's property to the east;
- Re-imagine Dolan Shopping Center redesigned to be more in line with the prevailing character of

Greenwood Av

- Model new construction on Bethel historic buildings: small footprints, 2-4 stories, highly detailed, typical New England clapboard or brick exteriors;
- Renovate the blank facade of Caraluzzi's by lining it with small shops with entrances from Greenwood Avenue;
- Retrofit the gas stations at either end of Greenwood Avenue: place buildings along the street frontage and the gas pumps to the side with access through the alley; and
- Enlarge sidewalks along Greenwood Avenue where possible to permit a four-foot planting strip and snow shelf along the street.

GREENWOOD AVE TO SCHOOL STREET DETAIL SKETCH PLAN

APPENDIX



- Dolan Plaza Redevelopment
- Redeveloped Mixed-Use Building to house CVS, Chase Bank, and Gym Tenants
- Pedestrian Bridge
- Liner Buildings
- Relocated Bethel Train Station
- Station Sq with Barnum Fountain Replica
- New Post Office Portico
- Expand/Improve Com. Bldg.
- Eaton Expansion
- Library Expansion & Portico
- Municipal Pool Building
- School St Multi-Family
- Incubator Cottage Row
- Senior Housing
- Stage & Amphitheater Green
- School St Multi-Family
- Parking Access Lane
- Inn on the Green
- Inn Lane Rowhouses
- New Plaza Paving

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

APPENDIX

Motorized Transportation

- Significant traffic on principal arterials
 - Route 53: 11,200 vehicles per day
 - Route 302: 14,100 vehicles per day
- Bethel Station: 257 average weekday passengers (95% round trip)
- 4 signalized intersections within TOD area
- No significant capacity constrained intersections/roadways
- One RR crossing in study area creates barrier to mobility & access to new TOD uses

Non-Motorized Transportation

- The vibrant pedestrian scale of town center should be replicated in the new TOD district
- Bethel train station is 0.4 miles north of Bethel Town Center
- Pedestrian links to TOD areas & the train station are essential
- A standardized streetscape treatment is desirable
- State highways limit bicycle & pedestrian mobility
- Local roadways limited
- Complete streets needed





One of the fliers announcing the public kick-off for "Bethel Forward"

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

APPENDIX

OVERVIEW

The DPZ team kicked off the public outreach component of this effort by holding stakeholder interviews in Bethel on September 16 and 17. Gianni Longo (GLA), Joseph Balskus (CDM Smith), Kennedy Smith (CLUE GROUP), Robert Orr (ROA), and Michael Weich (DPZ Partners) interviewed a total of ten groups including:

- Downtown business owners (two groups)
- TOD property owners
- Downtown property owners
- Realtors
- Local builders and architects
- Town employees
- Community groups
- Downtown residents and Bethel neighborhood associations
- Planning & Zoning Commission, Economic Development Committee, and Board of Selectman

This section summarizes key recurring points made in the course of the interviews. They represent perceptions and beliefs based on the stakeholders' experience as businesses and property owners, developers, residents, and downtown advocates.

The information is organized in three sections:

- What We Heard
- Preliminary Guiding Principles
- Miscellaneous Items

In addition, attached are three documents submitted by interview participants: the Town of Bethel TOD Study Regulatory Considerations, Thoughts on Bethel Forward, submitted by neighbors on Grand Street, and the copy of a parking plan included in the 1958 Bethel Plan of Development.

The interviews are the first step in engaging Bethel stakeholders and residents. Public meetings were held on October 1 and October 29 and the Bethel Design Charrette to be held the week of November 16 will add additional insights on community concerns, values, attitudes, and aspirations. The public comments collected in these meetings will help guide the development of the Bethel Forward plan together with a rigorous analysis of infrastructure, land use, and economic conditions, conducted concurrently.



The Town of Bethel invites you to participate in the first public meeting of BETHEL FORWARD.

Community Voices

October 1, 2015

Presentation & Discussion: 6:30 to 8:30 PM.

Meeting Location: General Purpose Room, Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center, 1 School Street, Bethel.

Community Voices will collect your ideas for the future of downtown and the area surrounding the rail station. Using maps, you will identify what works, what does not, and what can be done to make downtown better. Small group discussions will allow your ideas, thoughts, and aspirations to be heard. Your input will become the foundation for BETHEL FORWARD.

For more information visit: www.bethel-ct.gov

COMMUNITY VOICES - SUMMARY REPORT

APPENDIX

OVERVIEW

The Community Voices workshop took place on October 1, 2015. It was the first public meeting of the extensive Bethel Forward community engagement process.

Community Voices was designed to meet the following objectives:

- Introduce the consultant team to residents
- Share findings of the stakeholder interviews conducted September 16 and 17
- Identify physical sites within the study area and in the immediate vicinity that:
 - Are strong and we can learn from;
 - Are weak and can be improved for the community's benefit; and
 - Identify opportunities for the future.

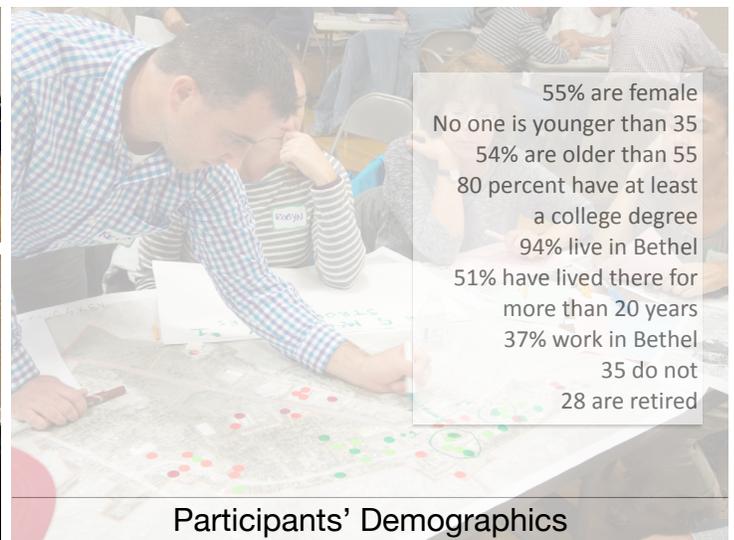
This report includes summaries of the two interactive segments of the workshop: the Strong Places Weak Places mapping exercise and the Opportunities for the Future brainstorm. It also includes the results of the exit questionnaire administered at the workshop. Raw data from each of these activities are available on line at <http://www.bethel-ct.gov/content/117/8612/11809.aspx>.

In the Strong Places Weak Places exercise participants identified strengths and weaknesses within the study area, linking them directly to specific places. The strong places were marked with green dots. The weak places were marked with red dots. They then brainstormed about what makes a weak place weak and what makes a strong place strong.

In the Opportunities for the Future each participant suggested two ideas for improvements in the study area. A total of 208 ideas were collected, sorted, and organized according to four categories and 14 topics

Strong Places Weak Places

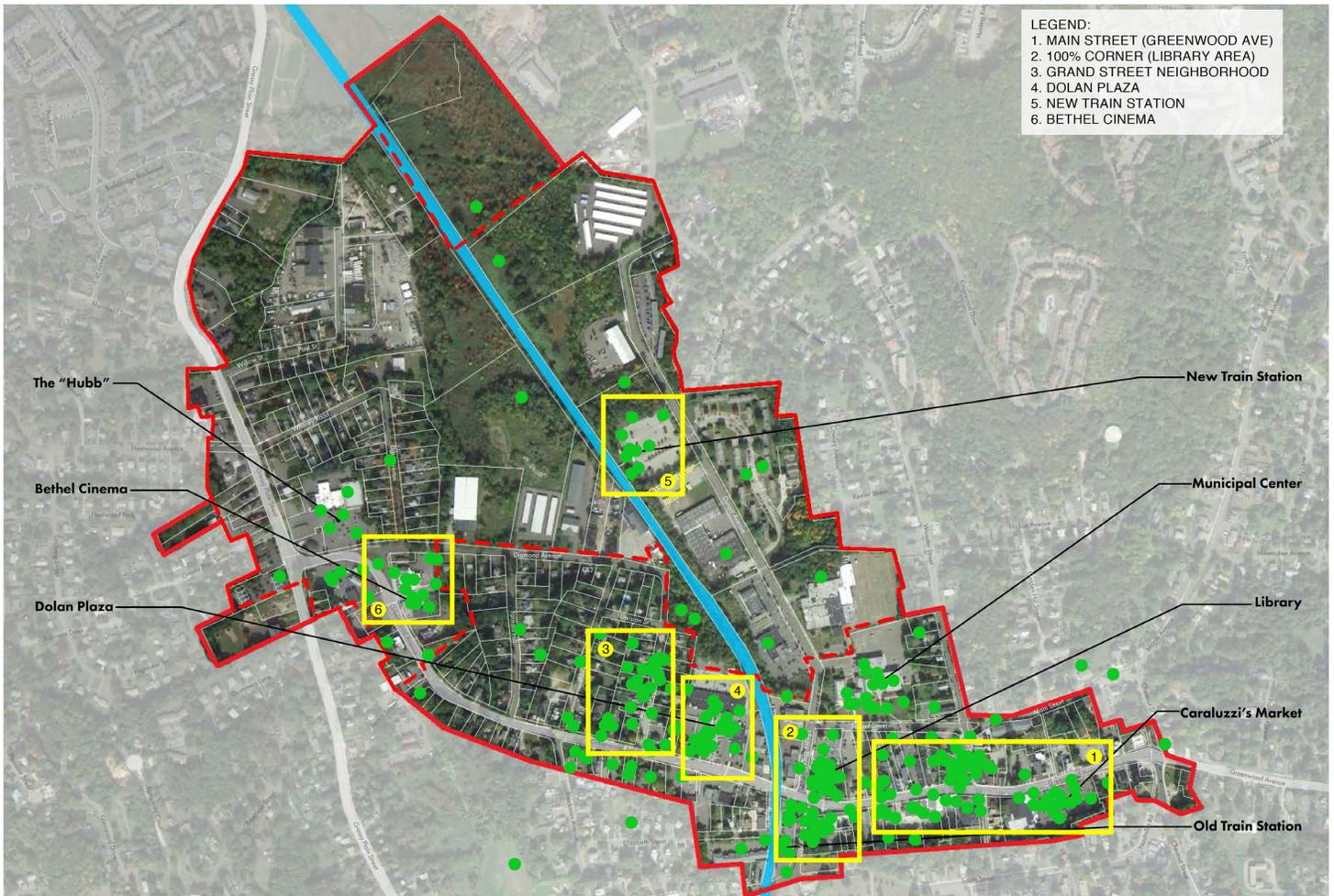
The Strong Places Weak Places exercise provided an at-a-glance snapshot of the strengths and weaknesses of the study area. The information was compounded in the three maps shown starting on the next page.



55% are female
No one is younger than 35
54% are older than 55
80 percent have at least a college degree
94% live in Bethel
51% have lived there for more than 20 years
37% work in Bethel
35 do not
28 are retired

Participants' Demographics

STRONG PLACES



This map shows all the strong places identified by participants. The characteristics of each place are described below synthesizing the participants' own words.

1. Greenwood Avenue

Greenwood Avenue is the core of Bethel's downtown. It is a "charming New England style street with strong architectural character. It is safe for people and home to nice shops, many independently owned." A key part of the downtown core is P. T. Barnum Square an "intimate and friendly" triangular square with a variety of small scale shops and stores, and a European charm and feel. The streets surrounding the square can be easily closed to traffic for events.

2. Library Area

The area surrounding Bethel's Public Library is the town's 100 percent corner. It is the recognized "center of town." It is the stage for "lots of community activities." It has a "green space with a nice lawn, trees and benches, a beautiful re-landscaped street," and historic architectural features. It is "a landmark for outsiders."

3. Grand Street Neighborhood

This neighborhood located walking distance to downtown has "beautiful historic architecture and walkable sidewalks with large shade trees. It is "well maintained and safe for pedestrians."

4. Dolan Plaza

A recent development of "locally owned shops" that has "resisted chain-retail stores" and has integrated "Victorian architecture" in its design. It offers "restaurants for people to dine."

5. New Train Station

The new station "anchors the town and offers access to the region, brings people into Bethel, and gets cars off the road."

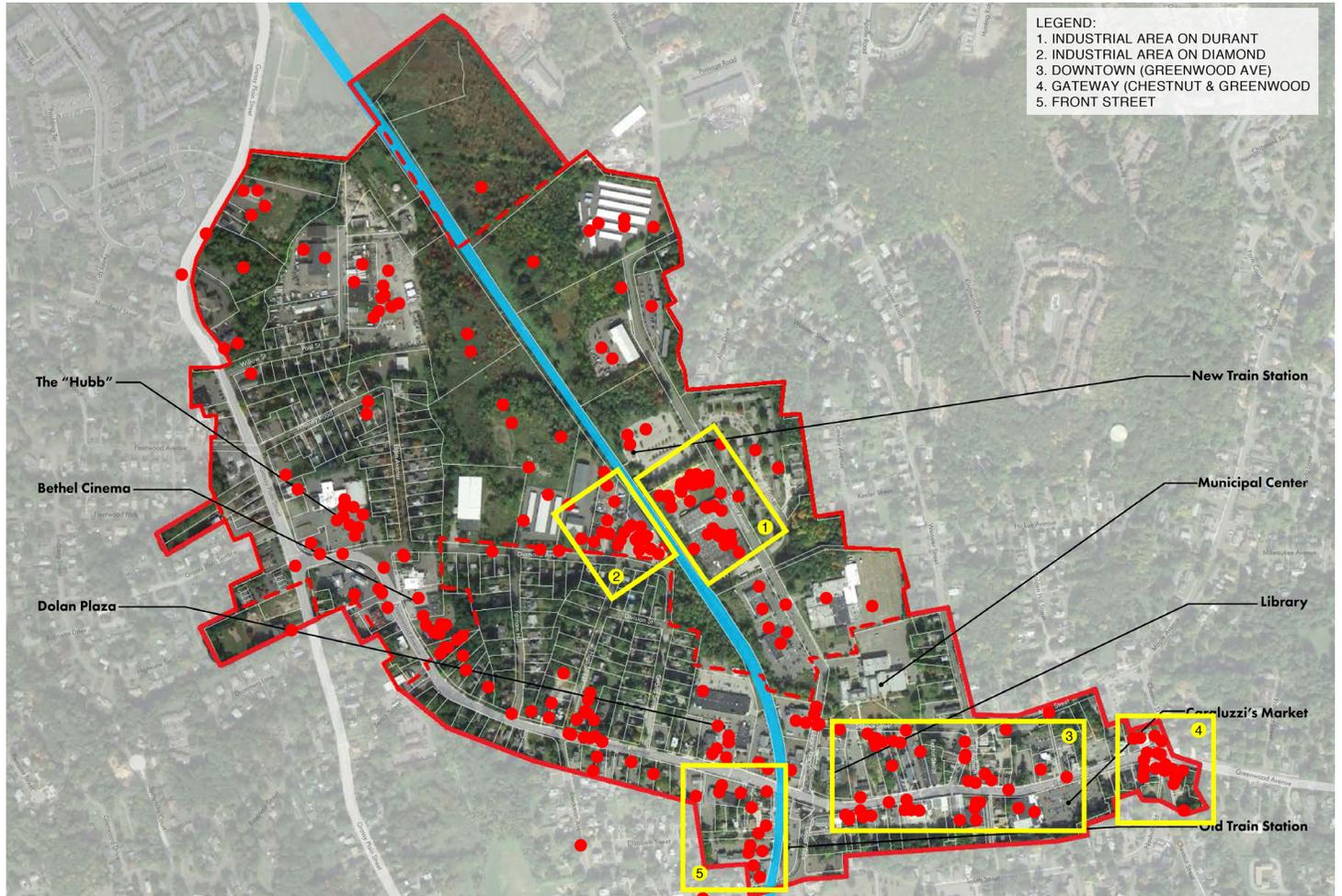
6. Bethel Cinema

The Cinema is a "cultural regional point of interest, that brings people from other areas" into Bethel. A host to "special events and community events."

COMMUNITY VOICES - SUMMARY REPORT

APPENDIX

WEAK PLACES



This map shows all the weak places identified by participants. The characteristics of each place are described below synthesizing the participants' own words.

1. Industrial on Durant Avenue

Located next to the new train station this industrial area is marked by an "over crowded bus parking" that is "ugly and rundown with not enough green." It is "not pedestrian friendly for people walking from the train to downtown." It has "hazardous sidewalks" and cars "parking in front."

2. Industrial on Diamond Avenue

Located on the west side of the railroad tracks the area is an "eyesore from the train platform, not pedestrian friendly, and too close to residential streets."

3. Greenwood Avenue

The weaknesses of Greenwood Avenue include:

- Too many empty stores and not enough varied retail
- Not enough cross walks for pedestrians
- Rents that are too high for local businesses
- Poor parking conditions on the School Street side

4. Gateway at Chestnut & Greenwood

A key gateway to downtown, the intersection of Chestnut Street and Greenwood Avenue has:

- Vacant and rundown buildings
- Bad traffic flow
- Parking issues at the convenience store and dry cleaners

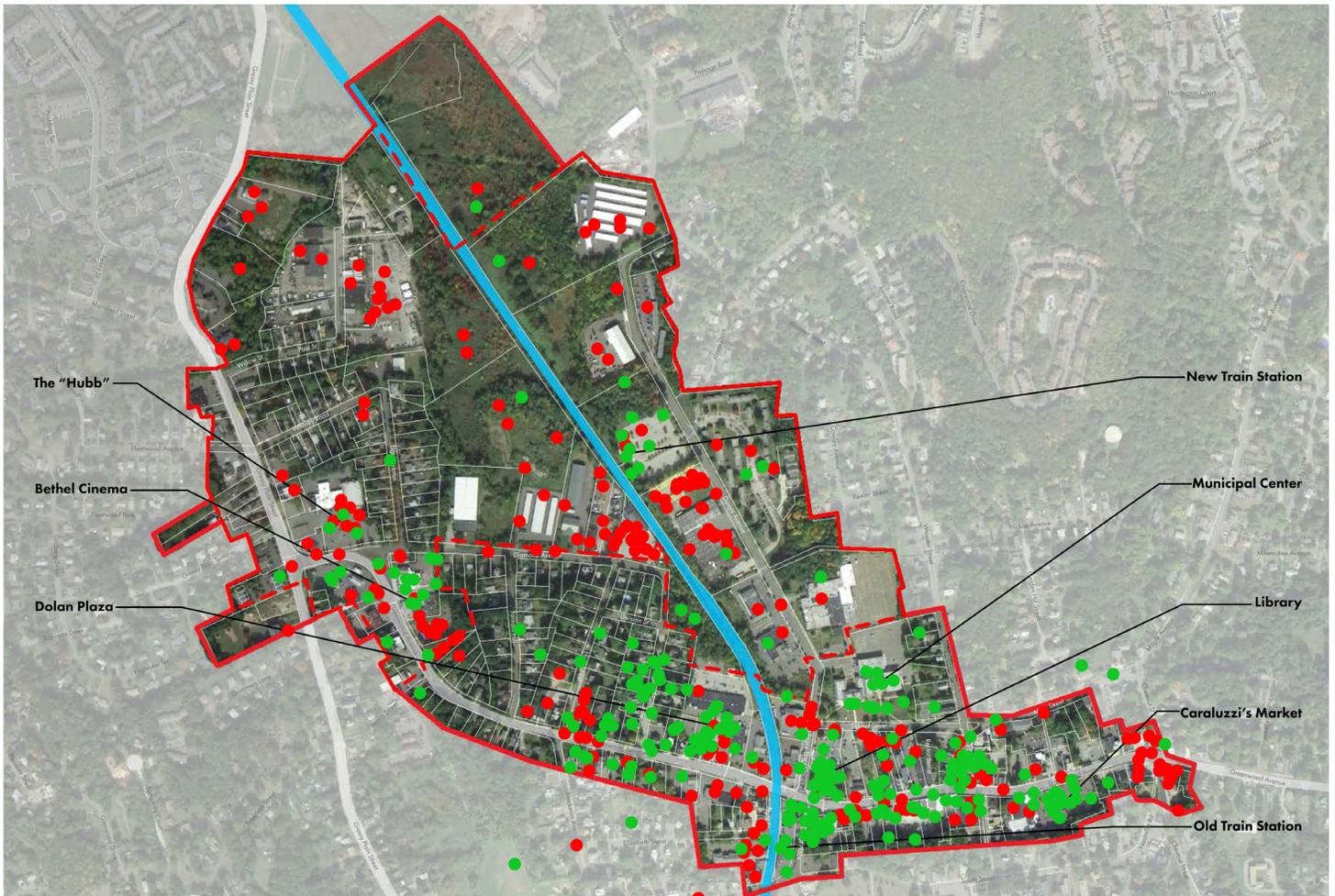
5. Front Street

Located opposite the Public Library front street has:

- Dilapidated and rundown buildings
- Bad sidewalks

The "proximity to the library and shops makes it visible."

STRONG & WEAK PLACES



This map shows the all strong and weak places. Significant overlap of conditions are evident where the green dots indicating strong places and the red dots indicating weak places cover parts of the same area. Strong examples of that are Greenwood Avenue, Dolan Plaza, and the area surrounding the Bethel Cinema.

COMMUNITY VOICES - OPPORTUNITIES

APPENDIX

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE

The following ideas were collected in the Opportunities segment of the October 1, 2015 Community Voices workshop. They were used to identify preliminary goals for Bethel Forward.

The ideas in this report are reported verbatim. When necessary, compound ideas have been separated into individual components. Each idea is numbered. The first number indicates the table where the idea was collected. The second number identifies the idea.

The ideas have been sorted into topics and sub-topics and organized according to five categories:

- The Public Realm
- Transportation and Parking
- Retail, Restaurants and Other businesses, Arts and Events, and Marketing
- Transportation and Parking
- Government.

The topics are listed below with an indication of the number of ideas gathered for each.

- The Public Realm: 110 ideas
- Walk Bike: 35 Ideas
- Open Space: 24 Ideas
- Character: 17 Ideas
- Housing: 14 Ideas
- Development: 13 Ideas
- Landscapes: 7 Ideas
- Downtown Businesses, Art and Events, Marketing: 43 ideas
- Retail, Restaurants, and Other Businesses: 24 Ideas
- Arts And Events: 12 Ideas
- Marketing: 7 Ideas
- Transportation and Parking: 40 ideas
- Transportation: 20 Ideas
- Parking: 20 Ideas
- Government: 13 Ideas
- Environment: 2 Ideas

PRELIMINARY BROAD GOALS

The topic and subtopics provide insights in areas that are critical to the plan. They suggest a number of broad goals such as:

- Enhance the pedestrian friendly qualities of Bethel by improving sidewalks throughout, adding bike lanes and paths, using the wetlands for exercise trails and recreation, and connecting different parts of downtown.
- Create a major “community gathering” place as well as distinctive smaller open spaces.
- Maintain and enhance Bethel’s character, streetscapes, and visual appearance.
- Add downtown housing.
- Attract and strengthen retail, restaurants, and other businesses by leveraging Bethel’s arts and events and marketing the town’s unique assets.
- Improve the flow of traffic and parking.
- Address infrastructure and regulatory issues.

The goals were prioritized during the Community Choices workshop held on October 29.

CATEGORY – THE PUBLIC REALM

TOPIC – WALK BIKE: 35 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
2.04. Bike lanes for commuting from home to downtown especially train station.	Walk Bike	Bike
2.05. Change ordinance for bike racks, allow racks in parking lots by eliminating parking.	Walk Bike	Bike
10.10. Bike Lanes.	Walk Bike	Bike
5.01. Put clear emphasis on creating pedestrian friendly areas, one linked to the next, all through the downtown and Durant area and west side of tracks.	Walk Bike	Connect
8.07. Connect the Danbury/Bethel Inn on Grassy Plan St to the center of town by walking paths and boulevard type streets.	Walk Bike	Connect
9.16. Bridge “walking” over M-N RR @ Diamond (or North), connecting west downtown to east downtown.	Walk Bike	Connect
10.11. Better pedestrian crossings.	Walk Bike	Connect
3.07 Connected sidewalks throughout town.	Walk Bike	Connect
5.13. Greater access for foot traffic to and from the train station.	Walk Bike	Connect
13.10. Improved accessibility.	Walk Bike	Connect
3.01. Walkways, paths, pedestrian bridge from east side at train tracks to the west side near the new apartments that are being built.	Walk Bike	Connect
5.17 Re-designate School St to pedestrian only/re-pave with brick/cobblestone etc.	Walk Bike	Pedestrian
3.07. More accessibility. Making a pedestrian friendly environment. A train that is actually efficient.	Walk Bike	Pedestrian
9.20. People on the street + parking.	Walk Bike	Pedestrian
13.06 B. Develop the Greenway north of the train station as public outdoor recreational areas.	Walk Bike	Recreation
1.16. Raised walking paths and bike paths (separate) built over wetlands so people can stroll through these areas.	Walk Bike	Recreation
2.08. Accessibility to wetlands for walkways/bike paths or exercise trails.	Walk Bike	Recreation
7.01. Bike path (multi-use path) circling the TOD attracting people to downtown center. Bike Friendly Town.	Walk Bike	Recreation
7.15. Create more walkway and green space along wetlands.	Walk Bike	Recreation

COMMUNITY VOICES - OPPORTUNITIES

APPENDIX

9.01. Nice access, wide bike/ walking paths, with recreation to downtown business district from all in town residential areas.	Walk Bike	Recreation
9.04. Make walkway throughout wetland.	Walk Bike	Recreation
9.12. Create walk ways.	Walk Bike	Recreation
9.18. Bike path - Greenway over wetlands.	Walk Bike	Recreation
3.07 Bike land/developing a trail, community oriented place to exercise off road.	Walk Bike	Recreation
9.09. Create a walkable downtown with bike paths, walkways thru the wetlands/greenways-a vibrant cohesive downtown community.	Walk Bike	Recreation
2.01. More and improved sidewalks.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
3.16. Connect all sidewalks in the area.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
4.13. Better sidewalks.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
5.10. Uniform sidewalks throughout TOD area.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
10.09. Sidewalks on School Street.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
13.08. New sidewalks on the Grassy Plain side of town.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
13.10 Pay attention to small details in sidewalk quality and curb cuts that can make downtown hard to walk around if you have mobility issues.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
13.10 Look into permeable concrete for sidewalk so curb less streets would work.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
7.08 Better sidewalks	Walk Bike	Sidewalks
8.02. Walkable area, larger/longer of a downtown that is inviting with great curb appeal.	Walk Bike	Sidewalks

TOPIC – OPEN SPACE: 24 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
1.14. Central gathering space (outdoors) for community events, that is similar to the Danbury Green. Reasonable size stage with covering and electric/lights and lawn for people to gather.	Open Space	Central
6.08. Some sort of centralized location that is the place from which all activity, events, art, gatherings occur...and a way to know what is happening.	Open Space	Central
8.03. Create a public area including gardens, sculpture to us as a centralized gathering place. Surrounded with businesses, restaurants, etc that is connected to existing downtown.	Open Space	Central
8.09. Green space and a community center. A space for all generations to gather for positives activities.	Open Space	Central
13.06. Creation of a central larger public park. Outdoor space to rival the great lawn in the educational park.	Open Space	Central
13.11. Destination park/splash pad similar to Dickinson Newtown or Rogues Park Danbury.	Open Space	Central
9.09 New large central recreational area for concerts and community events.	Open Space	Central
8.09 A community center with a pool, gym, walking paths, playground. Promotes town pride.	Open Space	Community center
8.14. Community Center	Open Space	Community center
13.07. I would like to see a recreation center in the proposed area of development to benefit residents of all ages. The center could include an outdoor bike path, an indoor track (great for the senior population) and a swimming pool. The town could charge for swimming lessons, gym membership, etc. Additionally there could be businesses located in the rec center such as a cafe.	Open Space	Community center
1.06. Close off all or part of PT Barnum Sq. to traffic.	Open Space	PT Barnum
5.09. Turn PT Barnum into large green, eliminate roads.	Open Space	PT Barnum
5.04. Small gazebo with seats in PT Barnum Square.	Open Space	Small

10.02. Have some pocket parks where people can sit, talk, relax and meet one another.	Open Space	Small
10.15. Small park like area to sit, meet, eat lunch, read, etc. Community garden.	Open Space	Small
5.08. Move building to Greenwood or use parking as park/green, seating in front of yellow brick building. Rector & Greenwood. Upgrade facade of building.	Open Space	Small
6.13. More nice parks, attractive areas. For example by the stream along the RR tracks by the railroad station and/or the stream between the post office and CVS.	Open Space	Small
6.02. Expand Town Hall lawn to other side of School Street. Ask owner to allow this. Close School Street. Make Town Hall lawn our "Town Square".	Open Space	Town hall area
6.14. Make a town square, perhaps where Municipal Center and School St area or by PT Barnum Sq.	Open Space	Town hall area
10.08. Enhance Municipal Center, renovate and make more accessible.	Open Space	Town hall area
13.05. Development of the municipal center area as a true town center. Bridging the downtown to the train.	Open Space	Town hall area
13.06 A. Expand municipal center open space.	Open Space	Town hall area
3.17. Make Mousey's Corner into downtown dog and people park.	Open Space	
9.07. Elizabeth Street parking/transit/play area.	Open Space	

TOPIC – CHARACTER: 17 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
1.08. Keep character of buildings.	Character	Buildings
1.09. No buildings more than 3 stories.	Character	Buildings
3.14 Don't want old Bethel houses to turn into Danbury.	Character	Buildings
12.02. One story round houses across from Post Office on School Street.	Character	Buildings
12.12 Consistent aesthetics with building design	Character	Buildings
7.17. Move all utilities to the back of the buildings on Greenwood Ave.	Character	Appearance
5.11. Uniform style for designated areas, not colors, not lettering.	Character	Appearance
8.05. Center zone (i.e. a more homogenous look).	Character	Appearance
8.13. The "look"/visual appearance of the buildings, keeping a historic feel.	Character	Appearance
12.10. Consistent look all along 302.	Character	Appearance
3.05. Bury downtown power lines. Visual pollution near Boylans & Greenwoods is very prevalent.	Character	Maintenance
3.14. Protect residential areas from noise, dirt, etc; when owners reside in historic homes they take better care of yards.	Character	Maintenance
7.05. Encourage owners to improve the exterior appearance of their buildings. Perhaps enlist boy/girl scout clubs to paint buildings or plant shrubs and flowers around these structures.	Character	Maintenance
7.08 Proper building maintenance	Character	Maintenance
7.07. Restrict new construction to maintain existing style of construction on each street.	Character	Regulations
7.09. Have architectural zoning requirements (build structures that are made to last and look good). Not that crummy, temporary big box look.	Character	Regulations
9.13. Removing "unattractive" buildings, factories, unused land.	Character	Regulations

COMMUNITY VOICES - OPPORTUNITIES

APPENDIX

TOPIC – HOUSING: 14 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
8.06. Bring more people to downtown. If more people live here, the business will follow.	Housing	
12.13. Encourage young professionals not families.	Housing	
4.03. Affordable housing for 55+ and older. Rentals or Condos.	Housing	
5.12. More residential development to help support and grow the downtown commerce vitality.	Housing	
5.16. Developing more opportunities to live downtown	Housing	
6.01. More housing downtown.	Housing	
6.10. More affordable housing. Mixed housing choices.	Housing	
7.13. Affordable rental housing. Fix sidewalks all over TOD area.	Housing	
9.02. Flood the downtown area with new residential homes to supply the business district with customers to highly utilize the millennial tendencies to use the train.	Housing	
9.03. Durant Ave, convert to housing not commercial.	Housing	
9.06. Housing. No new commercial, but need to do a study on how much is needed.	Housing	
9.14. Housing for younger families. So there is more activity and people.	Housing	
13.03. Increased commuter housing and parking.	Housing	
13.07 I do not want to see more residential development as I am concerned about traffic and parking.	Housing	

TOPIC – DEVELOPMENT: 13 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
3.09. Integrate strong points such as Greenwoods to the Green into more of the continuous corridor. It needs flow from one building to another, where the architecture and feel are similar.	Develop	
3.11. Move the police station to Durant Ave. and get rid of the school bus storage.	Develop	
6.03. No industrial development downtown.	Develop	
7.16. Buy stores - Leave as is but restore building.	Develop	
8.04. Redevelopment of rundown buildings and vacant properties following guidelines for the village.	Develop	
8.10. Tear down 11 Durant Ave and build apartments.	Develop	
1.20. Create incentives for businesses to want to move into town. In turn create competition among business owners. Tax breaks to property owners to pass on to new and/or struggling businesses.	Develop	
3.10. Developing Verdi's Woodworking into a restaurant or civic center or performing arts.	Develop	
5.19. Expand existing village district into part of the TOD area possibly.	Develop	
8.11. Develop eastern edge of Greenwood Ave.	Develop	
10.12. Revamp old factory near old train station. Make it an antique co-op, an art co-op or small boutique stores/shops.	Develop	
6.04. Allow more flexibility in land use.	Develop	
12.12. Commercial development only. Conserve open space. Walkability. .	Develop	

TOPIC – LANDSCAPES: 7 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
7.06. Create streetscape.	Landscapes	
7.08. More trees	Landscapes	
7.10. Extend streetscaping to Dolan Plaza and opposite strip mall to camouflage parking lots and create pleasant link to Victorian row.	Landscapes	
7.11. Trees on Durant Ave and sidewalk improvement. Also down to Caraluzzi's.	Landscapes	
10.01. Re-tree the downtown with smaller tougher trees that can withstand climate change.	Landscapes	
1.19. Extend street scaping / sidewalk past Dolan Plaza on both sides and landscape the hill across from Opera House/Putnam House on the side of the Bethel Cycle parking lot.	Landscapes	
9.19. Street scape extended.	Landscapes	

CATEGORY – DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES, ART AND EVENTS, AND MARKETING

TOPIC – RETAIL, RESTAURANTS, AND OTHER BUSINESSES: 24 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
1.17. Brand Stores! LL Bean, Home Goods, Starbucks, GAP, Shoe Store, adult & child new clothing store.	Retail	Anchor
7.02. Trader Joe's or Fresh Market, a destination store to bring people from out of town.	Retail	Anchor
10.03. Get in a big magnet store like Old Navy where people can shop for clothes.	Retail	Anchor
12.08. Large retail stores for clothing store.	Retail	Anchor
13.01. Anchor store to attract people to downtown.	Retail	Anchor
4.06. More diverse establishments with shopping and performing arts.	Retail	Diversify
10.05. We have too many pizza places in town but there is not a Mexican restaurant. Would love to have art supplies available.	Retail	Diversify
10.14. More diversity. More restaurants and shops.	Retail	Diversify
7.04 Tax incentives should be offered, personal property tax waivers.	Retail	Incentives
10.04. Incentives perhaps to attract small business to the many available spaces on Greenwood Ave. Our primary street looks deserted.	Retail	Incentives
1.20 Create incentives for businesses to expand hours.	Retail	
8.01 Create and encourage more retail opportunities.	Retail	
13.12. Clothing store, picnic table, garbage cans. Option for a place to leash dog to enter a store?	Retail	
1.24. Bed & Breakfast and places for visitors to stay that are in keeping with local character.	Retail	
5.02. Offer counseling to potential business owners to help determine if their business plan can succeed. Too many new business open, have no customer base, and close quickly.	Retail	
5.15. Enhance what draws people to downtown and providing economic opportunity.	Retail	
5.18. Somehow attract more businesses to stay longer. We have a constant turnover in the downtown area.	Retail	
7.04. Fill in the empty store fronts with businesses, preferably selling goods that will attract buyers. Parking will need to be improved to facilitate this.	Retail	
9.05. Understand that services maybe realistic to downtown. Income of Bethel, different clientele than retail.	Retail	
8.08. The downtown needs more sustainable retail that keeps with the charming New England feel we currently have.	Retail	
1.03. More stores for men's and women's shoes.	Retail	
2.07. Beer Garden near downtown.	Retail	

COMMUNITY VOICES - OPPORTUNITIES

APPENDIX

4.07. Apparel shops for men, women (Talbots), children. Speciality shops- e.g. sports, gold	Retail
4.09. Health food store for downtown.	Retail
4.11. Encourage restaurants as a destination for fine eating or family eating.	Retail
6.06. Keep stores open later at night.	Retail
6.11. Industry out, fill up stores.	Retail
7.03. More Dr. Mike's out to the front of a building in downtown center.	Retail
7.14. Attract businesses that will bring Bethelites and others into Bethel.	Retail
13.04. Increased Retail.	Retail

TOPIC – ARTS AND EVENTS: 12 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
1.15 Outdoor sculptures in the park areas all along walking paths.	Art & Events	Arts
1.15. More art/music/theater in Bethel.	Art & Events	Arts
4.08. Live theatre performances.	Art & Events	Arts
1.15 “Music Nights” where people bring instruments and play together.	Art & Events	Arts
1.23. Highlight the strong ARTS - music, visual, etc. There is live music almost every night in Bethel but so few people know.	Art & Events	Arts
2.06. A weekly program on the green in front of town hall.	Art & Events	Arts
3.04. Need a real banner to announce events. Have great events and no way to advertise them. Banner in downtown, centralized marketing/recreation plan. People can't come if they don't know about events.	Art & Events	Events
10.13. Farmers market on Sundays. Food truck night, add to summer events.	Art & Events	Events
1.02. Major Unnamed Bethel Festival. Close the center of Bethel to traffic and use all the space to host a major festival/event.	Art & Events	Events
12.07. An arts venue.	Art & Events	Facilities
12.14. Cultural Center/Arts/Music/Performing Arts Center.	Art & Events	Facilities
12.05. Venue in downtown to attract people.	Art & Events	Facilities

TOPIC – MARKETING: 7 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
1.18. Make Bethel a destination for weekenders. Need downtown accommodations (we have the restaurants) “Come to Bethel for the Weekend”	Marketing	
1.01. Create a focus for Bethel. Bethel needs a theme, something that it is known for that will attract people to downtown -e.g. Hay-on-Wye = Used books	Marketing	
1.05. Give people a reason to come to downtown Bethel so they will shop and go to restaurants.	Marketing	
1.10. We need a creative, comprehensive P.R. campaign to encourage people to come and spend money downtown, otherwise, no businesses will thrive.	Marketing	
1.22. A PR campaign to celebrate Bethel's local entrepreneurship - different from Greenwich, Westport, New Canaan and Kent	Marketing	
8.01. Beautiful town. Feature our town in local newspapers and Shelter magazine.	Marketing	
12.11. Something unique to draw people to Bethel.	Marketing	

CATEGORY – TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

TOPIC – TRANSPORTATION: 20 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
4.05. Better traffic flow with parking.	Transport	Flow
4.14. Make better traffic flow.	Transport	Flow
9.09 Make Greenwood drive only, no street parking.	Transport	Flow
1.21. Bus station - list of businesses and direction to access (a directory at station). Trolley around town to access businesses. Collaboration between elected officials, business owners, and property owners.	Transport	Public
3.02. Bethel needs better public transportation. More buses. Taxis that are safe and can transport a disabled veteran and his wheel chair.	Transport	Public
1.12. Trolley car to go around town.	Transport	Public
1.13. Bus shelters.	Transport	Public
6.12. Have a downtown trolley and get as much parking off streets and into lots as possible. Charge for the parking as needed but make the trolley hop on, hop off and free.	Transport	Public
8.12. Capitalize on our beautiful train station, using it as a means for accessibility and a destination point.	Transport	Train
9.10. Electrify RR for a quicker/easier ride. Expand the schedule to NYC.	Transport	Train
9.17. Electrification of Metro North.	Transport	Train
3.13. Creative ideas for rush hour traffic congestion.	Transport	
4.02. Open up town hall parking lot to drive thru.	Transport	
4.10. Fix the roads.	Transport	
4.12. Fix roads.	Transport	
9.08. Grand/Durant connection.	Transport	
10.07. Improve access in/out of Dolan Plaza.	Transport	
13.02. Traffic relief for Greenwood Ave.	Transport	
1.04. Signage for direction.	Transport	
5.07. Greenwood Ave. car free from Caraluzzi's to Library and Depot Place including Barnum Square (add fountain). East bound traffic via south street. West bound traffic via main street & school street. Parking south side of school street.	Transport	

TOPIC – PARKING: 20 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
5.05. Parking on School Street.	Parking	School Street
5.17. Reconfigure existing parking areas in downtown. Prime example is on School St facing Municipal Center. Opposite side of street could be green space to connect to muni center lawn.	Parking	School Street
12.06. Unified and level parking on School Street.	Parking	School Street
12.04. Limit street parking. Get off street parking. We sell Bethel cheap.	Parking	
1.07. Need more downtown parking.	Parking	
5.14. More parking.	Parking	
6.05. Improve parking/reduce traffic (trucks) down Greenwood Ave.	Parking	
6.07. Better parking.	Parking	
9.11. More parking.	Parking	

COMMUNITY VOICES - OPPORTUNITIES

APPENDIX

9.15. Downtown parking.	Parking
10.06. Remove parking on Greenwood.	Parking
12.01. Eliminate dangerous parking from St. Thomas Church to Barnum Square.	Parking
12.03. Parking and new sidewalk.	Parking
12.15. Parking and addressing traffic issues.	Parking
3.15. Connect the parking lots and put up signs showing where they are.	Parking
4.01. Put up parking lot signs.	Parking
13.09. Better signage and sight lines to make downtown easier and safer to navigate. Better signage for off street parking. Removal of selected parallel spots that hide cross walks.	Parking
2.02. Expand train station parking.	Parking
3.18. Tie parking lots together. Town could do easement and accepting liability.	Parking
6.09. Development of the upper end of Maine Street, primarily parking, to improve access to museum, historic sites and church.	Parking

CATEGORY – GOVERNMENT

TOPIC – GOVERNMENT: 13 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
7.12. Sell water to Danbury in return for more sewer capacity.	Govern	Infrastruct
12.09. New update infrastructure.	Govern	Infrastruct
3.08. Maintenance. Maintenance of sidewalks in winter. renovating/up dating blighted properties.	Govern	Maintenance
3.08. Cleaning up trash, more trash cans/recycling bins.	Govern	Maintenance
5.03. Recycling receptacles next to garbage receptacles in downtown area. Slot for paper and slot of plastics/glass.	Govern	Maintenance
3.03. Enforce ordinances. The sidewalk maintenance in Bethel in winter is abysmal, ice & snow everywhere. Very dangerous.	Govern	Maintenance
3.06. Enforce blight ordinance. Burned house on Blackman is an eyesore. Understand it is historic but it has been too long and sets a precedence.	Govern	Regulations
3.08. Enforcing existing ordinances.	Govern	Regulations
3.12. Condemn and teardown abandoned buildings.	Govern	Regulations
7.18. Create enforceable sign regulations.	Govern	Regulations
4.04. Lower taxes for seniors. Including those already offered.	Govern	Taxes
5.06. Lower taxes on commercial property so landlords can charge lower rents.	Govern	Taxes
1.11. Town leaders to use our tax dollars to better maintain, clean, trim, etc the downtown area.	Govern	Taxes

TOPIC – ENVIRONMENT: 2 IDEAS

Ideas	Topic	Sub-topic
3.19. Check wetlands. 100 year flood plain.	Environ	
2.03. Solar-powered charging stations.	Environ	

EXIT SURVEY RESULTS

Were you comfortable working in tonight's small group?	Percent
Yes	99%
No	1%
Total	
Were you exposed to new ideas and concerns?	Percent
Yes	86%
No	14%
Total	
Was the workshop...	Percent
Too long	3%
Too short	1%
About right	96%
Total	
Will you continue participate in the vision process?	Percent
Yes	100%
No	0%
Total	
You are...	Percent
Female	55%
Male	45%
Total	
What is your age?	Percent
14 years and under	0%
15-19 years	0%
20-24 years	0%
25-34 years	0%
35-44 years	19%
45-54 years	27%
55-64 years	19%
65-74 years	24%
75 years or older	11%
Total	
What is your highest level of education?	Percent
Less than high school diploma	0%
High school diploma	9%
Some college (no degree)	11%
College graduate (Associate or Bachelor's Degree)	41%
.Masters Degree or Ph.D	39%
Total	
Where do you live?	Percent
In Bethel	94%
Outside of Bethel	6%
Total	

If you live outside of Bethel, where do you live?	
Newtown, New Fairfield, New Milford, Hickcock Avenue.	
How long have you been living in Bethel?	Percent
0-4 years	2%
5-9 years	11%
10-19 years	35%
20-29 years	13%
30-39 years	19%
40-49 years	16%
50 years or more	3%
Not Applicable	0
Total	
Do you work in Bethel?	Percent
yes	37%
no	35%
Retired	28%
total	
Do you own a business in Bethel?	Percent
yes	16%
no	84%
total	
Annual Household Income	Percent
Less than \$20,000	2%
\$20,000 to \$39,000	8%
\$40,000 to \$59,999	9%
\$60,000 to \$79,999	15%
\$80,000 to \$99,999	11%
\$100,000 or more	55%
Total	



So, what's next?

Community Choices

October 29, 2015

Presentation & Discussion: 6:30 to 8:30 PM.

Meeting Location: General Purpose Room, Clifford J. Hurgin
Municipal Center, 1 School Street, Bethel.

Community Choices is the second public meeting of BETHEL FORWARD. You will review findings from the first meeting and evaluate how they measure up against current land use and economic conditions. Working in small groups, you will refine and prioritize a shared vision of downtown Bethel that will become the foundation of the BETHEL FORWARD plan.

For more information visit: www.bethel-ct.gov

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES

OVERVIEW

The Community Choices workshop took place on October 29, 2015. It was the second public meeting of the Bethel Forward community engagement process.

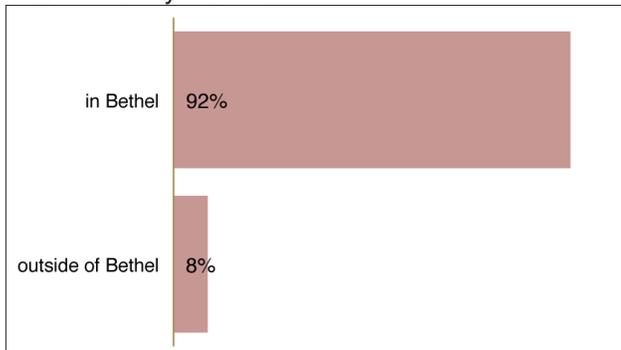
Community Choices consisted of presentations followed by electronic keypad polling of participants. Presentations included:

- Report on the Community Voices workshop
- Report on economic findings
- Land use observations
- Overview of infrastructure findings

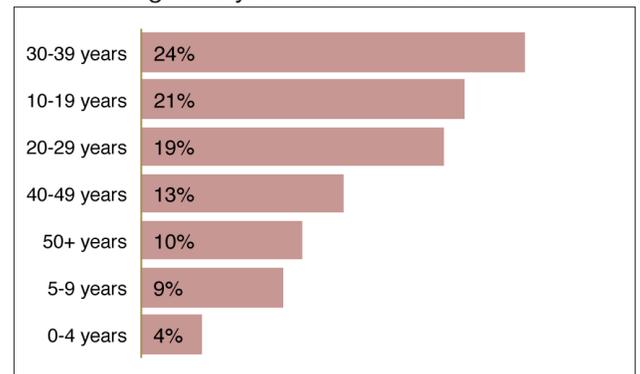
This report includes summaries of the interactive sessions. A total of 82 participants were polled. Raw data from this activity is available on line at: <http://www.bethel-ct.gov/content/117/8612/11809.aspx>.

A. PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

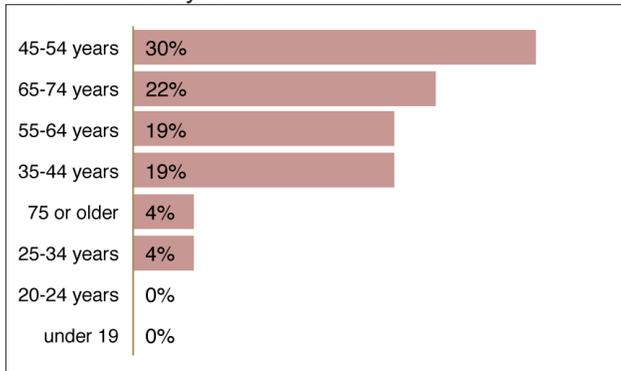
1. Where do you live?



3. How long have you lived in this area?



2. How old are you?

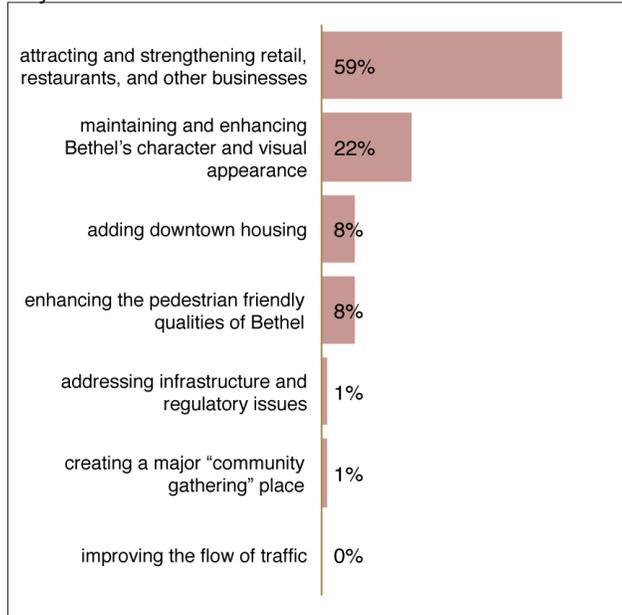


COMMUNITY CHOICES

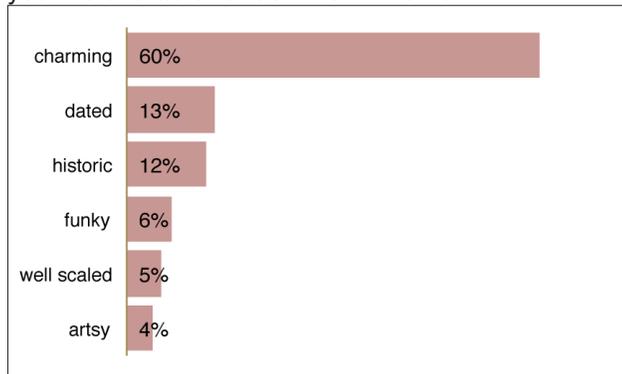
APPENDIX

B. COMMUNITY VOICES PRIORITIES

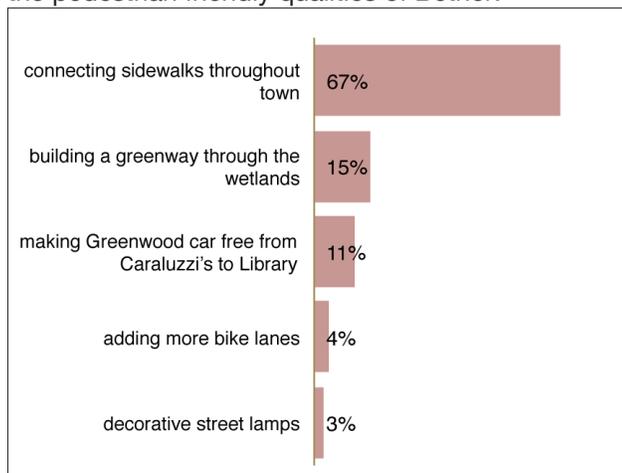
4. Which of the following goals is more important to you?



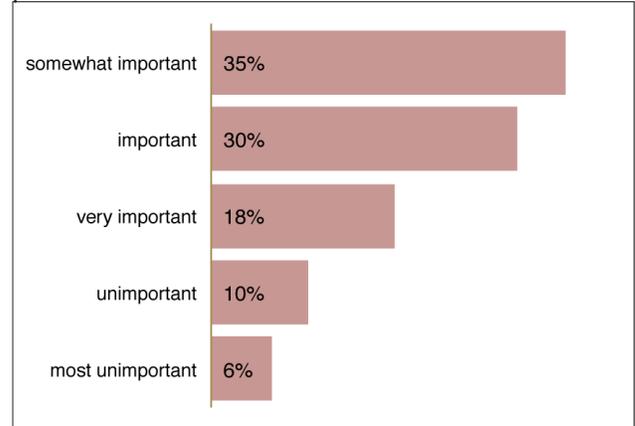
5. Which of the following words best describes for you the character of downtown Bethel?



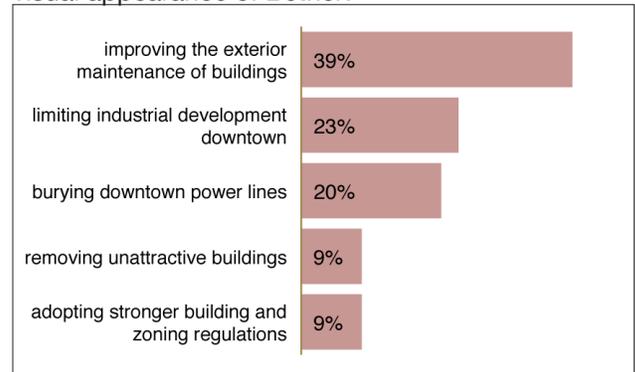
6. Which of the following steps would most enhance the pedestrian friendly qualities of Bethel?



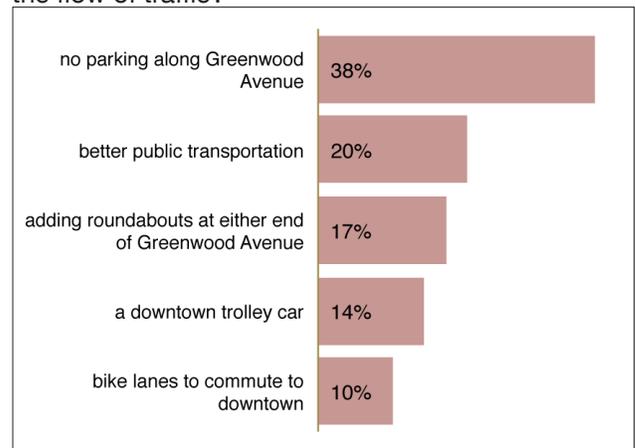
7. How important it is to create a major gathering place in downtown Bethel?



8. Which of these actions will better enhance the visual appearance of Bethel?

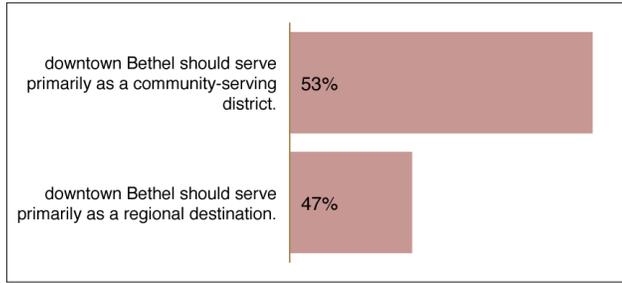


9. Which of the following items would most improve the flow of traffic?

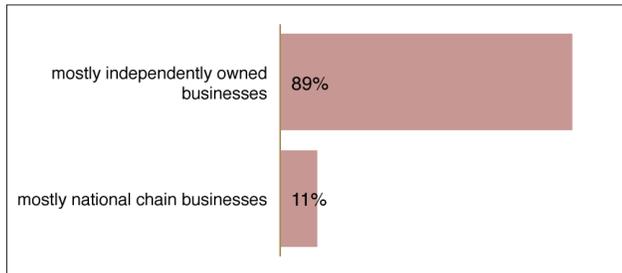


C. REPORT ON ECONOMIC FINDINGS

10. Which of these two options would you prefer?



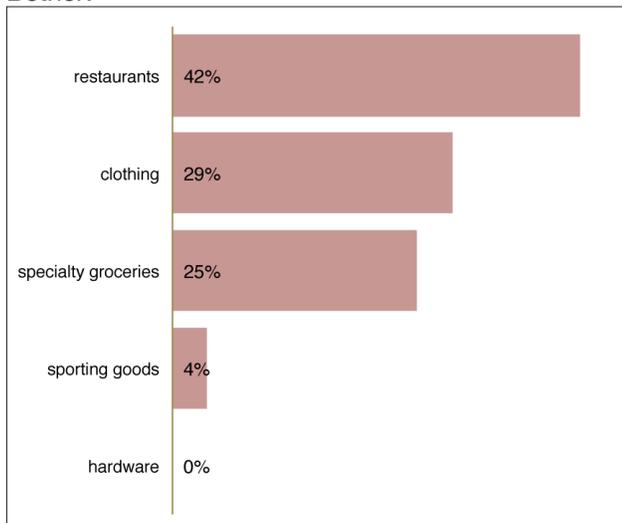
11. Would you prefer downtown Bethel to have more independently owned businesses or national chain businesses?



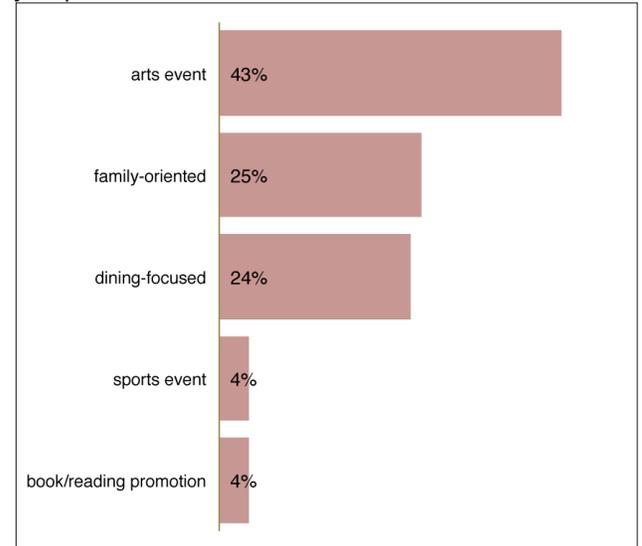
12. Which would be the better choice for the development of new restaurants and entertainment?



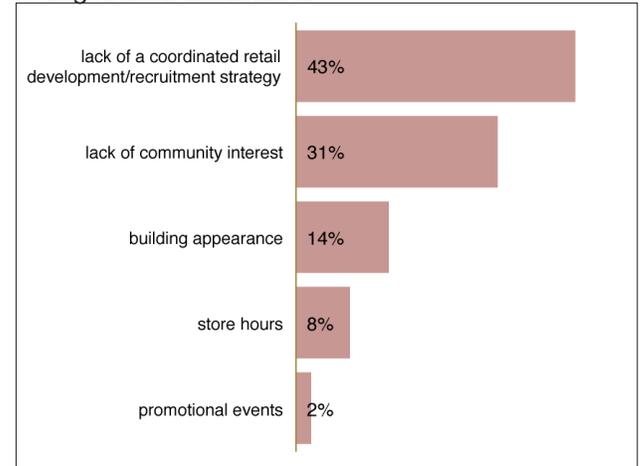
13. Which of the following types of retail businesses would you most like to see added to downtown Bethel?



14. What type of new festival or special event would you prefer downtown?



15. Of these issues, which is the biggest problem facing downtown Bethel?

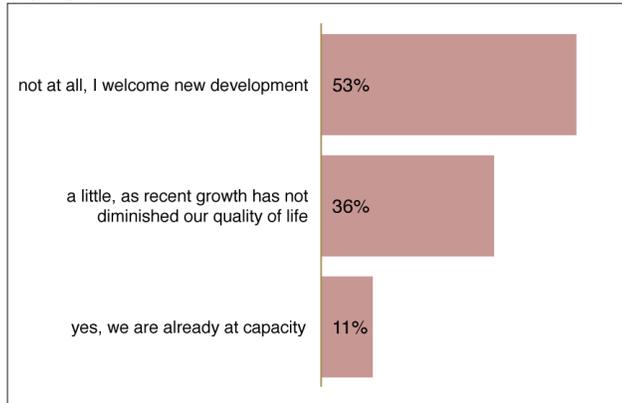


COMMUNITY CHOICES

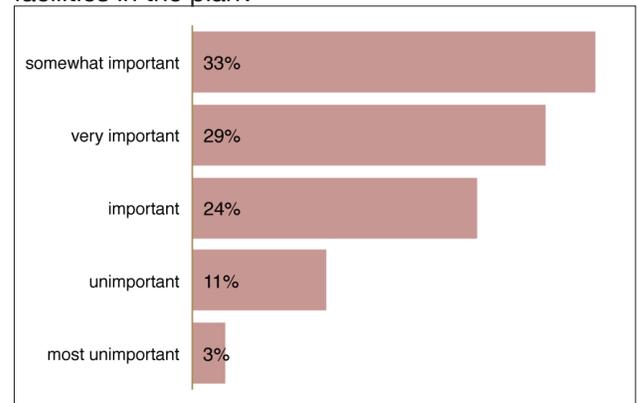
APPENDIX

D. LAND USE OBSERVATIONS

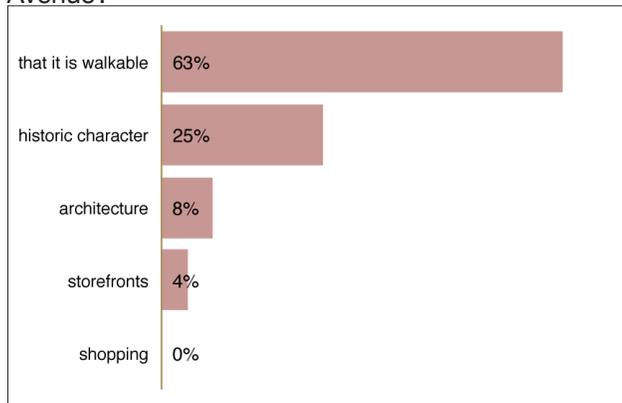
16. Do you fear additional growth or development in Bethel?



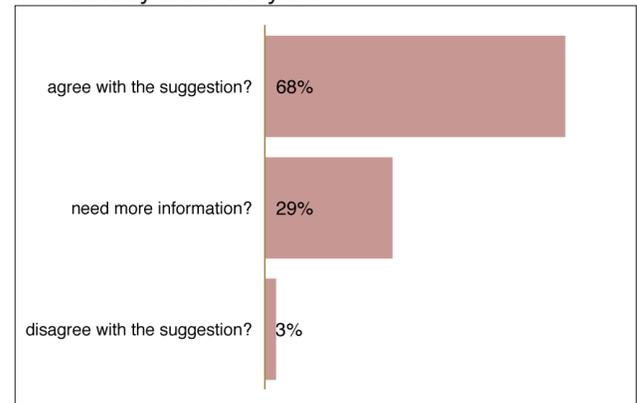
19. How important it is to introduce makerspace facilities in the plan?



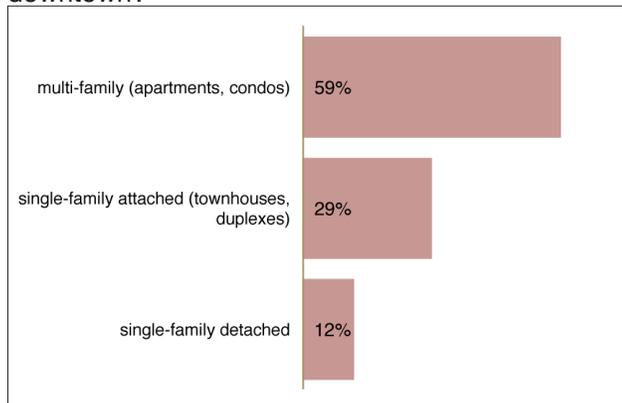
17. What do you like most about Greenwood Avenue?



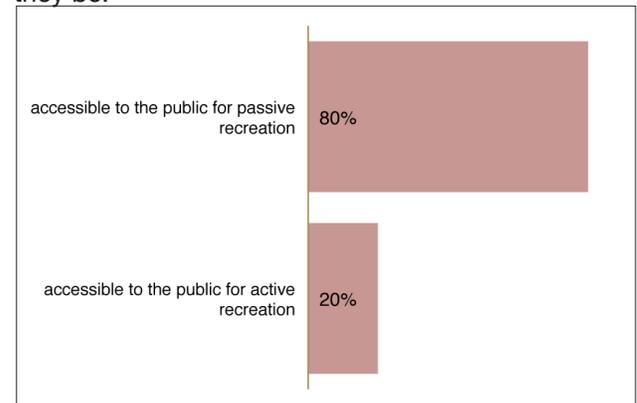
20. Your ideas suggested that the plan should preserve as a public amenity the extensive wetlands in the study area. Do you:



18. What type of housing is most needed in downtown?

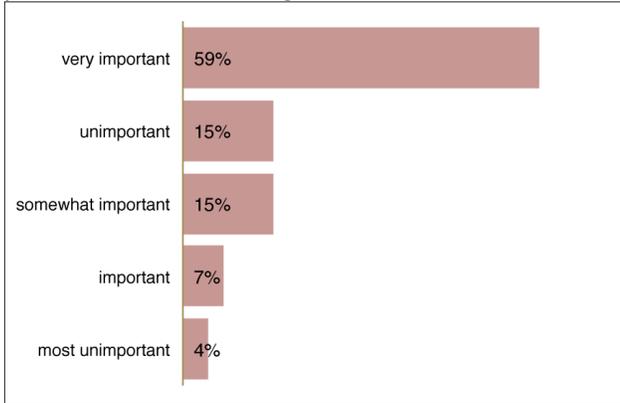


21. If we were to make the wetland public should they be:

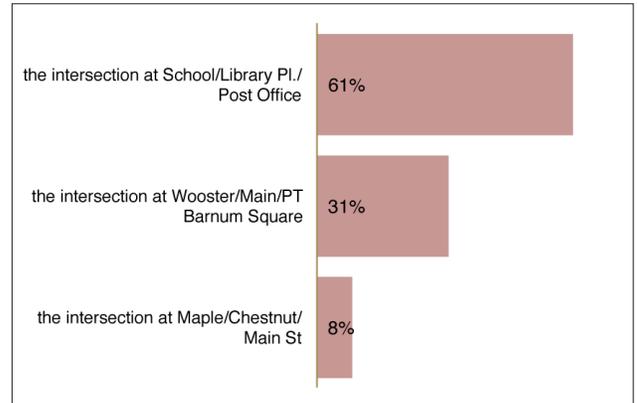


E. OVERVIEW OF INFRASTRUCTURE FINDINGS

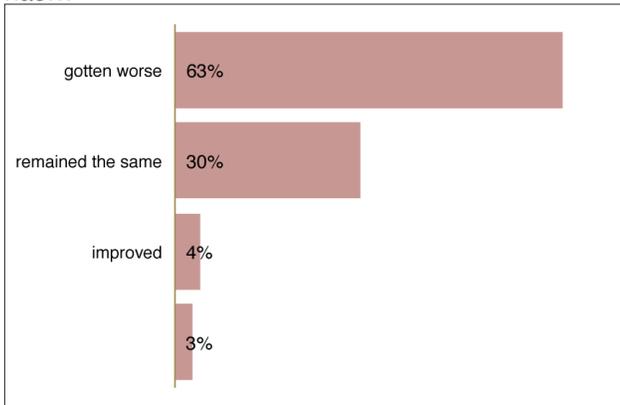
22. How important is it to connect the east and west sides of the tracks AT or near the train station with a pedestrian/bike crossing?



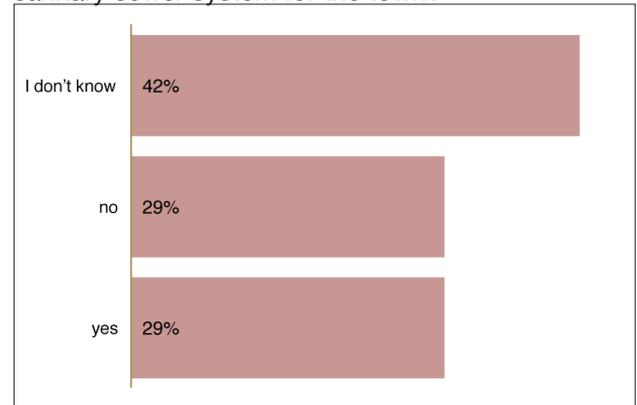
25. Which is the most problematic of the following downtown intersections not on Greenwood Avenue?



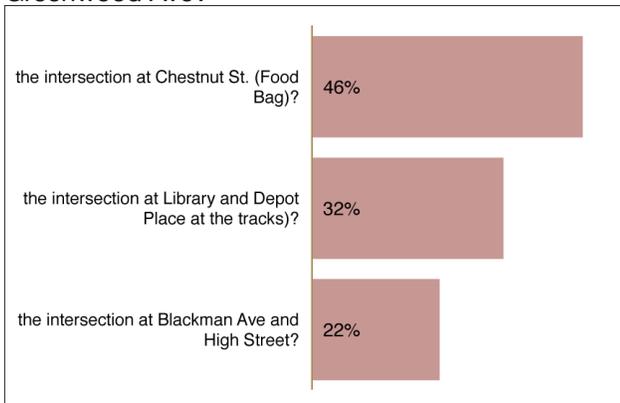
23. In the past five years, traffic in the town center has...



26. Do you feel development is limited by the sanitary sewer system for the town?



24. Which is the most problematic intersection on Greenwood Ave?





interactive collaborative vision design hands-on informed open to the public **CHARRETTE** so, let's do it! help shape the future of downtown creative

The Bethel Charrette is a four-day long work session where planners, designers, architects and the public work together to take the public's ideas and develop illustrations and architectural designs that will be used to define the vision and plan for downtown Bethel.

The Charrette is open to the public. Residents are encouraged to participate in the development of the plan by dropping in and attending two scheduled presentations the week of November 16th.

Drop-ins: 10 AM to 6 PM Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday

Public Meetings: Tuesday, November 17
and Thursday, November 19 at 7 PM

Where: General Purpose Room, Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center, 1 School Street, Bethel

For a more comprehensive schedule visit: www.bethel-ct.gov



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Partners

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