

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 **small town charm, historic preservation, and other aesthetic issues**. 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.

16 We need a nice entrance to our town. The property across from the Citgo is such an eyesore to our town. It's the first thing you see when you enter our town an overgrown corner and a used car lot. Our town has so much potential and I think a lot of our citizens are very willing to help make our town a better place. I also feel we need an auditor to come in and figure out how to rework the numbers of all the taxes we pay I bet you would find some money for the HIGH SCHOOL!

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 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.

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.

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.

140 I have lived in Bethel for over 23 years and really love it here. I do not want to see Bethel so built up and over-crowded that we lose the small town feel. I would like to see The Bethel School System become one to be admired rather than just acceptable. I would like "The Powers that Be" to look to the future and not just into their personal pocketbooks.

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've 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 turning into a mini-strip mall community and will lose it's small town flavor. We desparately 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.

154 Above all I believe that bethel needs to aggressively hold on to its small town roots. overdeveloping will kill this town. We all want more money and increasing the amount of residents surely brings more money to the town via property tax. However it also brings a bundle of issues. The high school is in need of rebuilding, our roads are getting crowded, open space is dwindling away. We need to head in the direction of Redding not Danbury. Speeding vehicles is also an apparent out of control issue in this town. Cars routinely speed through Greenwood Ave making it dangerous to cross the street. I feel its only a matter of time until there is an incident near the Bethel Cinema. The area is poorly lit and I constantly witness close calls as drivers are often completely oblivious to the crosswalk. As a resident near the schools I'm consistently amazed at the horrific disregard for the 15 MPH speed limit clearly posted. Although I can certainly understand drivers at 25 MPH I'm horrified when cars drive by at what seems to be well over 40 MPH. We need money to fix the high school and fund other projects and at the same time lives are being endangered by speeding vehicles. I propose we start ticketing speeders in town with an overpowering police presence. Wilton, CT is famous for DWI arrests along RT 7. its common knowledge that when you drive through Wilton you should take it easy. We need the same reputation in Bethel. If you're going to break the law and endanger human lives, you must pay a penalty.

156 I believe it is next to impossible to stop growth and deveopment. Those with political & financial clout will push their agenda through regardless of what is best for the town or it's people. People with children will always demand that not enough is being done, although as adults looking back most of us got what we needed to be sucessful from the school system of our time. Does driving up the cost of living here benefit the taxpayer or those collecting on the loans? Will this still be small town America when we submit to these increases and growth year after year? Will what we lose really matter? How can the town keep it's integrity and sell out to big deveopment at the same time? Is Bethel just a few good meals for the development machine to take what it wants before moving on? Maybe it's not important. Not enough people seem to vote or care. Bottom line for me is keep costs as low as possible, put in some environmental improvements, preserve the land, a few bike trails would be nice and heathier school lunches. Oh, South St. is in dire need of repavement. It feels like I'm driving down a crater filled war zone every time I go to Bethel Food Market. All in all, I'm very happy to be a Bethel resident and would just like the town to keep the charm that it has now.

203 I would like to see an improvement in Bethel sidewalks. We live within walking distance of the village, but the sidewalks we use are in poor repair - even dangerous. Good sidewalks are one way to reduce downtown congestion - they encourage people to walk. Walking is good for personal health and for the environment. We retired to Bethel from Long Island and find it to be a good choice for us.

We are somewhat concerned about increase in taxes. We are willing to support education, but do not want to be forced to move from a village we enjoy.

204 We need to get the town's to be more positive and proud of Bethel. The people of Bethel are very down on this community. It is rubbing off on the children. I am hoping to volunteer more and become more active because maybe the people we have as spokesperson are too opinionated and self-centered. I am not one to keep up with the Jones's but the house is a disgrace. Even the inside of the houses need to have more pride taken in it.

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

221 I'd like Bethel to REALLY preserve the small town feel, and NOT convert to another Norwalk with horrible distasteful urban sprawl. There is a time to say NO to more housing. New dense housing is a negative asset to the town, not a positive one.

231 Make it illegal to keep unused or abandoned vehicles on your property. Homes with driveways should not have cars parked on street or grass. Homes with obvious "junk cars" or old furniture should not be allowed in public view.

250 Put lower-wattage bulbs in the downtown lamps, they're far too bright (light pollution). Beautify strip malls, Burger King, and the like (even facades are better than what's there now). Downtown needs more trash cans. Traffic issues need addressing. Extend beautification up to Foodbag area and down to Mobil Station area. Stop allowing ugly buildings like the recent car wash.

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.

322 Bethel is a wonderful small New England town, let's keep it that way.

334 Lower taxes realize that some of us didn't just move in to this town. We don't make the big bucks that are coming in from the big cities. Soon we won't be able to live here with the continuous tax hikes. The originals in this town will be gone. Along with it's quaintness.

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.

348 Get the HS fixed, with A/C in the whole building NOW! We need more sports fields, better care of the ones we have and make the HS football field and Rourke TURF fields! It was great to have the town center redone with nice lights, sidewalks and such a few years ago - WHY didn't we BURY the telephone and electrical lines, they are UGLY! STOP the overbuilding in residential areas and ENFORCE the zoning laws on the number and size of buildings being proposed!

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.

364 Tick problem is very significant - consider controlled deer hunts by residents. Clean-up empty lot across from Citgo station on Greenwood - downtown parking is one option for this spot.

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 its 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 its surrounding neighborhoods do not need any more traffic thru them. Similar 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 been 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 led 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.

368 I think we can be doing a much better job in making people that work for our town more accountable. Each day our downtown community should be weeded, trimmed and the streets cleaned of papers and debris. I have personally followed town crews from time to time around Bethel and discovered they accomplished nothing but wasted gas or fuel! I've talked with town workers and concluded that they lack leadership. They now need some new trucks because they are worn out from so many miles and lack of care. Is there a daily log of where they went or what they did to drive 80 miles during the day? NO.... This is just an example of where improvements can be made and I hope someone implements these simple changes.

389 I WORK IN DANBURY AND THEY ARE ALWAYS IMPROVING THEIR ROADS...BETHEL ROADS, WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN AREA ARE HORRIBLE...PRIME EXAMPLE: SOUTH ST. IT'S LIKE TRYING TO AVOID LAND MINDS...IT HAS BEEN DUG UP SEVERAL TIMES & NEVER PAVED, I USED TO LIVE ON THAT ROAD SEVERAL YEARS AGO & IF I DID TODAY, I'D BE CALLING THE TOWN HALL EVERYDAY! OTHER ROADS IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA ARE ALSO VERY POOR. ALSO, DURING THE VOTING OF THE 2005 G/L BUDGET, WHEN IT DID NOT PASS TWICE, WHY WEREN'T CUTS MADE FROM THE BOARD OF EDUC.? BETHEL TOWN DEPTS. SHOULD NOT BE AFFECTED.I WAS BORN & RAISED IN DANBURY & MOVED TO BETHEL ABOUT 30 YRS AGO & LOVED THE DOWNTOWN QUAINTESS, FRIENDLINESS & LITTLE OR NO CRIME....I WISH TO SEE THAT CONTINUE NOW & IN THE FUTURE...DO NOT BUILD UP BETHEL LIKE DANBURY HAS DONE TO ITSELF. THANK YOU.

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.

423 bethel is a beautiful place- small town feel with friendly people. We should have an online place for residents to post news/events for local awareness...

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.

472 Bethel is a unique town with a lot of potential. I've lived here for 2 years and, despite that I am a renter, not a homeowner, care tremendously about this town. Greenwood Ave. needs a shot of energy, culture. We need to preserve our open space and promote outdoor and cultural activities.

492 Some buildings downtown stand out as needing renovations, both major and minor, although there has been great improvements. More activities on weekends for the community would be ideal, and better advertising, I never know when street fairs, ext... are going on.

507 Enforce residential zoning laws! houses that have cars parked on lawn< decrepit furniture on porches or in yards should be fined> litter is everywhere! CLEAN UP BETHEL>

510 Next survey ask questions about excessive home development and influx of people from New Jersey and New York changing the face of Bethel...

511 Bethel needs to "clean up". The unsightly vehicles that are on home properties. Commercial vehicles should not be allowed, old and unused cars are an eye sore, houses that are run down and overgrown should be given a visit by volunteers from the high school student body to help clean up our town. Community Service should be mandatory for all school children no matter what the age. We need to give back to the community in order for the residents to have a sense of responsibility and awareness. Stop finger pointing and do something to make a difference, something you can see everyday of the year. Rake a lawn, recycle cans, clean up the school yards and fields, volunteer at an event at the library..The people of this town need to engage ALL of the town, not just the same faces over and over.

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!

560 I would love to know why the town did not choose to bury all of the wires downtown when they ripped up & replaced all of the sidewalks and made it look so nice. It has always bothered me to see such beautiful walkways & landscape design and then to look up & see these ridiculous wires going every which way. I'm afraid it is a pretty clear reflection of today's Bethel, it looks great from one angle but from another it is a tangled mess. A project only half completed properly.

575 Let's not make Bethel into Wilton or Newtown.

602 I would love for there to be more community based activities. I would like to maybe see online forums/blog sites where people can read up on and comment on issues related to the town and government. I would really like to see meetings and events in the community calendar. I feel like there's stuff missing from that. Something else I'd like to see is maybe the government website be more informative. I've gone on to look for information on planning and zoning and can't seem to find anything. I love the town and would love to see it maintain it's small town feel and not get over crowded like every other town seems to be doing. I know that's hard to do because populations are just growing, but it's frustrating. Thanks for the opportunity to contribute my voice and I hope that in the future I can get more involved in the town.

620 Bethel downtown has improved visually remarkably. However, someone, somewhere, soon, very soon MUST do something about the eyesore at the end of Chestnut Street. It looks dreadful. Couple this with the spelling error that has such high visibility opposite (the car dealership) where it is quoted "We by cars" - I have to wonder what a visitor's first impression of the town must be when approaching from the Newtown direction or from Chestnut Ridge and whether he or she would bother

to go further into Greenwood Ave. but instead hottail it out to a nicer town? 1. Please ask the garage owner to re-do his signage. 2. Deal with the area on the corner of Chestnut St. and 302. Please!!

674 Bethel is a wonderful town, in so many ways. The schools and downtown area are terrific and we all should be proud. Bethel does, however, seriously lack recreational facilities and budget season is simply an embarrassment.

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

720 A community swimming pool is a wonderful idea and would make our town more Bethel oriented...i am looking forward to this improvement in our community. I am praying that Bethel will not become the home to many condo developments...this creates our town to look messy and would rid us of the lovely small town charm we possess. The teen center seems old and could use some renovation. The high school project has not started yet and this upsets me. Instead of raising more money we should actually start!

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.

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.

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

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.

834 many homes and buisnesses on the other side of the tracks are historic and should be recognized. The side walks and lighting should have been carried to 302/ 53 intersection. Hats off to dolans plaza and all historic renovaters.

866 I wish that there were sidewalks on the streets leading to Town. This would encourage more people to walk instead of driving & increase the area that people who go to Town could explore. I also would like to see the quaintness of the Town continue on Greenwood Ave. towards Danbury. This area of Town lacks the charm of the central area & appears shabby.

867 I think that the town should relook at the golf course idea. It sounded like a wonderful project. I believe they propped 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 porperty values. Local businesses could possibly be asked to set up food stands to help the local economy. The local businesses and amall 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 of towners to Bethel to visit.

873 Stop building condos! Bethel is going to burst from its seams. Consider rerouting traffic one day a week to see how that goes. Huge trucks and loud motorcycles don't make for a "charming" cafe sidewalk brunch, that's for sure. Bethel Public Library is to be congratulated on this survey. Thanks for asking and listening!

897 Bethel is my favorite town in the world! I have always loved it's 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.

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!

955 Use the trust land to develop some revenue as well as a place for local Bethel residents to enjoy. Let's start with a golf course. Later add a town pool. Nothing for FREE. Needs to pay for itself and turn a modest profit to the town. Develop RT for Tax relief to the locals and keep Downtown Bethel as it is. Small and charming.

961 Bethel is my favorite local town and I hope it remains as quaint as it is now. I know you can't exclude certain businesses but there are requirements other towns impose on corporations to keep their towns charming and I hope Bethel will take the same precautions. If Bethel loses its feel, it will lose a lot more in revenue and businesses. So far so good, keep up the good work. I do hope the rumored super car wash/gas station proposed for the former Texaco location, remain just that, rumor. That would be a horrible eyesore in downtown!!! Thank you!

1021 Please be careful about the aesthetic appearance in Bethel. There are a lot of buildings that are really ugly. I would like to see a strict code for architectural and aesthetic appeal. We can't let people slap up whatever they want because most of it is terribly ugly and inappropriate. Perhaps you could create an aesthetics panel to help guide people in the building process.

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.

1043 We could use a Town pool or spray park, municipal golf course, and to do a better job of preserving open space. Bethel has a wonderful charm about it, and more thought needs to be given to sizing things right rather than building bigger developments and buildings.

1055 Need to address speeding problem on Greenwood heading towards Sycamore. I live on Elizabeth St and there are WAY too many people that use the street as a drag strip; cars go WAY too fast down our street, and many homes have small children. Put in some speed bumps or start handing out \$300 tickets, or restrict traffic. Put up a concrete barrier next to the strip mall to prevent people from using Elizabeth as a route from the Spot at night. Is there a vehicle noise ordinance? Too many loud motorcycles driving around. Complete the Ives Trail. Property taxes are crazy and need to be lowered. Bethel should have its own garbage service and also include recycling pickup. Designate in-town streets (like Elizabeth) or areas as historic and prohibit any commercial development. Ex. call the area around Blackman/Elizabeth/South St 'The Sealy District' and make it historic. I hate to see homes being turned into businesses. If you do not act soon, there will be no more down-town residential. Ridgefield uses Ballard Park for free concerts. Why not do something similar with the space in front of the Municipal center?

1058 My main concern is that Bethel is losing its small town charm due to increased buildings and bigger businesses 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 their 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.

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!

1067 The only real negative about where we live is that people speed down our street. We live on Benedict Ave. I did not know when I moved in that it was such a busy road. It is important to me that I be able to walk and ride a bike on my street. You have to be very careful on our road. I know it is impossible but I would love a speed bump or stop sign at the end of my drive way to make people slow down. I am not sure there is anything else that would work. Since that will never happen it is very important to me that there is a community bike path. While living in Westchester we had a bike path (blacktop) that ran through miles of the county. It was great to go biking and rollerblading or even walking on. It would be great to have classes during the day for stay at home moms such as photography, garden club, book clubs, yoga, cooking classes, (basic continuing ed stuff) but during the day so we would not have to rely on our husbands getting home in time to take a class. I love the idea of a community pool. I would love to find out more about many of the parks etc. in this survey. I had no idea they existed. I would love to know more about my elected officials. Where do you get this info? And I would love a jazz radio station since you asked. The music in this area is horrible. I use my mp3 player. and finally, We moved to Bethel because it was the only small town in the area that had a town center where you could walk and shop. It reminded us of Cold Springs, NY. We want to keep it that way.

1074 The Public roads in Bethel need to be maintained and paved. Bethel is a nice small town for all ages.

1113 1. Eliminate overhead wires (all of them) downtown. 2. For every new traffic sign that gets put up require that two get removed. 3. Widen Greenwood Ave between PT Barnum Sq and Bethel Food driveway. 4. Make our public schools the best in the state - it can be done! 5. Hire a "take charge" town manager to oversee all operational and fiscal aspects of town government. The town's inability to deal with long term issues stems from the fact we fall victim of short term limits and lame duck leaders who spend way too much time appeasing those who complain the most and do the least.

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.

1147 This town and state are becoming addicted to taxpayer money. If government spending continues to spiral, all people not in their peak earning years will be forced out, creating a bland, unfriendly transient community.

1150 There's hardly any water in Bethel. I would love to see a manmade pond, brook, or large fountain in a strategic area where many people will get to view it. The town needs something eye-catching, especially along Rt. 6 in the Stony Hill area.

1156 Continue making downtown Bethel more appealing. Make storeowners make the outside building appearances nicer, get rid of tacky store signs. WEED the downtown area - a lot of money was spent to build the area with the clock in front of Greenwoods - just to let weeds take over.

1174 Having lived in Bethel for over 34 years, the horse is out of the barn with regard to maintaining a quiet sleepy New England town. We can't tell where Danbury and Bethel begin and end. The traffic is horrible and getting worse and the quality of life is "0". Noise, pollution, high cost of living and noway to eliminate these problems. It's very sad to see what has happened to the Bethel of the 1950's and 60's, but the whole country is no different. Too many people !!! Too much greed !!!

1180 Clean up the corner of GREENWOOD AVE. and CHESTNUT STREET!!!! This has been an eyesore for too many years...We are a walking community..Get on whoever owns it to make it look better! GET THE B.H.S. project GOING!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

1192 I feel our elected officials should be leaders and look for every opportunity to better the town for its citizens. That is why they were elected, we can hire administrators. Planning ahead with ways to improve the way we live and not be concerned with political gain or getting even with prior officials should be of prime importance. Political acrimony has reached a new low in Bethel and must be eliminated. The unique quality that makes Bethel the attractive town it is should be maintained and developers who want to do excessive building should be denied. The high school needs to be renovated and if additional monies are needed another referendum should be held. Fund raising events to raise money to finish the second floor of the Library should be organized by the town and participation by the townspeople encouraged. The old town hall should be knocked down and the area made into additional parking for the Library and Municipal Center. A new police station is desperately needed as well as major repairs to the South St. Firehouse and ways to accomplish both projects quickly should be a major issue for the current administration and the community should be kept apprised.

1208 I wish Bethel was part of the Magnet School in Danbury. We need underground lighting in downtown. Some of the new landscape trees downtown need to be replaced. Kudos to the new Bethel Educational Foundation!

1214 I think that Bethel needs to focus on keeping a small town feel, while allowing for business and educational and cultural development. We need to look at other towns around us that have done this successfully (Ridgefield, Wilton, and Newtown) to see how to do this successfully with the improvement of our quality of lives, but also to give our children the best opportunities.

1215 I believe that the school improvement issue should be on the top of this town's list. I wish for the town to preserve the "small town" image that we now have. I feel that Bethel is a very nice town and I would like to see it continue to grow as such. There is alot of work to be done and I think that at least some of it should finally be started.

1223 I really enjoy living in Bethel due to it being a small town. I would like to see even more community events.

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!

1236 Fix BHS, allow a municipal golf course, speed up the sewer project, continue to re-vitalize downtown, limit new residential development to single family homes. Lastly, enable more balanced answers

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.

1245 Please provide a rigorous academic curriculum for our students in a state of the art educational facility. Also, could we please do something about all the litter around town. Perhaps fines for littering and/or a litter patrol to clean up the side streets. It's a shame that others ruin the beauty of our town by throwing beer bottles, fast food wrappers, and coffee cups out their car windows. Something really needs to be done about this issue. Let's keep Bethel clean. Thank you for putting together this survey. We appreciate your efforts to enhance our 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!

1267 Many of the questions on this survey could use an "I don't know" response. Using town restaurants 1 - 5 times a month should not be considered a negative. This is an average of once a week. The downtown area is one of the nicer "downtowns" in the region, however Bethel should take advantage of the light poles along Greenwood Ave. by hanging flower baskets during the summer, and hanging larger wreaths and wrapping the poles with lights during the Christmas holiday season.

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 Bixbee'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.

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 Chocolates 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 antique stores 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.

1293 I think we need to stop letting all the Portuguese, Puerto Rican, Mexican, Japanese, African American, Arabic, and Brazilian people in our town. They are messy and dont care about our town. They make our town look dirty.

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!

1299 I work in Bethel in the Stony Hill area. I spend very little time downtown, although I love the area and its shops and restaurants, because it is so difficult to get there from Brookfield. Sorry!

1307 1. I am concerned about the teen center, it's a disgrace - surely we can do better. 2. I am concerned about all the young people out on the street late at night 1-2 AM. 3. I think it's too bad that the CVS pharmacy was permitted to build another large facility. That area was nice for St. Mary's carnival, and it would have made a lovely a lovely park for sitting or events, plus the traffic will be horrendous and noisy. 4. The lower end of Greenwood Avenue near the movie theatre needs work, it needs cleaning up or something. 5. Snow removal on sidewalks is poor, too much ice on sidewalks, snow piles in streets etc. 6. I am always amazed at low voter turnout in Bethel. Locally, both parties need to do more to encourage participation other than newspaper articles and posters.

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.

1344 Bethel needs to maintain it's home town appeal. Not interested in big stores and traffic congestion and loud noisy night spots. Keep it clean, safe where we can provide a quality life for everyone, old to young. Newtown is already over developed as is Danbury, and Brookfield - keep the peace and undeveloped space.

1346 Traffic flow needs improvement, too heavy in downtown- cars travel too fast, heavily congested-especially on weekends. Possible solution, a parking garage w/ a shuttle bus on weekends. Also, corner lot by Citgo station on Greenwood avenue is abandoned/overgrown/and an eyesore. Please have the owners maintain it- or the town should act and bill the owners. Healthwise, a walking/exercise trail would be great. They have several of these in Fl. You can walk or run on the trail and there are stations throughout the trail where you can do exercises (Chin up bars/large logs for situps/monkey bars/balance beams etc.) Economically, the ever increasing price of gas is making it difficult for people to go to work/travel etc.- all issues that affect the economic health of the town. I don't understand how it can be 10 cents higher at one gas station 1 street away from another gas station. I understand the impact of the middle east issues- however, the gas companies can't be reporting record quarterly profits and expect consumers to be happy with the increases. More public transportation would help w/ this issue as well as alternative energy sources. Thank you for providing the survey as a way to voice ideas.

1353 Bethel definately 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

1356 1. More intelligent use of open land. For example, let archery hunters on all open land to help control the raging deer population. 2. Stop virtually all development in Bethel. Let's keep it a nice small town. Why compete with everyone else?

1357 I've noticed the big, old trees in downtown Bethel being cut. It makes our town look ugly and barren. We need to replant the streets and, especially, the parking lots with trees that are going to grown big enough to provide shade and keep the air clean. Dolan Plaza needs trees, as does the Staples/WalMart Plaza complex.

1361 embrace our small town, i dont like condos, i enjoy history and feel its very important.

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 feild 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

1374 Dont make Bethel into another Greenwich or lower Fairfield county town. Bethel is Bethel and should stay that way.

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.

1394 I am frustrated with the stalemate on the BHS project. This needs to be resolved. My child went to parochial schools, but I still see the need to have a competitive educational experience for all children. Zoning needs to be tightened to discourage outside developers from any more high density projects. I am very concerned about the plans the Hubbards have for the property on the Danbury town line. I think the town should buy it, subdivide it with 1 acre size lots that fit the area and sell them, before we have another nightmare on our hands. We need to put together a long term plan to repair and replace the town's sidewalks. This would encourage walking. As mentioned above we need to get rid of the billboards by utilizing the sunset laws. Finally, we need to recongize that many long term elderly folks cannot afford the taxes and provide them with greater tax discounts. I love Bethel and care a great deal about its future.

1420 Congratulations for making this valuable research tool available. I only hope that the results and comments have a positive influence of the community's future. Bethel used to be a friendly small town. Sadly, politics has become a "blood sport" casting a shadow on the community. The constant negativity at meetings, and in the media, presents a poor image to others. This has resulted in the silent majority just becoming disgusted with the system, opting to sit it out. Who would want to become involved, knowing that they would surely be the subject of personal political attacks? No sane person I know. Taxes have run out of sight in proportion to the services provided. Bethel must learn, doing things cheaply doesn't pay in the long run. How many times has Bethel had to replace a roof on a building, or had to address environmentally poor work spaces? too many. The community now finds a new high school is needed. This debate has gone on for what, ten years? My question, why was the facility allowed to fall into such disrepair to begin with? The lack of discipline rates high of the list. The students vandalized their own building, without fear of accountability. Penny wise and pound foolish every time. Frugal Yankees hate to waste money. The town got the shaft when building the Police and Stony Hill Fire Departments. The contractor walked off the site. The town then found out the contractor's bond was bogus. The Police Station flooded before it even opened. The "new" middle school had to have its roof replaced BEFORE the building was completed and again five years later. The school also need to have its heating and cooling system overhauled due to poor design and specifications. Poof, wasted funds. Sleeping at the switch does not engender confidence. I have always considered a community's library to be a valuable asset. While modern technology has changed the way people receive and research information, libraries have done their best to keep up with addressing these issues, delivering services alternatively. Bethel is to be commended for doing a fine job despite the obstacles. My biggest wish for you is better parking so people may better avail themselves of the opportunities that await inside the doors. I always look at potential and hope that some day Bethel will be able to properly marshal its assets. Good people in key positions would go a long way to return Bethel to the fine community it once was.

1452 I think the town should instill requirements for people to keep their lawns and the outside of their houses clean. The town could be so beautiful and has so much potential, but some people keep their houses embarassing and it needs to be regulated. For example, there should not be garbage, run down cars, and furniture in front yards. It ruins the charm that so many people adore about Bethel.

1456 traffic and downtown business. Keeping the small atmosphere.

1462 Bethel's great -- a real piece of New England just beyond NYC suburban sprawl. Train service connecting to Norwalk and beyond is great -- seems that it could be expanded.

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.

1490 Why are there so many lampposts downtown. It looks like a lamppost forest. Who ever decided on the placement of these did no research. They should have been spread out more and could have covered much more of Greenwood Ave. or other streets.

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.

1495 Keep the small town feel Bethel has now!!!

1520 Bethel is trying too hard to impress itself. We need to concentrate on core infrastructure and stop erecting monuments to importance. The future is in cyber libraries, which don't need to be overgrown burdens on resident's wallets. It's ironic that the people most needing a public library are lower income residents, and the cost of this behemoth is driving tax rates up too high for low income individuals to live in Bethel. Bethel needs to remember the value of clean air and open spaces. The most important way to reinforce that commitment would be to drastically reduce taxes on undeveloped land. If people could afford to keep thier open land, this town could keep the innate charm and peace we life-long residents remember. Back when you saw as many meadows and woods as homes. It's probably a losing battle, but for pity's sake stop trying to 'improve' everything and in the process devour our natural resources to pay for it. If we can't reverse this trend Bethel will be just another overcrowded mini-metropolis.

1543 Did not support the new library... do not like it. It should have been in Stony Hill, with more parking; a new building that could have been expanded over the years. In-town library should have been an annex. The redone victorian houses are wonderful and that small town look should have been capitalized on.

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...

1555 Keep Bethel's small town image. This and it's residents is what makes it a great place to live & raise a family. Other comments: I found out about this survey at the Planimetrics workshop on how to improve Bethel. I read USA Today and the NY Daily News. I watch Sports channels - ESPN, YES, SNY.

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.

1571 Can't stand the over-abundance of street lights on Greenwood Avenue. The original ones conflict with the newly installed and the final effect is horrible.

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 Bethel 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- similar to what Ridgefield has recently implemented on Friday nights.

1589 As I drove through downtown this morning I thought how nice it is, but something is marring it badly - a tangle of electric lines. I think the town should consider burying the electric downtown or bringing it in from behind the buildings (i.e. from the streets paralleling Greenwood Avenue).

1591 Downtown Bethel needs a serious facelift! Compared to other neighboring towns we need some landscaping attention. Window boxes are nice but there are other gardens that have been neglected and need attention. The teen center could use some attention -- why not get the kids involved? Simple things like hostas around the trees there and in front of town hall would go a long way. It would also help if the garbage was removed on a more regular basis (downtown, Parloa

Park...). It would also be nice (and safer) if the Victorian lights in the center of town extended down past the businesses from the RR tracks to Blackman Avenue.

1607 traffic is getting real bad. People are not as fiendly on the road. Don't let Bethel turn into another Westport. This is beautiful small classic New England town, still safe, clean, walkable, with town center. Let's keep it that way!!!

1608 Bethel is a great little town but some changes need to be made soon before the town loses its character and charm, it is time to invest in our towns and our homes and our open space. The illegal immigrant population is also becoming an issue, Bethel could easily turn into a place like Danbury. Go Bethel!!!!!!

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 things 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!

1658 slow the traffic down in Bethel; enforce the laws especially zoning; keep Bethel downtown historic; finish the sidewalk project towards Bethel Food as the sidewalks downtown are dangerous; noise ordinance would be great; totally ban fireworks of any kind; dark windows in cars should be outlawed as you cannot see who is going into your neighborhood; there is probably a lot going on in this town that I am not aware of; keep in mind I have lived here for almost 60 years and know very few people anymore; we are planning to sell our home in Bethel and retire in another state. Please make Bethel a place that you can come home to. None of my family resides in Bethel anymore and don't want to; why? how did this happen? We have lost a lot of respect for the town due to the urban sprawl; mismatched building projects; lack of proper drainage; snowplows hitting our mailbox, lights at the end of the drive have been destroyed as they barrel down/up the road; trees are rotting and falling into the road; potholes are everywhere; where is the money being spent other than health insurance and paychecks? I bought a new car and got the tax bill and have to dodge potholes; dare to drive down South Street? disaster; this town should be ashamed of its roads; is anyone checking the reservoir/public water system? has it ever been dredged? who is watching the henhouse? thanks for listening, if anyone is? I am second generation Bethel and it has ended with me; trying to keep people in Bethel.

1664 I love Bethel... I love working here and living here.. and shopping here.. and being here... this is the best small town I have ever lived in... and I have lived in many places... I am very happy to live and work in Bethel. Keep up the good work.. Bethel Powers that Be!

1667 Bury the powerlines in town. Will greatly improve the look of the town.

1689 The Town of Bethel could be on par with Ridgefield or Rye, NY. It has the potential to be a charming, thriving community. Education is extremely important to us and we are surprised how it is viewed in this community. While we supported the budget increase this year, it was difficult given that

we approved the high school building project and it seems like no progress has been made. It just looks like Bethel can't manage its money very well. I think it is awesome that the Bethel Library took the initiative to sponsor this survey and provide this service to the community. Well done.

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.

1720 Bethel is beginning work on its 2007 Plan of Conservation and Development. I was happy to learn that at least one of the consultants from Planimetrics is an advocate of Christopher Alexander's "pattern language" which aims at creating an environment which is human-friendly, supportive of social interaction, and beautiful to be in. Talk to architect Peter Eckert on Greenwood Avenue for more details about Alexander's very practical philosophy about architecture and town planning. Downtown Bethel is an ideal place for community events, festivals, block parties etc. The negative factor is traffic, especially truck traffic on Greenwood Avenue. The noise level can be overwhelming. Traffic is the main physical condition that ruins Bethel's small-town charm. Bethel also needs to find a way to have more affordable housing - real affordable housing, not the \$300,000 condo units proposed by developers under the "affordable housing statute." We need small houses, not McMansions, and we need neighborhoods where neighbors know each other, socialize, help each other, and work together. That creates "small-town charm" even more than old fashioned architecture. A town should be a community of people, not just a physical collection of buildings inhabited by people who don't know each other, or care about each other's needs. Bethel used to be a close-knit community. In the past few years the political scene has become very devisive. Boards and Commissions have to include members of both major parties. It used to be that once on a board or commission, members left their politics outside and worked together. Now the meetings are battlegrounds between the parties, and venues for a few crackpots who crave attention and get it by deliberately pushing people's buttons and making people upset about false issues. The town meeting form of government has deteriorated to the point that it is dominated by a few people who have no solutions, or even interest in finding solutions, but who desperately want a forum with an audience and a microphone. Town meetings are supposed to be an open, productive discussion of issues. If we cannot restore that system, we should change our structure of government.

1723 I am concerned about the large condo developments. I think downtown Bethel may soon get over crowded and loose its small town charm. The town will have to make efforts to maintain its charm, cleanliness, safety and friendly neighborhood atmosphere.

1732 i do like living in Bethel and love the small town charm. i hope we can continue to stay here and would like it to be more affordable for the future of everyone in the town.

1747 speed of traffic on elizabeth street - excessive. designating areas of town, such as elizabeth street as historic districts to encourage responsible renovation and preserve small town charm.

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!!

1768 Bethel is a nice town and I enjoy it every time I visit. Thank You

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

1796 Same as said above.....concerns are traffic in town, lack of green open space, sprawl, taxes (let's not tax our elderly out of town!), zoning issues, and general concern over lack of long term vision for the town and preserving small rural town feeling.

1797 The fact that zoning allowed the CVS to purchase the Dolan lot was outrageous. That should have been set aside for expansion of or building of a new post office. We probably have the worst post office in CT from both a capacity and service standpoint. The new Library building is an eyesore. It took away open space, removed old historic trees and is a real blight. It has ruined the sight lines in the downtown. Why are the old streetlights still lit at night on Greenwood Avenue in the streetscape area when we have the new "old fashioned" streetlights? Why do we need both? Aside from being awfully bright, why are we wasting that much electricity and paying for it? The noise levels in town are out of control. We have got to pass a noise ordinance and enforce it. Motorcycles, loud car radios and noisy mufflers are ruining the quality of life in town. Our house is close to the street and it is impossible to sleep at night because of the noise. Some of the motorcycles are bone jarring with the degree of noise they produce. Taxes are getting out of control. We can afford it but we're concerned about the older citizens on fixed incomes. The education lobby is insatiable. No amount of money is ever enough. They have to be reigned in and the Board of Ed and the Bd. of Finance should be much more responsible. Unfortunately, they're controlled by the education lobby. Bethel used to be a nice, quiet town. Now it's noisy, full of traffic and over developed.

1821 I think there should be an ordinance for commercial property owners to keep lots looking respectable while it's up for sale. It's such an eye sore to see that vacant lot on the corner of Greenwood Ave. and Chestnut St. They should be required to have the property weeded and the grass cut at least once a month. And maybe high school students can help out with this as part of a community service project.

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.

1835 Please keep Bethel the lovely "small town" that it is today and don't let it get too over-developed !!! I would love to move to Bethel some day !

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.

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.

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

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!

1939 The concerts at Town Hall on Sunday are great ! Bethel has the chance to remain a small town within a growing metropolitan (Danbury) area and should make every effort to keep the charm.

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.

1972 Bethel is a very quaint small town, however, the heads of town are making living here very hard. Property taxes have skyrocketed!! The cost of living keeps going up and it's very difficult to maintain your present quality of life when your pay doesn't keep up with the expenses. Bethel is a small town yet it's getting too expensive to live here. I feel bad for the elderly who have been living here their whole life and are being forced to leave because they cannot afford the taxes to their home. The taxes have to come down. I don't know how, but they must come down.

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.

1987 Great idea for having a survey - it was a bit long though. Perhaps next time (yes, please do this again!) you can shorten this to a few areas of focus. I think the renovations downtown a few years ago really improved the look, I only wish there had been some thought to bury the power lines when the road was being reconstructed - it would have greatly added to the downtown beauty.

1997 I would love to see Bethel residents remove all the junk in people's yards. Why should one be allowed to have plastic/metal items pile up in a front or back yard. Please see that the homes in our wonderful town look clean and neat.

1999 The First Student Bus Building and area is very dump-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. A lot of stores and eating places look dump 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 future 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.

2007 Aside from the historic section of Greenwood Ave. it would be nice to improve the landscaping and appearance of the other businesses, i.e. planting trees and gardens. For example the area around the Newtown Savings Bank/CVS complex in particular. The empty lot is an eyesore. Also the boarded up market next to the Burger King is quite unappealing as well.

2008 We need a plan for Plumtrees Rd. It is very ugly and doesn't fit in with the look of our town. Maybe there are some variances that could be enforced for this road. The town should wait on the police department and fire house until the high school is finished and done right. We have a very bad reputation at the high school and the moral is very low. We can't keep good teachers.

2013 Why not make Greenwood Ave. a one-way street and South or School the opposite direction only. (Much improving traffic in town) Also remove parking on the north side (the bendy part) near the Music Store, on Greenwood Ave. Put a traffic light at Dolan Plaza and another at the end of P.T. Barnum Square and the intersection of School St., Wooster and Main St. Another peeve, there isn't a map of Bethel in the "Welcome to Bethel" the Official Guide 2006; nor the new little Bethel Phone Book, why not? Why don't we have a statue of P.T. Barnum somewhere here? I think we are allowing too many condo complexes to be built in this town, which will change and increase the need for more services and schools, etc. We need benches at the train station. For those travelling by train, why are there only parking meters at the station? Most other stops provide an envelope for payment or other less restrictive methods to pay for parking. What is the rest of the library building used for? how about a map of the building somewhere? AND HERE'S A BIG DEAL . . . We could try to get most of the professional people to move off of Greenwood Avenue and into Professional Centers like Village Medicine, thus, allowing more types of stores and shops on the main streets instead of Doctors, Dentists, Lawyers, Insurance Agents and Real Estate Firms that have monopolized and destroyed a major quality of this small towns real flavor.

2014 Bethel is losing it's small town appeal. It's getting too expensive to live here!

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.

2022 My family came to Bethel 39 years ago, attracted by the small town charm, where we quickly became acquainted with neighbors and friends. The Recreation department was very instrumental in helping our children to fit in. Church, school and volunteersing helped me and my husband to enjoy our lives here. I understand that progress is bound to happen, but it really pains me to see so much rapid growth over the past ten years, especially the condos which seem to be springing up all over town. I also believe that it is a shame that the pond at Meckauer Park can't be resurrected somehow

to provide a public swimming area in that lovely park. These remarks are probably not what you are looking for but I do love this town and want to share these feelings.