

Of the 2025 people who took BethelSurvey.com, 875 also spent extra time writing a final comment about issues in Bethel which the survey did not address, or did not cover adequately. These are strong opinions and we thank you for sharing them.

*For ease of use we are presenting the final comments by topic. This group includes comments about **Economic Development**. Comments are directed at the Chamber of Commerce, the town's Economic Development Commission, retail merchants, and local industries. Rather than try to extract sections, we are listing the entire comment from each person who had something to say about these issues, though their comment may in fact address several topics.*

Typing and spelling errors have not been corrected - the comments are presented as written. The number represents the respondent number and is left here for ease of discussing the comments. The number is not linked to any personal information.

20 My main concern is with the Bethel chamber of commerce, they don't do enough to help promote shopping downtown. A meeting of members once in a while would be helpful, and I'm not just talking about some get-togethers where I have to pay to go and eat. I want a regular meeting, there may be some members out there that may have good ideas as to getting more shoppers downtown and to promote downtown. Also we need to have a REAL VOTE to elect the board members. But we will never know unless we have a meeting

31 I think the train station is sort of out of the way and hidden. Maybe from Greenwood to the train station ought to be properly sidewalked and lit with the same lamp posts as the rest of downtown (and School Street, as well). Someone needs to be sure Bethel is represented in state-wide publications, like Connecticut Magazine and Fairfield County magazines. It seems southern Fairfield gets the lion's share of all news and attention, while Danbury and Bethel consistently are ignored. It may be because no one from our area is constantly sending in updates and information about what is going on up here.

35 Do something to encourage the retail shops on Greenwood, it's a shame so many come and go so quickly - and shop owners (candy store) that park in front of their shop taking up one of the only spots on the street will never get my business.

45 I wish we had more corporate businesses to help with the tax relief. We must make education come first in this community. We need to have the high school start right away. I think the our selectman, and the BOF should spend a day in the high school when it's in session to see the conditions our children have to face day after day. The community voted to renovate the HS so let's not let politics get in the way for our children's sake please!!!!

49 My family loves Bethel but we can see it is progressively becoming more unaffordable. It appears that we are competing aesthetically with towns like Westport and Redding which eventually will price older residents right out of their home and town that they planted their roots and memories in. Please be sympathetic to the baby boomers who have helped build this town to what it is today and slow down. Rome wasn't built in a day. I am no longer a volunteer in Bethel, however, I was extremely active as a volunteer from 1978 to 1993. The taxes are getting out of hand, the roads are a

mess and teachers are getting a 5-6% raise when all I got was a 2% raise. This, in addition to the oil prices is very disconcerting.

57 The town selectman need to get out and find what people/businesses want. Be pro-active and go see people and ask "how's it going?" Regarding the town's budgeting process. The Finance Board should meet with the Board of Ed prior to the budget to understand/advise where the money will be spent on education. They need to cooperate then support the budgeting process unitedly. Though the BAC has a "purpose" they disservice themselves by stating "No, Too High" without any constructive suggestions. If they feel the budget is too high then suggest where the "fat" can be trimmed. Their negative stance without any REAL alternative suggestions makes them look foolish to many! They haven't expressed an opinion in a positive way only "say NO". This is a great town with lots of "roots" and family history. I would like it to see that part remain but to support responsible economic growth to help offset increasing financial needs of the town.

66 We need to do something about the negativity in the press. Unfortunately those who would tear down our wonderful town have the loudest voice. What a shame! Let's remember that what we have here in Bethel is a gem - New England charm, wonderful teachers, friendly business owners, and great people. We need to have leaders that take charge and get things done. The public loses faith when projects are approved and not completed in a timely manner - costs and indignation rise exponentially. Let's do the right thing by our town and our children.

82 Land values in Bethel will continue to rise because of its proximity to jobs in lower Fairfield County, Westchester, and NYC. Commuting from Bethel to these destinations is no longer unusual, especially when people can occasionally telecommute. The demographics of the town are changing upward, and the powers that be need to recognize this and adapt to it. The heyday of Good Old Boy politics and anti-tax zealots is ending. Bethel's newer residents are moving here because of the town's charm, yes, but they also want property values to rise -- even if they plan to retire here. After all, don't you want to have equity to live on or pass along to your heirs? After settling in, they will demand better services, better schools, roads that get paved frequently, recreational opportunities, and sophisticated shopping and restaurants. If Bethel recognizes this trend and caters to it, the town will prosper. Take steps now to prevent the worst aspects of this phenomena. For example, tear downs of historic homes are a small part of the Bethel landscape right now, but in 10 years, tear downs in the downtown will be rampant unless controls are put in place now. Another example, zone out unattractive, property devaluing industrial plots and encourage mixed high-end housing and retail on some of these sites. Encourage the town's Economic Development Commission to stop thinking about industrial sheds and heavy equipment manufacturing (all dead and dying industries, in general) and think more about attracting high-tech corporate offices.

95 There was a question in this survey that touched on the subject of what we would like to see in our town and it drives me nuts to think that there were plans to put in a public pool in our town and it never got done. I do not know the specifics of why it never happened, I just really cannot figure out why it didn't happen. This is something that we could put in our town that would generate income unlike some of the other things that we have around town that just cost the tax payers money. Also why can we not find a place for a real recreational center. I think the town really needs to spend some time and look at our surrounding towns to see how they do it and I bet that these facilities are paying for themselves. And the sad thing is that many Bethel residents are going to other towns to use these facilities. So why can we not come up with something. I think one of the biggest things that our towns top people should be doing is thinking about what kind services they can bring to the public, and yes they may cost money to build but in the long run it will benefit everyone and will not cost the public a thing. What Bethel does not have is enough things that bring in revenue. Our commission has to become more creative instead of things just running the way they always do and that seems to be the way this town runs. I have now lived in Bethel for over 6 years and have heard nothing about a town pool. Why? Go to Ridgefield and see how they built a beautiful recreation facility. Why can't we. I

could go on and on. But in the end I love living in Bethel but there is just so much more that we can do.

108 This is a step in the right direction. From a business point of view for Bethel we need to come up with a better reason for people to come into our downtown area. I do not see why we do not close Greenwood Ave from the Green to The light at the library once a month to have a street festival- Parties could vary from Chili Cookoff's to Italian festivals etc. The key is to get people down here, and the rest will take care of itself. If you don't sell yourself, you won't sell anything. I am more than willing to participate in a discussion of possible events, or ways to improve our economic outlook here in Bethel. It's bad, and getting worse. To the point where we are considering when our lease is up relocating to another town. I like to think that our candy store on Greenwood adds something to that Small "old fashioned" town feel that we like, but it's not personal, just business. ~Thanks for listening .

111 LACK OF RECYCLING!! the town should provide. polarization of political parties in town, Tax watch dog group that seems scandalous rather than constructive, people in town not willing to change or grow as society does, boe that seems to fight with each other rather than help the children. MORE income to the town from outside visitors... make Bethel appealing place for others to spend money... Maybe a golf course

116 BETHEL needs to think outside of the box when it comes to providing sports and arts events. The activities that are provided are very narrow-minded and few. When the local coffee house is the basic, and pretty much only, form of entertainment, something needs to be done. A community-minded arts commission is needed.

124 Bethel is a charming town, unique because it has a downtown. We need to make choices that support its charm and keep it from becoming a mini-Danbury. It could be like Cooperstown, NY.

146 I'd like to see something done about the noise pollution in downtown Bethel. All too often cars drive down the streets with radios blaring...it would be great to have an ordinance. I'm very concerned about the new construction of a new CVS being built on Library Place. I would have preferred to see some kind of park built there, with benches, trees, etc. What business will go into the old CVS location? I fear Bethel is being turned into a mini-strip mall community and will lose its small town flavor. We desperately need to preserve the green and open spaces, to allow for more areas where residents can relax and visit around town. We do NOT need to keep paving over so many areas in our community.

147 Please keep Bethel a small town with small town charm. Don't get caught up in all the big store development.

157 Bethel, and the whole state, really needs a more balanced approach to development. I do not agree with suburban sprawl, with the corporate social engineering of the new urbanism, or with the exclusivity and unsustainability of gentrified boutique economies. We need to build real mixed use, multi ownership communities, in small chunks, like how things were planned before WWII, focusing on town centers and access to transportation. Bethel is fortunate to have both, and should build upon them. Many towns in CT have neither.

161 This survey is a great initiative. I think the town of Bethel has a lot of potential and I hope this survey helps to take action on capitalizing on that potential. If Bethel wants to attract residents with greater discretionary income, higher education, and involvement in the community then it must invest in the High School Project now...there's too much competition with neighboring towns to not invest in this project.

176 Overall, I have loved living in Bethel for my whole life. However, in the last ten or so years, I can't be happy with the way the town has "given the town away to the developers who are filling their pockets with high profits while we, the citizens of Bethel are paying higher and higher taxes". The roads are deplorable with pot holes all over town.

180 Bethel is not doing enough to preserve open space. It seems that every other week, another tract of land is leveled to put up condos or a subdivision. This town does not need more residential development. It increases the burden on school and town services, drives up taxes, and destroys what little natural beauty is left in this town. We need to toughen our zoning regulations and not roll over every time Toll Brothers comes knocking. We also need to get proactive about acquiring and preserving undeveloped land.

187 The Bethel town roads need attention! Many of the roads should be repaved. Sand and leaves should be removed from the streets by street cleaners after each season ends and not left to clog street drains. The town definitely needs a town pool. I would like to see better stores in the downtown. The downtown Bethel Post Office is the slowest in the area. We need to build a bigger post office or somehow add more windows or staff. The new First Selectman needs to take a stand on the budget and be more proactive.

205 Encourage some business owners on Greenwood to improve property appearance and thereby elevate the appearance of entire community.

238 A lot of money is being put into the town's parks and a lot of work is being done, but there are some things that can and should be improved on. Many people go to Meckauer and Parloa park every day, but the equipment there needs to be improved. Children play on inadequate swings and slides. Many people play basketball at these parks. Any day you will see at least 20 people trying to fit on these small courts. At Meckauer park the court is too small to play a normal game of five on five basketball, and the courts don't have the necessary lines for free throws and three point shots. Also, while playing at these parks get hungry and thirsty, but there is no where to get something to eat or drink. Personally, I would turn the empty building next to the bathrooms into a snack stand, or at the very least put vending machines at the park. A snack shed could make money for the town and create job opportunities for people in Bethel.

239 The residential property taxes in Bethel can not continue to increase. We need to find alternative sources to fund future town projects. Families and older people will not be able to afford houses in Bethel if this continues. This is why the budget for the school was difficult to pass.

243 instead of building 300,000 condos...build condos for low income renters..there are many in Bethel...keep the rents low and accept housing vouchers...i love Bethel and the schools..but low income people need a break and can't afford 300,00

244 Can you influence Metro North to fix the train cars? Why does our line have the old cars with the smelly bathrooms and no working a/c? It is truly vile to ride in them on some days.

258 I think there's too much focus on the library and the town could benefit from a pool, sprinkler park, skating area, golf course. I also think that local businesses would attract more people if they were more friendly. I've walked into downtown shops several times and it wasn't welcoming at all, and then I hear fuss that we should support local businesses. Owners have a responsibility to make people want to come to their shops. It's also a big turn off and unprofessional for owners to be smoking in front of or inside their businesses.

275 Think ahead: as Bethel gets built out, what is it going to do with a community no longer growing? How can the downtown be made more walkable? Should Stony Hill be treated as if on a separate planet?

281 People need to be more informed about things going on in town such as events and budgets there is not a lot of communication between the town officials and the community. More business need to be attracted to the town to help with the tax base.

305 More needs to be done for the business owner in this town. I own a manufacturing company and we're basically invisible to the local Bethel government. We have 50 million dollars in improvements planned and I'm not sure Bethel will be the place we stay. I've lived here for 20 years this year. The local government don't have a clue. Shame, Bethel has a lot of potential.

310 I have lived in Bethel as a child and have recently moved back to town. I would like to see increased promotion of local small businesses, encouraging new residents to shop in Bethel, teach them that supporting local businesses in Bethel supports and improves the town. Getting people to use downtown and Stony Hill instead of going straight to the mall out of habit takes some educating and advocating on behalf of our businesses. In addition, the "boutique" mentality of some local businesses may work for tourists, but pushes townpeople to shop at more reasonably priced stores outside of town. I will gladly pay more at a locally owned business, but I cant afford to pay 2-3 times as much!

311 Commercial trucking through a primarily residential area within close proximity to a park catering to children. Is anything planned to re-route and boost this potentially appealing real estate to interested parties hoping to relocate to the Bethel area?

315 too many people in this town are worried about the wrong things, like keeping the town a "quaint new england village" at the expense of progress. I have been here 3 years, and will be leaving in one month, and still can't find all the stores I need, like a place to find shoes which fit my feet, and other things which I want and need. The town is also way to political, as the BAC and Matt Paulsen who seem to have it out for the Education System. People don't seem to care about the children of Bethel. I am glad to be leaving this highly political small town. I have lived in 4 major areas in the country and never encountered such politics as this town. I really liked the school system, until last year when so much had to be cut from the budget. Now, it is barely hanging on in my opinion. I do hope things can change, but rather doubt it.

338 I think more needs to be done in this town for the middle class and lower. The town is becoming to yuppyish and is distracting from the old town charm. Build up the downtown and charge for parking.

342 I think that Bethel has a big opportunity to further develop the downtown area to incorporate additional businesses including restaurants, bars and shops. While most of the downtown area is very appealing, there are quite a few buildings that need work - starting with the property that now houses the Free Masons (across from the Food Bag gas station) and going right through the opposite end of 302. Bethel also needs more recreation options for adults - from outdoor activities during the summer to activities for the winter, to nightlife. Community events/fundraisers would also be a great addition.

344 I think it is important that downtown Bethel (Greenwood Avenue) remain the site of locally owned and operated businesses so that the small-town character is preserved. the Route 6 corridor, because of its proximity to Route 84, can handle big box franchises without infecting downtown.

Creative zoning regulations could preserve downtown while encouraging corridor development. I also think that preservation of open space is critical in an area where there is very little left.

345 I think it is very important to bring in new tax revenue to take the burden off us home owners. It is causing many to consider living elsewhere or making it difficult for those to remain. I don't think Clark Industrial Park is being used to its capacity and needs to be developed more. We need to get more of the population out to vote..it saddens me to see more people voting for American Idol than in local or national elections. I love living in Bethel, the small town everyone dreams of but change should not compromise quality of life to benefit a company looking to make high profits.

346 Litter. Fines need to be enforced. Sound ordinance for loud music from vehicles needs to be enforced. Speeding needs to be dealt with more firmly. STOP DEVELOPING!!! This town is packed full. Preserve Bethel. Cheap labor= cheap housing= decline in property values and less desire to live in this town, which was once gorgeous!

349 Let me begin by saying Kudos to the Library for hosting this survey. I have said at more town meetings how the town should begin to do this on its' website instead of splitting the budget. They tell me that it can't be done, yet here the Library is able to do it. I think our town is positioning itself for future years of severe economic trouble. Current leaders are trying to define Bethel as a "retirement community," if it continues to do this all development in Bethel will stop. Retirees do not; have never developed a small New England town. A New England town's model is built, developed and sustained on bringing young families in who are not on fixed incomes into town. A fixed income populace can not develop Bethel into a "charming small town," nor will it be able to support its current infrastructure. We need to rethink this retirement path we have chosen. Look at what needs to be developed in the next five years, because I can assure you if the town government would take the time to do tax projections on a "retirement community base," it will find it will not have the tax revenues even to maintain the current infrastructure. I asked why are they putting in 26 and 264 "retirement units." Their answer was because these types of units don't burden the school system. Once again they are only looking at one side of the equation. A growth in school system means young families with money. Yes, bigger schools but more money in tax revenues to pay for those schools and other town development.

352 stop over developing the downtown area. leave it small town, quaint and cute. Cut down on overpaid and underworked town employees. They even hang out at the coffee shop while working. it is not a good thing for this town as most people see what i see.

353 Stop parking on both sides of the road on Greenwood avenue by Bethel Food Market. Start a smart development of Route 6, sooner than later to gain further tax revenue, and help decrease the burden of our tax payers, get ride of negative naysayers in town politics do not allow them to hold "court" at town meetings and public sessions. Start selling the Town of Bethel as to its positive attributes, put a more favorable perception in Bethelites and out of towners eyes. Let sell why someone would want to live here, work here, shop here, visit here. Let's get a very functional website for the town, where we can get forms, information, let's pay for a webmaster. Let's all remember change is good when done right, taxes happen and increase when done for the right reasons, and education is one of them. The elected officials needs to set a 5 Year plan for this Bethel inclusive of growing our town, fixing our buildings, developing Route 6.

365 Well, after taking the survey, I see the town of Bethel has not changed in anyway with the new government officials. They are more interested in the amount of money their citizens make, as indicated by all the personal monetary questions on income, credit cards, types of cars driven etc... so that they can gauge the tax increase for next year. My answer is this: freeze the tax increases, check all your budgets prior to year end to see where there is unused money and cut back on the budgets.

By checking before the year end closing date I'm sure you'll find the extra money! Do an internal audit without warning and I'm sure you'll be surprised at the funds you'll find. Additionally, and just as important, Bethel needs to stop the overdevelopment of it's land before it destroys the small town charm. Terre Haute needs to be preserved AS IS - no golf course and no "harvesting." Make it passive recreational with trails for all. Likewise, Bethel needs to stop the overdevelopment by outside construction firms/developers, such as Ovenrock partners, from creating more urban sprawl. Reservoir Street and it's surrounding neighborhoods do not need any more traffic thru them. Similiar projects throughout Bethel are taxing (literally) the people, the infrastructure and supply system of Bethel. Causing power fluctuations, water main breaks, flooding, traffic concerns and stressing all departments at the increased demands. Furthermore, The town swimming pool and golf courses should NEVER have be in this survey. They should NEVER have been brought up! Both were shot down for various reasons by the citizens of Bethel -why are they still here? Because the town is lead by a select group of cronies who continue to beat a dead horse. The town spoke out numerous times against both projects, was anyone listening to them? Let me refresh your memory the answer was a resounding: NO WE DON'T WANT THEM. The Library project was just a precursor to the horrendous mismanagement of the Bethel High School project. The library is oversized and underutilized. The High School is heading in the same direction. Stop where you are, look at what can be cut in the new addition and renovated in the old building. Most importantly, keep within the approved amount of bonding/loans that the citizens original approved - do not request more money, the town citizens can not afford anymore.

372 I avoid town due to traffic and the crazy drivers running stop signs, lights and speeding. I am not thrilled with any of the food establishments in town and only frequent Tonellis.

394 I would like more shopping stores festivals parties raffles contests in bethel

395 Land conservation is the most important thing!. Since we dont have the 2 or 1 acre zonings to preserve values i think it might be smart to keep the town pristine . Our mill rate has gone up steadily while other towns are lower Fairfield is 19 and such we dont have the high value of those towns per household but we are not going to get that from stores, large condos unless your improve services like fire and police.

405 Bethel is a lovely little town with great potential. We have to conserve ALL of the historical properties/Landmarks in Bethel!!!- Keep the town center manicured/ clean and freshly painted with New England colors. Lets bring in more high end shops to attract people to the town center. Town concerts would be a delight. Bethel needs a historical museum and a quaint New England Inn/ B&B to attract traveling vistors.

412 I find the shopping in the downtown area does not give me what I'm looking for. There is not enough variety. The quality is not high enough. Regarding the library. I do not like the "feel" of it. It does not feel warm or inviting. The employees there are also cold and disorganized. I wish it had better selection too. I used the library regularly in my former town, but I am not drawn to Bethel Library at all -- in fact, I'm turned off by its coldness. I wish it was more inviting to children too. It looks like a quaint place on the outside, but the inside falls short significantly.

429 I feel that town government should develop a long term plan that supports the growth of the town which encourages families to WANT to move into Bethel. Hence, increasing property values.

430 Some of the questions didn't seem relevant to the town of Bethel. If you want to improve things about the town, why ask about credit cards? Why didn't you ask how we can help to market the town of Bethel to attract businesses and the like to help impact aout tax base? Why don't we have a public

recreational facility? Why don't we see how businesses like Canondale can use the town to help their business and help the town as well? To me the relivance of some of these questions was a waste of time. The survey idea is a good one so long as the BAC isn't behind it.

454 It's becoming to expensive to live in bethel, your chasing the old time residents out, and the young ones can't afford it. bethel will become a more of a bedroom community and will lose it's charm when all mom and pop stores close. The backbone of the town are leaving.

458 I have been living in Bethel over 10 years now and would like to see Bethel remain a small town. I do not like all these Condos being built all over town. I would hate to see the woods taken away along Reservoir street. I would like to see more stores open up that will bring more families to the town to spend an afternoon walking around. More historical events to learn more about our town. More events that will bring us together. Also, more advertising of these events. I usually find out about it a week later in the Bethel Beacon.

466 I have lived in Bethel all of my life and am very sad to see all this overdevelopment. There is only so much land in this town and if development continues as is we are very soon going to have no land left and we will be a very overpopulated town.

559 I absolutely love Bethel. I have lived there since '98, and it is the only town I have lived in since moving to Connecticut (from the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh areas). I love its small town charm, and the fact that people are always walking/running/riding bikes on the sidewalks. I love the downtown shops and people that come visit us always comment on how cute Bethel is, and how it is the quintessential New England town. I love the library and think it looks great, but I do wish the 2nd floor was finished. I love the new development going on in Dolan Plaza, and the fact that the old Texaco station is finally gone (although I wouldn't mind a new gas station in that same location). As long as Bethel stays clean, walkup and safe, I don't mind new development, even more "commercial" stores/retail establishments. When new development hampers the "walkability/small town charm", that is when towns are destroyed. But, I hope to live in Bethel for the rest of my life - I love it here!

561 (1) Bethel stores should be opened later then they are especially during the summer. On Saturday night by 10pm all stores are closed - if you want to take a walk in town it's like a ghost town. (2)Why would the library hold it's book sale the weekend before the sidewalk sale? Couldn't it have been the same weekend to bring more people into town? It seems like the town planning isn't very well coordinated. (3) I firmly believe the town needs to have more activities that cater to all ages. I also think it would be great to bring a New York street style fair to Greenwood ave - close down the street and have the stores open with some booths in the street too.

634 stop the commerical corporate development, focus on conserving resources. OUR MONEY SHOULD NOT BE GOING ALL TO BETHEL HIGH SCHOOL! much of Bethel's population are elderly, have no children, or send their children to other out of town schools. if the parents of bethel high students want improvements, great, they can pay for them. stop making everyone else use their money towards something they could care less about. and it's pretty ridiculous when a bill keeps failing to change the budget and people attempt to keep trying to pass it. hello, no means no.

635 Some town roads are in deplorable condition. Scotty fund picnic is the best and doesn't disrupt traffic through town. Sidewalk sales are great. Love to tell outsiders about Bethel and its ambience even though we can't afford to live here any more. our biggest disappointment with Bethel is the public school education. There is too much fluff and not enough emphasis on the basics. If children learn the basics well, they'll pick up the rest on the way. Firm fundamentals give an apetite for more education. Too much, too soon only tends to confuse the young mind and make learning difficult.

661 BETHEL NEEDS TO VIEW ITSELF IN COMPARISON TO OTHER TOWNS THAT IT COMPETES WITH. THE CIRCUS OF SCHOOL SYCOPHANTS CRYING ABOUT THE SKY FALLING CAUSES A NEGATIVE IMPRESSION ON THE OUTSIDER. BETHEL HAS SOME GREAT ASSETS AND HISTORY, BUT IT IS UNCOMPETITIVE WHEN CONSIDERING ADULT AND FAMILY AMENITIES. ITS TAXES ARE HIGHER, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCIAL PROPERTY IS REACTIVE. BETHEL IS CENTRALLY SITUATED WHICH MAKES IT A BETTER CHOICE FOR DOWN-COUNTY COMMUTERS, IT'S DOWNTOWN IS APPEALING. I FIND, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS NOT MUCH TO ATTRACT ME TO ACTUALLY SHOP DOWNTOWN. THERE IS A REDUNDENCY OF SIMILAR SHOPS, AND A CONSTANT TURNOVER. AS A BUSINESSPERSON I FOUND THAT THE DOWNTOWN LANDLORDS ARE COMPLETELY UNREALISTIC ABOUT THE VALUE OF THEIR RENTAL SPACE, AND HENCE THEY ARE WILLING TO LEAVE THEIR SPACE VACANT FOR EXTENDED PERIODS OF TIME TO THEN GOUGE UNSOPHISTICATED TENANTS WHO THROW LARGE SUMS OF MONEY INTO SPACE TO START A BUSINESS SEEMINGLY WITH NO FORMAL BUSINESS PLAN. THE LANDLORDS AVERAGE THE REAL RENTAL VALUE, BUT IF THEY CHARGED A REASONABLE RATE TO BEGIN WITH, THEY'D HAVE OCCUPIED STORES AND THE DOWNTOWN WOULD HAVE HIGHER QUALITY ESTABLISHMENTS. FINALLY, THE ZONING ENFORCEMENT IS HORRENDOUS. BETHEL LOOKS LIKE A TOWN OF RIDGE RUNNERS WITH WORK TRUCK IN DRIVEWAYS, OR WORSE YET, FRONT YARDS. HOUSES ARE ALLOWED TO DILAPIDATE, WITH NO APPARENT PENALTY FROM THE TOWN.

689 Keep Bethel with the same small town feeling! No big corporations! Fix BHS now!

691 Let's get the high school project started. Bethel is a great community! Without the high school renovation, potential new residents will look to other towns to relocate.

703 fewer banks and maybe a garbage can or two so people aren't forced to litter. Speed bumps on Elizabeth Street, and enforce noise pollution laws from motorcycles leaving "The Spot" late at night...Guess where I live...

716 Seems to have a lot of "green" questions. I am a frugal yankee, not a lefty blue state transplant. This town is wrought with overdevelopment. How many condos and junky single family homes can we sustain without proper commercial development to offset the tax burden? I was for the golf course, and I think it is time to discuss this issue again. Many of the naysayers and unsophisticates have either moved or died since the misinformation campaign to kill the proposal went forth. The only adult activities we have in town are to feed our faces on the fare of a few restaurants, become sh_t-faced at a local bar, or complain about Bethel and its perceived slights and woes at the ballfields.

717 EXCESSIVE OVERDEVELOPMENT!!! Every pretty patch of woods in town is being pulled down for more housing or commercial space and we do not have the room for all these people and their cars and their kids in the schools! Also, something needs to be done about this selfish minority of big mouths ruining our town called the Bethel Action Committee. Paulsen simply doesn't want to pay taxes on a house he inherited and he doesn't send his kids to the local school, so he doesn't care how he ruins the town and the schools for the rest of us. Surely something can be done to shut him down. He is a DISGRACE.

730 Everywhere I go - people say " How sweet Bethel used to be". Of course they mean the condos, gas stations, real estate bldgs. and pharmacies that are NOT "little people" anymore. No one can afford to run a business anymore -unless they have a good "Soprano" connection! Greenwood Avenue looks nice to people that are new...they don't realize how hard it is becoming to hold on to

ones' house - due to taxes always going sky-high!!!....and dare we mention again...the salaries for those in the town hall that don't do much for our hard-earned paycheck.

750 I would generally like for the Town of Bethel to not have too much of people's incomes used to pay for taxes. However, at the same time, I would like people from the Town of Bethel to be able to use their money. So, I think there should be jobs to bring in money, here and outside of Bethel to level out the high taxes and bring enough business to the area.

751 the over spending by the board of education. too many people move into this town, raise their children and our taxes and then move on. i don't know how to fix it but it is driving home grown residents from this town. we need affordable housing so our children do not have to move out of town and state. too many McMansions being built instead of small starter homes for seniors or young adults. and stop paying for so many administrators in the school system. use to be 1 principal for each school now there are 3 at the HS and Middle school WHY? and what does Chesley do besides drive around town.

757 I am concerned with the over development of Bethel. I feel too many homes are being built and too many 'big' businesses, ie. Target & Big Y are moving in. I don't want to see Stony Hill Rd turn into Federal Rd. One of the reasons we moved here was b/c of the small town charm of Bethel. It doesn't have the crazy traffic of Brookfield or Danbury, but has more to offer than Redding or Easton.

770 Keeping this town affordable to continue living here.

781 I think that Bethel needs to take a larger, more global, view of its Terre Haute property and make it part of the undisturbed land that runs through Western CT. We don't need to buy it, or find ways to pay for it (Which is a REALLY big plus), we just need to leave it alone, or at most develop it for passive recreation. If the town just absolutely has to develop it, we better be prepared for the potentially devastating effects due to flooding on the western part of town, as well as possible problems that could develop in the watershed area (such as loss of potable drinking water). Then the town will have to come up with a lot of money and the land tracts that are undeveloped with which to replace this valuable asset. I think that overdevelopment is the single largest problem that Bethel is currently facing, on both an environmental front as well as an aesthetic one. I feel that the town is powerless against these ruthless developers, but perhaps if the town offered tax-relief incentives to developers who make minimal impact on the existing landscape, we would see more responsible and attractive development. We should be promoting the small-town character of the town much much more. I would like to see broader promotion for the town (Ie in NY papers) to be used as an arts center (even seasonal), crafts center (more summertime crafts fairs and workshops) and for bicycling, or other non-invasive sporting events. It would even be nice to see an old-time town fair in the late summer or early fall as a means to create town unity, and also to draw out-of-state tourists. I think we also need to encourage the development of bed-and-breakfast type places as opposed to the awful hotels along Rte. 6. In summary, I think that one of our biggest challenges, both locally and nationally, is the preservation of our natural resources, our architectural heritage and our small-town flavor which makes Bethel such a unique and wonderful place to live. We really must, as the stewards of the town, make sure that we don't pave Paradise for all future generations of Bethelites!!!!!! I think the town needs to stop further residential development until such time as the town has a larger business/corporate tax base to pay for the discrepancy between residential tax revenues and the drain of residences on city services and educational needs. That being said, I think we must very carefully look at further business development to limit the negative impact it will have on the water supplies in the western part of town and the Stony Hill area, and also how it will negatively affect the traffic

797 Finish the Library! Finish the High School! Get leaders in Bethel who will lead the town to something better. Stop the animosity between the BOE and Selectmen. Get more big business in here to bring down the taxes! Keep Bethel Awesome!

799 I am starting retirement and am concerned the spiraling taxes in Bethel. I may not be able to continue to afford to live here. It's a charming town been here 23plus years but becoming unaffordable for retirees on fixed incomes.

804 I like Bethel downtown but am concerned about its future. It needs some more and different stores to draw people in.

809 1)A park in the downtown area would be nice as would a Town Pool at one of the existing parks(such as Mekaur or Bennet). Most residents are currently using pools in other towns. If we had our own it would bring in extra revenue. 2) A traffic light or 4 way stop is a MUST on the corner of Taylor and Plumtrees. 3)More merchant events (such as Trick or Treat ST) 4)Town Flea Market or Monthly Auction

810 We need to move the teen center(and improve it) to make more parking for the library!! It would be nice to see something done to the old gas station downtown (kind-of an eyesore) I think the library is a big asset to Bethel. My children enjoy the summer program and they usually have the book we need or they help to find it! Keep up the good work!

815 I'm distressed by the building developments occurring on Durant ave. I worry that the town will become full of big-name businesses like walmart and will lose its rural small town appeal. I do understand that commerce needs to be brought here, but I favor local privately-owned businesses over strip malls filled with large commercial operations.

817 First, this was a great survey. I feel like my answers represented that I do not spend time or buy things in Bethel. The reality is that we don't spend very much money aside from basic expenses- we're not heavy consumers- so restaurant visits and extraneous purchases are very limited. I think this should be a choice on future surveys. Something like " Don't buy a lot" or "Don't spend money on extras" should be a choice. I know we're rare, but we're out there. Also, I don't think traffic is heavy all of the time, I do think that traffic is bad in a few areas- 1 is when one is trying to take a left out of Dolan plaza at almost any time. Another is when one is tries to take a left from Putnam Park Road onto Route 302 on any given morning or afternoon because of commuter and school traffic. The light is very short and should probably have a green arrow or making the light longer to make it less dangerous. Thanks for this opportunity.

819 I would love to see a nonpolitical group develop a five year plan addressing the needs of the town. I would also like to see a nonpolitical group explore alternative means of funding for some town projects ie corporate sponsorship.

843 I don't like people speeding through town, and I don't like the way pedestrians are not treated with respect. I would like to see more things to do in the downtown area. I don't think this survey quite got to the heart of the matter, and the choices of responses was not appropriate. For example, there is a huge difference between answering "never" and "1-5 times per month." What happened to a few times per year, occasionally, or something else? For example, very few people probably use professional services 1-5 times per month, but they well may use them 1-5 times per year. Whoever put together your choices for answers was CLEARLY not thinking clearly! And just because we only go out to eat 1-5 times per month does not mean we prefer the mall or another town. Maybe we don't have the money and can't afford to do it more often, or maybe we don't like to go out. Ditto for

shopping. I don't like to shop, so I don't do it more than 1-5 times per month, whether in Bethel or elsewhere. Just because that is how I answer the question doesn't mean that there is anything wrong with Bethel, or I prefer other places. Finally, you probably should have had some economic questions on the survey. Rather than trying to get us to buy or consume more, maybe you could have asked if Bethel was getting too expensive for some people to live in. Maybe some people can't afford to do the things you asked about.

864 There are too many condominiums going up in the town. The sad part is that the buildings that are being put up, increase the population of the town, and it only benefits the greedy developers who don't live in the town! Also it is a shame that there is such a negative attitude towards the high school renovation in the town. What is sad is that the people who are against it don't realize that if it is not renovated and fixed no one will move into the town, and therefore their house value will depreciate!

867 I think that the town should relook at the golf course idea. It sounded like a wonderful project. I believe they proposed hiking trails as well. A town pool would be nice too. The golf course fees for out of town residents could be paid to the town. These family recreational areas would increase property values. Local businesses could possibly be asked to set up food stands to help the local economy. The local businesses and small town charm are what makes Bethel a beautiful place to live. I like the development of the Stony Hill route 6 area in terms of the Big Y supermarket and Target. That area needed a supermarket but I feel that downtown Bethel should be preserved for local businesses. It is part of the charm that brings our out of towners to Bethel to visit.

870 Keep bicyclists out of the road. Add a dog park or someplace people with dogs can take them to exercise. Promote the cleaning up of the downtown area.

879 think taxes are too high for what we get.

895 Bethel is like a ghost town after 6pm. It would be nice if the shops and stores stayed open at least 2 nights a week. Some of us work 5 days a week and don't get home till after 6pm. Weekends are used up with household chores and yard work. It would be nice to shop after 6pm in the wonderful shops we have in Bethel.

897 Bethel is my favorite town in the world! I have always loved its character and small town charm. Please keep franchised businesses away! I love the new sidewalks and street lamps installed a few years ago, and also love the recent development of Meckauer Park. I wish there were activities at the library for children under 2 years. Would love to see a town pool and golf course added. I recently hooked up to the sewer, and am still trying to understand why I have to start paying for my own well water!

906 I moved to Bethel in 1987 because it was a small town. Quiet, slower pace, you could be involved in town government; it was a real quaint New England town. In the recent past, I have become concerned with the situation of those families who grew up here, who are now on fixed incomes, struggling to pay the rising cost of property taxes. Bethel should strive to maintain its small town heritage, and be less concerned about economic growth. The only growth that doesn't make sense, has to do with all the New York people, who have moved here and started demanding more services, newer schools, and more development. If the taxes continue to rise, it will only force more good "home grown" people to move away, and I would be right behind them! Thank you for listening.

941 On your shopping in Bethel, I would have answered Occasionally to shopping in Stony Hill, but you didn't give me that choice. You seem to imply that a 1-5 answer indicates I'm unhappy shopping in Bethel but the reason the number is that low is that I do it efficiently because I hate to shop. I do all

shopping I can in Bethel, always consider dining out in a Bethel as my first choice, and have basic medical care in Bethel (only go outside of Bethel for specialists - and even 1 of those, lives in Bethel!)

947 I love the downtown Bethel feel, and it is what enticed us to move to Bethel. Most of the stores are too pricey for usual shopping, hence the frequenting of "big box" stores. I wish we could financially support the "mom & pop" shops more.

950 Save Bethel's Natural Gem: Permanently preserve Terre Haute as open space. Future generations will be so grateful. Keep the small town downtown small and unique. Think of the future, \$5 gallon gas: Maximize use of the RR, walking, biking, the wonderful ability to do business, shopping, recreating downtown w/o a car. Bring people to this center w/o their car. Cluster new development!

951 I love Bethel - with the exception of the political environment around the budget process. I believe that we are making decisions today that will make Bethel less attractive (ie arduous handling of the school project). We don't need to overspend - but we do need to prudently make good decisions. I am also concerned about sprawl into Bethel (Big Y, etc).

959 I have only attended one school budget hearing. From a professional perspective, it was a circus. There must be a way for everyone to voice their opinion, while maintaining decorum. I have lived here my entire life. The economic climate needs help. I have always thought that Bethel would make the perfect "Quincey Market" type environment. Reroute traffic around Greenwood Avenue and have a year round outdoor, "marketplace."

960 I've often thought it would be a good idea to install wind turbines on the hill next to the High School to generate power for the Education Park and possibly the downtown area. Think of the savings to the community and the message we can send to the world.

996 Keep commercial development in downtown Bethel. Keep it pedestrian friendly. Try to keep small businesses. Expand residential opportunities downtown. Improve train accessibility. Bethel has one of the best downtown developments around. Try to keep it that way. I like being able to walk downtown and do business.

1030 I don't have children and don't plan to have any. I would like to see more services and local events geared toward child-free adults who are not senior citizens. I would also like to see more dog-friendly areas/shops around town. Perhaps a dog park at Merkauer? I would like to have a couple of great sit-down, mid-price-range restaurants (like Laurentano's) in town that aren't dive bars. Nothing against dives, but the few mid-price restaurants in town are terrible. The only good restaurants tend to be the take-out pizza/Chinese joints and Greenwood's. The Sycamore is a Bethel institution, but you can't eat there every week (terrible food) and it gets too crowded on weekends. I have high hopes for the new Bethel Cafe, but it seems like more of a lunch spot. Molten Java is fantastic, and is quickly becoming the hub of the town. I wish it could expand to offer alcohol and more food. Or open another place in town that is similar to MJ, but has a wine/beer list plus great dinner food. I don't use the Bethel library for several reasons -- 1. when we first moved to town in 2002, I went there for a library card and to look for local job listings. NO ONE would help me. I applied for a card, but it was never sent to me. So I just kind of gave up. 2. I read professionally, so I don't have much time to read for fun, so I tend not to borrow books. 3. I never know what's going on with the library. I would like to see more ads around town for lectures/cultural events, new books they have available, what services they offer, etc. The library could be a GREAT resource, but unless you go in there, you have no idea what it offers.

1041 We love the town of Bethel. We are concerned with the budget and how it is never passed on the first try. We are pro budget if it will improve our schools. It is very important for us with two young children to ensure a good education. We are also concerned with the businesses in downtown. We want to keep the quaintness of Bethel without becoming a professional area of businesses.

1058 My main concern is that Bethel is losing it's small town charm due to increased buildings and bigger bussinesses in the downtown area. (CVS, and Dounkin Dounuts). It seems like every inch of land is being constructed. Also, much more multiple family homes in this town. It is becoming a single family homeowners nightmare when your neighbor's become renters that don't care about there property. Too many 2 family homes in this town. Zoning does not care what goes on in this town. It feels more and more like I have moved to Danbury.

1065 What is never addressed in this town is the pollution and contamination of water supplies by companies such as Vanderbilt Chemical and Kanthal. This town has five superfund sites, there is extensive groundwater contamination, and companies such as Vanderbilt spew toxic chemicals into the air 24/7. There was a toxic waste dump site that was excavated at Vanderbilt. There is groundwater contamination and ongoing testing of wells for contamination. They store thousands of pounds of very dangerous chemicals which are brought into the plant by train or truck right through downtown and residential areas. There have been at least two fires there that I am aware of, one of which resulted in a huge fine by the EPA, and neighboring residents were never notified. What is being done to protect the citizens of Bethel? We should have a reverse 911 system to alert residents in case of a fire or toxic release at one of these industrial plants. There should be maps of groundwater contamination made available to the public so those with wells know if they are at risk and can test their water. The plan to expand the industrial park will just bring in more companies with the possibility of more pollution. The town should be looking to expand economic development without further compomising the environment and the health of residents. I previously commented on the use of pesticides in parks. Why can't the town go to a policy of no pesticide use in public areas or at least an integrated pest management program? It would be wonderful for the children of this town to have natural, pesticide free parks to play in. Buy a string trimmer and stop using weed/grass killer right around chidren's play structures. Also, the grass outside the Police Station does not have to look like a golf course. One huge difference between the way issues are addressed in this town and surrounding towns, is that when a problem arises in a town such as Ridgefield, it is made public and a solution is planned and implemented. Here, it seems as though nothing is ever planned out properly, huge issues are never made public or addressed, and nothing is ever resolved or adequately completed. Things are always half done or not done at all. A few good examples are the half a library (which flooded last year right after it reopened), the high school renovations that have never happened, the Chestnut Street culvert that was never properly repaired causing the town to face DEP fines, and the streetscape project which did not adequately address drainage issues resulting in downtown businesses being flooded.

1066 cafe style "sidewalk" dining would be nice if allowed downtown, and maybe greater promotion of the Bethel Film festival and farmers market. How about a "Go Bethel" campaign to promote small town spirit and draw others to our merchants. Thanks!

1082 The traffic and traffic speeds on Greenwood ave have increased over the years. There's not much that can be done about the amount of traffic,but something must be done about the speed. I don't feel safe walking downtown. PS. most stores close at 5pm anyways

1086 How does our tax rate keep going up when we keep getting new business in town (Target, Big Y)? I want whatever deal they're getting on tax breaks!

1104 Please reconsider the value of developing the Terre Haute property as a golf course and recreational facility. The value in jobs, opportunities for families and kids would be invaluable. The town has little to offer the youth of the community as far as entertainment (no lake, pool, etc. Such an endeavor would add revenue to the town as well.

1105 Traffic on Plumtrees road is heavy @ will only get worse w/ Big Y opening i think several speed bumps should be placed along this road

1109 The area of land next to the post office and across the street from town hall should be taken advantage of, either for a new business or for community use. After all this survey mentions a lot about community activities and in Bethel i do not think that there is enough. I have grown up in this town and the kids in high school just do not find the town as much fun. Granted the "green" was turned into a park which deters kids from hanging out downtown which is not a bad thing, however many are weary of going into molten java which many would like to replace the former Doctor Java, but it has not. Famous pizza is a popular place to go, but it can only fit so many people just like many other businesses. I think a Starbuck's might be a good business to put downtown, even though we already have a dunkin donuts. I think a gym would be a great thing to have considering there is a Curves, yet there is no place for men to workout, also i heard rumor of a Pancho's and Gringo's that will be on the backside of William Sotheby, that would be a great restaurant to have, especially to bring more to the night life. Another bar or pub would also be good this way people could walk from the Spot, to Greenwood's, to Putnam House and then another to finish off their walking/drinking tour of Bethel. I myself cannot think of much else to say, I am going off to school in the fall and Bethel will just be that place i go back to for the holidays and for the summer. FIX THE HIGH SCHOOL

1118 As a community we need to raise the bar and focus on the issues of lasting importance. Education and quality of life issues should be first and foremost. If education improves, property values rise and Bethel becomes a more viable alternative for positive growth.

1123 Recruit more volunteerism in town to help with the cost and reduce tax increases Continue to support the Town's Garden Club to beautify Bethel Unite Bethel Center with Stony Hill area Support the Teen and Senior Centers to increase pride and support of Bethel and a working relationship between the two centers Support the Historical Society and develop the Historical Museum for residents and visitors to learn more about Bethel as well as the Veterans Hall in Town Hall Develop an updated video as public relations effort with the town's realtors about Bethel and its history(The Teen Center may also help here) Promote weekly events throughout Bethel Promote more Holiday Events throughout the year to support the town's businesses Change the Sidewalk Days to mid June when the weather is not so HOT in mid July Promote a Town Tag Sale on the MC Lawn to bring customers downtown in May Continue the Town's Birthday Celebration yearly Develop T-Shirts to promote Bethel and sell in town hall and businesses. Involve BHS ROTC in more town events and causes Develop the Veterans Day Ceremony to encourage more resident and school participation,as well as all Bethel Businesses Thank you for this opportunity to give my input, please do it yearly.

1127 Bethel needs to develop its own identity (e.g. when the P.D. switched to black & white cruisers, one could only imagine that it was trying to identify with snotty Ridgefield). There is more to this town than the shops on Greenwood Avenue. As a local resident, it is sad to see that - much like for the Boardwalk area of Atlantic City, NJ - the concern for the overall community significantly diminishes, as one moves away from the commercial district. Think outside the box!

1137 The Above Ground Power wires, are people pleased about the resolution? Programs and plans to prevent downtown blight as in Danbury? Plans to put Bethel on the map regarding education? As mentioned, the failure of Bethel to prevent Affordable housing abuse and the need for strategies to prevent future violations. Development of the Corporate park to bring in more taxes and

create jobs for professionals. Why should we all travel to NY, White Plains, Hartford and the coastline? Try to convert Bethel to the work destination rather than Bedroom community of other places.

1140 A condo complex of one- and two-bedroom "cottages" ON ONE FLOOR, similar to Walnut Tree Village in Newtown, would keep wealthier older, RETIRED persons like myself living AND CONTINUOUSLY SPENDING in this wonderful town.

1141 With the hiring of illegal immigrants it has been difficult for high school students and college students to find what used to be typical summer jobs for their age group. I would like to see something done to make the situation fair to the legal citizens' younger population, or to those who have not had the luxury of pursuing higher education to compete in the "unskilled" job market. Re: Public Education: There needs to be a major overhaul of course curriculum, how concepts and skills are taught as well as opportunity for these young students to have physical exercise and "down time" during their school days. I was appalled by the fact that once in Middle School, students weren't allowed outside even for a brief recess. Even during their lunch period in the cafeteria they were forced to maintain assigned seating for an entire term and were punished if they left their tables to talk to a friend. The kids need to be allowed to be "kids" - not cultivated to be automotons treated as if they're already hardened criminals.

1188 I love Bethel. I grew up next door in Danbury and moved into my first "real" apartment here back in the late eighties. I never want to leave. The only shame is with current need to tighten the town budget, the schools are always the first to feel the pinch. To keep Bethel a vibrant town, there needs to be more young families moving into Bethel and raising their children here. With the current situation I find it harder and harder to stay with my own child because I want him to get the best education possible. Being cheap with the education budget is so terribly short sighted it will only drive out new young people from moving here and leave us with ill prepared young adults not properly trained to take their place in running the town.

1198 delivery of prescriptions to one's home for the elderly and those who live alone

1201 1. I'd like to see a menorah on PT Barnum Square at Holiday time, in addition to a Christmas tree. I would also like to see the lights on the tree put up differently-around the tree, not straight up and down like they have been on the Pt Barnum tree and the tree by the Hub shopping Center. 2. A traffic light is needed by the CVS shopping center. I'd like to see them remove the 4 way stop sign on Maple avenue, and return it to the way it was...too much of a traffic back up on the main road (Maple Ave)in the morning on the way to work. 3. We don't need any more pizza places downtown! 4. The survey question asking why you only shop 1-5 times per month at a particular location did not have an appropriate answer for me. I think shopping once a week at these locations is sufficient. 5. The Post Office should have a mailbox that you can drive up to and mail from your car, especially since parking is such an issue. If they would allow driving around the building and exiting the other driveway, it could be done.

1205 Implement town-wide trash removal for residents. Rabies vaccination clinics - dogs and cats (probably best on different days.) Initiate Habitat for Humanity / Christmas in April community project(s) ("Keep Bethel Beautiful") A number of my fellow residents and I are very disappointed that a Big Y plaza, currently under construction, has taken the place of a picturesque tract of land next to Hollandia on Route 6 - shameful - as within a stone's throw one could access other supermarket choices. My family is deeply concerned about the "leave no open land" policy that seems to be in place. This policy has and continues to squeeze out & displace wildlife, gouges the land eliminating the natural landscape qualities and does little to improve our overall quality of life. How many drug stores, supermarkets and big box companies in our community (and surrounding communities) will be

enough? I honestly wonder if there is sufficient consumer business to support all of them - and at what cost to the environment / wildlife? I believe that what could differentiate our sweet town from others would be a land / community conservation mindset vs. overdevelopment. Now that's a legacy and a gift to leave for future generations worth every effort. Thank you for the opportunity to give voice to our vision for Bethel.

1228 see comments regarding town departments. The downtown area looks great but we need to get a grip on spending so much that the taxpayers will have to move out cause a lot of them can't afford the real estate taxes and the assessment on the motor vehicles need to be looked at again..they are all out of waack!

1240 Bethel is a great small town, but in order to keep it affordable to current residents and at the same time, keep an excellent school system, the town needs to generate more tax revenue from businesses. We can NOT have a 5% increase in property taxes every year. A town pool would be nice for residents at the same time could generate much needed revenue. Although it would be an up front cost, it would pay for itself and more in several years. Plus it would be nice for families to go to in the summer time since Bethel does not have a beach or lake.

1241 I believe this town has great potential. With its small town charm and convenient location it could be the next Ridgefield. In order to improve our standing we need a competitive school system with competent and experienced faculty and administrators. We need local leaders with more forward thinking vision. We need more restaurants and appealing retail in town. It seems this town has stagnated and has not been able to move forwards and upwards. Less concentration on nickel and diming and more focus on larger scale projects and the future of this town.

1264 I grew up in Bethel. I attended the local schools. I love the downtown area and wish that some I could own a home here. I have a business in town and I live in Danbury. I wish Bethel was more affordable. I'm speaking about taxes. I would love my children to be able to grow up in this beautiful little town of Bethel. Hope this helps!

1278 Our town should have a pool plus more sports for the middle school like swim and football middle school teams. We should have more restaurants that are nationwide and sports fields and basketball courts and more businesses that are nationwide.

1279 I live in Redding, but I go to Bethel every weekend for my voice lesson at BMC. My mom does grocery shopping there. I love eating at Biksbee's and House of Yoshida. I love hanging out in Bethel with my friends, but I don't shop much because I'm cheap. My dad says the books at the used book store next to Molten Java are too expensive. I think their postcards are hilarious, though. Molten Java is a cool coffee shop but over the past year it's been getting more and more merchandise, trying to sell crap; this is a concern. Last summer there used to be a big huge tree in downtown that was cut down, and that really upsetted me. It would be nice if in the empty area next to the railtracks, where there used to be a gas station, I think, Bethel could set up another grassy area and plant a couple trees for shade. I'd also like to see grass and trees planted in that weedy lot by the intersection that's closer to Caraluzzi's. The antique shop with the big elephant skull is never open, which is too bad. I've always been curious as to what else is inside. There is a ton of traffic in downtown. I'm worried about air pollution. It would be cool if there was a thrift clothing store in Bethel, like Goodwill or something.

1283 1) Stop the developers from coming into our town and raping the land. 2) Need to keep taxes from going too high. We all need to compromise on certain issues, we can't do all the building projects that need to be done NOW! We must prioritize!

1285 Would like to see the downtown continue to expand, while keeping the small town charm. Restaurants/food places are great, we frequent them all the time. Allowing more mainstream stores that will be able to pay the high rents and last. Such as starbucks, mainstream clothing stores, gap and banana republic etc., instead of the smaller mom and pop stores. Hauser Choclates is great, bike shop and hobby shop I use. It's all of the used book stores and chamber of commerce and not so quite antiques sores that we don't use. I would like to be able to walk downtown and walk into almost every store. Right now there are just too many places that we walk right by. The new Dolan plaza building looks great. Would like to see more of the other dilapidated buildings get a remake. The police need to be given more attention. The building is inadequate. They are dealing with a lot more people in this town, and need the resources and money to continue to keep it a safe town. Are we looking into a full time fire dept.? We keep building more homes and buildings, it isn't uncommon to see a million dollar home now. Mekauer Park looks good, but it can continue to be made even nicer. Thank you for the survey. But lets not stop here, this is a good start to make Bethel into a great little town for everyone.

1290 I am just concerned about the Bethel society. I do not want to see the downtown area a mess, which it isn't, but sometimes it could use improvement. I enjoy the food in downtown especially, but I do not shop often there, because there isn't anything appealing.

1294 1.) We are so pleased to see Sotheby's/William Pitt real estate in Bethel. Aside from having an upscale reputation, we are thrilled with the way they have renovated a previously dilapidated property in downtown Bethel. Bravo! 2.) It's a shame that the railroad station, a potential hub-of-activity, is somewhat on the "outskirts" of town. In many Westchester, NY towns, commuters can duck in/out of businesses before catching/departing on a train. 3.) There is tremendous appeal for us in being able to park the car, walk with the children to the post office, library, drugstore. What would be an added, welcomed stop would be a park. It's too bad, again, that the town parks are removed from the downtown area. Could a potential compromise be the addition of some needed park benches on the lawn of the town hall? What about a water feature? 4.) While I realize that the town may have had its origins as somewhat of a hippie enclave, I don't feel that it is accurate or economically advisable to promote that image now (how was the graphic on the t-shirts being sold at English Drug arrived at?). A better "hook" seems to be the town's characteristic charm. 5.) What about a town community house that Bethel residents could rent out with pride for receptions, parties, etc. Perhaps the town purchases and refurbishes one of the existing historic homes (versus new construction) that has fallen into disrepair with this intent in mind? Thank you very much for asking!

1315 More indoor recreational space allotted for teenage children especially during the winter months. Another in-town grocery store as an alternative to Bethel Food. Come up with ways to lessen the traffic flow through town, especially during the 5:00 pm hour. Prohibit large trucks from using Greenwood Avenue at any time. Keep all trucks off Bethel streets until after 9:00 am. Create bicycle lanes for the increase in bicyclers. Decorate the town Christmas tree in a truly professional manner, and not as if it took ten minutes to do, so residents can have some pride in it and make the annual tree lighting a can't miss event. Encourage builders to build more affordable housing and not just homes only the rich can purchase. There are not enough full size baseball fields in Bethel. Improve the baseball field at Parloa so more teams can regularly participate and play there on a regular basis. Add lights for night games. Encourage Bethel baseball to add a 16-18 yr. old Babe Ruth league for those young men of average talent who wish to continue to play baseball but have no alternative to play after 15 yrs. of age.

1332 I think that Bethel would really benefit from a major finance company opening up. It will bring jobs and money into the community and give families perhaps a higher comfort level in investing. I feel this would keep Bethel strong and keep it a wonderful place to live and raise a family.

1338 In the past it seems as if the previous administration had only the ability to focus on one thing at a time, when in fact there are a series of important points that need to be addressed all at once: 1. The High School, 2. SPEEDING on Greenwood Ave is out of control, I have witnessed multiple accidents in front of my business and at this time the town has done nothing to control the speed. For 7 years that I have been here the limit has been 25 and cars pass on the right and drive at speeds WELL over the limit making it hazardous for people to enjoy the small town charm. Ticketing drivers on Greenwood would generate additional funds for the town to be used for other things, the speeding needs to stop. 3. The Chamber of Comm. needs to focus on business' other than in the center of town. It has become a too closely knit "clique". Collectively we can pull more people to town from all of our business' other than focusing on just a few in the center, it can benefit all of us. I am no longer a member because of this and heard the same from a number of business' outside the center of town. Bethel is not just about PT Barnum Square. 4. The Library. All we have heard for year is the Library and now in this survey it is about the library, our focus needs to be broadened on other issues and items which will make people want to move to Bethel, let's look harder at the high school and get this done before families no longer want to live here. The books have a home let's move on to something else. Let's look at other towns and planning such as Westport, Ridgefield, and even Greenwich center, where traffic is heavy all the time but never a problem. Officers will ticket you immediately, this is a source of generated income let's use their technique and make some money. 5. Let's look for some property for a larger municipal lot such as Westport has, so more people can enjoy our charm and our town.

1341 Try to get local shop owners to stay open more plus later. Make this a town where people want to do business focus on making it easier good news travels fast What about the two or three restaurants in the center of town having poker nights is this a joke or what, find away to put a stop to that right away. That is already driving away business from what I see. And it might behoove this town to be more selective about how low are standards go when it comes to allowing certain bars events to be open in this town.

1353 Bethel definitely needs upgrading but the charm of the downtown area MUST be left alone. The lamp posts, the store fronts, the benches should be left as is. The quality of the goods offered could be a lot better to attract business from Weston for example. My family loves to go to Bethel for the "funkiness" of it all! One Book Too Many is terrific but boy, does it need a face lift and air conditioning! My family loves the car shows and the food at the Sycamore! I don't but I do let them go and have a great time. They always come home in a better mood having been there. Going to Bethel is a "breath of fresh air" from Westport, Wilton and Weston. Could use a lot of clean up and spruce up but it's still terrific. Thank you for asking to assist you with this survey. CL

1363 As a new resident...2 years + ... what attracted me to the area is the diversity in income and type of people. I grew up in a town with farms farms to buy your apples and corn at roadside stands, cheaply I might add then the town changed drastically and taxes forced many out so no low or moderate income people could stay and every field I played in now has been taken by housing and that even with limited zoning... that town is Easton ... not far at all from here.. Bethel has a good business tax base from what I can see. I just hope it will not try to compete with the likes of Easton Ridgefield Redding and so on...or zone too many condos and the like which will increase tax base yes but also burden the schools and roads etc. Thanks for having this format to talk in ...hope your gathered information is helpful

1383 I would love to see a balance between corporate/big biz growth to help out with the tax situation while maintaining an upscale, charming small town charm.

1386 offering job sites within our community, for our people in the community. if Bethel high school wants to promote their students to do volunteer work as a NECESSARY requirement..although it is

against our constitution..then have our students volunteer work be strictly for BETHEL..with the elderly, library, business help, ect. make it honorable volunteer help, where the student learns something valuable for their studies or life skills. also i feel bethel is very conservative town and people have already formed their opinions years ago..we need to re-think the values of our youth..offer our troops coming home discounts for settling back into their HOME-TOWN..job opportunities, counseling.

1393 I would love to see a more gay friendly vibe in the town...

1444 There should be more focus on Bethel's economic development.

1455 1)For the children: a town pool, establishing a scholarship for pay/to play sports--anonymously. 2) have local leaders welcome outsiders (some have been in Bethel a long time,) 3) don't vote by the party, but what you think is right, 4)the baby boomers are retiring--seek them out to be residents in Bethel for their retirement, encourage them to volunteer to help pre school, grade school and high school students; english as a second language--we have so many immigrants who are contributing to our town--lets share our lives.5)Just because the baby boomers are retiring does not mean they are disabled or elderly. Offer opportunities for able people to reach the needy for friendship and help.6) The downtown merchants--don't be chatting with your friends--talk to your customers. I love Bethel. And, I realize I have to change my ways to make what I want to happen. Do you know how many times I tried to participate and been told everything is taken care of?

1456 traffic and downtown business. Keeping the small atmosphere.

1458 I am extremely concerned about the economic feasibility of me and my family to be able to afford to remain a resident in Bethel and the State of Connecticut. I have been a responsible member of the community in Bethel. Taxes in Bethel and the State of Connecticut are overwhelming. This coupled with federal, social security taxes and raising cost of energy and health care will force me and my family to relocate. It will be with regret that I feel I must leave within the next few years. There needs to be a balance as to needs of the town and the ability of the public to fund the operating and capital budget of the town. Waste and poor handling of taxpayers money is throughout all levels of government. When taxes go up I am not able to ask my employer for an increase to assist with the raising cost of living. I have worked for large Corporations that have had to adjust to hard economic times. For the companies that I have worked for it has resulted in overhead reductions, lost jobs, buyout and bankruptcy. I worked for MCI that was part of Worldcom and lost everything. In addition, recently MCI was acquired by Verizon, so the people reductions and realignment of the business to compete in a global economy continues. That is how private enterprise handles economic pressures.

1478 I dont know why there were questions about investing, type of credit cards used, car purchases unless the town is planning on selling advertising to outside sources. The biggest issues that the town faces is how to responsibly attract business while maintaining our small town feel. The Francis Clarke Park should be developed as much as possible as well as provide incentives for office buildings to be built along RT 6 and any large parcel of land that is part of an industrial zone. I dont know why the property by the Municipal Center was reclassified from industrial to residential to bring in more condominiums. We dont need more families in town, we need business investment to offset the cost of the families. In addition, Alice Hutchinson was driving a strategy to see if existing home stocks could qualify for affordable housing which could stop this destructive development.

1493 Centrally located restaurants are increasingly adding gambling (poker games) as part of their business. I do not want to go to dinner with my family while a poker game is taking place in the next

room or walk through the people standing outside drinking and/or smoking. This definitely is doing nothing positive for the town of Bethel.

1523 The Bethel downtown area needs to continue to refurbish and rejuvenate itself; I am concerned with what appears to be businesses constantly closing, and wonder if the town can make it economically; there are too many parts of Bethel that are seedy; the schools do not have a solid reputation like neighboring Redding, etc. that will attract and retain a caliber of families that is serious about education. The library is terrific and a great source of inspiration for the town.

1531 It is disappointing that there are always a few loud people in Bethel that turn everything down. A town pool and a Municipal golf course would have been wonderful in town and not cost must money. The pool would have encourage a better community spirit and the golf course would have been a money maker. The HS really needs to be fixed. We need to stop nit picking and just do it. The town is lovely. I shop more at larges stores because of time and generally there are better deals. I am at CVS and Bethel Food often. Other then that, I don't frequent the stores to often. However, when I do, I always enjoy them. The employees at the library are so lovely and helpful.

1550 Ithink we need to have more community gatherings and everyone should get mail telling us when to be there. We also need more grocery shopping stores also we need shopping stores and a movie theatre. We should also have more gatherings and we should do more fun things as a community!!!!!!

1553 Concerned about the overall affordability of living in Bethel and State of Connecticut. My children are of age and can not afford to return to the town or the area to live. I definately do not see my and my family being able to live here during retirement years. I feel we are being forced out du to the HIGH cost of living.

1554 The village area can be a lovely and valued area but it needs to complete the Streetscape project and have more events/entertainment for shoppers i.e. musicians, clowns, etc. to attract attention and amuse shoppers...Chamber of Commerce can do a lot more to improve the visual aspects...

1565 I love the diversity of people and businesses in downtown Bethel - it is a "real" town that is still somewhat affordable in a very expensive region. Historic architecture and a vibrant, pedestrian small town feel are very important to me.

1581 The town REALLY needs to improve the way it promotes itself. It is a growing town and accumulating in population. We need a more youthful and creative way to expand our town and NOT by big stores or brand names. Small cute towns can stay small and cute and attract many people. We are currently NOT trying hard enough and NOT doing a good job bringing in more people as well as NOT supporting our community businesses enough. If we bring in the big brand names into our town, we are telling people we NO LONGER CARE about the small businesses and about the quality of life. The town NEEDS to hear fresh ideas and let the community give their input. Example: create town events downtown and simply ASK! and let us know our opinion COUNTS! The town also needs to accept that it is changing and we can't only hear the voices of the older generation who may be stale with their ideas. This town is NOT ONLY for the empty nester's age group. Also whatever the age group, we all want to FEEL ALIVE! I hate to feel that this cute town go down the tubes. At the moment, I've noticed that many and most of the time, it is a REAL BORE and DEAD QUIET! There is hardly any traffic in town for businesses. The ONLY traffic I see is rush hour traffic, working class going to and coming from their jobs yet parking for consumers is still HORRIFIC. There are many locations in town where we can share and create innovative and enjoyable ideas for the families and

youth as well as for the community. ONE EVENT PER YEAR IS HARDLY AN EVENT! Sorry for sounding so hasty, but so far I REALLY DON'T THINK THE TOWN IS LISTENING! The younger generation CARES TOO! We want to see the future of our town and the quality of our lives to grow for the better. We NEED someone to better market us. You can drive through the town and completely miss us right now. We need to be recognized and others to RECOGNIZE US! Quite often do I hear people say I never or hardly come down to Bethel including the people that already live right in town. The town DOESN'T INTEREST people enough and market itself AT ALL! I've also known of people who have tried to give their opinions to better us and NOTHING is done about it. This is also the fault of the Bethel Chamber of Commerce. All the advertising the local businesses do does NOT help when there IS NO REAL SUPPORT from its own community and chamber. There is also a LACK OF CARE about its appearances. For example; people litter, town garbage receptacles are not maintained and cleaned. Bethel DOES NOT give anyone any a reason to come to town. A small town like Bethel has SO MUCH potential UNUSED!!!! IT'S SUCH A SHAME!!!! I HOPE OUR VOICES DO NOT GO UNHEARD OR IGNORED!!!! I HOPE EVEN MORE THAT SOMETHING IS DONE ABOUT ALL THIS!!!!

1586 i come to Betel because I think it is charming and has good rest. and the cinema. I have occasionally used some prof. services as well. I find parking a problem and might come there if you had evening shopping hours- similiar to what ridgefield has recently implemented on friday nights.

1596 The public officials that sought to facilitate the commercial development of the Terre Haute property should be lined up against a wall and shot for their profound shortsightedness (or greed, or incompetence or both), and at least voted out of office. Open space is a resource that shouldn't be squandered in the rush to Bethel's economic and cultural "renaissance". By taking a good look around, it should be apparent that factors such as this figure significantly in an improved quality of life for a town's citizenry, and therefor to its economic well-being.

1615 Appearance of the town needs improvement. Greenwoods and PT Barnum Shopping center had Christmas decorations/wreaths still up in the Spring. Finally at Easter time, they were taken down--only to be replaced with the tackiest fakest looking flowers I have ever seen (Greenwoods). Come on!!!! This makes the town look anything but quaint!!! Some of the store/shopping center faces need to be renovated. They look out of date and dingy. The Spot is an eye soar as well. I do see some positive thigns happening though--the yoga place is great, as is the shoe store. The flower boxes WITH REAL FLOWERS look great too. The store owners are always friendly and work hard. If we cleaned up this area and added more--everyone would prosper, it will drive up not only business, but house prices as well. Oh-- and enough with the townhomes/multi-family dwellings/rentals/apartments---they are not the best for school systems at all----too many people/too much of a revolving door! I applaud the powers that be who had this survey idea!!!! Thank you. Keep aiming high!

1620 1 -- Get rid of The Spot (bar on Greenwood Ave)!! 2 -- Having a 3 year old son I am very concerned about the Bethel school system and would consider leaving Bethel if I find the school system is not adequate.

1635 Please keep open space preservation on the top of your "to do" list. Bethel is lovely community. while I don't live there, I enjoy leisure activities there. It would be a shame to see your quality of life suffer due to urban sprawl and big box development.

1645 would like to see an organic farmers market or a famers market in downtown bethel on the green. Would also like to see more block parties or sidewalk sales in down town to draw business. Public library should have more activies outside on thier lawn. I would like to see more volunteer type services geared for children and teens. Would also like to see more public activities structured for

adults in the community, ie organized, publicized and advertized walking trail event, bike event, scavenger hunt with a local business awarding a prize. I think a large scale scavenger hunt for adults with an area business award prize would bring many people into this town for commerce etc.. local business should compete to be the one chosen to give the award. THE EVENT SHOULD BE ADVERTISED thank you

1662 It is time for Bethel to find a way to keep taxes down. Use state consortiums or school-based purchasing groups to get the best prices on everything from gas to heating oil to textbooks. The town has to do a much better job of planning for capital purchases and projects. We can't defer capital projects year after year and then try to do three or four in one or two years. The library is a prime example of a poorly executed project. When the project came in over bid, it should have been scrapped or rebid. There is no excuse for having a second floor that is essentially useless. Why put all of the money into a library addition and then have the ability to fully use the new space. The high school is another long overdue project that seems to be heading for disaster. Look at the Barlow project in Redding and take heed. If there is not enough money to do the project as proposed, value engineer what you can and then go back to the voters upfront for more money, and it is absolutely essential that a construction manager be hired. Bethel officials need to start thinking outside the box on how to get more for our money. Bethel is fast becoming a town that even middle class people - our sons and daughters, our teachers, our highway crew, firefighters, etc. - cannot afford. Bethel's forte has been its socio-economic mix. Let's work hard not to lose this. Bethel needs more open space and more industry to broaden the tax base. Expand Clarke Park while maintaining as much open space as possible, encourage business in the Commerical-Industrial corridor along Route 6. Offer tax breaks and incentives. Is the Economic Development Commission still viable? If not, it should be. Last, but not least, police should enforce the crosswalk laws in downtown Bethel. You take your life in your hands to get across the street. If you are in a town like Ridgefield, you wouldn't think of not stopping for a pedestrian. We also need better enforcement at traffic lights. Time and again I see people running a light long after it has turned red. There is almost a complete disregard for the law. My last comment is about your survey. What on earth do my credit cards, what I watch on TV, my cell phones and other non-related to Bethel questions have to do with this survey?

1670 If I loose my job, I'm concerned I'll have to travel far for a new job to keep my same income.

1672 It would have been more accurate in the questions about locations of shopping to offer a choice of less than once a month as I do shop a bit in Stony Hill but there was no option that worked for me amongst the choices. Same for dining out.

1680 Very much value small businesses like Countdown Hobby, English Drug, Molten Javas, O'Neills, Disc and Dat, etc. Low frequency of restaurant visits is not due to their lack of appeal...we do not eat out frequently.

1685 The town needs to start thinking about broader solutions that contain costs. Regional libraries, combined public safety facilities (fire/police). Controlling residential growth in the town and encouraging commercial growth. Develop a long-term plan for the town's buildings and renovations in order to contain costs.

1700 Regarding economic development, Bethel needs to apply for gov't & state programs for town improvements & incentives for young married couples to work & live here. More assistance to the elderly people who helped make the town what it is today.

1701 One of the reasons my husband and I were drawn to this community was because of the appealing downtown area, Having said this, I feel that many of the shops need serious improvement in terms of their window displays.

1702 Economic Development - Bethel is a very nice place to live but senior citizens and lower income families are being priced out and people are unable to find gainful employment in order to stay in the area. Professionals from New York and other areas have more or less "taken over" the town. There should be a way for people to afford decent homes - smaller perhaps, but these people might be able to help maintain by helping out each other in maintenance etc. Also, Bethel's Transfer Station fees are higher than any town I know of - Norwalk has garbage collection as I've heard do many other places such as Stratford, Huntington, Shelton. Ridgefield has NO yearly fee and a carload of trash is \$5 per. I do enjoy the Outdoor Concerts at the Municipal Center on Sundays and hope to be able to attend once again as soon as I move and am settled.

1726 The most important thing to remember about Bethel is that it is NOT trying to compete with affluent neighbors in all categories. #1 Yes, we need to be competitive with our education, but teaching goes beyond the classroom. We expect the teaching will happen wherever and whenever. We missed the window of opportunity to provide more space when the bubble was coming through the high school. The renovating process should have started 7 years ago, it should have been complete the fall of 2003. Having said that, we need to move on. But with the same plan????? I'm not convinced. We have to keep the juices flowing with ideas and this survey is a fabulous start!!! #2 I believe people in Bethel would like more recreational options and would be willing to spend \$\$\$ if the right plan was presented. The Educational Park we have is absolutely the best, we need to maintain it. Our downtown area has had many recent facelifts..... we need to support our merchants. We lack a location for community health and sports activities beyond team sports. Maybe our land of 650+ acres can be used for a municipal golf course, a resident only pool, trails for cross country running/skiing, etc. I believe the residents of this town are thirsting for a chance to be creative. Our Educational Park was once a vision and look at it now, we all love it. Let's create and execute a vision for community based activities which includes everyone, in BETHEL, only. We should not compare ourselves to other towns because we are different, and I mean that in a very positive manner. Remember, 'good things come in small packages.' We just have to look at what we want in the package. It's not about the wrapping, it is about what's inside. #3 The people who support education will also support this concept. So, we need to include the two concepts together and present the advantages of a 'total picture'. For the good of the community. #4 Unfortunately most individuals are disappointed in the library. I believe this is due to the fact that it is incomplete and the current lay out is not appealing. I hear the phrase, 'it is way to big, cold and impersonal'. Let's not make the same mistake for the high school. I know this community deserves better than to be hasty. Late is late, we don't have the same urgencies as when the referendum was passed..... #5 Thanks for taking the time to listen and read and think about everyone in the town who resides here and who will want to remain here in the future.

1750 Bethel is far behind surrounding towns in preservation of open space. This is not merely an environmental issue, but an economic issue as well (new developments almost always cost the town more in services, especially education, than we get back in tax revenues). In particular, establishing the Terre Haute portion of the Ives Trail should be a top priority. This will be a nationally-recognized trail, of great benefit to Bethel.

1762 I believe Bethel needs to realize that the continual budget battles and not listening to the advisory question response of too high does not bear well for this town. This town is not an affordable place to retire in for many of us. We will be moving from Bethel shortly and have chosen to build in Colorado where we can scale back our work hours and afford to live in a new 3 bedroom home for less than a quarter of the real estate taxes. The cost of living and town resources in Loveland are very

appealing, as well as the magnificent scenery. The wonderful people of Bethel are what made it home for us-our friends became our family and we will miss them.

1767 We've lived in Bethel for a year and a half at this point, and the only person I've really met is my neighbor that shares a driveway with us!! I tried to contact the Newcomers & Neighbors club or society and never heard back. I'd like to be a little more involved in the community, but have no idea what is around. We last lived briefly in an apartment in Ridgefield and actually had a "Welcome Wagon" come and 'introduce' us to all the local businesses and attractions. It was very helpful and really helped us to get to know the community better. Bethel seems to have a small community similar to Ridgefield, that charm is one of the reasons we bought a house here, so I don't know if that has ever been considered, but it's a thought!! Thanks for listening!!

1778 I am hoping that this survey will reflect the very best features of Bethel which are, in my humble opinion, its sincerity as a small, friendly, down-to-Earth town. I love Greenwood Ave as much as anywhere I've ever been. I love that there is no Starbucks, no Stop N' Shop, no McDonalds. People still say hello as you pass them on the street and kids can walk downtown and be safe. Bethel is charming because it is unpretentious, beautiful and genuine. Don't change, Bethel. You make me happy.

1781 Bethel has a considerably sized bicycling community. These are well educated involved citizens and with that being said we should have the roads to support this usage. I have visited many cycling friendly communities over the years and we are way behind in making roads safe for bicycles and car shared usage. We make home to one of the best bicycle companies in the world and having the bike lanes and wide shoulders on our roads would help in many ways. It is healthier for people, cycle commuters save energy and local business get a boost from the groups that meet here to ride. I would commute to work more if the roads were Friendlier and more suited to safe cycling. Also if the Electric company is going to rip our roads apart then they should replace them in good order, not patch and leave a mess. How did this benefit us besides paralyzing our daily commutes? For a while it took less time to ride my bike to work than it did to drive my car. We chose to live in Bethel because we see it as the next great town in Fairfield county. It has great parks and a nice downtown. We felt that by the time our children are ready for school the facilities will be in order and therefore we should continue to invest in town facilities and people. Let's make Bethel Great

1823 I believe in progress but please maintain the quaintness of downtown Bethel. Also consider maintaining strict planning and zoning that will maintain the character that is uniquely Bethel. Ridgefield was very strong at one point. They have changed and the business district is showing the result. Danbury has gotten carried away to the point that there will not be any trees left in the business areas. If Bethel maintains the vision it has had, economic/business demands can be accommodated (ie for every new building, let the environment benefit by conservation of trees, etc.

1836 There is one major issue that is never properly addressed and it is Economic Development. We need to make it our first priority as without cash flow and income the goals of this town cannot and will not succeed or be met. If the Library wants their \$2,000,000.00 to finish its project it should assume a position of advocacy for Economic Development.

1839 bring more commercial development to Bethel to offset tax base

1841 My house is in Newtown but I live in a region - chiefly Bethel. The taxes in Newtown are too high, but I think we pay too high a price in all regional towns for "home rule". Too few people really inform themselves & then go to vote. There should be regional planning and taxing. How many "big boxes" do we need? The entire tax system of the country needs modernizing. I think we pay too high

a price for "home rule" in which too few participate! Traffic - I find drivers to be very courteous at crosswalks. I think Bethel is blessed with parking behind shops, School Street etc. Outdoor activities - I walk regularly for exercise, especially in "downtown" Bethel. Library use - I do not use libraries. Economic Development - Too many of the same types of stores competing with each other. Bicycle Transportation - Impractical?

1853 I wish your community provided more support for the schools. I don't understand why the taxpayers don't realize how important this is in order to maintain their real estate values. Other than that, Bethel seems like a wonderful town. I hope your Greenwood Avenue businesses prosper. We love Bethel Cinema!!

1858 I truly believe that in order to move forward as a town, we will need to deal with some possible inconveniences. It is extremely important that we have the best education available. This means improving Bethel High School. Bethel's citizens continue to grumble about the cost of such improvements to our town. However, one possibility for town revenue would be the proposed and denied golf course which would bring in people from all over who would shop at our stores, lunch at our restaurants and pay to play. This would also be a source of afterschool activities and job opportunities. It would be a way to preserve our land but get the best out of it. The library needs to be finished. Like the school, the library affects the type of people moving into our town. Seeing that our school and library are in such bad state, who would want to move to Bethel? In short, I am a huge support of the renovation of BHS, The Bethel Library, A town golf course, a public pool and any events which would bring people and revenue to our town. Sometimes, change is not only necessary but beneficial.

1866 There is so much pressure on taxes, the issue around economic development is very important. We do a very poor job of 1) promoting the features of the town such as our fabulous restaurants and 2) soliciting, and keeping, significant businesses. We fight land use for business and lose negotiations to Danbury. We need to use the Bethel Website more for posting information. This is 21st century and we still only post referendum and candidate slates at Town Hall. We can be quaint without being left in the dark ages.

1867 I am pleased that no "big name" businesses are being added to downtown--e.g. Home Depot or The Gap. I like the size of the businesses downtown. I wish we could do more to encourage places like Molten Java and Bethel Cinema. I also wish we could do something to attract more industry to lighten the property tax burden and provide employment in town to those who currently work outside of town. I would be willing to see the town add on to the industrial park for this reason. I wish there was a sidewalk/bike path from my home to downtown. I live on Linda Lane and would love to ride or walk to town to do my errands, but it doesn't feel safe. The speed limits on 302 (and Linda Lane) aren't enforced, and there is no room for walking or biking. Thanks for listening!

1869 It is always difficult to grow a town in order that it is a desirable, sustainable place to live without becoming overcrowded and commercialized. Bethel, to me, had a lot of charm and appeal. For anyone, of any age, I think a great library is a must. If one needs to, they can always go to a mall for "mall shops". Good restaurants and service shops (hair salons, cleaners, pharmacy, dentists, physicians, vets, etc) seem plentiful in Bethel. I would definitely frequent a farmer's market in Bethel, if they had one. I also think anything for kids is a good thing and good business. One thing I like better about Ridgefield though, is that I feel too many large condo complexes detract from the desirability of a town. Too many is an eye sore and overcrowds. Seems there are quite a few in Bethel.

1871 There is a bum/drug addict living in a car behind the P T Barnum Square stores on School Street which is affecting quality of life for shoppers at these establishments.

1874 less residential condomenium development-more business development. The group of people wishing for more school funding should create a fund to which they can contribute and sponsor fund raisers which will pay for improvements they have recommended. We need better management of traffic on Greenwood Ave.

1875 I think this survey is a great idea, it is a great way to include people that may not have the time to attend town meetings and the like. I think it would be great to expand this concept to an information resource of what is happening in our community. Things I would like to see are the revitalization of the downtown area, better executed events, more business participation. I would love to see a plan for recyling pick up.

1893 KEEP BETHEL'S CHARM AND BRING IN SMART BUSINESSES.

1908 The Terre Haute property is your last big opportunity, and it must not be squandered. I feel this survey (thus probably the town) is not considering enough options. It's not a matter of development or no development. You must have it both ways, in fact. I think Bethel's commercial development so far is near perfect. But the abysmal state of the schools make the town a non-starter for families moving into the area. (The two families I know in Bethel avoid the schools. One refuses to have kids because of the schools. The other home schools.) The public schools must be fixed. That likely means the town needs some tax-generating economic development in Terre Haute, unfortunately. If this is done in a concentrated way, according to the principles of Smart Growth (which suits the rest of Bethel's development well) adding a small commercial or office district, and dense housing on, say 1/4 to 1/3 of the property, that would leave plenty of open space left over for recreation. Paving the whole thing over with single-family homes or big-box stores and parking lots will only make the town's financial problems worse.

1921 I don't live in Bethel but I do use you trails and I would stress that these are a great resource. Generally when I use the trails I visit a business in Bethel so supporting the traisl supports the twon.

1923 We moved to Bethel about 7 years ago and to be honest we are pretty happy here. The only thing I would like to see is a bit more activity in down town Bethel. It's a beautiful little town with a lot of charm. It just seems so dead when you take a walk in the summer time. When Molten Java opened up I thought it was the greatest thing! I wish we could have more cafe's and meeting places where you could sit with a friend and have a cup of coffee - and in the summer time you can hang out outside. I am a full time working mother and just to be able to go out and sit outside and have a coffee with my girlfriends is such a treat ! So one or two more venues like Molten Java may make Bethel a bit more cosmopolitan! Also, if you could throw in maybe one small store such as a Gap or an Old Navy it would really help!

1928 Overall, I think Bethel is a pretty nice place to live and raise a family. I do think the library is important but it cannot be all things to everyone. Bethel is a small town in terms of population and I do not think it needs to meet the needs of every individual. Rather it should find a few things to be focused on and not require a large amount of financial resources to support it at the expense of funding other town enhancing projects. Let's keep Bethel a well-rounded place to live that offers a variety of things to all. I do feel a town pool is absolutely necessary for a land-locked town that does not have a YMCA. Every age group could use it. Someone should look into the communiy center in Shelton where my 85 year old uncle swims everyday. Also, more recreational activities like golf (again something for all ages) should be provided to the community. I think anything that gets people moving and addresses the nation's obesity issue would be great! One other thing I would like to mention, Bethel Food is one of the best businesses in this town. I do not want to see a Trader Joe's or any other grocery store come to the downtown area. It will really change the character of the downtown area.

1931 BPL - need to get updated materials. I noticed 5 copies of an old DVD of the same title. Why not purchase six separate updated titles instead? Town Government - NUMBER ONE PRIORITY IS TO FIX THE HIGH SCHOOL. In addition the govt. needs to come up with a economic plan to bring more business to Bethel and increase the tax base. The conditions of the roads in this town are pitiful. The amount of blight on personal property is unacceptable. Referendum questions of "too high" and "too low" need to be revised. How about adding "just right"? Until the Bethel Action Committee realizes that improvement to this town costs money, we will never succeed. While towns around us improve their town facilities, Bethel remains stuck in the 1960's. And it shows in direct correlation to the price of homes. Professional Services in downtown - Two years ago I used a medical office in downtown for services and thought i had stepped back into the 1950's! I don't feel comfortable using the doctors in this town.

1944 We could always use more resturants but not pizza please!

1945 The retail in downtown has become quite dismal. Many stores coming and going. Nothing exciting and different. The silver store in Dolan's plaza looks like a junk/chachke store. The children's store doesn't carry any new brands/current brands. I'd much rather shop a quaint downtown than go to the mall but Bethel has lost it's good stores and charm. And please, someone tell Matt Paulson that people are sick of reading his mindless diatribes in the News-Times.

1947 Keep Bethel's hometown character by making it easy for interesting, unique, and independent businesses to set up here. Discourage big box and chain stores from taking over. I can go to Federal Road or New Milford if I want those. Don't develop EVERYTHING. Have a plan and stick to it. Have some conviction, for Pete's sake. And keep up the good work. I like Bethel.

1959 The town should somehow celebrate the companies that are here. Duracell, Eaton, Cannondale - these are big companies and are really exciting. I would bet most people don't know that these world known companies are here in Bethel.

1974 There is a low supply of quality restaurants in the Upper Fairfield area. Restaurants up here charge high rates but have mediocre food quality. Please support the Bethel Cinema it is an Anchor for the community

1975 I am concerned about the kind of businesses that may be opened in the historic part of Bethel.. I would prefer that they are all small retail shops.

1979 Bethel needs planned development. It has a great deal of potential, yet the bitter financial struggles need to be resolved. Information to constituents needs to be improved. Taxes are very high compared to other localities, with a minimum of services. Unfortunately, the expense may become too great for individuals who retire and wish to remain here. We love the small, New England town atmosphere, but we are concerned that it is eroding.

1999 The First Student Bus Building and area is very dumpy looking. The apartments across the street from them is run down. The area where the Sycamore restaurant down through Burger King should look more appealing. Also, Caraluzzi's grocery store should be open until 10:00pm like most are. Alot of stores and eating places look dumpy inside and outside so you don't want to take friends or company visiting you there. It should be fixed up cosmetically to look more appealing and still keep the old charm.

2004 1. Straight forward road connecting Rt 7 and possibly Grassy Plain Road. It would decrease commuter travel time, increase connectivity to Bethel and bolster economic growth from out of towners. 2. Provide free San Francisco-style trolley car connecting Caraluzzi's section of town with Dunkin' Donuts side. Just loop continuously, stopping wherever people need to get off. 3. Public Rec Center with pool is a must (possible water park included). 4. Side walks on roads like Nashville Road, to enhance foot traffic to town, in lieu of driving into town. 5. Stay true to down town style...keep ordinances consistent. 6. Work with furniture store owner, located next to old Bethel Train Depot, to gut and renew that area...revitalize. 7. Entice all downtown owners to stay open late 1 night per week, on the same night. 8. Don't build on new ground...utilize existing, extinct structures to rebuild (like the Danbury-Best Buy/Lowes area) 9. Public Golf Course 10. Leave pick-up on side of road. Bring all downed trees to dump for public usage...create a pick-up day. Also, create a hazardous waste pick-up day, and a bulk pick-up day. 11. POST ALL ELECTION DATE INFORMATION...local elections, budget meetings, town referendum dates. 12. Dis-allow franchises like Burger King, to continue. If needed, ensure they stay within ordinances. 13. Work with Bethel Cinema regarding film festivals.

2019 Bethel still has the CHARM and feel of community of a typical NEW ENGLAND VILLAGE. Many residents of neighboring towns love and come to Bethel for this reason. Bethel is one of the few left. We have to PRESERVE IT. Unfortunately the small businesses, SHOPS with display windows, attractive to pedestrians, are being REPLACED by professional service businesses (lawyers, RealEstates, dentists accountants..) ghost businesses, just signs and closed doors, (they probably are the few ones who can still afford the INCREASING COST OF RENT) They also seem to constitute the major part of the membership of the chamber of Commerce. Meanwhile the ATMOSPHERE DOWNTOWN is quickly CHANGING, losing its character, dismantling the sense of community. I would like to see more CELEBRATION of the history of Bethel and its the surroundings. PT Barnum, Stetson hats etc, . A STATUE of our celebrity P T BARNUM should stand on the island of Barnum square (triangle!) (I volunteer to sculp it, if the town pays for the material ! Circus parade around Barnum theme, at MARDI GRAS a la Carnaval of New Orleans or Rio de Janeiro!!!! By the way, do we get fined or jailed if we, old folks, sit on the bench at Barnum square "PARK" to eat our ice cream from Dr Mike, AFTER SUNSET? The TRAFFIC down town urgently needs to be revised. Make Greenwood, South Street and/or School street ONE WAY streets. TRAFFIC LIGHTS. Needed to get out of Nolan Plaza! And, at the intersections of Greenwood avenue, route 58 and Judd as well as at Grassy Plains and South Street, ADJUST TIMING of ARROWS (to turn left) for more than one car (and a half!) to turn! We need BENCHES at the TRAIN STATION for us old folks and, a different SYSTEM than quarters for the PARKING. (How many for the day while we are in NY city?) I LOVE BETHEL but these little things would make it even better, ideal. Hope you had the patience to read me through, with a smile..although this is serious business! THANK YOU for sending out this survey. It shows that you care, and that adds to the greatness of our town.

2023 1. Re: Visiting Bethel Businesses - My income is limited. I don't shop often. I try to shop locally more often than not. 2. Re: Economic Development - While "realty greed" is extant across the nation, over-development here could destroy Bethel. 3. I do not use the Internet. 4.

2024 Re: Economic Development - Bethel could use some improvement. Our taxes and services are not compatible at this time. First is too high, second is too low.

2025 Bethel is changing, and not for the better. Developers are ravaging the land, building in degraded wetlands, or hillsides, anywhere they want, apparently. Meanwhile my property taxes are going up every year. I wonder how much longer I can live here. There doesn't appear to be any control over this explosion, no master plan to save some wild land or habitat for wildlife - zoning is a mess, mixing residential and industrial zones to the detriment of home owners. Growth is a very mixed blessing. The new library is much too big, sticks out, isn't an improvement, for example. NO MORE. Re: Bethel businesses - I walk to shops in town; do not use my car to shop in Stony Hill. Re: parks - Parloa Park 3 or 4 times a week, all year, for walking. Re: Economic Development -

Development is out of control, destroying the environment/habitat and quality of life. Re: Vehicle purchase - I only buy used cars and drive them for 15-20 years. Re: Internet - I do not use the Internet.

2029 There seems to be an unusual turn over in small businesses, especially on Greenwood Street - can't something be done to encourage the public patronage - perhaps a late closing one night a week. Bethel truly "rolls up its sidewalks" every evening except for the Molten Java coffee house.

2031 Re: Economic Development - I am extremely concerned about the amount of residential development within the town i.e. large condominium projects which bring many more people needing services; large new homes on small pieces of land - why not 2, 3 or 4 acres for houses of 5-6,000 square feet or larger. Why not declare a moratorium on building for a year and come up with a comprehensive plan for expansion of business & industry; density of residential use within specific areas of the town, and open space.

2032 Re: Open Space - Not enough open space. Also, zoning is inconsistent & unacceptable. Re: How Terre Haute should be used. 1. Residential development - NO WAY 2. Commercial Harvest - NO WAY 3. Commercial Development - NO WAY