

# MASTER PLAN 2016



**BETHLEHEM  
NH**

Draft Plan  
December 18, 2016

*“If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail.”*

***-Benjamin Franklin***

*“You can design and create, and build the most wonderful place in the world. But it takes people to make the dream a reality.”*

***-Walt Disney***

**Cover Photo Credit:** Bethlehem Mural; located at outside at WREN in the Bethlehem Village District; all cover photos by Mike Bruno

## *Table of Contents*

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>9</b>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	9
VISION STATEMENT .....	10
GOALS & OBJECTIVES .....	10
PLANNING HISTORY .....	11
CURRENT PLANNING & REGULATORY DOCUMENTS.....	11
THE COMMUNITY OF BETHLEHEM, NH.....	11
<b>CHAPTER 1: LAND USE &amp; COMMUNITY DESIGN .....</b>	<b>15</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	15
MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS .....	16
ZONING DISTRICTS.....	17
EXISTING LAND USE.....	19
GOALS & OBJECTIVES .....	25
SUMMARY .....	26
<b>CHAPTER 2: TRANSPORTATION .....</b>	<b>27</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	27
MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS .....	27
NEW HAMPSHIRE HIGHWAY PLANNING.....	28
NEW HAMPSHIRE ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS.....	29
OTHER CLASSIFICATIONS.....	30
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.....	32
TRANSPORTATION FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES.....	33
GOALS & OBJECTIVES .....	34
SUMMARY .....	34
<b>CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY FACILITIES .....</b>	<b>35</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	35
MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS .....	35
COMMUNITY FACILITIES.....	35
GOALS & OBJECTIVES .....	40
SUMMARY .....	41
<b>CHAPTER 4: UTILITIES &amp; PUBLIC SERVICES.....</b>	<b>43</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	43
MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS .....	43
UTILITIES & PUBLIC SERVICES .....	43
GOALS & OBJECTIVES .....	44
SUMMARY .....	45

<b>CHAPTER 5: POPULATION &amp; HOUSING .....</b>	<b>47</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	47
MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS .....	47
HOUSING DEMOGRAPHICS .....	47
HOUSING HISTORY .....	48
HISTORIC RECORD OF BUILDING PERMITS SINCE 2005 .....	49
HOUSING SUPPLY .....	49
FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS .....	50
GOALS & OBJECTIVES .....	50
SUMMARY .....	50
<b>CHAPTER 6: ECONOMY.....</b>	<b>51</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	51
MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS .....	51
THE REALITIES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT .....	51
THE EXISTING BUSINESS BASE IN BETHLEHEM .....	52
EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS .....	52
GOALS & OBJECTIVES .....	54
SUMMARY .....	54
<b>CHAPTER 7: NATURAL RESOURCES.....</b>	<b>55</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	55
MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS .....	55
IMPORTANT NATURAL RESOURCE ISSUES .....	55
GOALS & OBJECTIVES .....	57
SUMMARY .....	58
<b>CHAPTER 8: RECREATION .....</b>	<b>59</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	59
MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS .....	59
EXISTING RECREATION.....	59
GOALS & OBJECTIVES .....	62
SUMMARY .....	62
<b>CHAPTER 9: CULTURAL &amp; HISTORIC.....</b>	<b>63</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	63
MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS .....	63
HISTORY .....	63
GOALS & OBJECTIVES .....	65
SUMMARY .....	65
<b>CHAPTER 10: REGIONAL CONSIDERATIONS .....</b>	<b>67</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	67
MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS .....	67
BETHLEHEM'S ROLE IN THE REGION .....	67
REGIONAL GROUPS & ORGANIZATIONS .....	68
GOALS .....	69
SUMMARY .....	69
<b>CHAPTER 11: IMPLEMENTATION .....</b>	<b>71</b>
THE IMPLEMENTATION TABLE .....	71



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<b>CHAPTER 12: MAP DOCUMENTS .....</b>	<b>77</b>
MAP #1, ZONING DISTRICTS .....	79
MAP# 2, COMMUNITY FACILITIES & EVACUATION ROUTES .....	81
MAP #3, WHITE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST & PEAKS & RIDGES .....	83
MAP #4, CONSERVATION .....	85
MAP #5, 100-YEAR FLOOD ZONE, AQUIFER & WETLANDS .....	87
MAP #6, WATERSHEDS & HYDROGRAPHY .....	89
MAP #7, WILDLIFE HABITAT LANDCOVER 2015 .....	91
MAP #8, HIGHEST RANKED WILDLIFE HABITAT BY ECOLOGICAL CONDITION .....	93
MAP #9, SOILS .....	95
<b>CHAPTER 13: APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>97</b>
APPENDIX A: STATE OF ADOPTION – BETHLEHEM MASTER PLAN .....	99
APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS – POWERPOINT PRESENTATION .....	101
APPENDIX C: RESPONSES TO Q37 REGARDING “VISION” FOR BETHLEHEM .....	115
APPENDIX D: ANNUAL REVIEW FORMS .....	127

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- Rhienna Miscio ..... Recreation Department
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- Marsha Palazzo ..... Friends of the Bethlehem Public Library
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### Gift Sponsors for the Ice Cream Social...

- The Colonial Theatre
- Drummond's Ski Shop
- Sage
- WREN
- The Village Store
- The Wayside Inn
- Finnegan's Fine Firs
- Cold Mountain Café
- Meadowstone Farm
- Bethlehem Recreation Department
- Bethlehem Country Club
- Rosa Flamingo's
- Fresh Salon & Day Spa
- The Rocks Estate
- The Maplewood Golf Course

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### The following people have attended meetings and/or been instrumental in completing this Plan:

- Michael Bruno ..... Planning Board-Chair
- David Wiley ..... Planning Board-Vice Chair
- Christopher McGrath ..... Planning Board Member
- Stephen Gorman ..... Planning Board Member
- Marie Stevenson ..... Planning Board Member
- Johnathan Stevenson ..... Planning Board Member
- Debra Bayley ..... Planning & Zoning Board Clerk

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- Cassandra (Sandy) Laleme.....Planning Board Selectmen Ex-officio
- Donald Lavoie.....Planning Board Alternate
- Andrea Bryant.....Planning Board (former Planning Board Member)
- Jeanne Robillard.....Planning Board (former alternate Planning Board Member)
- Peter Roy.....Planning Board (former Planning Board Member)
- Libby Staples .....Board of Selectmen (former alternate Planning Board Member)
- Dawn Ferringio .....Planning Board Secretary (former)
- Francis Claffey.....Bethlehem Treasurer
- Rita K. Farrell.....Bethlehem Resident
- Dann .....Bethlehem Resident
- Kevin Roy .....Business Representative

#### Other Meeting Attendees

- April Hibbard .....Administrative Assistant
- Gerald Blanchard .....Board of Selectmen
- Martin Glavac.....Board of Selectmen
- Mark Fiorentino.....Board of Selectmen (former)
- Brett Jackson .....Bethlehem Road Agent
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- Beverly Massani .....Bethlehem Resident
- Katy Kerr.....Bethlehem Resident
- Chris Jensen.....Bethlehem Resident
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- Marilyn Johnson.....Bethlehem Resident
- Karen Neuringer .....Bethlehem Resident
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- Paul Greenlaw .....Bethlehem Resident
- Scott L'Ecuyer.....Bethlehem Resident



## INTRODUCTION

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Bethlehem Master Plan is designed to produce a community-wide document that will guide the growth and development of the Community for the next ten years and beyond. The resulting Plan will help to improve developmental stability and help to ensure the economic well-being of the Community. The Master Plan will also assist in the preservation of the physical vision that residents have for Bethlehem. Building upon the Town's prior Master Plan (Adopted in 2004), the 2016 Bethlehem Master Plan will further enhance the ideals that have been envisioned for the Town while taking into consideration the changes that have taken place locally, in the surrounding communities and the world in the past twelve years.

The Bethlehem Master Plan was developed to be in accordance with NH RSA 674:2. RSA 674:2 requires a community's Master Plan (the Plan) to minimally include:

*“(a) A vision section that serves to direct the other sections of the plan. This section shall contain a set of statements which articulate the desires of the citizens affected by the master plan, not only for their locality but for the region and the whole state. It shall contain a set of guiding principles and priorities to implement that vision.*

*(b) A land use section upon which all the following sections shall be based. This section shall translate the vision statements into physical terms. Based on a study of population, economic activity, and natural, historic, and cultural resources, it shall show existing conditions and the proposed location, extent, and intensity of future land use.”*

RSA 674:2 goes on to say that the Master Plan may also include other sections. In preparing this Master Plan, the Town of Bethlehem has chosen to include the following chapters:

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1) <i>Land Use &amp; Community Design</i> | 8) <i>Recreation</i>              |
| 2) <i>Transportation</i>                  | 9) <i>Cultural &amp; Historic</i> |
| 3) <i>Community Facilities</i>            | 10) <i>Regional Concerns</i>      |
| 4) <i>Utilities &amp; Public Services</i> | 11) <i>Implementation</i>         |
| 5) <i>Population &amp; Housing</i>        | 12) <i>Map Documents</i>          |
| 6) <i>Economy</i>                         | 13) <i>Appendix</i>               |
| 7) <i>Natural Resources</i>               |                                   |

This Master Plan will guide the Planning Board in the performance of its duties and aid in the design and development of ordinances in areas which fall under their authority. The Bethlehem Master Plan will provide legal standing for future actions of the Bethlehem Planning Board and will be maintained as a public record.

As a means to visualize long-term growth for the Community, the Master Plan considers past trends and anticipates future development and potential. The Master Plan is a guide to the future, not an unbending tool. As new trends, regional development, technological advances and viewpoints change, so may the visions and goals of this document change. As a living document, changes as recommended by town officials and the citizens of the Community are anticipated and welcome.

## VISION STATEMENT

Bethlehem takes pride in its past and present – its history, schools, parks, recreation and scenic beauty are treasured by citizens both young and old. The small town qualities of Bethlehem are a hallmark of its existence and the reason why people live, work and play in the Community.

The Town has worked to maintain a balance between the inevitability of growth and the protection of its small town character. Preservation of this character will require meeting the challenges that arise both in the local community and the region. Providing its residents with a safe and friendly environment in which to live, work, shop, learn, and play is also essential to the future of the Town.

*A "Vision Statement" is designed to define what members of the Community value most and is a shared image of what they want the Community to become. A well-conceived vision statement is just one of the elements needed to form a forward-looking basis that provides the perspective necessary to make sensible decisions on Community issues. Community vision statements are normally developed through a joint process that involves a wide variety of Community residents, stakeholders and elected officials.*

*A "Vision Statement" defines a preferred future. It is broad and may be idealistic, but it should be attainable.*

Five vision principles emerged from the responses to the Community Survey, input from Town boards, commissions and departments and from interested citizens:

- 1) Preserve the small town feel of the Community while promoting a vibrant and historic downtown.
- 2) Maintain the rural landscape, the scenic beauty, the recreational opportunities and the overall aesthetics by protecting open and conserved space within the Community.
- 3) Strive for the creation of a lively and walkable Village District where residents can find businesses and activities to improve their quality of life.
- 4) Promote tourism by encouraging the development of tourist-related facilities where visitors to the area can find interesting and attractive venues to explore.
- 5) Encourage well-planned small commercial development and businesses in the Village District and industrially zoned areas of the Community to attract tourism, local spending and to support the tax base.

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goals and objectives for this Master Plan are incorporated into each chapter of the Plan. These were determined according to the needs of the Community, the ideas and objectives that were expressed in the Master Plan Survey and based on the Vision Statement above.

A "Goal" identifies what the Town intends to accomplish. Goals help identify and prioritize the actions required to achieve the Vision. Subsequent chapters provide background, specific objectives, and actions needed to fulfill the goals.

**PLANNING HISTORY**

In the 1960s Bethlehem residents became increasingly concerned about haphazard and premature development in the Community. This concern led to the establishing of the Bethlehem Planning Board in 1969, and the creation of zoning, subdivision, and site plan review regulations in the 1970s. Bethlehem’s first Master Plan was then published in 1979. Over the past thirty years the Community has experienced periods of rapid growth and Bethlehem’s regulatory tools have evolved. A Master Plan update was completed in 1993 and in 2004; the 2016 Master Plan update will now guide planning and zoning in Bethlehem into the future.

**CURRENT PLANNING & REGULATORY DOCUMENTS**

The Town is fully aware of the risks and dangers to the public of development that is uncontrolled and unregulated. The Town has put in place the necessary mechanisms to ensure proper, smart and safe growth in the Community well into the future.

Subdivision Regulations .....	Adopted, 1971; Amended 2014
Zoning Ordinances .....	Adopted, 1972; Amended 2016
Site Plan Review .....	Adopted, 1975
Flood Ordinance .....	April 15, 1986
Flood Maps .....	February 20, 2008
Emergency Operations Plan .....	May 2012
Hazard Mitigation Plan .....	August 14, 2014

**THE COMMUNITY OF BETHLEHEM, NH**

Bethlehem is a town located in northern Grafton County. The 2010 Census estimated there were 2,526 residents representing an increase of 320 from the 2000 Census. Bethlehem is bordered to the north by Whitefield and Carroll, to the west by Littleton and Dalton, to the south by Sugar Hill, Franconia, Lincoln and Livermore (Unincorporated Place) and to the east by Carroll and Hart’s Location. Bethlehem is ranked as the fourth largest town in the state in area, behind Pittsburg, Lincoln and Sandwich, with a total land area of 90.6 square miles.

Elevations in Bethlehem change dramatically over the geographic terrain, ranging from 1,188’ above sea level at Pierce Bridge, to 1,426’ above sea level in Bethlehem Village District to 4,781’ above sea level at the summit of North Twin Mountain, just one of several 4,000 footers in Bethlehem. The major highway through the Community, US Route 302, rises dramatically from Pierce Bridge to the “Village” where it quickly descends down Long Hill toward Littleton.

**HISTORY**

The first permanent houses were established in Bethlehem in 1787, in an area then known as Lloyd’s Hills. The small farming community was eventually incorporated on December 25, 1799 as Bethlehem, with only thirty-three families; the survival of the Community is often credited to the help received from the Native Americans in the area.



The early 1800s saw growth in the Community with the development of a grist mill, five large sawmills and two starch factories. The population in 1950 had grown to 950.<sup>1</sup>

“In the early 1800’s Bethlehem was a way station for stage coaches traveling to Crawford Notch and Portland, Maine. Taverns and blacksmith shops lined Main Street to accommodate the steady stream of travelers passing through. The beauty of Bethlehem began to assert itself and people began to stay. As the numbers grew, settlers added to their farm incomes by taking in summer boarders and eventually building tourist homes.

After the Civil War, Bethlehem emerged as a popular mountain resort known for its clean, crisp air. More than 30 luxury hotels and boarding houses catered to summer guests. Magnificent private cottages adorned the hillsides and Main Street. Vacationers crowded the wooden sidewalks. In the evenings, a stroll on Main Street was a delight to the senses with tantalizing aromas from the hotel kitchens. Music from the dance bands carried through the air. Men and women in formal dress filled the streets with color.”<sup>2</sup>

## CURRENT TOWN STATISTICS

Town Statistics				
Population (US Census)	2010	2000	1990	1980
<i>Grafton County</i>	89,118	81,826	74,998	65,806
<i>Town</i>	2,526	2,206	2,018	1,784
<i>Elderly Population - Percent over 65 (Census 2010)</i>	13.4%			
<i>Median Age (ACS 2010-2014)</i>	43.2			
<i>Median Household Income (ACS 2010-2014)</i>	\$49,589			
<i>Individuals below the poverty level (ACS 2010-2014)</i>	20.9%			
<i>Population Summer Increase (%)</i>	10%			
<i>Change in Winter Weekends (%)</i>	5%			
<i>County</i>	Grafton			
<i>Regional Planning Commission</i>	North Country Council			
<i>Tourism Region</i>	White Mountains			
Municipal Services & Government				
<i>Town Manager or Administrator</i>	No			
<i>Board of Selectmen</i>	Yes; Elected			
<i>Planning Board</i>	Yes; Elected			
<i>School Board</i>	Yes; Elected			
<i>Zoning Board of Adjustment</i>	Yes; Elected			
<i>Library Trustees</i>	Yes; Elected			
<i>Conservation Committee</i>	Yes; Appointed			
<i>Capital Improvement Plan</i>	No			
<i>Capital Reserve Funds</i>	Yes			
<i>Building Permits Required</i>	Yes			

<sup>1</sup> Excerpts taken from the 2009 Bethlehem Hazard Mitigation Plan

<sup>2</sup> Town of Bethlehem website; <http://www.bethlehemnh.org/About.html> “Who We Are”



Town Statistics	
Percent of Local Assessed Valuation by Property Type (NH Department of Revenue Administration-2014)	
<i>Residential Buildings</i>	82.3%
<i>Commercial Land &amp; Buildings</i>	14.4%
<i>Other (including Utilities)</i>	3.4%
Emergency Services	
<i>Emergency Warning System(s)</i>	CodeRED; School reverse calling system; no sirens
<i>Police Department</i>	Full Time Chief; 7 full-time officers; one part-time officer
<i>Police Mutual Aid</i>	Surrounding communities
<i>Fire Department</i>	Full Time Chief; 29 call firefighters
<i>Fire Mutual Aid</i>	Twin State Mutual Aid Fire Association; Northern NH Fire Mutual Aid District
<i>Fire Stations</i>	One
<i>Fire Warden</i>	One & 8 deputies
<i>Emergency Medical Services</i>	Fire Department
<i>Established EMD</i>	Yes
<i>Nearest Hospital</i>	Littleton Regional Hospital; 8 miles
Utilities	
<i>Road Agent</i>	Full-time Road Agent; 5 full-time employees
<i>Public Works Mutual Aid</i>	Yes
<i>Water Works Director</i>	Three Village District Commissioners
<i>Water Supply</i>	Public & Wells
<i>Waste Water Treatment Plant</i>	Yes
<i>Electric Supplier</i>	Eversource
<i>Natural Gas Supplier</i>	No
<i>Cellular Telephone Access</i>	Verizon & US Cellular
<i>Public Access Television Station</i>	Littleton Channel 2
<i>High Speed Internet</i>	Time Warner & Fairpoint
<i>Telephone Company</i>	Time Warner & Fairpoint
Transportation	
<i>Primary Evacuation Routes</i>	Interstate 93, US Route 302, US Route 3, NH Route 142, NH Route 116
<i>Nearest Interstate</i>	I-93, Exits 40 (Local Access)
<i>Nearest Airports</i>	Private airstrip on NH Route 142 (Presby)
	Franconia Airport; 2,305 ft. turf runway, not lighted, no navigational aid.
	Twin Mt Airport; 2640 ft. asphalt; lights; no nav. aid
	Mount Washington Regional Airport, Whitefield, NH, 4,001 ft. asphalt; lights; nav. aids
<i>Nearest Commercial Airport</i>	Manchester-Boston Regional Airport (103 miles)
<i>Public Transportation</i>	No
<i>Railroad</i>	No

Town Statistics		
Housing Statistics (2010)*		
Total Housing Units	1,517	
Total Occupied Housing Units	1103	
Total Vacant Housing Units	414 (34 for rent; 0 rented, not occupied; 35 for sale; 5 sold not occupied; 305 for seasonal, recreational or occasional use; 35 all other vacant	
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	777	
Renter Occupied Housing Units	326	
Other		
School Administrative Unit	SAU 35	
Elementary School	Bethlehem Elementary; K-6	
Middle School & High School	Profile Cooperative; 7-12	
Private School	White Mountain School; Bethlehem Christian School; Woodland Community School; White Pine Montessori School	
Childcare Facilities	2 Licensed; 24 Capacity	
Web Site	www.bethlehemnh.org	
Emergency Page	No	
Local Newspapers	Littleton Courier; Caledonia, Manchester Union	
Conserved Land as a Percent of Land in the Community	Square Miles	Percent of Town Land
*Approximate Square Miles in Community	90.60	100.0%
*Approximate Total Conserved Land (%)	51.16	56.5%
*Approximate Federal Owned land (%)	47.80	52.8%
*Approximate State Owned Land (%)	0.17	0.2%
*Approximate State Municipal/County Land (%)	0.04	0.0%
*Approximate Private Land (%)	3.15	3.5%
*Information derived using GIS Analysis		
Information found in Table 2.1, unless otherwise noted, was derived from the Economic & Labor Market Information Bureau, NH Employment Security, January 2016. Community Response Received 5/21/15; <a href="http://www.nhes.nh.gov/elmi/products/cp/profiles-htm/bethlehem.htm">http://www.nhes.nh.gov/elmi/products/cp/profiles-htm/bethlehem.htm</a>		

## CHAPTER 1: LAND USE & COMMUNITY DESIGN

### INTRODUCTION

Many factors affect land use and community development including physical, transportation, economic and human factors as well as zoning and other town regulations.

### PHYSICAL FACTORS

The primary physical factor influencing land use in Bethlehem has been its topography. The Town of Bethlehem has a land area of approximately 90.6 square miles, plus approximately .06 square miles of water. Of these, 47.80 square miles (52.8%) are within the White Mountain National Forest. The remaining area, approximately 42.8 square miles, consists of open space or is occupied by residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, educational or governmental land uses.

Elevations range from 880' above sea level to 4,781' above sea level at the summit of North Twin; eighteen mountains and hills within Bethlehem exceed 2,000 feet in elevation. A high plateau, at over 1,400' above sea level, is the setting for the Bethlehem Village District, a mixed use, densely developed area along US Route 302. The slope and elevation of Bethlehem's terrain affects development in Bethlehem as does the availability of land outside the White Mountain National Forest. Bethlehem has the highest elevation of any incorporated town east of the Rockies.

### TRANSPORTATION FACTORS

Transportation routes have also effected development in Bethlehem; properties along major thoroughfares tend to also have an increased market value. US Route 302, a major east-west corridor for truck traffic from Canada, Vermont and New Hampshire off Interstate 93 to and from Maine also serves as the Main Street in Bethlehem. Small commercial establishments have sprung up along the road taking the place of the large hotels and larger businesses that once existed.

US Route 3, another major transportation route, is heavily traveled but is almost completely surrounded by the White Mountain National Forest where it passes through Bethlehem, so is not a likely spot for development. US Route 3 is connected to US Route 302 by Trudeau Road, a town-maintained road, which is heavily traveled by passenger vehicles and by trucks going to a private commercial landfill and private commercial gravel pit.

NH Route 116 skirts the northern edge of town; many people work and/or shop in Littleton and use NH Route 116 for their commute. The road is also well-travelled by commercial vehicles travelling to and from Interstate 93 and to points north and south along the Connecticut River Valley. District III along NH Route 116 is a prime area for commercial and light industrial development.

NH Route 142 has seen an increase in residential development. NH Route 18 linking Franconia to Bethlehem has not seen significant change. Brook Road, a Town road linking US Route 302 to NH Route 116, has seen a moderate increase in agricultural and residential development.

No development has occurred at the two I-93 interchanges located within Bethlehem. Exit 40, Interstate 93's intersection with US Route 302, is mostly undeveloped due to the fact that the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests owns the land on three of the four corners. The remaining corner is partially occupied by a private business. At Exit 39, Interstate 93's intersection with NH Route 18, there is also limited development. This may be due to the fact that it is not a full four-leaf clover intersection design.

## ECONOMIC FACTORS

Economic concerns in Bethlehem, New Hampshire and the United States in general over the past seven years have also had an impact on land use and development. Although there was a housing boom in the early 2000's, development trends and changes in land use have slowed as a result of the weakened economy, particularly since the stock market crash in 2008. It is expected that as the economy continues to recover, development and requests for land use changes will increase.

## HUMAN FACTORS

Human factors can also influence land use and community design. To sustain continued growth and development, the Community needs to show at least a modest population increase over time and have the ability to attract and sustain new community members and businesses.

## ZONING

Zoning and other town regulations are the basis for growth, development and land use within a community. Bethlehem's Zoning Districts should be reviewed and adjusted as other physical, economic and human factors change in order to remain consistent with the vision of the Community as represented in the Master Plan Community Survey. *See Map 1, Zoning Districts in Chapter 12.*

## MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

There were three main concerns in response to the question: "What is your biggest concern about the present and future of Bethlehem?" They were (in descending order): dislike of high taxes; environmental and health problems from the landfill, and opposition to box stores.

Other survey responses were:

- Clean up downtown area by improving the condition of buildings along Main Street
- Make zoning adjustments to allow for more business
- Entice more businesses in general through regulations and/or tax credits and other incentives
- Keep the small town feel and preserve downtown character

In response to the question, "What is your opinion of the landfill?" many people stated that it should be closed immediately or that there should be no additional expansion beyond the settlement agreement. Other respondents felt that the landfill is a "good operation"; some felt that the Town should continue to explore mutually beneficial agreements on the future use of the site.



- Nearly 68% of respondents would like to see more commercial development, with an emphasis on bringing more small businesses to Main Street to accommodate residents and invite tourists. The top survey suggestions for new businesses included restaurants, tourism & recreation, professional offices and healthcare; motels, inns and B&B's and cottage and home industries. Respondents least wanted to see big box chain stores, fast food establishments, gambling, storage units and heavy industry.

## **ZONING DISTRICTS**

A brief summary of Bethlehem's current zoning districts is necessary for a better understanding of how zoning has affected the Town and its role in future development. The current zoning ordinance divides the Town into six zoning districts: District I, Main Street; District I; District II; District III, District IV and District V. A summary of the provisions for each of the zones follows: *(see Map #1, Zoning Districts in Chapter 12)*

### **DISTRICT I, MAIN STREET**

District I, Main Street includes property along US Route 302 in the center of town, within the limits of the Village District. Uses include residential, commercial and other uses (see Zoning Ordinances). Minimum lot frontage is 100 hundred feet, minimum lot size is 20,000 square feet and the principal access for all lots in this district shall be US Route 302. District I, Main Street starts at Lewis Hill Road on the west side of Town and ends at Turner Street on the east side of Town.

### **DISTRICT I**

District I includes the properties surrounding the Main Street District. Uses in this district include much of the same uses as District I, Main Street; however special exceptions may be required (see Zoning Ordinances). The minimum lot frontage is 150 feet minimum lot size is 40,000 square feet.

### **DISTRICT II**

District II is the largest district; uses include residential, farms, forestry, sand and gravel. Manufacturing and industrial uses as well as utility buildings and condominiums on private water and sewer systems are allowed only as a Special Exception (see Zoning Ordinances). Minimum lot frontage is 200 feet and minimum lot size is 80,000 square feet.

### **DISTRICT III**

District III is an industrial and commercial zone in the area along NH Route 116 from Alder Brook Road to the Whitefield town line. District III uses include most District II uses as well as manufacturing, industrial, public utilities, saw mills, a municipal transfer station and other similar uses. Construction yards, animal hospitals and research labs are allowed by special exception (see Zoning Ordinances). Minimum lot frontage is 200 feet and minimum lot size is 80,000 square feet.



*District III (NH Route 116): Pinetree Power & Timberwolf Logging  
2011 Aerial Imagery*

## DISTRICT IV

District IV is a light industrial and commercial zone of 140 plus acres on Brook Road. Uses include most of those allowed in District II and light industry. Any other manufacturing, agriculture or heavy commercial use is allowed by special exception (see Zoning Ordinances). Minimum lot frontage is 200 feet and minimum lot size is 80,000 square feet.

## DISTRICT V

District V is the landfill district on Trudeau Road (see Zoning Ordinances).

## GENERAL PROVISIONS (FOUND IN THE ZONING ORDINANCE)

Other ordinances and regulations in Bethlehem address specific subjects and are listed below. For the most part the general provisions pertain to the entire town regardless of zoning district (copies are available at the Planning and Zoning Office). Examples of the Town's ordinances and general provisions include, but are not limited to:

- Aquifer Protection
- Sludge Ordinance
- Sign Ordinance
- Parking Ordinance
- Lighting Ordinance
- Condominium Development
- Condominium Conversion
- Multi-Family Dwelling Unit Development
- Cluster Developments
- Manufactured Housing
- Floodplain Ordinance
- Incinerator Ordinance
- Capital Improvements Program
- Excavations
- Impact Fees
- Telecommunications

Changes have been made as necessary and the ordinances and the regulations implementing them have served the Town well.

## ENFORCEMENT OF ORDINANCES & REGULATIONS

At the 2013 Town Meeting, the Town voted to adopt the International Residential Code (IRC) 2009 and International Building Code (IBC) 2009 building codes; these were amended to the Town's 2011 Zoning Ordinance. In 2003 the Board of Selectmen employed a part-time Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer who has developed a comprehensive enforcement policy. Building permits are required for construction activity with a value over \$3,000. Certificates of Occupancy are issued after approvals from the Building Inspector and Fire Chief. For more detailed information, please refer to the Planning and Zoning Ordinances and Site Plan Regulations.

## PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board meets the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. Five elected members, a Board of Selectmen Liaison and up to five alternates make up the Planning Board. A Planning/Zoning Board Clerk works part-time to assist the planning process. The Planning Board is responsible for site plan review, subdivision approvals, lot line adjustments, recommendations for changes to ordinances and master plan development.

## EXISTING LAND USE

Recognizing and understanding recent and current land use is the first step in planning for the future. Bethlehem's land uses include Residential, Bethlehem Village District, Commercial/Industrial, Recreation, Sand and Gravel, Commercial Landfill, White Mountain National Forest, Open Space and Current Use. The table below provides an overall look at land use trends over the past eleven years and the first eight months of 2015.<sup>3</sup>

### BETHLEHEM LAND USE APPLICATIONS 2004-2015

Land Use Applications 2004-2015								
Year	Approved Subdivisions	Lots	Acres	Withdrawn not Approved	Site Plan Review	Lot Line Adjustments	Condominiums	Improvements Made Post Approval
2004	6	16	179.19		5	1	0	1 road
2005	4	12	594.7		2	1	0	
2006	6	22	428.7		3	7	0	2 roads
2007	5	22	347.67	1	5	0	0	1 road
2008	3	12	175.44		5	1	0	
2009	4	10	437.73		3	1	0	
2010	1	2	44.54		1	1	0	
2011	3	6	30.17		0	2	0	
2012	2	4	50.43		1	3	0	
2013	3	6	292.03		4	2	0	
2014	1	2	8.19		2	3	0	
2015	0	0	0		4	1	0	

### RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

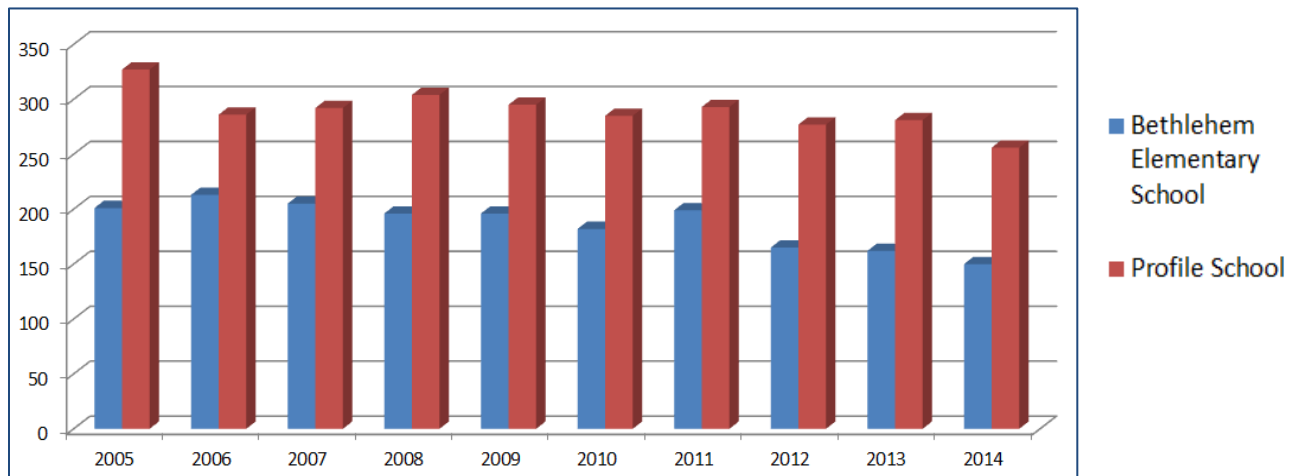
As the chart above indicates, although there have been 38 approved subdivisions since 2004, only 4 roads have been developed post approval; since 2007, no improvements have been made post approval. As a sign of current economic conditions, this is indicative in virtually all communities in northern New Hampshire. Expectations are that as the economy of New Hampshire and the country in general continue to improve, a portion of these approved subdivisions may become a reality. A sudden surge of building activity could bring about an increased population and more demand on the Town's municipal and emergency services. Likewise it could bring in more tax revenue which would be beneficial for the Town and the citizens.

HOUSING (ACS 2009-2013) <sup>4</sup>	
Total Housing Units	1,690
Single-Family Units, Detached or Attached	1,182
Units in Multiple-Family Structures:	
Two to Four Units in Structure	155
Five or More Units in Structure	235
Mobile Homes and Other Housing Units	118

<sup>3</sup> Bethlehem Planning & Zoning Clerk, September 2015

<sup>4</sup> Economic & Labor Market Bureau, NH Employment Security, March 2015; Community Response Received 5/22/14

A population growth rate of 25.17% (1990-2,018 to 2010-2,526) suggests that some of the new lots and/or homes were purchased for use as second homes, or by individuals without children since school populations have not increased with the overall population increase. The chart below shows a steady, but not dramatic, decrease in student enrollment at each of the Town's public schools. Overall school attendance has dropped by 122 since 2005.



The majority of current residential housing stock consists of single family homes. New residential units constructed over the past 10 years have been scattered throughout the Town. There is one senior and/or disabled housing complex that has an average two-year waiting list. The availability of affordable housing and housing for the elderly has increasingly become an issue due to the aging population; the need for elderly housing was repeatedly mentioned in the responses from the Community.

According to the Northern New England Real Estate Network MLS System, the current (August 2015) market for housing in Bethlehem is as follows:

- 51 ..... Single Family Homes
- 7 ..... Condominiums
- 2 ..... Mobile Homes
- 3 ..... Multi-Units Buildings
- 51 ..... Land Parcels

Residential development within Zoning Districts I and II is likely to continue. Bethlehem has been a desirable location for second homes for many years and this trend will likely continue. It also has land available at reasonable prices, which makes living in Town an attractive option for the increasing number of people employed in surrounding areas.

Town officials will strive to balance the need for community development with the desire to maintain the rural character of Bethlehem. Existing zoning ordinances and regulations need to be periodically reviewed to ensure that they are consistent with the Vision of this Master Plan and what residents value most about living in Bethlehem, as evidenced by the results of the Community Survey.



## BETHLEHEM VILLAGE DISTRICT

Development in the Bethlehem Village District is mixed use and includes two zoning districts placing Main Street in District I-Main Street and the branching and parallel streets in District I. Mixed uses are allowed in both districts although commercial enterprises are primarily along Main Street which is surrounded on both sides by residential development. A small amount of commercial development exists along NH Route 142 near the intersection with US Route 302 and on other town streets off Main Street. The zoning ordinances encourage commercial development along Main Street and a variety of allowable uses in District I.

Many of the Town's remaining historic structures and architectural treasures are in the Bethlehem Village District. Fortunately, many of the older homes and other structures have been renovated and are well-maintained by their owners whether as private residences, inns, bed and breakfast operations, or commercial buildings. General Provision 1 of the Zoning Ordinances states that new structures must conform "...in general value, architecture and character to other structures and dwellings in the neighborhood..." This was intended to help preserve historic integrity of the Town.



*Bethlehem Village District from Mapewood to the Bethlehem Country Club  
USGS Topo; USA Topo Maps; National Geographic Society, 2013*

## COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Pine Tree Power and the North Country Environmental Services Commercial Landfill remain the Town's largest commercial operations. Other commercial developments within the last ten years include a mix of restaurants, inns, service providers, farms, cultural and micro-enterprises.

The Mapewood Country Club, having undergone renovations in the early 2000's to include hotel accommodations, remains an active and significant historic landmark in Bethlehem. The Mapewood Country Club & Casino celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2014.

The newly built Arlington Hotel & Conference Center offers fine kosher dining and luxury accommodations as well as an indoor pool and a synagogue.

The Bretton Woods Resort also remains a significant landmark. The Bretton Woods Ski Area, high-end condominiums and a restaurant offer many recreation and employment opportunities to area residents.

Christmas tree farm operations by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF), at the Rocks Estate property on US Route 302, have proven to be very successful. This land use attracts a large number of people to the Community between mid-November and Christmas. Finnegan's Fine Firs, a Christmas Tree farm on Cherry Valley Road, has been similarly successful adding to late fall and early winter visits to the Town. Visitors purchasing a tree or wreath at one of these businesses often make visits elsewhere in Bethlehem, and stay in inns or motels in Bethlehem or the surrounding communities.



*View from the Rocks Estate; SPNHF Tree Farm*

Most new commercial activities have been confined to Main Street in existing commercial buildings. Commercial activities in the remainder of Bethlehem have been scattered and include auto repair facilities, a tree service, day care facilities, a dog grooming and a mail order operation and various home based businesses with little, or limited, retail activity. More recently, several new businesses have located along the Main Street corridor including a health, wellness and fitness facility, a hair salon, gift shops, a creperie, a yarn shop, a landscaping business and plant nursery, a hotel and conference center, a coffee shop, an ice cream shop, a natural home store and a fresh food market. Additionally, the Colonial Theatre is scheduled to undergo major improvements.

In 1999, the Planning Board took the initiative to encourage commercial and industrial development in Bethlehem by proposing two new zoning districts to be carved out of District II. A number of commercial and industrial endeavors would be permitted outright or by special exception. The voters approved these new districts, District III and District IV. A bulk fuel and lubricants business and a concrete and stone materials business are the two of the businesses that have been built in District III. District IV is primarily agricultural.

## **SAND & GRAVEL EXCAVATIONS**

Bethlehem has a number of active sand and gravel pits. Excavations are controlled by the State in some respects under RSA 155-E, but towns retain most powers to regulate the removal of earth to be used as construction aggregate. Most State land use statutes do not give the Planning Board enforcement powers. Excavations are an exception. The Planning Board is the “regulator” and is also given enforcement powers under RSA 155-E. The Planning Board adopted excavation regulations on November 18, 1992.

Four permitted private and commercial sand and gravel pits operate within the Town. The Planning Board inspects permitted pits each year and if all is in order, a permit is issued for the next year.

Bethlehem has significant sand and gravel resources due to the glaciers that covered the area 12,000 years ago, and the deposits they left behind. Reclamation has taken place on several sand and gravel pits in recent years.

## COMMERCIAL LANDFILL OPERATIONS

### *THE HISTORY OF SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT IN BETHLEHEM*

For years Bethlehem operated a town-owned dump on Prospect Street; this facility was gradually phased out as a result of the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts of 1970. In 1976 a local resident opened a 400 x 400 foot private dump in an abandoned gravel pit on Trudeau Road; he sold it in 1983 and it was renamed Sanco. Sanco received a special exception to develop the site into a 14-acre commercial landfill, and then sold it to Consumat, a Virginia manufacturer of incinerator systems. In 1994, Casella bought the property and began landfill operations under the incorporated North Country Environmental Services (NCES) name. NCES continues to operate the landfill at this location.

On November 21, 2011, the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board entered into negotiations for a settlement agreement between the Town and Casella. After drafting an agreement, which the Board of Selectmen voted to approve and the Planning Board did not, it was brought to a vote at a special Town Meeting to vote on a warrant article enlarging District V to 61 acres. The settlement agreement was approved by the Town's voters and included, in addition to "host community" benefits, tipping fees, recycling and curbside pickup, multiple provisions restricting NCES from expanding the landfill beyond the boundaries of District V. The settlement agreement and the zoning change achieved an end to the litigation; it imposed site restrictions and restrictions on the purchase of property for the purpose of the landfiling. Under the restrictions negotiated by the Town and current state permitting, the NCES landfill will likely reach capacity in 2021.

*\*Go to the town website for the complete settlement agreement and for a more detailed history found in the 2004 Master Plan.*

### *LANDFILL GAS TO ENERGY*

Commonwealth Bethlehem Energy, owner of the rights to the methane gas generated at the landfill, applied to the Planning Board for a permit to locate a generator on property owned by the Tucker family that would convert landfill gas to electricity. The electricity would have been sold directly into the grid. Since then NCES has bought back the rights to the landfill/methane gas from Commonwealth Bethlehem Energy.

### *LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE*

Once the current 61 acre landfill reaches capacity, Casella will be responsible for conducting and paying for the 30-year monitoring of the closed site, with oversight by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). Because many survey respondents voiced concern about the possible pollution and health problems attributed to having a landfill site in the community, the Town should take an active role in monitoring test wells and landfill run-off that flows into the Ammonoosuc River. Prior to closure, the Town must develop a plan for maximizing recycling, disposing of town-generated waste, and financing its trash disposal. The Board of Selectmen is currently studying various options, including reopening a town-owned Transfer & Recycling Station.

## OPEN SPACE

Bethlehem is fortunate to have a great deal of open space and undeveloped land. This is due in large measure to the land within the White Mountain National Forest, but several large parcels are also scattered throughout the Town outside of the White Mountain National Forest boundaries. Through GIS analysis, there are more than 55 lots of 100 acres or more. The Forest Service's primary use for its land in Bethlehem is for timber production and recreational activities. As reported by the Town, an annual average of 129 acres of timber has been harvested on Forest Service lands within the Town between 2003 and 2015.

A number of farms offer residents and restaurants the opportunity for farm to table living. Several farms continue operating in Bethlehem including produce, horse, flower, tree and meat farms.

White Mountain National Forest Timber Cuts 2014-2015	
4/1/2003 – 3/31/2004	360
4/1/2004 – 3/31/2005	0
4/1/2005 – 3/31/2006	261
4/1/2006 – 3/31/2007	235
4/1/2007 – 3/31/2008	65
4/1/2008 – 3/31/2009	150
4/1/2009 – 3/31/2010	28
4/1/2010 – 3/31/2011	47
4/1/2011 – 3/31/2012	0
4/1/2012 – 3/31/2013	85
4/1/2013 – 3/31/2014	287
4/1/2014 – 3/31/2015	30

The Town identified its rural character and outdoor recreation opportunities as two key elements that define what Bethlehem is and why people choose to live in the Community. It is important to keep these open areas in mind while planning future uses and land use patterns for Bethlehem.

## CURRENT USE ASSESSMENT

New Hampshire RSA 79A, adopted in 1972, provides a property tax incentive to all qualifying landowners (generally owning more than 10 acres) who agree to maintain their land in an undeveloped condition. The assessed value of this land is based on the capacity of the land to produce income in its *current use* – whether it is managed forest or farm, or unmanaged open space – and not its *potential use*. Current Use Assessment has helped maintain Bethlehem's rural character and its attraction for tourists by keeping land open for productive forests and farms, recreational enjoyment, and wildlife habitat. Open space also helps reduce the costs of municipal services.

The table on the following page presents the number of acres in Current Use in Bethlehem. The total number of acres in Current Use in Bethlehem in 2014 was 18,710, or approximately 32.17% of the Town's land area outside the White Mountain National Forest.

**LAND IN CURRENT USE (ACRES)<sup>5</sup>**

Category	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
<b>Total Land Acres</b>	<b>58,164.53</b>	<b>58,164.53</b>	<b>58,164.53</b>	<b>58,164.53</b>	<b>58,164.53</b>
<b>Acres in Current Use</b>	<b>18,710.00</b>	<b>18,887.00</b>	<b>17,340.44</b>	<b>18,717.85</b>	<b>17,685.89</b>
<i>% of Total Acres in Current Use</i>	32.17%	32.47%	29.81%	32.18%	30.41%
<b>Farm Land</b>	<b>1,207.00</b>	<b>1,245.00</b>	<b>1,222.66</b>	<b>1,325.43</b>	<b>1,470.30</b>
<i>% of Farm Land in Current Use</i>	6.45%	6.59%	7.05%	7.08%	8.31%
<b>Forest Land</b>	<b>15,042.00</b>	<b>15,336.00</b>	<b>13,826.47</b>	<b>15,732.66</b>	<b>14,428.40</b>
<i>% of Forest Land in Current Use</i>	80.40%	81.20%	79.74%	84.05%	81.58%
<b>Forest Land with Documented Stewardship</b>	<b>1,917.00</b>	<b>1,812.00</b>	<b>1,800.67</b>	<b>1,165.83</b>	<b>1,165.83</b>
<i>% of Forest Land with Documented Stewardship</i>	10.25%	9.59%	10.38%	6.23%	6.59%
<b>Unproductive</b>	<b>205.00</b>	<b>217.00</b>	<b>488.99</b>	<b>217.23</b>	<b>394.01</b>
<i>% of Unproductive Land</i>	1.10%	1.15%	2.82%	1.16%	2.23%
<b>Wetland</b>	<b>339.00</b>	<b>277.00</b>	<b>1.65</b>	<b>276.70</b>	<b>227.35</b>
<i>% of Wetland</i>	1.81%	1.47%	0.01%	1.48%	1.29%
<b>Acres Owned for Conservation Land Non-taxable</b>	<b>32,187.00</b>	<b>32,187.00</b>	<b>32,187.02</b>	<b>32,187.02</b>	<b>30,565.13</b>
<i>% of Acres Owned for Conservation Land Non-taxable</i>	55.34%	55.34%	55.34%	55.34%	52.55%
<b>Conservation Land and Current Use</b>	<b>50,897.00</b>	<b>51,074.00</b>	<b>49,527.46</b>	<b>50,904.87</b>	<b>48,251.02</b>
<i>% of Conservation Land and Current Use</i>	87.51%	87.81%	85.15%	87.52%	82.96%

**COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS**

Along US Route 302 there is a strip of commercial development forming near the intersection of I-93 and continuing to the bottom of Long Hill. Although most of the commercial developments are spread out along this area, it is possible that the remaining open areas could be developed incrementally. The Trudeau Road and US Route 302 area may provide opportunities for growth in the future. Additionally, commercial opportunities are possible on NH Route 116 and on NH Route 18 near the Franconia line.

**COMMUNITY DESIGN**

The Master Plan Survey identified the Community's desire to continue to develop small commercial industries and town-wide growth. Within the confines of the law, the Town will continue to encourage new commercial and residential growth based on Best Practices and the regulatory guidelines that are currently in place.

**GOALS & OBJECTIVES****GOAL 1 – KEEP THE SMALL TOWN FEEL**

Review ordinances and regulations so that they coincide with the desire of the Community to maintain the small town nature of Bethlehem, such as developing a Historic Main Street District and preserving areas for rural development. Review Zoning Districts to preserve areas for specifically allowed uses, such as residential and commercial enterprises. Study the establishment of residential districts.

<sup>5</sup> NH Department of Revenue Administration, Current Use Reports; <http://revenue.nh.gov/current-use/reports.htm>; for information prior to 2014, please refer to the 2004 Master Plan.



**GOAL 2 – PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT**

- a) Develop a new and more interesting website that would help attract visitors and investors.
- b) Create a friendly image for the Town – image building.
- c) Join a Chamber of Commerce or other such organization to promote the Town.
- d) Promote the fact the Town has the Fourth Best High School in the State.<sup>6</sup>

**GOAL 3 – PLAN FOR A TRANSFER STATION**

Develop, and keep current, a plan for the operation of a transfer station or alternative waste management options. This plan should identify trash disposal options and funding alternatives, in preparation for the eventual closure of the NCES landfill on Trudeau Road.

**GOAL 4 – MONITOR THE NCES LANDFILL CLOSURE**

Draft and approve a plan to ensure the Town takes a proactive role in reviewing the DES monitoring reports post closure.

**GOAL 5 – SUPPORT SENIOR AND LOW INCOME HOUSING**

Support increasing availability of affordable and senior housing.

**SUMMARY**

Managing land use and understanding development patterns are important for any community. Maintaining the characteristics of Bethlehem that were expressed as desirable by the residents of the Community, can only be achieved by understanding what currently exists and what is expected in the future.

Present and future land use must be thoughtfully planned now and into the future in order to protect the impact on natural resources, the character of the Community, the critical infrastructure and key resources, housing affordability, the tax base and the cost of providing services.

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<sup>6</sup> US News & World Report, 2015

## CHAPTER 2: TRANSPORTATION

### INTRODUCTION

The location, diversity, condition, and efficiency of a town's transportation system have a direct effect on the Community and the region. The general mobility of the residents and visitors, as well as the general economic prosperity of the Community is a function of the Town's roads and transportation services. Good highways, road access, pedestrian facilities, bicycle lanes, and multi-use trail networks compose the infrastructure that contributes to the quality of life for residents and visitors, and may serve to spark development in a particular area.



*Looking east from US Route 302 in Downtown Bethlehem  
Photo Credit: MAPS*

Conversely, certain land uses generate an amount of additional traffic which could require expansion of various aspects of the transportation network. Transportation connections to the outside world are crucial to the economic growth of a community by providing needed access to goods and services not found in the Town. Issues resulting from transportation in and through the Town may point to access management problems, the need for traffic calming techniques, the location of parking facilities, and the need to create a more “walkable” downtown with landscaping and design, crosswalk placement, and pedestrian amenities.

### MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

From the Master Plan Survey the following items were identified:

- The survey responses indicated that 49.85% of the respondents felt that Bethlehem's roads are in “good” condition.
- The majority of respondents indicated that there is a problem with truck traffic in downtown Bethlehem on US Route 302.
- The majority of respondents indicated that traffic speed is a problem in the downtown area on US Route 302; Lewis Hill Road, Agassiz Street & NH Route 142 also were mentioned as having too much “speed”.
- The majority of respondents indicated that traffic noise was the worse in downtown Bethlehem on US Route 302; the cause of the noise was primarily from trucks and trucks using “engine brakes”.
- Turning and entering was indicated as a problem at the intersections of US Route 302 and NH Route 142, US Route 302 and Trudeau Road and downtown at the Post Office, coffee shop and the elementary school.
- 36 respondents felt that “lighting” is adequate; six felt there is too much already, and 21 felt that lighting is inadequate in some places.
- Better roadway shoulders were mentioned for Long Hill, NH Route 142, River Road and Brook Road.
- Of the 36 written responses, 21 felt that signage in town was “no problem”.



- Changes to roadways from unpaved to paved was not a major issue; of 35 written responses, 20 respondents indicated that there was “no problem”; a few roads however were mentioned: “all private roads”, “Beaver Pond and River Road” and “Prospect Street to the bridge”.
- Roads that need improvement received 102 written responses; the common threads were to pave and resurface and to improve drainage; the roads mentioned were primarily Old Franconia, Trudeau and Brook Roads.

### **NEW HAMPSHIRE HIGHWAY PLANNING**

#### **NEW HAMPSHIRE LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

The New Hampshire Long Range Transportation Plan, formally adopted in May 2008 and updated in July 2010 for the years 2010-2030<sup>7</sup>, is a statewide planning document formulated to establish strategic direction for further investment in, and management of, state transportation assets over the next twenty years. Although primarily a state-wide planning tool, the plan focuses on significant local transportation issues such as congestion and the inter-relationship between transportation, economic development and land use.

The Town of Bethlehem’s transportation strategy will be consistent with this vision and aim to implement applicable policies from the statewide plan at the local level in striving for sustainable transportation solutions in the Town.

#### **NEW HAMPSHIRE STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION/TEN-YEAR IMPROVEMENT PLAN (STTIP)**

The development and prioritization of projects in the State of New Hampshire is an ongoing effort to address transportation needs at the local, regional, and statewide levels. The Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan (STTIP), updated periodically, is the result of a complex interactive process.

As a member community of the North Country Council, the Town of Bethlehem has representation on the Regional Planning Commission and its Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). For the most up-to-date information regarding projects affecting Bethlehem the most recent New Hampshire Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan should be consulted; NH Statewide Transportation Improvement Program 2015-2018 (draft).<sup>8</sup>



*Interstate 93  
Photo Credit: 2004 Master Plan*

<sup>7</sup> NH Long Range Transportation Plan, 2010-2030;  
<http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/documents/CompleteLRTP083110.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/stip/documents/FINALSTIPUPDATE45.pdf>

## **NEW HAMPSHIRE ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS**

### **LEGISLATIVE CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

Of the eight possible state legislative classifications, Bethlehem's roads fall into six of these: Class 0, Class I, Class II, Class V, Class VI and Class VII roads; there are no Class III or IV roads in Bethlehem. The table below shows the Legislative Class (LC) as well as the surface type for the roads in Bethlehem.<sup>9</sup>

#### **CLASS 0: PRIVATE ROADS**

There are several private roads serving Bethlehem. Current subdivision regulations require that new roads within subdivisions be built to the Town road Standards but not paved. To be accepted as a Town road they should be upgraded to full compliance with the Town road standards and must be voted on at Town Meeting. Maintenance of these roads is the responsibility of those utilizing the roads. While generally open to the public these roads may be regulated by the property owners.

Highway Mileage in Bethlehem <sup>10</sup>		
Class	Legislative Class Name	Miles
Class 0	Private Road	5.79
Class I	State Highways (Numbered)	26.19
Class II	State Highways (Named)	12.64
Class III	Recreational Roads	0
Class IV	State Streets	0
Class V	Town Highways	51.24
Class VI	Unmaintained Highways	1.64
Class VII	Federal Highways	19.36
Total Miles in Bethlehem		116.87

#### **CLASS I STATE HIGHWAYS (NUMBERED)**

Class I consists of all existing or proposed highways on the primary state highway system, excepting all portions of the highways within the compact sections of cities and towns. The State assumes full control and pays costs of construction, reconstruction and maintenance of its sections with the assistance of federal aid. Legislative Class I highways in Bethlehem include Interstate 93, NH Route 18 and US Route 302.

#### **CLASS II: STATE HIGHWAYS (NAMED)**

Class II highways are all existing or proposed highways on the secondary state highway system, excepting portions of the highways within the compact sections of cities and towns, which are classified as Class IV highways. All sections improved to the state standards are maintained and reconstructed by the state. All other sections must be maintained by the city or town in which they are located until brought up to state standards. The same applies to bridges on Class II highways. Agassiz Street (Route 142), part of Alder Brook Road (Route 116), Maple Street (Route 142), Mt. Agassiz Road (Route 142), Whitefield Road (Route 142) and West Forest Lake Road are Legislative Class II highways in Bethlehem.

#### **CLASS III: RECREATIONAL ROADS**

Class III roads consist of all roads leading to, and within, state reservations designated by the Legislature. NHDOT assumes full control of reconstruction and maintenance; there are no Class III Recreational Roads in Bethlehem.

<sup>9</sup> Legislative Road Classifications; analysis in GIS using NH DOT Road Layer; available from Granit, UNH cooperation Extension

<sup>10</sup> Legislative Road Classifications; analysis in GIS using NH DOT Road Layer; available from Granit, UNH cooperation Extension

**CLASS IV: STATE STREETS**

Class IV highways consist of all highways within the compact sections of cities and towns listed in RSA 229:5. Extensions of Class I (excluding turnpikes and interstate portions) and Class II highways through these areas are included in this classification; there are no Class IV Town and City Streets in Bethlehem.

**CLASS V: TOWN HIGHWAYS**

This classification consists of all traveled highways that the Town has the duty to maintain regularly. There are approximately 51.2 miles of Class V highways in Bethlehem, nearly 16 miles of which are unpaved.

**CLASS VI: UNMAINTAINED HIGHWAYS**

This class consists of all other existing public ways, including highways discontinued as open highways and made subject to gates and bars, and highways not maintained and repaired in suitable condition for travel thereon by the Town for five (5) or more successive years. In Bethlehem, there are approximately 1.64 miles of Class VI highways which include part of Alder Brook Road, Cleos Way, Deer Run Road, Muchmore Road, No Name and Ox Bow Drive.

**CLASS VII: FEDERAL HIGHWAYS**

The Class VII designation is applied to roads that are owned by the federal government. Approximately 19.4 miles of roadway are in this legislative classification.

**FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

Another way to consider road classes is through the Functional Classification System which places roadways in four basic categories: Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial, Collector and Local.<sup>11</sup> Additional information on road classes in NH is available at the NH Department of Transportation website.<sup>12</sup>

**OTHER CLASSIFICATIONS****SCENIC ROADS**

RSA 231:157 allows the establishment of Scenic Roads. These roadways are designated by the Town and are only recognized locally; scenic roads cannot be on Class I or II roads and are not specifically part of a statewide system.

Any road, other than a Class I or Class II highway, "may be designated as a Scenic Road upon petition of 10 persons who are either voters of the Town or who own land that abuts a road mentioned in the petition."<sup>13</sup> Other rules govern the designation of a road as a "Scenic Road": abutters must be notified within ten days of filing the petition, the road must meet approval of the voters at either an annual or special meeting and the road may be undesignated by the voters also at an annual or special meeting.

Work that is performed to a Scenic Road should not include the removal of trees of a diameter of 15" or more or the destruction of old stone walls unless approved in writing by the Planning Board. Designation of a Scenic Road

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/highway\\_functional\\_classifications/section00.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/processes/statewide/related/highway_functional_classifications/section00.cfm)

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/documents/ClassificationofHighways.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Scenic & Cultural Byways; <http://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/scbp/>

does not affect the rights of any abutting landowners on their property and does not affect the eligibility of the Town to receive construction, maintenance, or reconstruction aid.

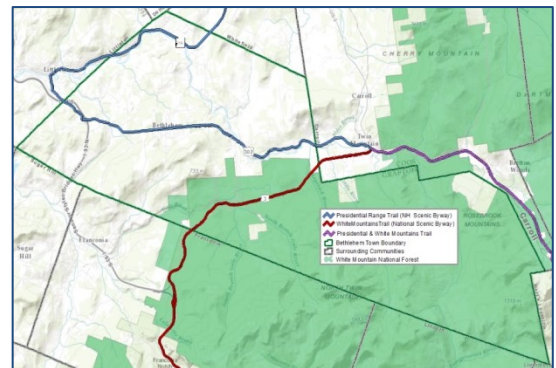
A major component of a town's rural character can be its unpaved and scenic roads. These roads help to retain a sense of history and rural quality that Bethlehem's residents have indicated a strong desire to maintain. The purpose of a designation as a scenic road is to protect the intrinsic qualities of that stretch of road which add to the rural nature of Bethlehem. Scenic Road designation has been given to: Swazey Lane, Gilmanton Hill Road (Old Franconia Road) and Lewis Hill Road.

Generally, future commercial development in Bethlehem should only be permitted to take place at locations where the primary road function is appropriate for the type of development proposed. As part of its Site Plan Review Regulations, the Planning Board should consider the classification of any road on which development is proposed to ensure that the proposed development is appropriate for the existing roadway function.

### SCENIC BYWAYS

A National Scenic Byway, the White Mountain Trail (red and purple lines in map to right), passes through the Town of Bethlehem. The White Mountain Trail runs through Franconia Notch on Interstate 93, cuts through Bethlehem via US Route 3, diverges south in Twin Mountain along US Route 302 to the Kancamagus Highway, then west to its intersection with Interstate 93.

The Presidential Range Trail (blue line in map to right), a NH Scenic Byway, travels from Littleton through Bethlehem along NH Route 116 to eventually make a circular route through two of NH's most beautiful notches, Pinkham Notch and Crawford Notch. The Presidential Range Trail finally returns to Littleton through Bethlehem on US Route 302. The Presidential Range Tour provides extraordinary scenic vistas of the White Mountains and connects visitors and local residents to year-round recreation.



Although most of the land in Bethlehem along US Route 3 is in the White Mountain National Forest, the Town plays an important role in the protection of the scenic and intrinsic qualities of the Scenic Byway. Such planning techniques as access management, environmental protection, historic protection and landscaping are recommendations stated in the White Mountain Trail Corridor Management Plan for those areas abutting the Scenic Byway. The Town of Bethlehem works with NH DOT and the USDA-Forest Service on construction or improvements along this section of roadway.

### MULTI-USE TRAILS & PATHS

There are a multitude of trails and paths in Bethlehem serving walkers, hikers, mountain bikers, horseback riders, cross-country skiers, snowmobilers, and other users. Much of this network, outside of the White Mountain National Forest, is informal and privately owned, with no formal agreements for continued use or signage. There have also been discussions around the creation of a formal multi-use trail along the old railroad beds in Bethlehem. The only formal motorized use trails in Bethlehem are snowmobile corridors. The Mount Agassiz Trail Association and the New Hampshire Trails Bureau manage these trails.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

There currently is no public ground transportation serving Bethlehem, therefore the residents are dependent on private passenger vehicles. Also, employment for the majority of the working residents is in neighboring towns commuting via US Route 302 and NH Route 116.

## **AIR TRANSPORTATION**

No regularly scheduled air service is currently available in Bethlehem, or in the North Country as a whole. Air service is limited to private aircraft, which can fly into Mount Washington Regional Airport in Whitefield, a general aviation facility with an asphalt runway length of 4,001', the Twin Mountain Airport with an asphalt runway length of 2,640' and Franconia Airport with a turf runway of 2,305'.

There are registered heliports in Franconia (state owned) and at the Littleton hospital. The nearest scheduled air service is in Lebanon, NH, about 70 miles south. Manchester-Boston Regional Airport in Manchester is the closest airport with international flights, and is located approximately 120 miles south of Bethlehem.

## **BUS SERVICE**

Only one bus line services the Bethlehem area. Concord Coach Lines offers passenger service twice daily to and from Logan Airport in Boston from the neighboring towns of Franconia and Littleton.

Currently there is no regularly scheduled public transportation in Bethlehem. Several regional organizations do provide transportation services to their clients. Examples of this service are Tri-County CAP and Littleton Regional Healthcare. Littleton Regional Healthcare's "Care-a-Van" service is available to transport patients between home and the hospital for scheduled appointments.

## **RAIL**

There were several rail lines located in the northern part of New Hampshire. Rail service has deteriorated substantially in the last 40 years, and many lines have been abandoned or are relatively inactive.

Only one line currently exists in Bethlehem that still has rails and that is labeled "active" - although no use has been made since 1997. The line was owned by Gilford Transportation Industries, but was bought by the State of New Hampshire in 1992. Although the section of line through Bethlehem is still considered "active", the line is inactive from Woodsville to Bethlehem and from Jefferson to Gorham.

Two abandoned lines exist in Bethlehem and their grades are still in evidence in several locations. One connected Wing Road Station with Twin Mountain and the other connected Bethlehem Junction with the Profile Station in Franconia. Both were abandoned in the 1920s.

The Town has discussed the possibility of a multi-modal trail system in town on these abandoned railroad grades. Many of the abandoned lines have reverted back to land owners, or have been purchased and the rights of way added to private properties. The Town of Bethlehem should research the Rails-to-Trails Program and decide how the Town could best preserve any remaining right-of-ways for recreational, historical, and cultural purposes.

The NH Department of Transportation published a new State Rail Plan in June 2012. A section of this plan relates to abandoned railroads in which the State plan sets a goal for preserving these corridors for future transportation and/or public use; NH DOT currently owns 330.9 miles of abandoned railroad. The active rail system in New Hampshire is composed of 443 miles of rail lines owned by five primary owners.<sup>14</sup>

### **TRANSPORTATION FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

The creation, maintenance, and improvement of the transportation system in Bethlehem are necessary in order for the Town to meet the needs of its residents and to provide a reliable transportation network. The following programs and options should be reviewed by the Town as potential opportunities to meet the transportation goals of this Master Plan.

### **LOCAL SOURCES OF TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT FUNDS**

Capital Reserve Funds are popular methods to set money aside for future road improvements. RSA 35-I mandates that such accounts must be created by a warrant article at Town Meeting. The same warrant article should also stipulate how much money will be appropriated to open the fund, as well as identify which Town entity will be the agent to expend the funds. Once established, communities typically appropriate more funds annually to replenish the fund or to be saved and thus earn interest that will be put towards large projects or expenditures in the future.

### **STATE FUNDING SOURCES**

Highway Block Grants are available annually. The State apportions funds to all cities and towns for the construction and maintenance of Class IV and V roadways. In an April 2015 letter from NH DOT, it was explained that "...for distribution of Apportionment "A" funds, a disbursement is made of approximately \$1,235 for each mile of Class IV and Class V highway inventoried by each municipality and approximately \$11.00 for each person residing in a municipality based on the state planning estimate of population. Apportionment "B" is distributed... under a somewhat more complicated formula as specified in RSA 235:23..."

Block grant payment schedules are as follows: 30% in July, 30% in October, 20% in January, and 20% in April. Any unused funds may be carried over to the next fiscal year. The Town of Bethlehem historically receives about \$95,300 annually (five year average) from State Funding sources; however the total for fiscal year 2016 is slightly higher at \$104,000.

State and Town Bridge Aid programs help to supplement the cost to communities for bridge reconstruction. More information is available through NH DOT.

### **FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES**

Transportation Enhancement (TE) Activities (now called Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)), may be a viable source for improving roads in communities. These funds are provided in an 80/20 match, with the State paying for the majority of the project cost. TE projects must relate to surface transportation and must qualify under one or more of the 12 eligible categories.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> NH DOT; NH State Rail Plan, 2012; <http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/aerorailtransit/railandtransit/documents/FinalStateRailPlan.pdf>

<sup>15</sup>FHA, Transportation Enhancement Activities; [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\\_enhancements/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_enhancements/)



Federal Aid Bridge Replacement Funds are available for the replacement or rehabilitation of town-owned bridges over 20 feet in length. Matching funds are required and applications for funding are processed through the NHDOT's Municipal Highways Engineer.

## **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

### **GOAL 1 – OVERALL MAINTENANCE OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

Provide a safe, functional and well-maintained transportation system which implements the land use plan. It should include roads, parking, sidewalks and non-motorized opportunities.

### **GOAL 2 – TRAFFIC SPEED & NOISE ON ROUTE 302**

- a) Work with the Police Department to seek grant funding to obtain a portable speed monitoring sign.
- b) Continue law enforcement in front of the school to enforce the speed limit.
- c) Lobby the State to provide “No Engine Brake Zone” signs for use in the 30 mph zone.

### **GOAL 3 – REVIEW REGULATIONS & ROAD SPECIFICATIONS**

- a) Look at site plan regulations to review road specifications for private roads to ensure compliance with current standards.
- b) Devise a method of review for road regulations to ensure that road specifications are met before a road goes to Town Meeting for approval as a town-owned road.

### **GOAL 4 – PROVIDE PUBLIC EDUCATION ON ROAD SAFETY & MAINTENANCE**

Educate residents who live on private roads of the importance of maintaining their roads for first responders by adding information to the Town's website. (*Action Item #18 from the 2014 Bethlehem Hazard Mitigation Plan*)

### **GOAL 5 – IMPROVE PARKING AT PUBLIC BAND CONCERTS**

Devise a parking solution for band concerts at the town gazebo.

## **SUMMARY**

The historical relationship between the existing land uses and the transportation network is important, and helps us understand how Bethlehem has evolved into the Community it is today. However, it is also important to approach transportation planning based upon projected and desired community development patterns and character. Some transportation facilities are under the Town's authority for planning, financing, construction and maintenance, and others, serving the larger region, are controlled by the state and federal governments, and are influenced by the Town through advocacy, legislation, and cost-sharing.



## CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### INTRODUCTION

Bethlehem's largest land holdings continue to be the Bethlehem Country Club, the Town Building (which includes the Fire and Police Departments), the town swimming pool and playground and the Information Center/Bethlehem Heritage facility. The Highway Department is located on Prospect Street where a new garage was completed in 1992.

In 1998, the voters approved taking an "owner unknown" parcel and an abutting property to become a Town Forest. The Town acquired a 15.7-acre parcel on Pleasant Street in 2001 for eventual use as a portion of the Country Club. In addition to space at the Town Building, the Police Department utilizes town-owned property on NH Route 116 as a training facility. (*See Map #2, Community Facilities & Evacuation Routes in Chapter 12*)

### MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

- Respondents provided an overall "good" rating for Bethlehem's community services.
- The Bethlehem Public Library and the Gazebo Concerts were ranked excellent more often than good.
- Lack of public parking in the Bethlehem Village District continues to be an issue. Many respondents from the Community Survey felt that there is inadequate parking at the Post Office, Town Building and Elementary School although other locations such as the Colonial Theatre, the Bethlehem Hebrew Congregation and during the Gazebo Concerts were also mentioned; handicap parking did not seem to be a major issue.
- 48% of the respondents felt that there should be more sidewalks.
- High-speed internet was ranked as "poor" by a number of respondents; some respondents indicated a need for "more spending" on high speed internet.
- Of those who responded, most respondents said that spending for community services should remain the same.

### COMMUNITY FACILITIES

#### TOWN BUILDING

The Town Building was built in 1912 and located in the center of Town. It was a gift to the Town by General George Cruft. In 2007, there were renovations to the town building making it handicapped accessible with the addition of an elevator.

All town administrative offices are located in the Town Building; a large meeting space is available on the third floor. The lower level houses the fire department and police department. In 2014 a library was built as result of a generous contribution by Arthur Jobin.



### FIRE DEPARTMENT (BFD) & AMBULANCE SQUAD

The Fire Department staff includes a full-time chief and approximately 29 “call” firefighters and members of EMS. The Fire Department plays a large role in the Community. The Fire Department continues to educate school children on Fire Safety and also charts a Fire Department/EMS Explorer Post for area youth.

The Fire Department has an active Auxiliary which provides food and beverages at long-term fire scenes. Bethlehem Emergency Services maintains a 501C3 non-profit fund raising organization; Bethlehem Emergency Services sponsors the annual Easter Egg Hunt for the kids as well as the Christmas in Bethlehem Celebration.



#### NUMBER OF CALLS THE DEPARTMENT RESPONDS TO IN THE PAST THREE YEARS

Code 111 Building Fires			Car Accidents (Both Fire & Ambulance)	Ambulance Calls	Other Fire Calls (Includes building fires)
Year	Total	With Mutual Aid	Total	Total	Total
2013	7	6	55	222	165
2014	8	4	49	252	138
2015	6	2	44	258	149

While the Fire Station is centrally located in Town, there are issues relating to parking and pedestrian traffic as it abuts both the playground and the post office. The Fire Station was built as an addition to the original Town Building in 1951. Space requirements for fire equipment that is used today are inadequate in the current Fire Station; much of the ancillary equipment also needs updating.

#### FIRE DEPARTMENT INVENTORY OF VEHICLES

- 2000 Ford / Wheel Coach Ambulance (stored at Fire Station)
- 1998 Freightliner Tanker 1800 gallon (stored at Fire Station)
- 2000 Freightliner E-One Rescue Pumper 1250 GPM Pump / 1000 gallons of water (stored at Fire Station)
- 2005 Freightliner E-One Pumper 1250 GPM Pump / 1000 gallons of water (stored at Fire Station)
- 1977 Ford Pickup / Forestry Truck (Stored outside )
- 1948 Buffalo Pumper / out of service (Stored at Chicks Sand and Gravel)

The 2000 Ford Ambulance will be replaced in 2016 as a result of a warrant article. The remaining equipment is in good shape with the next replacement scheduled for 2025 to replace the 2005 pumper in order to comply with the ISO requirement that a pumper be no older than 20 years.

**NH FIRE ACADEMY ON TRUDEAU ROAD**

In 2012 the Commissioner of the NH Department of Safety reviewed possible sites for a North Country training facility; Bethlehem was chosen to be the Ray Burton Fire Academy, a training facility which is located at the old ranger station on Trudeau Road. After approximately a year of work by local volunteers, a classroom and a burn building were completed. The project is now an operational facility.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT (BPD)**

The Bethlehem Police Department is located in the lower level (first level) of the Town Building. The BPD is dedicated to working with the Community to provide exceptional police service in an effective and proactive way to keep the people in Bethlehem safe. The Bethlehem Police Department consists of a full-time Chief, seven full-time officers and one part time officer. The Police Department provides 24-hour coverage for the Town and employs a Patrol Officer who is a trained School Resource Officer and a DARE Officer. In 2015 a student internship program was established.



The Bethlehem Police Department is dispatched through Grafton County Dispatch in North Haverhill; the BPD transports arrested individuals to the Grafton County Jail.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT CALLS FOR SERVICE, 2010-2015**

Years	Calls for Service	MV Accidents	MV Stops	Crimes Against Persons	Crimes Against Property	Crimes Against Society	Other Crimes; DWI/MIP
2013	5052	74	1759	14	41	31	97
2014	5281	81	1896	20	35	27	97
2015	5155	99	2216	29	50	31	60

**POLICE DEPARTMENT INVENTORY OF VEHICLES**

- 2007 Chevy Impala
- 2010 Ford Expedition
- 2013 Ford Explorer
- 2015 Ford Explorer

**HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**

The Highway Garage is conveniently located on Prospect Street behind the Bethlehem Country Club. It comprises an approximately one-acre yard with a 130' x 60' garage that is in pretty good condition. The six full time employees of the Highway Department are responsible for maintaining the Town's roads for safe travel. This is accomplished by plowing snow, hauling dirt and grading and paving town roads. They also use equipment such as a backhoe to keep the drainage ditches clear. Another important task is to keep the trees and brush cut back and off the roads.

The Road Agent stated that to keep up with demands the Town needs to replace one 3-5 ton dump truck every three years, making the life span of each truck 21 years. The one ton should be replaced every seven years, and the loader within 10 years.

*HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT EQUIPMENT SCHEDULE*

Highway Department Equipment			
Equipment	Six year average maintenance cost	Replacement Year	Cost Today
1996 Ford	\$2,171.60		
1998 Freightliner	\$2,645.80		
1999 Freightliner	\$4,865.03	2016	\$150,000.00
2001 Freightliner	\$5,011.38	2017	\$150,000.00
2005 Ford 1-Ton	\$3,507.37	2016	\$100,000.00
2005 Cat Loader		2020	\$170,000.00
2006 Pick Up		2018	\$40,000.00
2007 Freightliner	\$5,703.84	2022	\$150,000.00
2008 Sterling	\$3,131.17	2023	\$150,000.00
2010 International	\$3,220.83	2025	\$150,000.00
2014 Freightliner	\$1,301.76	2029	\$150,000.00
<b>15 Year Total</b>			<b>\$1,210,000.00</b>
<b>15 Year Average</b>			<b>\$80,666.67</b>

**BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY**

The Bethlehem Library was located in the Town Building for 100 years. In 2012, a bequest was received from the estate of Arthur Jobin. Jobin grew up in Bethlehem and was the brother of long-time librarian, Muriel Brown. The property acquired from the Town formerly known as the Maplehurst Hotel and later the Chase Tennis Camp, became the site of the new library which opened in December 2013. The general maintenance of the Library is funded annually in the library's portion of the Town's operating budget.



The new library space offers a wide range of services. The library is completely handicap accessible. Free Wi-Fi and patron computers are available for use. The children's area includes seating for parents as well as a craft area. This space is frequently used by children after school and during summer children's programs. Library circulation includes a multitude of books, DVD's, as well as daily newspapers and magazines. The M. Persis Johnson room houses documents from Bethlehem's rich history, as well as reference materials.

The library also has a widely used meeting room that includes a large screen computer projection system and accommodates up to 50 people. This room is used not only for library programs but is available without charge to Bethlehem groups for meetings.

The programming increased dramatically with the new space. Children's programs include entertainers for summer reading, Lego club, STEM programs, and two preschool story time programs each week. There is also a summer reading program for teens, as well as movie nights and a Prom Expo. Adult programming offerings include learning to quilt and knit, book discussions, humanities presentations and author events.

In the last two years, patron visits increased 78%, and total circulation increased 37%. The Library offered nearly 200 programs in 2015, with total attendance topping 2,200 people. There are over 2,800 patrons on file; of those, 2,300 live or work in Bethlehem. Profile School students are offered a free card, regardless of their home town, for their duration as a student. Over 100 people have purchased a non-resident card. The patrons are served by a library staff of four: director, assistant director, a library associate for children's services, and a clerk; all are currently part-time positions. The library is open six days each week, 34 hours total. The library is staffed by two employees at any given time. The Trustees are currently working on a long-range strategic plan for the library's future.

### BETHLEHEM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The elementary school was built in 1931. At that time it contained grades one through high school. In 1963 it became only an elementary school. Due to increase enrollment an addition was built in 1992 that added two classrooms, an elevator and a kitchen. In 2015 a preschool was added to the enrollment and the heating system was changed over to wood pellets. Enrollment of the Bethlehem Elementary School fluctuates.

#### SCHOOL STATISTICS

Year	Bethlehem Elementary		Profile	
	Enrollment	Free/reduced eligibility %	Enrollment	Free/reduced eligibility %
2015-16	142	46.48%	240	27.50%
2014-15	134	41.79%	244	29.92%
2013-14	131	35.88%	161	29.73%
2012-13	144	47.22%	272	28.31%
2011-12	167	50.30%	270	31.48%
2010-11	160	48.12%	271	27.68%

### PROFILE SCHOOL

The Profile School is a regional school for students from Bethlehem, Franconia, Easton, and Sugar Hill and houses grades seven through twelve. It was originally built in 1976. A new high school was designed and renovations were made to part of the older structures and are presently used for the middle school.

In 2009 the building improvements were completed. An addition includes a full-size gym, new cafeteria with a stage, new administrative offices and an updated library. There were also new athletic fields built. A report conducted by U.S. News & World Report ranked Profile School in the top five of best high schools in New Hampshire for 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016.

### ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS

The Town of Bethlehem also offers four alternate private schools: The White Mountain School, a boarding school for grades 9-12; The Bethlehem Christian School, grades K-8; the White Pine Montessori School; and the Woodlands School, offering a Waldorf-style curriculum.

## RECREATION FACILITIES

The Town of Bethlehem also offers a municipal country club and golf course and an active recreation department. More information is available in Chapter 8, Recreation.

## PARKING

There is limited vehicular parking in Bethlehem. Parking in Town consists of two small municipal lots although the majority of available parking is along Main Street, US Route 302.

Parking along Main Street allows the Village District to maintain its village charm, reminiscent of Bethlehem's "Grand Hotel" era. On weekends during the summer season, the downtown area fills with foot traffic as tourists and townspeople stroll along the sidewalks visiting the Town's eateries or gift and antique shops.

Survey respondents did not identify handicapped parking as an area of concern as accessible parking is available in most areas of town. Respondents to the Community Survey identified the following areas as problematic: the post office, elementary school, and town offices. The post office abuts the town building, the town pool, the town playground and also the fire and police departments.

## PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

Sidewalks are accessible along both sides of US Route 302 from Lewis Hill Road to the Bethlehem Town Building and on one side of NH Route 142. The sidewalk continues along Route 302 on the southerly side to the Maplewood Golf Course. While there is an increased demand for installing a new sidewalk along the northerly side of Route 302 from the Town Building to the Bethlehem Elementary School, this will require action from the NH Department of Transportation and the Bethlehem Village District. Currently, library patrons and students who walk to the library and elementary school must use the sidewalk across the street and cross Route 302.

Many secondary residential streets lack sidewalks. Summertime pedestrian traffic increases with summer visitors and community events. With a pedestrian-friendly Main Street, town-wide support for improved and expanded sidewalks should be encouraged.

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### GOAL 1 – TOWN BUILDING

Create a written maintenance Plan for the Town Building that will ensure continued improvements and proper stewardship of current and future improvements.

### GOAL 2 – PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDINGS (FIRE DEPARTMENT, AMBULANCE SQUAD & POLICE DEPARTMENT)

Prepare a long range plan, based on a feasibility study, for relocating, building or renovating facilities for the Fire Department, Ambulance Squad, Police Department and an Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

### GOAL 3 – HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Provide adequate storage space for the Highway Department equipment.



**GOAL 4 – BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Assist the Library Trustees in their long-range plans for programming and future growth.

**GOAL 5 – BETHLEHEM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Assist the Bethlehem School Board in their efforts to improve parking and school access.

**GOAL 6 – BETHLEHEM COUNTRY CLUB**

Continue to study the current business model and devise a plan to make the Country Club self-sustaining.

**GOAL 7 – PARKING**

Work to pursue a solution for the parking issues in the Village District.

**GOAL 8 – PEDESTRIAN ACCESS**

Work with NH DOT, the Bethlehem School Board and other entities to pursue a solution for improving pedestrian access in downtown Bethlehem, with particular emphasis on access to the Library and the Bethlehem Elementary School.

**SUMMARY**

In the early 1900's, Bethlehem was a popular destination for both tourists and residents; many of the buildings built at that time are still being used by the Town today. The age of these buildings affects the function and the need for updating. Community facilities including the Town Building, the Bethlehem Country Club, the Information Center/Heritage facility, the Highway Garage, Bethlehem Elementary School and Profile School will need improvements in the future to keep up with changes in technology, state, federal and local regulations and with the changing needs of the Community itself.



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## CHAPTER 4: UTILITIES & PUBLIC SERVICES

### INTRODUCTION

Clean water, electricity, and communications systems are all part of the integral infrastructure of the Bethlehem community. These utilities help enhance the quality of life for the residents and businesses of Bethlehem as well as the many tourists that visit the Community.

### MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

- Many respondents to the Community Survey expressed an interest in alternative energy projects; Solar Energy, Geo Thermal Projects, Wind Farms and Hydro Power (in that order) were of interest to respondents.
- Additional comments about alternative energy projects included at least nine comments about Wind Farms (most against), at least ten comments about landfill gas (most for harnessing it) and at least seven comments about harnessing the power of the Ammonoosuc River for hydro power.
- High-speed internet was ranked as “poor” and respondents indicated that spending for high-speed internet should be increased.
- The overall rating of “Community Services” was favorable with 30.76% of respondents indicating that “Community Services” are “Good”. It should be noted that 43.46% of the respondents either had no opinion or did not respond to this question in the Community Survey.
- Some respondents indicated the need for “safe water”.

### UTILITIES & PUBLIC SERVICES

#### **ELECTRICITY**

The Town of Bethlehem receives electricity from Eversource, a Massachusetts based firm (formerly known as Public Service of New Hampshire). Currently transmission lines located in the western end of Town bring power into Bethlehem. A proposal for a 1090 voltage line is currently being considered by the State of NH Site Evaluation Committee (SEC). This line will include appropriately 4.9 miles of overhead lines on 85-100 foot towers ending at a transition substation (#5) that would convert the line to underground burial for the remainder of the line in Bethlehem. The substation would be sited off Route 302 just before the junction with Brook Road and is projected to reach 105 feet in height. This line is part of a proposed 192 mile project (Northern Pass) between Eversource and HydroQuebec of Canada, which runs from Canada to Franklin, NH, where a major substation is proposed. The Bethlehem Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, and Conservation Commission have all voted to oppose this project as proposed.

There is one wood power plant in Bethlehem, the Pine Tree Power Plant, located on Route 116. The Pine Tree Power Plant was built in 1985 and is a “wood chip to energy” electric producer. The plant sells electricity to Eversource. Pine Tree is part of the New England Power Pool; the plant produces 15 megawatts of power and burns 30 tons of wood chips per hour.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Telephone service is provided to the Town through Fairpoint. Wireless service is through Verizon. There are a variety of services available for long distance service to Bethlehem residents. Cable services are provided by the Time Warner Cable Service with offices in Littleton, NH. Residents may seek cable services through alternate cable providers as available (Dish/Direct TV). The Town recognizes the need for expansion of broadband and has participated in surveys and established a Capital Reserve fund to ensure future financial ability for broadband investigation. There is one privately owned 120 foot communications tower in Bethlehem, located on Mt. Agassiz. Due to concerns over visual impacts, the Town of Bethlehem enacted a Telecommunications Ordinance which dictates where towers may be located; because these towers may have regional impacts, surrounding towns and Bethlehem should provide notice to all towns in a 20 mile radius of any intent to erect new towers.

## VILLAGE WATER DISTRICT

The Bethlehem Village Precinct was created by charter in 1893. The Precinct was reorganized in 1925 under a new charter and is now known as the Bethlehem Village District (hereafter referred to as the District). There are three Commissioners which have been granted powers similar to the Board of Selectmen. The District regulates the use of water, the water treatment plant, sidewalks and the sewerage system of village areas. The Bethlehem Village District has a separate tax which is in addition to the town tax rate. In 2016, the District received a \$3,500,000 Department of Agriculture low interest loan and a \$500,000 grant to upgrade the District's water storage system located off Berkley Street and to upgrade the government required household water meters.

## WASTEWATER COLLECTION

The District oversees a wastewater collection system dating back to the 1880s. The wastewater collection treatment plant is a \$2 million dollar facility built in 1995 which sits on a 43 acre parcel of land located on the north central portion of the District off Maple Street. A secondary wastewater treatment facility consists of three aerated lagoons and a pre-treatment system. Collection lines are replaced annually as time and budget allow.

## WATER SUPPLY

The District's water is supplied by two surface water sources. The South Branch of Gale River with a 2.95 square mile watershed and the Zealand River with a 6.3 square mile watershed. These lines travel 12 miles to reach the 1.25 million gallon storage facility. District residents pay a connection fee and an annual user fee. As stated earlier, lines are replaced annually as time and budget allow. When lines are replaced larger diameter lines are used; lines are being buried deeper to prevent freezing of water lines. All lines and hydrants used are of the same style and manufacturer to reduce repair inventory.

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### GOAL 1 – INCREASE BROADBAND CAPABILITIES

Increase broadband capabilities throughout the Community by lobbying utility companies to upgrade their infrastructure to allow for better access by residents.

**GOAL 2 – ADDRESS ALTERNATIVE ENERGY PROJECTS**

Address alternative energy projects and their impact on the aesthetics, property values and the character of the Community as well as the functionality and cost of the project.

**SUMMARY**

The importance of utilities and public services in any community should not be understated; all citizens should have access to clean water and reliable electric power. Likewise, they should have the ability to communicate not just to other members of the Community but also to the world. By increasing broadband capabilities and addressing the impact of alternative energy, the Community will be better situated to encourage new businesses to move to Bethlehem and better able to enrich the quality of life for current businesses, residents and tourists.

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## CHAPTER 5: POPULATION & HOUSING

### INTRODUCTION

Housing is important in every community; the type and quantity of housing can influence the quality of life and the potential growth of a community. Housing is an essential part of the local tax structure and can have an impact on education, recreation and essential town services. The Master Plan, as outlined in RSA 674:2 (II) (I) includes a housing chapter which:

*“...assesses local housing conditions and projects future housing needs of residents of all levels of income and ages in the municipality and the region...and which integrates the availability of human services with other planning undertaken by the community.”*

*About one in 38 households or 3.54 million addresses each year are invited to participate in **The American Community Survey (ACS)**. The ACS is an ongoing survey that provides vital information on a yearly basis about our nation and its people. Information from the survey generates data that help determine how more than \$400 billion in federal and state funds are distributed each year.*

*Through the ACS, we know more about jobs and occupations, educational attainment, veterans, whether people own or rent their home, and other topics. Public officials, planners, and entrepreneurs use this information to assess the past and plan the future.*

This chapter examines the housing trends in Bethlehem based on past and current data from the American Community Survey, a five-year estimate for the period 2010-2014 that is provided by the US Census Bureau. It includes the present number, condition, and types of housing units, a record of building construction and housing demographics based on both the Master Plan Survey and the ACS for 2010-2014. This data, combined with the Master Plan Survey Response are examined to understand their effect on current and future housing needs in Bethlehem.

### MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

- 38.07% of those who responded ranked real estate values as “Extremely” important.
- The majority of respondents live in the Village District.
- Approximately 80 respondents indicated that Bethlehem is not their primary residence.
- The overwhelming majority of respondents indicated that they live in single family homes on either less than two acres (122) or more than two acres (136).

### HOUSING DEMOGRAPHICS

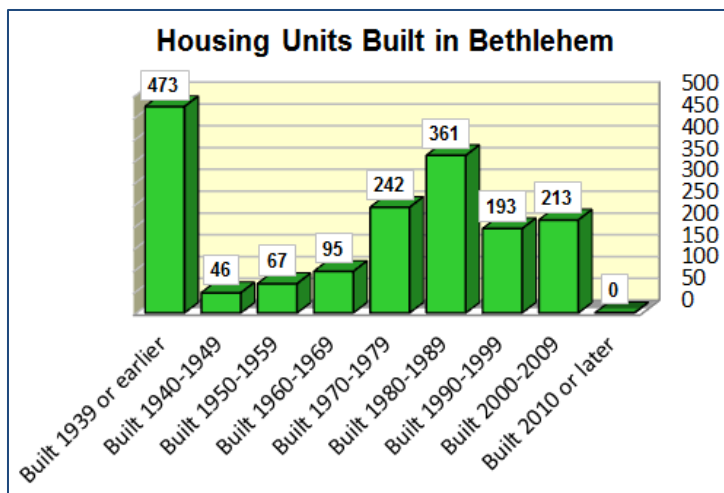
Longevity appears to be the norm in most housing in Bethlehem; 55 respondents indicated that they have lived in Bethlehem for more than twenty years with an additional 19 indicating that they are “lifelong” residents. Other responses to this question were as follows: 1-5 years (32 respondents); 6-10 years (22 respondents); 11-20 years (36 respondents); no response (80 respondents). Additionally, the survey revealed that the most common age group of respondents is 46-65 (163 respondents) years followed by 65 or older (114 respondents). These statistics indicate an aging of the population; respondents under the age of 45 totaled 47, with three respondents in the 18-25 age bracket.

Educationally, Bethlehem respondents indicated significantly high numbers; 249 respondents indicated that they have had higher education including 2-year college, 4-year college and graduate school education. Sixty-nine, or 20.85%, indicated that the highest level of education was high school.

Of the 331 respondents, 98 indicated they are “retired” while 137 indicated they are employed “full-time”. Self-employed respondents numbered 34 while unemployed numbered eleven. Employed seasonally (6) and no response (8) rounded out the employment numbers.

### **HOUSING HISTORY**

As with most of New Hampshire and the US, housing construction has declined since the recession of 2008. In Bethlehem, information from the ACS revealed that the decades of 1970-1979 and 1980-1989 showed the most housing units being built (not including all houses built prior to 1940). It appears that a significant drop in housing construction took place from 1990-1999 and again since 2010. Data for the period post 2010 was not available for this survey.



Although housing units built prior to and including 1940 were determined to be 456, no decade analysis was done so accurate comparisons cannot be made except to say that nearly 28% of the reported housing units in Bethlehem were built during this time period. The information substantiates the fact there are still a large number older homes in Bethlehem.

Statistics from the American Community Survey are seen in the chart below. Periods with the highest level of housing units built are indicated in bold font.<sup>16</sup>

Housing Units/Year Built (DP04)	New Hampshire		Grafton County		Bethlehem	
Total Housing Units	617,286	Percent	51,453	Percent	1,593	Percent
Built 2010 or later	4,480	0.7%	577	1.1%	6	0.4%
Built 2000-2009	73,272	11.9%	6,029	11.7%	197	12.4%
Built 1990-1999	66,071	10.7%	5,111	9.9%	146	9.2%
<b>Built 1980-1989</b>	<b>126,670</b>	<b>20.5%</b>	<b>11,835</b>	<b>23.0%</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>21.0%</b>
<b>Built 1970-1979</b>	<b>92,566</b>	<b>15.0%</b>	<b>7,586</b>	<b>14.7%</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>16.6%</b>
Built 1960-1969	53,811	8.7%	3,940	7.7%	58	3.6%
Built 1950-1959	45,159	7.3%	2,852	5.5%	94	5.9%
Built 1940-1949	23,859	3.9%	1,839	3.6%	38	2.4%
Built 1939 or earlier	131,398	21.3%	11,684	22.7%	456	28.6%
Median Value/Owner Occupied Units	\$237,400		\$212,800		\$146,400	

<sup>16</sup> US Census Bureau; Table DP04



**HISTORIC RECORD OF BUILDING PERMITS SINCE 2005<sup>17</sup>**

	Addition	Alteration	Out Building	New Single Family	New Multi Family	Conversion	Commercial	Demo
2005	5	8	12	27	1	1	2	2
2006	8	3	11	16	1	0	1	2
2007	No data available							
2008	No data available							
2009	5	9	10	11	0	0	0	5
2010	4	2	15	9	1	0	2	7
2011	2	9	9	3	1	0	3	5
2012	3	4	11	7	1	0	6	6
2013	3	6	9	5	1	0	4	1
2014	5	6	7	6	1	0	0	2

**HOUSING SUPPLY**

The current supply of housing in Bethlehem, according to the ACS 2010-2014, consists of primarily of 1 unit, detached housing units (1,017) for a total of 63.8% of all housing in the Community. The median value of owner-occupied units in Bethlehem is \$146,400, significantly under the state value of \$237,400 and the county value of \$212,800. This may be an indication that housing values in Bethlehem have not recovered from the recession to match housing values in other parts of the State.

Type of Housing Units	New Hampshire		Grafton County		Bethlehem	
Total Housing Units	617,286	Percent	51,453	Percent	1,593	Percent
1-unit, detached	391,463	63.4%	32,010	62.2%	1,017	63.8%
1-unit, attached	31,949	5.2%	4,511	8.8%	50	3.1%
2 units	36,226	5.9%	1,927	3.7%	63	4.0%
3 or 4 units	35,921	5.8%	2,957	5.7%	113	7.1%
5 to 9 units	29,200	4.7%	2,890	5.6%	109	6.8%
10-19 units	19,101	3.1%	1,316	2.6%	61	3.8%
20 or more units	37,132	6.0%	1,811	3.5%	70	4.4%
Mobile home	36,204	5.9%	4,026	7.8%	110	6.9%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	90	0.0%	5	0.0%	0	0.0%

The “type” of current housing in Bethlehem is indicated in the chart above. This chart indicates that the percent of housing unit types in Bethlehem is fairly similar to the same percent for the State and County, particularly in the 1-unit, detached category. The most significant percent difference by housing type is in the “2 units” category where the State is at 5.9% and Bethlehem at 2.4%.

Housing Tenure	New Hampshire		Grafton County		Bethlehem	
Occupied housing units	519,580	84.2%	35,127	68.3%	1,079	67.7%
Owner occupied	369,160	71.0%	23,876	68.0%	681	63.1%
Renter occupied	150,420	29.0%	11,251	32.0%	398	36.9%
Vacant housing units	97,706	15.8%	16,326	31.7%	514	32.3 %

<sup>17</sup> Provided by the Town of Bethlehem, May 25, 2016

Like Grafton County, Bethlehem's housing units are approximately 67.7% occupied; this is less than the State percent of occupied housing units at 84.2%. The "housing tenure" chart above indicates that 36.9% of the occupied housing units are renter occupied, while 63.1% are owner occupied. Vacant housing unit numbers, 32.3%, include not only vacant housing units but also those that are used for recreational or occasional use.

### **FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS**

In 2013, the NH Office of Energy and Planning (NH-OEP) municipal, state and county forecasts it was shown that both Grafton County and Bethlehem will likely experience a small increase in population over the next couple of decades. This may be a result of many factors including employment opportunities, commuting distance, affordable housing and available housing.<sup>18</sup>

Project Population	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
NH	1,316,470	1,330,834	1,359,836	1,388,884	1,412,041	1,425,357	1,427,098
Grafton County	89,118	89,666	91,641	93,224	94,359	95,018	95,275
Bethlehem	2,526	2,606	2,729	2,777	2,811	2,830	2,838

The NH Office of Energy and planning forecast shows the biggest increase in population in the five year period from 2015 to 2020, with slightly smaller gains during the next two decades. The total growth rate for the period from 2010 to 2040 is forecast to be 12.35%<sup>19</sup>.

### **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

#### **GOAL 1 – PROTECT REAL ESTATE VALUES**

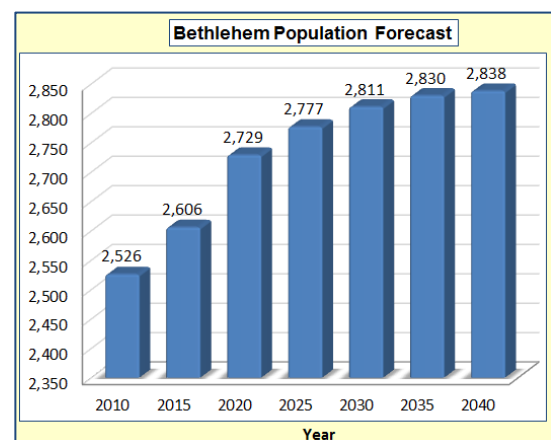
- Encourage economic development.
- Promote Bethlehem as a great place to live, work and play.

#### **GOAL 2 – PLAN FOR FUTURE INCREASE IN POPULATION**

Evaluate future infrastructure and key facility needs.

#### **GOAL 3 – PROTECT HISTORICAL HOUSING UNITS**

- Consider designating a portion, or particular structures, in Bethlehem as an "historic district".
- Support the Bethlehem Redevelopment Association's efforts to assist business owners improve buildings along Main Street.



### **SUMMARY**

Based on the NH Office of Energy & Planning (NH-OEP) forecast, Bethlehem may need to recognize the need for additional housing units to accommodate a modest increase in elderly and overall population. Bethlehem's housing market appeals to a diverse population; it is suitable for first-time home buyers, luxury vacation homes and second homes.

<sup>18</sup> NH OEP; NH Population Projections, Municipalities; Fall 2013, <https://www.nh.gov/oep/data-center/population-projections.htm>

<sup>19</sup> Growth rate calculation: New-Old=Difference; Difference/Old=Growth Rate

## CHAPTER 6: ECONOMY

### INTRODUCTION

Economic development is customarily based upon three objectives:

- 1) Retaining existing business
- 2) Helping the existing business base grow
- 3) Attracting new business.

The end goals of economic development are to increase the Community's tax base and to provide a more vibrant, diverse and rich culture for the citizens of the Community that offers opportunity for residents of all ages.

Approaches that can be used by a Town to reach the economic objectives include improving roads, improving broad band capabilities and providing better water, sewer and telecommunications throughout the Town. In addition, tax incentives or tax relief may serve to entice new business to a community along with general efforts to reduce costs and regulatory burdens.

Communities must create an atmosphere to welcome new business enterprises. These efforts may include the creation of office or industrial parks. Having businesses located in a designated area of the Community will help maintain the rural character of the remainder of the Town.

Overall, the attraction of new businesses to Bethlehem will require a concerted effort to create an inviting environment and to provide marketing that will advertise the Community as a desirable business location.

### MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

- 32.63% of respondents ranked business/employment as "Extremely" important.
- 59 respondents indicated that they work in Bethlehem; 38 indicated they work in Littleton; 190 respondents did not provide a response.
- The top five types of businesses that respondents said they would like to see in Bethlehem are: Restaurants, Tourism/Recreation, Professional Offices/Healthcare; Motels/Inns/B&Bs and Cottage & Home Industries.
- The bottom five types of businesses that respondents said they would not like to see in Bethlehem are: Big Box Chain, Fast Food, Gambling, Storage Units and Heavy Industry.
- 67.67% of respondents indicated that they would like to see more commercial development.
- Tax breaks or tax incentives were cited as the most common ways the Town can entice business.

### THE REALITIES OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The reality is that most economic development does not take place at the level of a small town like Bethlehem. Economic Development is most often part of a broader effort to increase opportunities throughout a region. Grafton County is fortunate to have several agencies that focus on economic development; these include but are not limited

to the Grafton County Economic Development Council (GCEDC), the North Country Investment Corporation (NCIC) and the North Country Comprehensive Economic Development Committee (CEDS) at North Country Council.

Small towns, such as Bethlehem, generally do not have the personnel, expertise or the financial resources to implement broad-based strategies to entice business. Therefore it is vitally important that Bethlehem coordinate with the regional, county and even state resources that can implement strategies to improve business in the North Country.

Bethlehem's new business appeal would likely be somewhat narrow, most likely attracting tourism-related businesses that would take advantage of the Town's natural features (campgrounds and small inns) and/or small businesses (convenience stores or gas stations) that can serve the local population. Construction and building companies may have some potential to establish themselves in Bethlehem as the economy both locally and regionally improves. Home-based and/or cottage industries may also be attracted to the rural nature of Bethlehem. Professional health-related businesses may become viable in Bethlehem.

The limited labor pool in Bethlehem would likely preclude the development of light industry which may require a larger labor pool than Bethlehem and the surrounding area can provide. Bethlehem's location in northern New Hampshire and its distance from major population centers could also curtail the development of small to large commercial enterprises.

### **THE EXISTING BUSINESS BASE IN BETHLEHEM**

Existing businesses in Bethlehem include a mix of industries. The largest employer in Bethlehem is the public school system, which includes Profile Junior/Senior High School and the Bethlehem Elementary School.

### **EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS**

Of the approximately 2,537 persons residing in Bethlehem<sup>20</sup>, it is estimated that 2,004 are sixteen years or older<sup>21</sup> and of those, 1,320 or 65.9% are in the overall labor force. In the five-year estimate of the 2010-2014 American Community Survey (ACS), it is estimated that the unemployment rate in the civilian labor force is 6.1%, on par with the State and County rates (see chart below).

Employment Status	New Hampshire		Grafton County		Bethlehem	
Population 16 years & over	1,080,795	Percent	75,479	Percent	2,004	Percent
In labor force	742,731	68.7%	47,450	63.0%	1,320	65.9%
Civilian Labor Force	741,358	68.6%	47,498	62.9%	1,320	65.9%
Employed	693,329	64.1%	44,957	59.6%	1,240	61.9%
Unemployed	48,029	4.4%	2,541	3.4%	80	4.0%
Armed Forces	1,373	0.1%	42	0.1%	0	0.0%
Not in labor force	338,064	31.3%	27,939	37.0%	684	34.1%
Percent unemployed civilian labor force		6.5%		5.3%		6.1%

<sup>20</sup> US Census; 2014 estimate

<sup>21</sup> American Community Survey, 2010-2014; US Census Bureau

Occupations were also assessed in the 5-year estimate of the ACS. The chart below shows the occupational estimates for New Hampshire, Grafton County and Bethlehem based on an average over the five year period from 2010-2014.

Occupation	New Hampshire		Grafton County		Bethlehem	
Civilian Employed 16 & over	693,329	Percent	44,957	Percent	1,240	Percent
Management, business, science and arts	274,354	39.6%	18,944	42.1%	437	35.2%
Service occupations	109,426	15.8%	8,261	18.4%	234	18.9%
Sales & office occupations	169,716	24.5%	9,235	20.5%	276	22.3%
Natural resources, construction & maintenance	63,186	9.1%	3,841	8.5%	108	8.7%
Production, transportation & material moving	76,647	11.1	4,676	10.4%	185	14.9%

Further analysis of the civilian employed labor force is shown below. Of the 1,240 persons estimated to be in the civilian labor force in Bethlehem, the highest percent is employed in educational services, health care and social assistances services.

Industry	New Hampshire		Grafton County		Bethlehem	
Civilian Employed 16 & over	693,329	Percent	44,957	Percent	1,240	Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting & mining	6,027	0.9%	678	1.7%	5	0.4%
Construction	47,247	7.1%	3,101	6.9%	97	7.8%
Manufacturing	88,217	12.7%	4,375	10.2%	146	11.8%
Wholesale trade	20,927	3.0%	810	1.7%	17	1.4%
Retail trade	87,037	12.6%	5,322	11.2%	219	17.7%
Transportation , warehousing & utilities	26,993	3.9%	1,240	2.79%	34	2.7%
Information	14,629	2.1%	802	1.9%	46	3.7%
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental & leasing	44,427	6.4%	1,725	3.5%	63	5.1%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative & waste management services	71,003	10.2%	3,953	8.6%	88	7.1%
Educational services, health care & social assistance	169,181	24.4%	15,252	33.6%	300	24.2%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation & food services	59,029	8.5%	4,892	11.1%	134	10.8%
Other services, except public administration	29,511	4.3%	1,500	3.3%	58	4.7%
Public administration	27,101	3.9%	1,497	3.4%	33	2.7%

The average commute time for Bethlehem residents is estimated to be less than both the state and county at 19.5 minutes. As the chart below shows, most Bethlehem working residents drive to work alone (82.9%) with only 2.4% carpooling. 3.9% were estimated to walk to work while 8.8% were estimated to work at home.

Workers 16 years & over	New Hampshire		Grafton County		Bethlehem	
Mean travel to work (minutes)	26.6		21.4		19.5	
Workers 16 years & over	676,708		43,761		1,231	
Car, truck or van-drove alone	550,028	81.3%	32,105	73.4%	1,021	82.9%
Car, truck or van - carpooled	53,807	8.0%	4,139	9.5%	29	2.4%
Public transportation	5,752	0.8%	656	1.5%	0	0.0%
Walked	19,736	2.9%	3,606	8.2%	48	3.9%
Other Means	8,232	1.2%	1,020	2.3%	25	2.0%
Worked at home	39,153	5.8%	2,235	5.1%	108	8.8%

Class of Worker (ACS, 2010-2014)	New Hampshire		Grafton County		Bethlehem	
<b>Civilian Employed 16 &amp; over</b>	<b>693,329</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>44,957</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>1,240</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Private Wage & Salary Workers	546,908	78.9%	33,695	74.9%	890	71.8%
Government Workers	95,286	13.7%	7,100	15.8%	193	15.6%
Self-Employed Not Incorporated Business	50,297	7.3%	4,046	9.0%	157	12.7%
Unpaid Family Workers	838	.01%	116	.3%	0	0.0%

American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (ACS, 2010-2014)	New Hampshire		Grafton County		Bethlehem	
<b>Total Household (ACS 2010-2014)</b>	<b>519,850</b>		<b>35,127</b>		<b>1,079</b>	
Median Household Income	\$65,986		\$55,045		\$49,671	
Poverty Level-All families (12 month estimate)	5.7%		5.8%		14.1%	

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### GOAL 1 – ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC GROWTH

Encourage economic and business growth in the Town of Bethlehem.

### SUMMARY

In summary the Town has taken steps to improve economic development by entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the UNH Cooperative Extension's Business Retention and Expansion Program. This program will facilitate a community Taskforce to engage community residents in a visitation program entailing a business survey to identify issues and concerns, opportunities to strengthen local businesses and compile a report for use in assisting the Town in implementation of an action plan.



## CHAPTER 7: NATURAL RESOURCES

### INTRODUCTION

One of the most important elements of a comprehensive plan is the appreciation and protection of a town's natural resources. These are necessary for residents' quality of life, ranging from drinking water to recreational activities.

The 2004 edition of the Master Plan includes an excellent and detailed description of the Town's resources, including climate, geology, wildlife and topography. In 2006 some of that information was updated in the Natural Resources Inventory (2006) commissioned by the Bethlehem Conservation Commission and prepared by Watershed to Wildlife, Inc. *(See Maps #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, #8 and #9 in Chapter 12)*

### MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

- Many respondents felt that the natural beauty of Bethlehem is among the best things about owning property in Bethlehem.
- Respondents indicated that the Town should actively promote more conserved land as follows:
  - 242 more conserved land for recreation
  - 208 more conserved land for wetland or surface water
  - 206 more conserved land for open space for wildlife
  - 191 more conserved land for aesthetics/scenic views
  - 183 more conserved land to protect steep slopes and hilltops
  - 170 more conserved land for forestry
  - 156 more conserved land for agriculture
- A common thread in the survey response was that there is already enough protected land and that too much land is owned by the Town, State or Federal governments; however, in contrast to these statements, the majority of respondents felt that the scenic natural environment and the proximity to the National Forest were “extremely” important.
- Some respondents indicated a desire to protect the drinking water and the environment

### IMPORTANT NATURAL RESOURCE ISSUES

Drawing on that 2006 inventory some of the elements that the Conservation Commission considers important to the Town's future are detailed below.

#### THE NEED TO PROTECT WATER QUALITY

This includes large stratified drift aquifers. Stratified-drift aquifers are an important source of ground water for commercial, industrial, domestic, and public-water supplies in the State of New Hampshire. Approximately 14% of land surface in the State is underlain with stratified-drift aquifers. In and around Bethlehem they consist of stratified, sorted, principally coarse-grained sediments (sands and gravels) deposited by glacial melt-water during the time of deglaciation.

Approximately 6,175.7 acres (9.7 mi<sup>2</sup>) or nearly 11% of the area of Bethlehem is underlain with stratified-drift aquifers. These are located mostly along the Ammonoosuc River floodplain and region, but also found in other areas of the Town.

One particularly large aquifer is over 2,800 acres, and located south of the Ammonoosuc River. It is adjacent to Route 302, under both sides of Trudeau Road, along both sides of Route 3, and south to the Gale River. The majority of this site is within the White Mountain National Forest. The North Country Environmental Services landfill on Trudeau Road lies over part of this aquifer. A second large aquifer (nearly 1,800 acres in size) is located in and around Bethlehem Hollow, River Road, Wing Road, Hazen Road, and Prospect Street areas.

Wells used by communities and private landowners draw groundwater from aquifers. The stratified-drift aquifers represent the greatest potential groundwater source for the Town. These aquifers represent potential usable water sources for municipal purposes and should be protected to ensure their future quality and availability.

Protection should also be given to the bodies of water including the Ammonoosuc River, which flows for approximately 63,161 feet or 12 miles through the Town. Being the largest river in Bethlehem, it is a valuable natural resource for the Town. There are several unnamed tributaries entering the Ammonoosuc River, as well as some larger ones including: Gale River, Zealand River, Baker Brook, Black Brook and Barrett Brook on the western end of Town; and Haystack Brook near Twin Mountain town line.

Miller (Baker Brook Pond) Pond also deserves protection. It is the largest open water pond in the Town at 17.9 acres and it is subject to the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act.

### **THE NEED TO PROTECT WETLANDS**

Wetlands, which are the core of life for the majority of plant and animal species, contain diverse habitats with numerous edge habitats needed by many species. It is estimated that riparian areas and wetlands are utilized by over 90% of the region's wildlife species and provide the preferred habitat for over 40% of local species. Future trails and observation points overlooking these wetlands provide excellent opportunity for wildlife viewing. Based on National Wetland Inventory (NWI) data and aerial photographs, there are just over 1,300 acres of wetlands throughout Bethlehem which represents 2.2% of the land mass.

### **THE NEED TO PROTECT VERNAL POOLS**

Vernal pools are unique and often found in isolated wetlands. A vernal pool is a temporary body of water which provides essential breeding habitat for certain reptiles, amphibians, and crustaceans – such as wood frogs, spotted salamanders and fairy shrimp. Vernal pools fill annually from precipitation, runoff, and rising groundwater. Vernal pools are usually dry by the middle of summer, making them uninhabitable for fish, and therefore a safer environment for amphibians.

### **THE NEED TO PROTECT ROADLESS AREAS**

With increasing development, the number of roadless areas or un-fragmented blocks has been steadily decreasing in many towns in New Hampshire. The increasing number of roads has affected wildlife both directly and indirectly; directly through road kills and indirectly through loss of habitat. Wildlife corridors are also affected by development.

Fortunately, Bethlehem has several large tracts of land which are not impacted by roads. The Town contains 419 un-fragmented blocks of land ranging from 10 acres to over 31,112 acres, the largest one being within the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF). The second largest block, on Beech Hill Road, is 1,130 acres and the third, located in Bretton Woods, is 794.94 acres. There are 52 blocks of un-fragmented land over 100 acres; the breakdown is as follows<sup>22</sup>:

➤ 1,000 Acres.....	2
➤ 500-1,000 Acres.....	3
➤ 100-500 Acres.....	47
➤ 50-100 Acres.....	70
➤ 10-50 .....	297
➤ <10 Acres.....	1880
➤ Total Parcels .....	2299

### **AN APPRECIATION OF BENEFITS AND NEED FOR CONSERVATION EASEMENTS**

At the time of the 2006 study, there were over 33,177 acres of conservation land in Bethlehem. This is equivalent to 57% of the land area but virtually all of that (31,112 acres) is in the White Mountain National Forest.

A conservation easement on private land is a property right that can be bought or sold. It allows property owners to put limitations on their property when an easement is sold, or for another person to set limitation upon the property owner when an easement is purchased. There are efforts by landowners in many NH towns to conserve and connect smaller parcels into one larger, contiguous area of land for conservation.

### **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

#### **GOAL 1 – PROTECT AQUIFERS & OPEN BODIES OF WATER**

Protect aquifers and open bodies of water by ensuring that the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act (Chapter 483.B), Department of Environmental Service (DES) regulations and the Town's aquifer protection ordinance are followed and enforced to ensure future quality and availability.

Particular areas to protect include but are not limited to:

- Miller (Baker Brook Pond) Pond and adjacent vernal pools
- The aquifers
- The Ammonoosuc River Watershed

#### **GOAL 2 – MAINTAIN INVENTORIES FOR NATURAL & SCENIC RESOURCES**

Identify, and keep current, inventories of natural and scenic resources, wetlands, flood plains, groundwater and important habitat areas.

<sup>22</sup> Town of Bethlehem, Board of Selectmen's Office

**GOAL 3 – ADDRESS GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ZONING**

In accordance with state law, revise sections of the Town's Zoning Ordinances, as necessary, to address changes in growth and development locally or regionally that may impact the Town's natural resources and the intent of this Plan to protect them.

**SUMMARY**

The potential for a population increase throughout the Town makes it wise for landowners to sustainably conserve their land, particularly along the Ammonoosuc River. By taking a proactive approach to deal with future development pressures, the scenic vistas and beauty will remain as impressive (or even better) tomorrow as they are today.

## CHAPTER 8: RECREATION

### INTRODUCTION

Recreational opportunities in Bethlehem have attracted visitors and new residents to Bethlehem for many years. Bethlehem and many of the surrounding towns depend upon visitors coming to the region; therefore recreational activities have been designed to attract and entertain both residents and tourists. Bethlehem has made great strides in planning and implementing recreational programs for the residents as well as for its visitors. The programs have flourished providing recreational outlets for both young and old, indoor and outdoor, active and leisure, year-round.

### MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

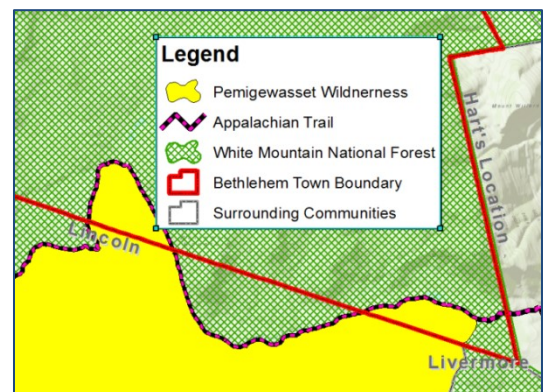
- 35.56% of the respondents indicated that “Outdoor Recreation” is very important.
- 56.8% of the respondents felt that there should be more bicycle paths and/or lanes.
- 63.44% of the respondents felt that there should be more linked trails for snowmobiling and hiking.
- 56.5% of the respondents felt that the Town should not allow ATV accessibility on town roads.

### EXISTING RECREATION

#### WHITE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST

The White Mountain National Forest comprises approximately 52.8% of the land in Bethlehem. Currently, there are several hiking, cross-country ski and snowmobile trails in Bethlehem, many of which connect to the White Mountain National Forest.

A small portion of the Appalachian Trail meanders into Town from Lincoln to the southeast, back into Lincoln and then into Bethlehem and into Hart's Location. Additionally, a small portion of the Pemigewasset Wilderness on the south side of the Appalachian Trail is also located within the Town's boundaries. *(See Map #3, White Mountain National Forest & Peaks & Ridges in Chapter 12)*



#### ALPINE SPORTS

Bethlehem is conveniently situated close to numerous major northern New England ski areas and provides easy access to Ski 93 Resorts. Bretton Woods Ski Resort is located partially in Bethlehem; approximately three quarters of the ski trails are located in Bethlehem as well as Latitude 44, a restaurant located about half-way up the mountain.

#### SNOWMOBILING

The sport of snowmobiling is a popular winter activity in the North Country. With Bethlehem situated in the heart of the White Mountains, snowmobilers have an opportunity to view our scenery from a unique perspective.

Snowmobile trails located within the boundaries of Bethlehem are maintained by the Mount Agassiz Trail Association, the Twin Mountain Snowmobile Club, and the NH Trails Bureau. The Bethlehem trails network includes NH Corridor 11 which provides access to points north and south through Franconia Notch State Park. Locally, the Mount Agassiz Trail Association maintains and grooms Primary Trail 104. This trail provides riders direct access from trails from Littleton, Twin Mountain, and Franconia Notch. The main artery for snowmobile access is from US Route 3 along Trudeau Road and onto private property access along NH Route 142 (Maple St). Westward trail access travels from NH Route 142 (Maple Street) towards Cherry Valley Road and across Brook Road to Littleton. Northern trails access via Wing Road to the railroad tracks along NH Route 116 to Whitefield.

The local trail network provides riders access to local businesses in downtown. The town public parking lot located on Agassiz Street is a popular spot for snowmobilers to park their vehicles and trailers and access major trails. The trail network provides snowmobile riders direct access to the Irving gas station, Mia Papaya's, the US Post Office and an access trail to Rosa Flamingo's.

With the Master Plan survey results showing a majority of supporters in favor of snowmobile access to amenities, consideration may be made to support and encourage expanded trail access on town property and right of ways. Community support in conjunction with property owners and the Mount Agassiz Trail Association may be encouraged to investigate options to provide greater trail access to other businesses in town.

## BICYCLING

Bicycling is both a recreation and a transportation tool. Bethlehem is popular among cyclists for both on road and off road use for play, health and commuting to work. Bethlehem roads are also commonly used by race teams as they travel through New Hampshire.

State Highways in Bethlehem are a mix of quality from a cyclist point of view. Some have wide smooth shoulders some do not. The Town should encourage State Transportation planners to incorporate shoulders in all future road reconstruction projects so that cyclists can ride out of the traffic lanes. However, in a mature community with many buildings and drainage features close to the road this is not always possible at a reasonable expense. Where this is the case, the Town should encourage the State to use sufficient signage to warn motorists.

Many Town Roads are popular with local cyclists as alternative to busier state highways: Brook Road, Cherry Valley Road, Prospect Street, River Road, Wing Road and Trudeau Road specifically. Most of these roads are sufficiently wide for safe travel for both vehicles and bicycles. The east end of Brook Road has one small narrow bridge and a couple of corners that could be improved.

The former railroad bed from Littleton to Whitefield is being explored by the Town of Bethlehem for its potential as a recreational multi-use trail. Should the railroad bed become a multi-use trail in the future, the Town should add it to its maps and promote it as an amenity to visitors and residents.

The National Forest in Bethlehem has an abundance of logging roads and trails for off road use. The Town could also promote these and work with the National Forest to keep them open for multiple use recreation.

## HIKING & TRAILS

Bethlehem has many miles of hiking trails, located within the National Forest and on private land placed in conservation. With a large portion of the Town located within the National Forest, we are home of many 4,000 footers, sections of the Appalachian Trail and an AMC camping hut at Zealand Falls. The Zealand area also has hiking, bicycling and cross-country ski trails. These areas are located on the outskirts of Town, miles from our downtown area. Currently there aren't any hiking paths linking the center of Town to other popular hiking locations or peaks.

Some of the notable mountain peaks that Bethlehem's hiking trails provide access to are: Mt. Hale (4,077'), North Twin (4,769'), Mt. Tom (4,040'), Mt. Field (4,300') and Mt. Willey (4,261). Other notable trails are the Heritage Trail, and the Beaver Brook Trail System which also doubles as a network of cross country ski trails during the winter season. There is also a network of less challenging trails.

## GOLF

The largest town-owned recreational facility, the Bethlehem Country Club, includes approximately 140 acres of land. The golf course is a Donald Ross designed 18-hole course; the Bethlehem Country Club also includes a clubhouse, pro shop and a seasonal restaurant. The Club is overseen by the Board of Selectmen and employs a full-time manager.

A second Donald Ross golf course in Bethlehem is located at the privately owned Maplewood Golf Club. In addition to the golf course, the "Maplewood" also offers both year-round lodging and function facilities.

## LOCAL PARKS & RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS

Ample opportunities exist for hunting, fishing, viewing wildflowers, quiet watching of birds and other wildlife. In addition to the White Mountain National Forest, Bretzfelder Memorial Park, Strawberry Hill State Forest, the Bethlehem Town Forest and the 1,400 acre Rocks Estate offer areas to enjoy the out-of-doors. Major waterways in Bethlehem include the Ammonoosuc River and the Gale River.

The Town provides a summer recreational program, and maintains ball fields, basketball courts, a public swimming pool and tennis courts.

## FESTIVALS & CONCERTS

Local festivals such as the Lupine Festival in June each year provide additional recreational opportunities. Other festivals or events that are enjoyed by Bethlehem residents include Bethlehem Art Walk, the Halloween Boo Fest, First Friday in Bethlehem and Christmas in Bethlehem.

One of the most popular activities in Bethlehem is the Gazebo Concerts. Residents and visitors gather each Sunday from June to September to watch local entertainers perform. The 2015 Master Plan Survey rated the Concerts at the Gazebo as one of the best community services.



## **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

### **GOAL 1: SNOWMOBILE ACCESS**

- a) Support and encourage expanded trail access on town property and right of ways.
- b) Encourage and investigate options to provide greater trail access to businesses in Town.

### **GOAL 2: BICYCLING**

- a) Improve the narrow bridge and corners on the east end of Brook Road for safer bicycling.
- b) If the railroad bed from Littleton to Whitefield is turned into a multi-use trail, the Town should add it to its maps & promote it as an amenity to visitors & residents.
- c) The Town should promote the off-road use of logging roads and trails and work with the National Forest to keep them open for year-round recreational use.

### **GOAL 3: HIKING**

- a) Support organizations in their exploration of options for creating hiking paths.
- b) Better promote the 4,000 foot peaks that are located in Bethlehem.

### **GOAL 4: GOLF**

- a) Explore options to expand the clubhouse facilities and the golf course.
- b) Consider opportunities to accommodate activities such as cross country skiing, snowshoeing and tubing.

### **GOAL 5: OVERALL GOALS FOR RECREATION**

- a) Maintain and continue to improve town-run recreational activities.
- b) Better promote the Town's parks and other recreational venues in Bethlehem.
- c) Better promote the Town's involvement with local and regional festivals and activities and the Gazebo Concerts.

## **SUMMARY**

Recreational needs are generally determined by what the Community would like to provide for itself and what additional opportunities would satisfy the needs of visitors. Protection of land areas for recreational uses may also benefit wildlife, water quality, and other conservation efforts.

The local scenery and access to outdoor activities were identified by survey respondents as "the best thing about living and owning in Bethlehem". Also important is the connection between recreation and the general health and wellness of the Community. Recreation contributes to the quality of life for both residents of Bethlehem and visitors to this beautiful region of the White Mountains.

## CHAPTER 9: CULTURAL & HISTORIC

### INTRODUCTION

Bethlehem was granted a charter by Governor John Wentworth in 1774 as Lloyd Hills. On December 25, 1799 the Town was incorporated as the Town of Bethlehem. Bethlehem is rich in history with its beginnings as an agricultural community. Governor Howard of Rhode Island stayed in Bethlehem to recover from an accident; when his friends visited, they enjoyed the area so much that they encouraged others to come to Bethlehem to see the beauty of the area.

*"History if for human self-knowledge...the only clue to what man can do is what man has done. The value of history, then, is that it teaches us what man has done and thus what man is."*

**R.G. Collingwood**

Later, Bethlehem became a summer tourist destination known for having clean mountain air to remedy against hay fever. During the late 1800's, the growth of the community consisted of Grand Hotels and summer cottages for visitors who travelled by coach and rail.

The history and culture of Bethlehem is important to the Community as it affords a close look at the past and an appreciation of the culture that has made Bethlehem what it is today. Visitors to Bethlehem have included many well-known American icons.

### MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

- Of the 331 total respondents, 46.22% said that the Town should establish Historic Districts; 37.46% said no and 16.31% did not respond.
- When asked if there are historic sites in Town that should be protected at this time, the most common responses were: the Colonial Theatre, the Railroad Station at Maplewood, Maplewood, Ivie Church and other churches in the Community, Victorian Homes and the Town Building.

### HISTORY

*"Once within the hunting range of the Native American Abenaki tribe, the town was chartered in 1774 as "Lloyd Hills." In the aftermath of the Revolutionary War, the original grant could not be found and this lack of documentation proving clear title deterred early settlement. Nevertheless, in 1787 the first permanent houses were established. For reasons uncertain, the town came to be known as "Bethlehem" and was eventually incorporated on December 25, 1799. In 1800 there were but thirty-three families in town and the only industry was agriculture. Perhaps the early settlers would have perished had not the Indians kindly taught them some of the nuances of survival in the North Country. In the mid-1800's Bethlehem had its own grist mill and had diversified its industry to include five large sawmills and two starch factories. By 1850 the population had grown to 950. Since then, almost 150 years later, the population has little more than doubled.*

*In 1805 the "Old Man of the Mountains" was discovered and in 1819 a path was created to the summit of Mount Washington. In the early 1800s, as in present, Bethlehem was conveniently situated between tourist attractions.*

*This helped set the stage for Bethlehem to become a thriving resort area. Today you can easily reach Bethlehem by Interstate 93 as well as several State highways.*

*By the mid-1870s, Bethlehem had evolved into a booming tourist town. The summers bustled with activity. Seven trains arrived daily, bringing guests from Boston, New York, and points beyond. Some 30 resort hotels were filled with tourists eager to experience the scenic beauty and breathe the clean mountain air. Many wealthy families built summer "cottages" of grandiose proportions.*

*The annual Coaching Parade, begun in 1887, endured for almost 50 years. People traveled great distances to see the lavishly decorated horse drawn coaches compete for prizes. About 1911, decorated automobiles began to appear in the parade... a harbinger of things to come. The horizons for tourists were vastly expanding. No longer did they have to limit their travels to the confines of railroad tracks. The tourist was liberated to explore new destinations and many of the old guests stopped coming to Bethlehem. Fortunately, beginning around 1916, a few Jewish families became summer visitors seeking relief from their hay fever symptoms. As a matter of fact, the National Hay Fever Relief Association was founded in Bethlehem a few years later. By the mid-1920s, the Jewish community grew significantly, helping to keep hotel rooms full. Although in much fewer numbers, Chassidic Jews can still be seen today, traditionally dressed, taking a summer stroll on Main Street.*

*Most of the old hotels have disappeared but several of the cottages remain - some as private homes and other as inns or B&B's. The art deco style Colonial Theatre, built on Main Street in 1914, still opens for the summer season. A wonderful booklet, "An Illustrated Tour of Bethlehem Past & Present" offers a description and history of several points of interest."<sup>23</sup>*

The Bethlehem Heritage Society (BHS) was established on July 18, 1997. The Heritage Society operates a museum on Main Street across from the Bethlehem Town Building and showcases artifacts of the history of Bethlehem. The BHS museum also operates as an information center for local attractions. Many documents detailing the rich history of Bethlehem can also be viewed at the Bethlehem Public library.

The Town of Bethlehem has three properties which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

- The Burt-Cheney Farm on US Route 302 was built in 1817
- The Rocks Estate US Route 302 (former John Glessner property)
- Felsengarten (summer cottage of Theodore Thomas, former conductor of the Chicago Symphony) on the corner of Lewis Hill Road and Whitcomb Hill Road

The following properties are listed on the NH Registry of Historical Places:

- Colonial Theater, Main Street
- Burch House, Main Street
- Mount Washington Cemetery, Main Street and Prospect Street

For a complete history of the Town of Bethlehem, visit the Bethlehem Heritage Society.

<sup>23</sup>Bethlehem Heritage Society; <http://bethlehemwhitemtns.com/history.php>

## **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

### **GOAL 1 – PRESERVE HISTORIC NATURE**

Continue to take actions to preserve the historic nature of Bethlehem through the preservation of documents and buildings.

### **GOAL 2 – CONSIDER ESTABLISHING AN HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Consider designating a historic district according to recommendations provided by the NH Division of Historical Resources or other agencies.

## **SUMMARY**

The history, the cultural and the historic resources of a community, help to build a sense of pride and belonging to individuals who reside there. An understanding of a community's cultural heritage provides people with a connection to social values, beliefs and customs.

It is important for Bethlehem to recognize this and to continue to preserve and protect the unique cultural and historic resources of the Town and to provide opportunities for the citizens of the Community to learn about and embrace Bethlehem's past.

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## CHAPTER 10: REGIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

### INTRODUCTION

The geography of the Town of Bethlehem has to a large degree shaped the Community and its character. However the Town is part of a larger regional area which may have influences over which the Town could have little control. Taking part in discussions with regional agencies will safeguard Bethlehem's ability to have a say in what happens in the future. Bethlehem is dependent upon the region for employment opportunities, schools, hospitals, food and a host of other services that may not be available in the Community.

Situated in northern Grafton County on the western edge of the White Mountain National Forest, there are regional, state, and national issues that could impact Bethlehem and the region of the White Mountains. Decisions concerning the environment, populations, housing, transportation and tourism could have an impact on Bethlehem.

Some examples of issues that may impact Bethlehem are:

- Growth in Littleton and other major towns in the region could have an impact on the tax base in Bethlehem, could increase business opportunities and regional growth may also increase Bethlehem's use as a bedroom community.
- Decisions made by the Forest Service that impact the White Mountain National Forest in Bethlehem may have a significant effect on land use.
- Adjacent communities may allow projects such as wind farms that could impact the view shed and quality of life for residents who live in Bethlehem.

### MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

Regional concerns were not part of the Bethlehem Master Plan Survey. However, it is expected that all residents would have concern about what is taking place in the region. It is further expected that residents would want community officials to participate in decision making processes that may affect the quality of life in Bethlehem.

### BETHLEHEM'S ROLE IN THE REGION

With a major portion of the Community's land area within the White Mountain National Forest, Bethlehem residents have supported conservation efforts elsewhere in Town as well. These efforts contribute to natural resource protection, preservation of the rural landscape, recreation opportunities, watersheds and the scenic resources that residents and visitors to the region value. Future efforts to prevent ridgeline development and pursue conservation in Bethlehem will further preserve the character of the Town and the region.

One major interstate highway, I-93 and several major state highways pass through Bethlehem creating a connection that serves the needs of residents, visitors, and businesses year round. The White Mountain National Scenic Byway and the Presidential Range Trail, a New Hampshire Cultural and Scenic Byway, also may serve to draw tourists for cultural and recreational activities.

## **REGIONAL GROUPS & ORGANIZATIONS**

Participation in regional groups, agencies and organizations is the best way to ensure that Bethlehem's voice is heard. The following are important for the implementation of Bethlehem's vision.

### **NORTH COUNTRY COUNCIL (NCC)**

North Country Council works with 51 northern New Hampshire communities including Bethlehem. Located at Mt. Eustis Common in Littleton, NCC has been operating since 1973. *"It is the mission of North Country Council to encourage effective community and regional planning for the development of economic opportunity and the conservation of natural, cultural and economic resources. This is accomplished by providing information, regional advocacy, technical assistance, community education, and direct service to the region, its organizations, and political subdivisions...In its function of service to the region, NCC initiates or provides essential support for planning and economic development services."*<sup>24</sup> Bethlehem currently provides representation to the NCC Board.

### **TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)**

*"The goal of the Transportation Advisory Committee is to provide the state and the region with transportation planning projects, corridor studies, and transportation policies that are needed for the successful movement of people and goods."*<sup>25</sup>

As the link between the state Department of Transportation and the Transportation Advisory Committee, NCC coordinates a committee composed of town representatives, including a representative from Bethlehem.

### **WHITE MOUNTAINS SCHOOL DISTRICT (SAU #35)**

The White Mountains School District (SAU35) consists of seven villages in and around Franconia Notch; these communities include Bethlehem, Easton, Franconia, Sugar Hill, Lisbon, Lyman and Landaff. The SAU works to further their vision to *"...prepare all students to be responsible citizens and afford them the opportunity to acquire the skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary to make informed decisions that lead to meaningful and productive lives"*.<sup>26</sup> The Bethlehem School Board maintains representation at the SAU35 board meetings to ensure quality education programs for the children of the Community.

### **BETHLEHEM VISITORS CENTER**

The Bethlehem Visitors Center, located on Main Street in Bethlehem, was established to provide support to local communities, businesses, utilities and tourist attractions. The Visitors Center provides information on local and area attractions, churches and synagogues, local businesses, Bethlehem's schools and current events. In addition, the Visitors Center houses historical displays presented by the Bethlehem Heritage Society. The Bethlehem Visitors Center is a member of the White Mountains Attractions Association.

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.nccouncil.org/>

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.nccouncil.org/about/ncc-committees/transportation-advisory-committee-tac/>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.sau35.org/>



## **GOALS**

### **GOAL 1 – ADDRESS NORTH COUNTRY INITIATIVES**

Take the lead, or actively participate with other towns and regional organizations, to address new initiatives or existing problems facing the region, such as, but not limited to transportation, housing, economic development, and the environment.

### **GOAL 2– MAINTAIN REPRESENTATIVE AT NORTH COUNTRY COUNCIL**

Continue to maintain representation at North Country Council, both as a representative from the Town for the NCC Board and as a representative to NCC's Transportation Advisory Council.

### **GOAL 3– SUPPORT THE BETHLEHEM VISITORS CENTER**

Continue to support the growth and development of the Bethlehem Visitors Center and the Bethlehem Heritage Society; continue to utilize this resource to promote tourism and business opportunities.

## **SUMMARY**

The scenic beauty and the historic nature of Bethlehem combined with the proximity to Littleton, the regional economic center of the region, and the tourist centers of Bretton Woods and Franconia Notch could produce growth in the Community. As the commuter base increases, the prospect for new business ventures could also improve. It is inevitable that progress in the overall region will have an impact on Bethlehem as well.

Many citizens today are seeking "quality of life" locations in which to live. Bethlehem's small town nature, strong community character and commitment to protect the natural beauty and recreational opportunities of the region, help make Bethlehem a good choice for new businesses, permanent housing or second homes. Regional issues not only affect the region, but also affect each and every town within the region.

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## CHAPTER 11: IMPLEMENTATION

### THE IMPLEMENTATION TABLE

#### Time Frame

**Ongoing** ..... For the Life of the Plan

**Short Term** ..... 1-3 Years

**Medium Term**... 4-7 Years

**Long Term**..... 8-10 Years

Chapter	Goals	Responsible Department (s)	Time Frame
Chapter 1 Land Use & Community Design	<b>Goal 1 - Keep the Small Town Feel</b>		
	Review ordinances and regulations so that they coincide with the desire of the Community to maintain the small town nature of Bethlehem, such as developing a Historic Main Street District and preserving areas for rural development. Review Zoning Districts to preserve areas for specifically allowed uses, such as residential and commercial enterprises. Study the establishment of residential districts.	Planning, Zoning & Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 2 - Promote Development</b>		
	a) Develop a new and more interesting website that would help attract visitors and investors.	Board of Selectmen	Short Term
	b) Create a friendly image for the Town – image building.	Planning, Zoning & Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	c) Join a Chamber of Commerce or other such organization to promote the Town.	Board of Selectmen	Short Term
	d) Promote the fact the Town has the Fourth Best High School in the state	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 3 - Plan for a Transfer Station</b>		
	Develop, and keep current, a plan for the operation of a transfer station or alternative waste management options. This plan should identify trash disposal options and funding alternatives, in preparation for the eventual closure of the NCES landfill on Trudeau Road.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 4 - Monitor the NCES Landfill Closure</b>		
	Draft and approve a plan to ensure the Town takes a proactive role in reviewing the DES monitoring reports post closure.	Department of Environmental Service & Board of Selectmen	Medium Term
	<b>Goal 5 – Support Senior and Low Income Housing</b>		
	Support increasing availability of affordable and senior housing	Planning Board & Board of Selectmen	Ongoing

Chapter	Goals	Responsible Department (s)	Time Frame
Chapter 2 Transportation	<b>Goal 1 - Overall Maintenance of the Transportation System</b>		
	Provide a safe, functional and well-maintained transportation system which implements the land use plan. It should include roads, parking, sidewalks and non-motorized opportunities.	Board of Selectmen, Village District & Highway Department	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 2 - Traffic Speed &amp; Noise on Route 302</b>		
	a) Work with the Police Department to seek grant funding to obtain a portable speed monitoring sign.	Board of Selectmen, Police Department & School Board	Short Term
	b) Continue law enforcement in front of the school to enforce the speed limit.	Police Department	Ongoing
	c) Lobby the State to provide "No Engine Brake Zone" signs for use in the 30 mph zone.	Board of Selectmen & NH DOT	Short Term
	<b>Goal 3 - Review Regulations &amp; Road Specifications</b>		
	a) Look at site plan regulations to review road specifications for private roads to ensure compliance with current standards.	Planning Board	Short Term
	b) Devise a method of review for road regulations to ensure that road specifications are met before a road goes to Town Meeting for approval as a town-owned road.	Board of Selectmen & Highway Department	Short Term
	<b>Goal 4 - Provide Public Education on Road Safety &amp; Maintenance</b>		
	Educate residents who live on private roads of the importance of maintaining their roads for first responders by adding information to the Town's website. <i>(Action Item #18 from the 2014 Bethlehem Hazard Mitigation Plan)</i>	Board of Selectmen, Fire Department & Police Department	Ongoing
Chapter 3 Community Facilities	<b>Goal 1 - Town Building</b>		
	Create a written maintenance Plan for the Town Building that will ensure continued improvements and proper stewardship of current and future improvements.	Board of Selectmen	Short Term
	<b>Goal 2 - Public Safety Building (Fire Department, Ambulance Squad &amp; Police Department)</b>		
	Prepare a long range plan, based on a feasibility study, for relocating, building or renovating facilities for the Fire Department, Ambulance Squad, Police Department and an Emergency Operations Center (EOC).	Board of Selectmen	Short Term

Chapter	Goals	Responsible Department (s)	Time Frame
Chapter 3 Community Facilities	<b>Goal 3 - Highway Department</b>		
	Provide adequate storage space for the Highway Department equipment.	Board of Selectmen	Short Term
	<b>Goal 4 - Bethlehem Public Library</b>		
	Assist the Library Trustees in their long-range plans for programming and future growth.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 5 - Bethlehem Elementary School</b>		
	Assist the Bethlehem School Board in their efforts to improve parking and school access.	School Board	Short Term
	<b>Goal 6 - Bethlehem Country Club</b>		
	Continue to study the current business model and devise a plan to make the Country Club self-sustaining.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 7 - Parking</b>		
	Work to pursue a solution for the parking issues in the Village District.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 8 - Pedestrian Access</b>		
	Work with NH DOT, the Bethlehem School Board and other entities to pursue a solution for improving pedestrian access in downtown Bethlehem, with particular emphasis on access to the Library and the Bethlehem Elementary School.	Bethlehem Village District & School Board	Short Term
Chapter 4 Utilities & Public Services	<b>Goal 1 - Increase Broadband Capabilities</b>		
	Increase broadband capabilities throughout the Community by lobbying utility companies to upgrade their infrastructure to allow for better access by residents.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 2 - Address Alternative Energy Projects</b>		
	Address alternative energy projects and their impact on the aesthetics, property values and the character of the Community as well as the functionality and cost of the project.	Planning Board	Ongoing

Chapter	Goals	Responsible Department (s)	Time Frame
Chapter 5 Population & Housing	<b>Goal 1 - Protect Real Estate Values</b>		
	a) Encourage economic development.	Board of Selectmen, Zoning & Planning Boards	Ongoing
	b) Promote Bethlehem as a great place to live, work and play.	Board Selectmen	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 2 - Plan for Future Increase in Population</b>		
	Evaluate future infrastructure and key facility needs.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 3 - Protect Historical Housing Units</b>		
	a) Consider designating a portion, or particular structures, in Bethlehem as an "historic district".	Planning Board	Medium Term
	b) Support the Bethlehem Redevelopment Association's efforts to assist business owners improve buildings along Main Street.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
Chapter 6 Economy	<b>Goal 1 - Encourage Economic Growth</b>		
	Encourage economic and business growth in the Town of Bethlehem.	Board of Selectmen & Planning Board	Ongoing
Chapter 7 Natural Resources	<b>Goal 1 - Protect Aquifers &amp; Open Bodies of Water</b>		
	Protect aquifers and open bodies of water by ensuring that the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act (Chapter 483.B), Department of Environmental Service (DES) regulations and the Town's aquifer protection ordinance are followed and enforced to ensure future quality and availability. Particular areas to protect include but are not limited to: Miller (Baker Brook Pond) Pond and adjacent vernal pools; the aquifers; the Ammonoosuc River Watershed.	Board of Selectmen & Conservation Commission	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 2 - Maintain Inventories for Natural &amp; Scenic Resources</b>		
	Identify, and keep current, inventories of natural and scenic resources, wetlands, flood plains, groundwater and important habitat areas.	Conservation Commission	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 3 - Address Growth &amp; Development through Zoning</b>		
	In accordance with state law, revise sections of the Town's Zoning Ordinances, as necessary, to address changes in growth and development locally or regionally that may impact the Town's natural resources and the intent of this Plan to protect them.	Zoning & Planning Boards & Conservation Commission	Ongoing

Chapter	Goals	Responsible Department (s)	Time Frame
Chapter 8 Recreation	<b>Goal 1 - Snowmobile Access</b>		
	a) Support and encourage expanded trail access on town property and right of ways.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	b) Encourage and investigate options to provide greater trail access to businesses in Town.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 2 - Bicycling</b>		
	a) Improve the narrow bridge and corners on the east end of Brook Road for safer bicycling.	Board of Selectmen	Long Term
	b) If the railroad bed from Littleton to Whitefield is turned into a multi-use trail, the Town should add it to its maps & promote it as an amenity to visitors & residents.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	c) The Town should promote the off-road use of logging roads and trails and work with the National Forest to keep them open for year-round recreational use.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 3 – Hiking</b>		
	a) Support organizations in their exploration of options for creating hiking paths.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	b) Better promote the 4,000 foot peaks that are located in Bethlehem.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 4 - Golf</b>		
	a) Explore options to expand the clubhouse facilities and the golf course.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	b) Consider opportunities to accommodate such activities as cross country skiing, snowshoeing and tubing.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 5 - Overall Goals for Recreation</b>		
	a) Maintain and continue to improve town-run recreational activities.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	b) Better promote the Town's parks and other recreational venues in Bethlehem.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
	c) Better promote the Town's involvement with local and regional festivals and activities and the Gazebo Concerts.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing



Chapter	Goals	Responsible Department (s)	Time Frame
Chapter 9 Cultural & Historic	<b>Goal 1 - Preserve Historic Nature</b>		
	Continue to take actions to preserve the historic nature of Bethlehem through the preservation of documents and buildings.	Heritage Society	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 2 - Consider Establishing an Historic District</b>		
	Consider designating a historic district according to recommendations provided by the NH Division of Historical Resources or other agencies.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing
Chapter 10 Regional Considerations	<b>Goal 1 - Address North Country Initiatives</b>		
	Take the lead, or actively participate with other towns and regional organizations, to address new initiatives or existing problems facing the region, such as, but not limited to, transportation, housing, economic development and the environment.	Board of Selectmen & Planning Board	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 2 - Maintain Representation at North Country Council</b>		
	Continue to maintain representation at North Country Council, both as a representative from the Town for the NCC Board and as a representative to NCC's Transportation Advisory Council.	Board of Selectmen & Planning Board	Ongoing
	<b>Goal 3 - Support the Bethlehem Visitors Center</b>		
	Continue to support the growth and development of the Bethlehem Visitors Center and the Bethlehem Heritage Society; continue to utilize this resource to promote tourism and business opportunities.	Board of Selectmen	Ongoing

## CHAPTER 12: MAP DOCUMENTS

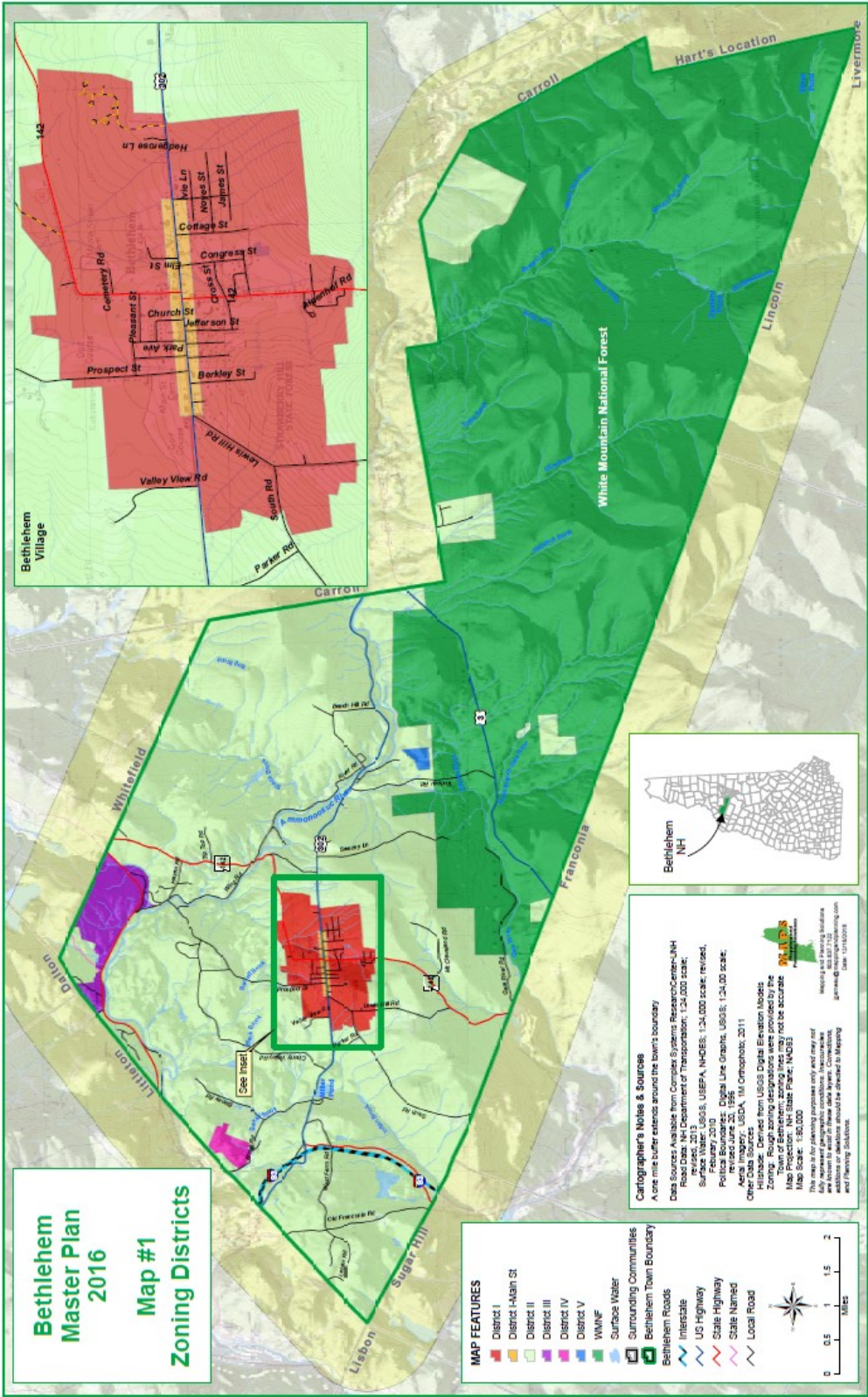
All maps included in this section of the Plan will be replaced with 11" x 17" maps in the final hard copy of the Master Plan. Maps included are the following:

- *Map #1, Zoning Districts & Conservation Lands*
- *Map #2, Critical Infrastructure/Key Resources, Evacuation & Community Facilities*
- *Map #3, White Mountain National Forest & Peaks & Ridges (Topography)*
- *Map #4, Conservation*
- *Map #5, 100 –Year Flood Zone, Aquifer & Wetlands*
- *Map #6, Water Sheds & Hydrography*
- *Map #7, Wildlife Habitat Land Cover 2015*
- *Map #8, Highest Ranked Wildlife Habitat by Ecological Condition*
- *Map #9, Soils*

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MAP #1, ZONING DISTRICTS

*This map will be replaced with an 11" x 17" map in the final hard copy of the Master Plan.*

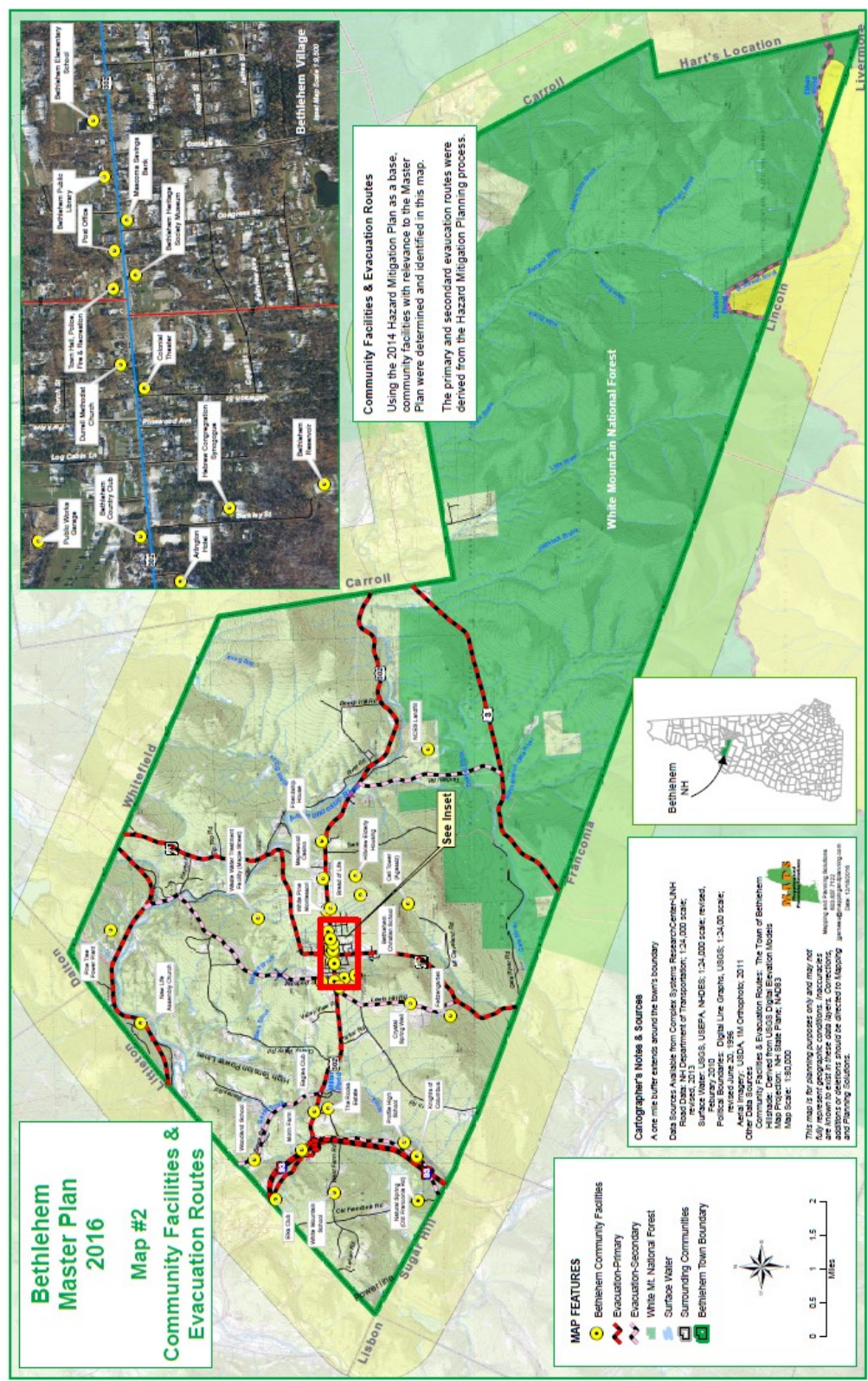


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MAP# 2, COMMUNITY FACILITIES & EVACUATION ROUTES

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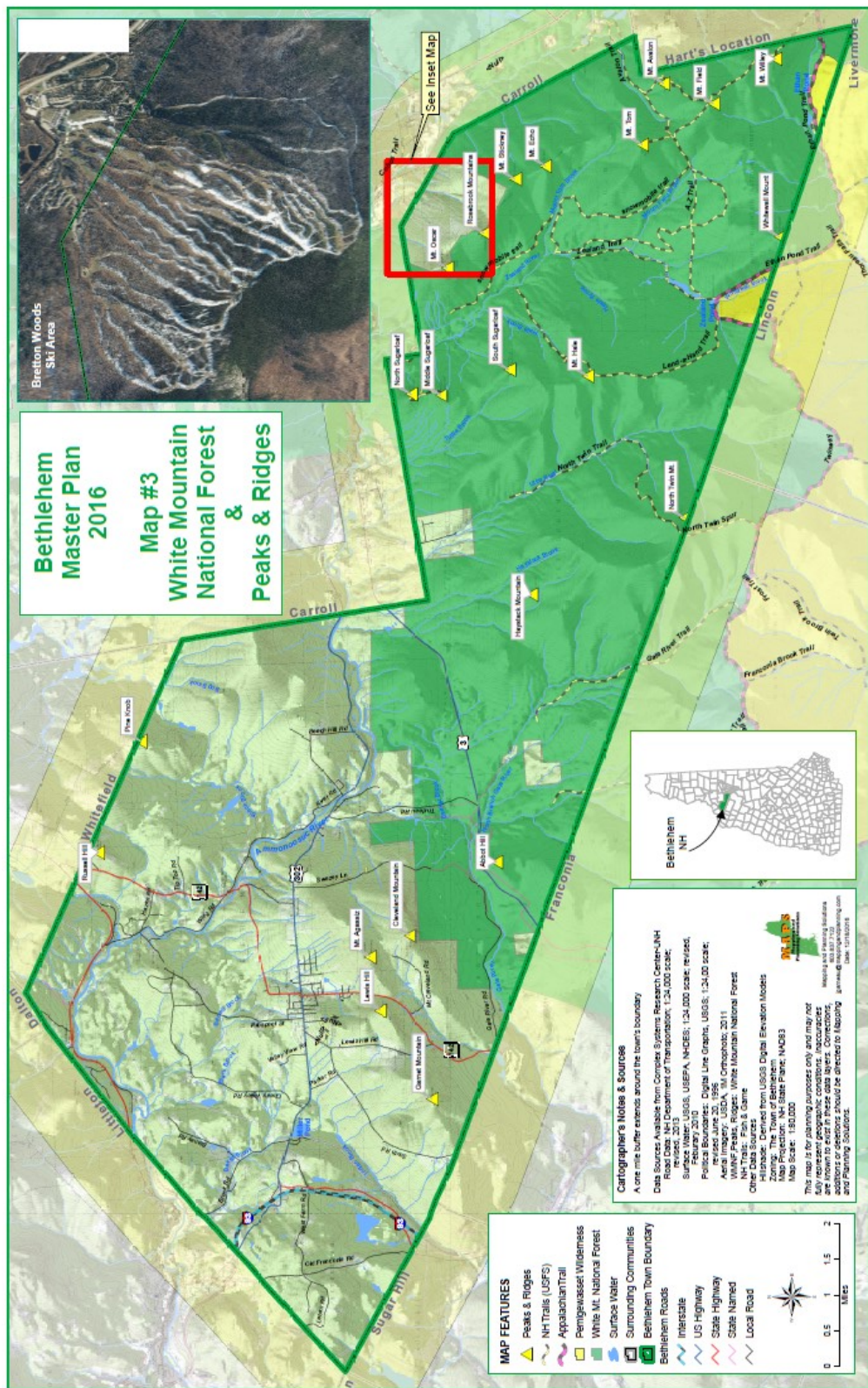


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MAP #3, WHITE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST & PEAKS & RIDGES

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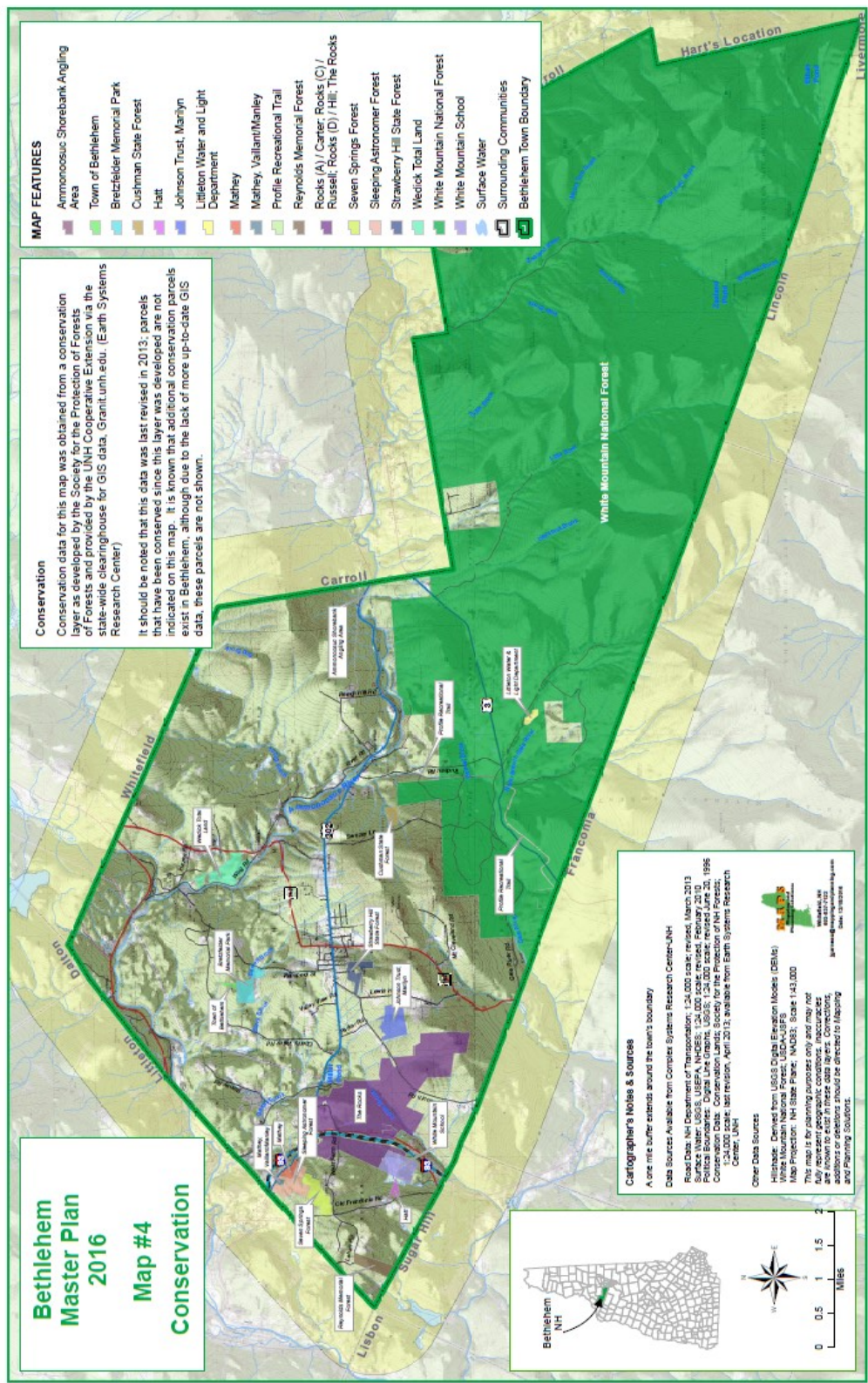


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MAP #4, CONSERVATION

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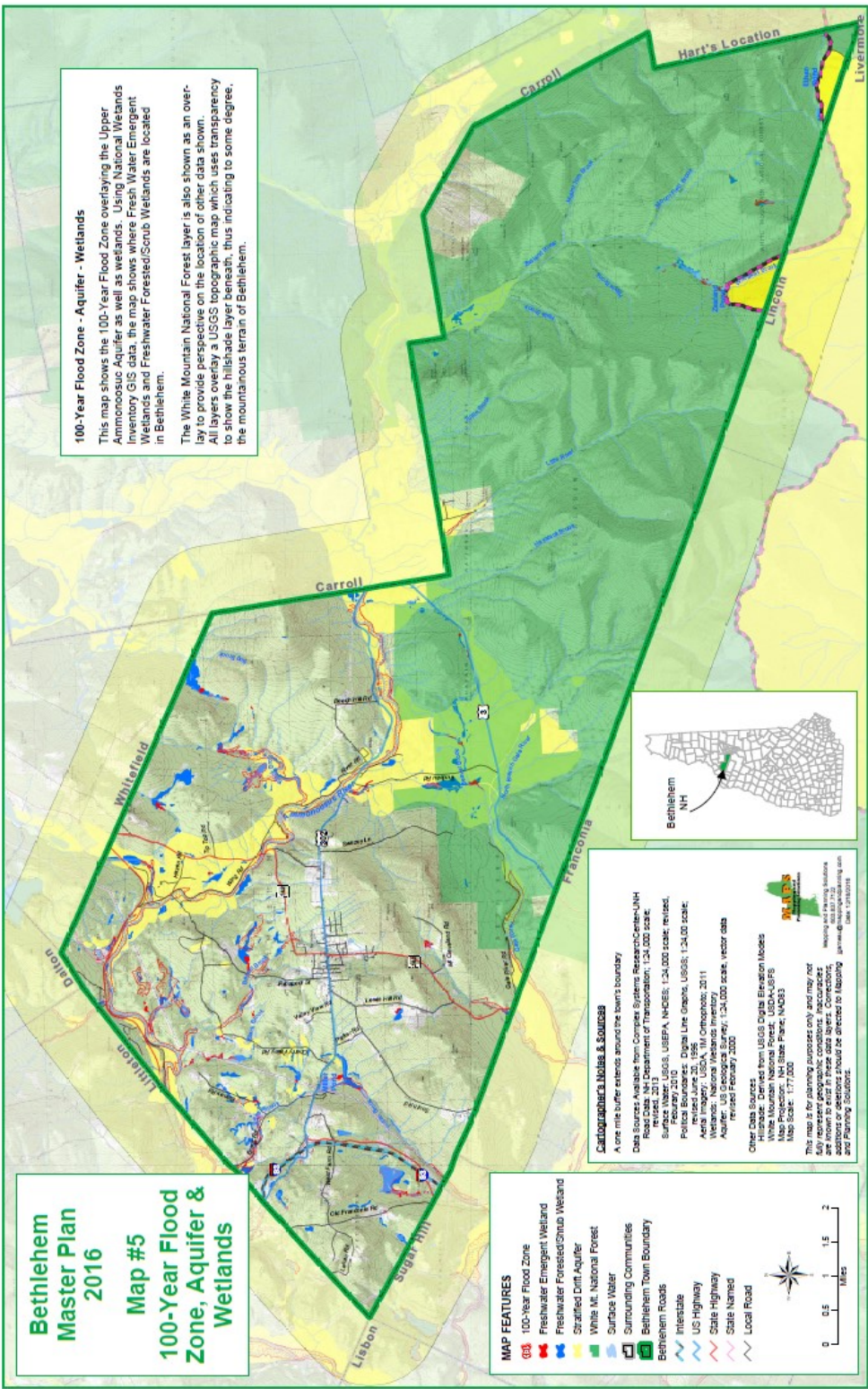


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**MAP #5, 100-YEAR FLOOD ZONE, AQUIFER & WETLANDS**

*This map will be replaced with an 11" x 17" map in the final hard copy of the Master Plan.*

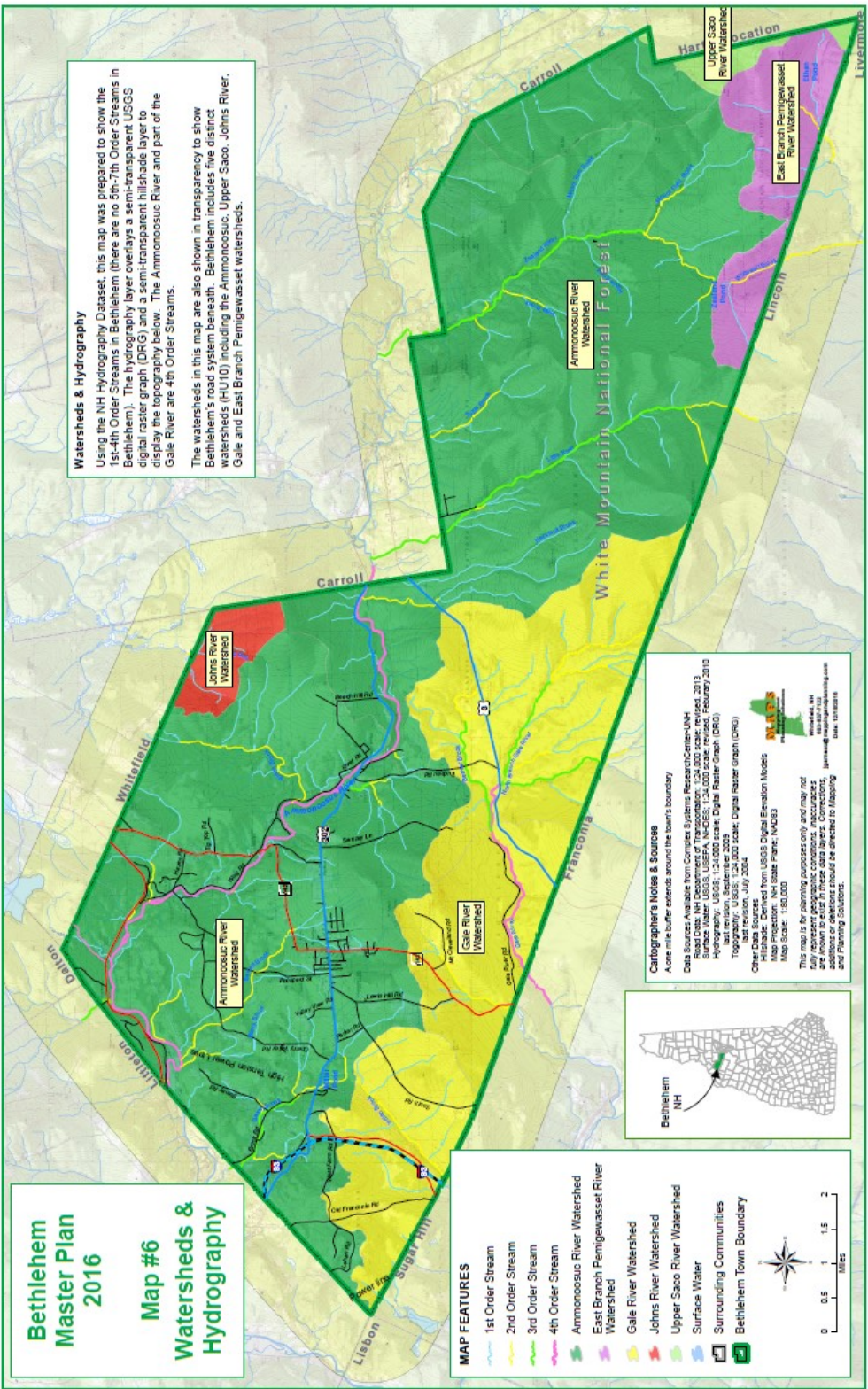


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**MAP #6, WATERSHEDS & HYDROGRAPHY**

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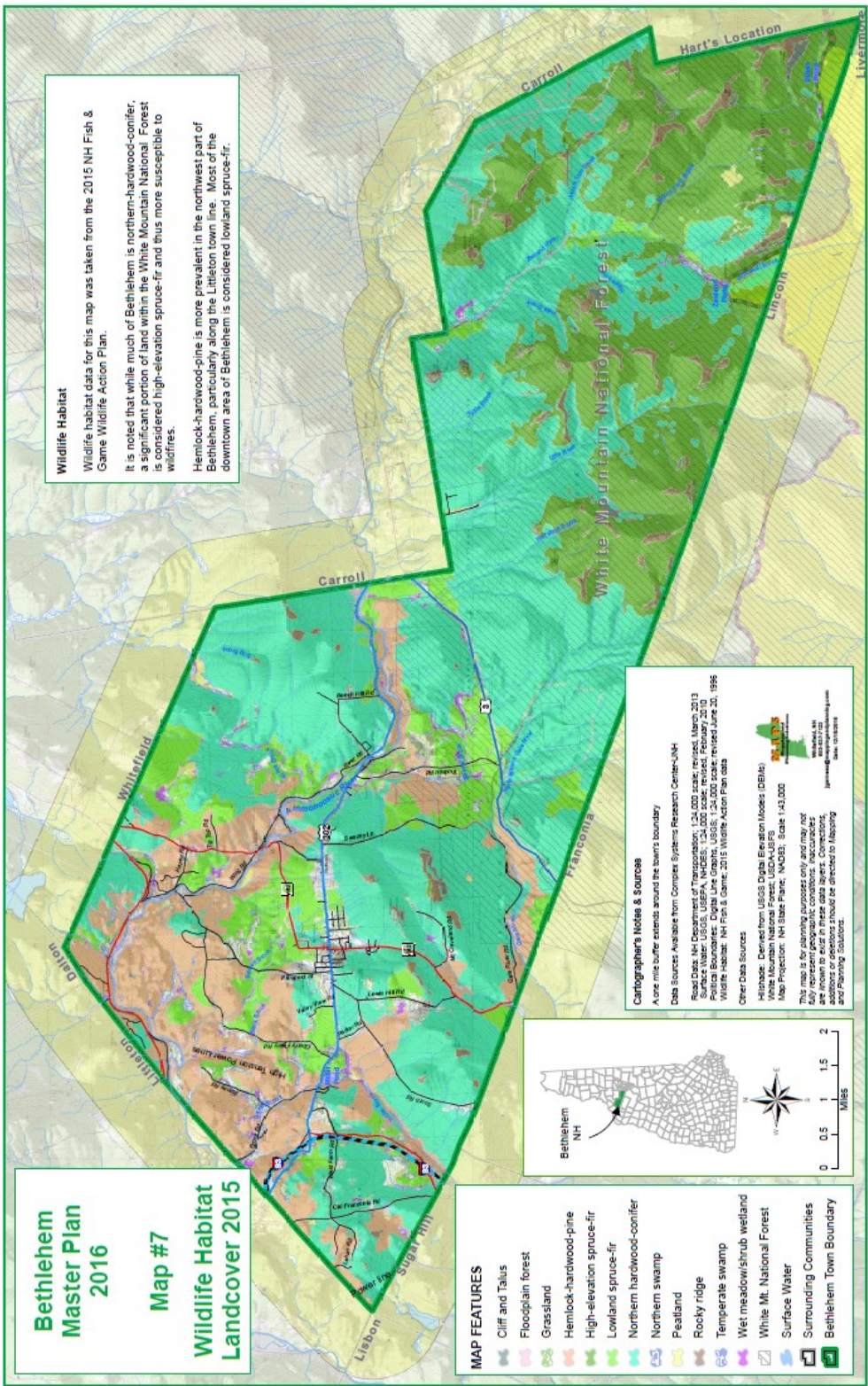




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**MAP #7, WILDLIFE HABITAT LANDCOVER 2015**

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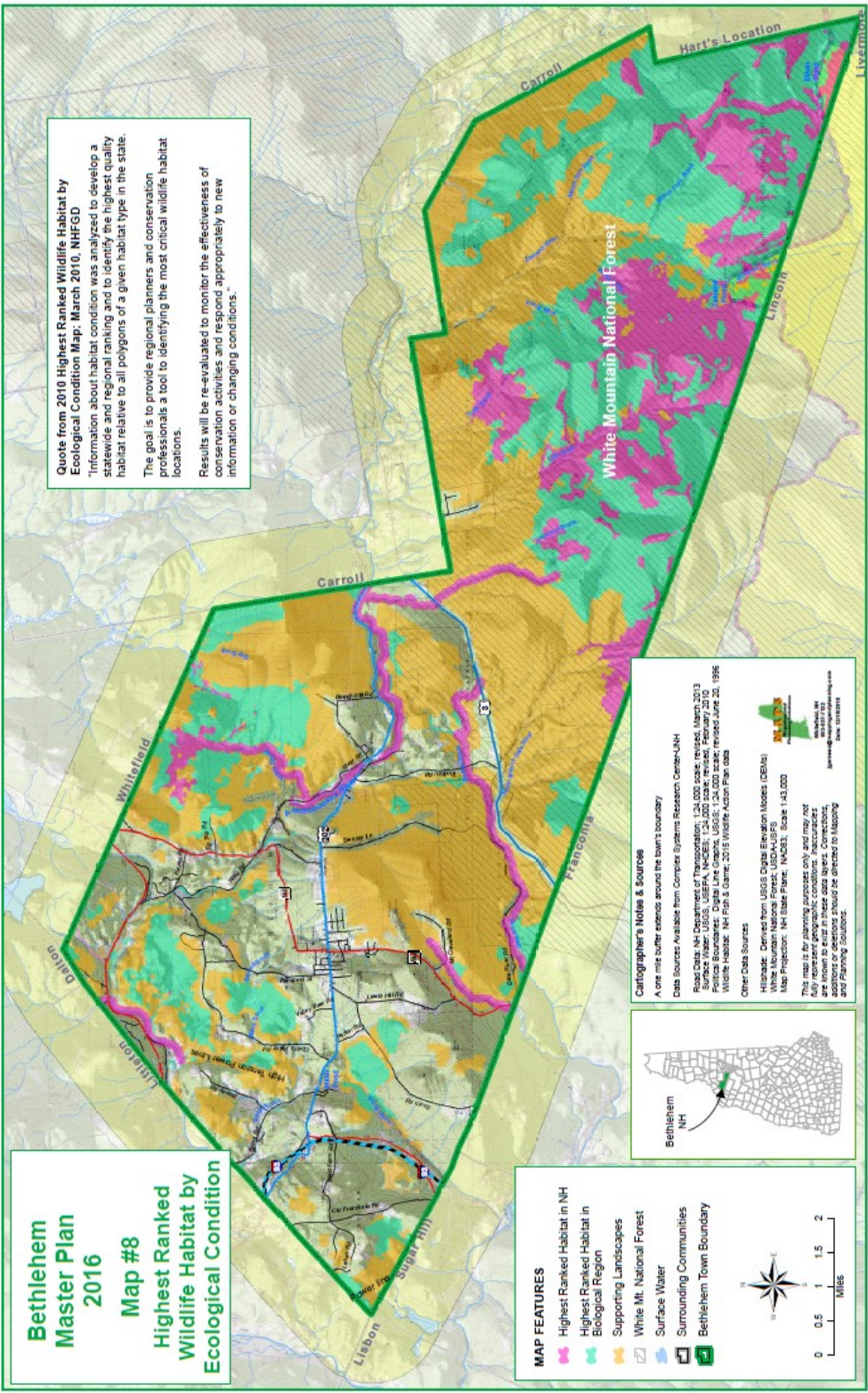


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**MAP #8, HIGHEST RANKED WILDLIFE HABITAT BY ECOLOGICAL CONDITION**

*This map will be replaced with an 11" x 17" map in the final hard copy of the Master Plan.*

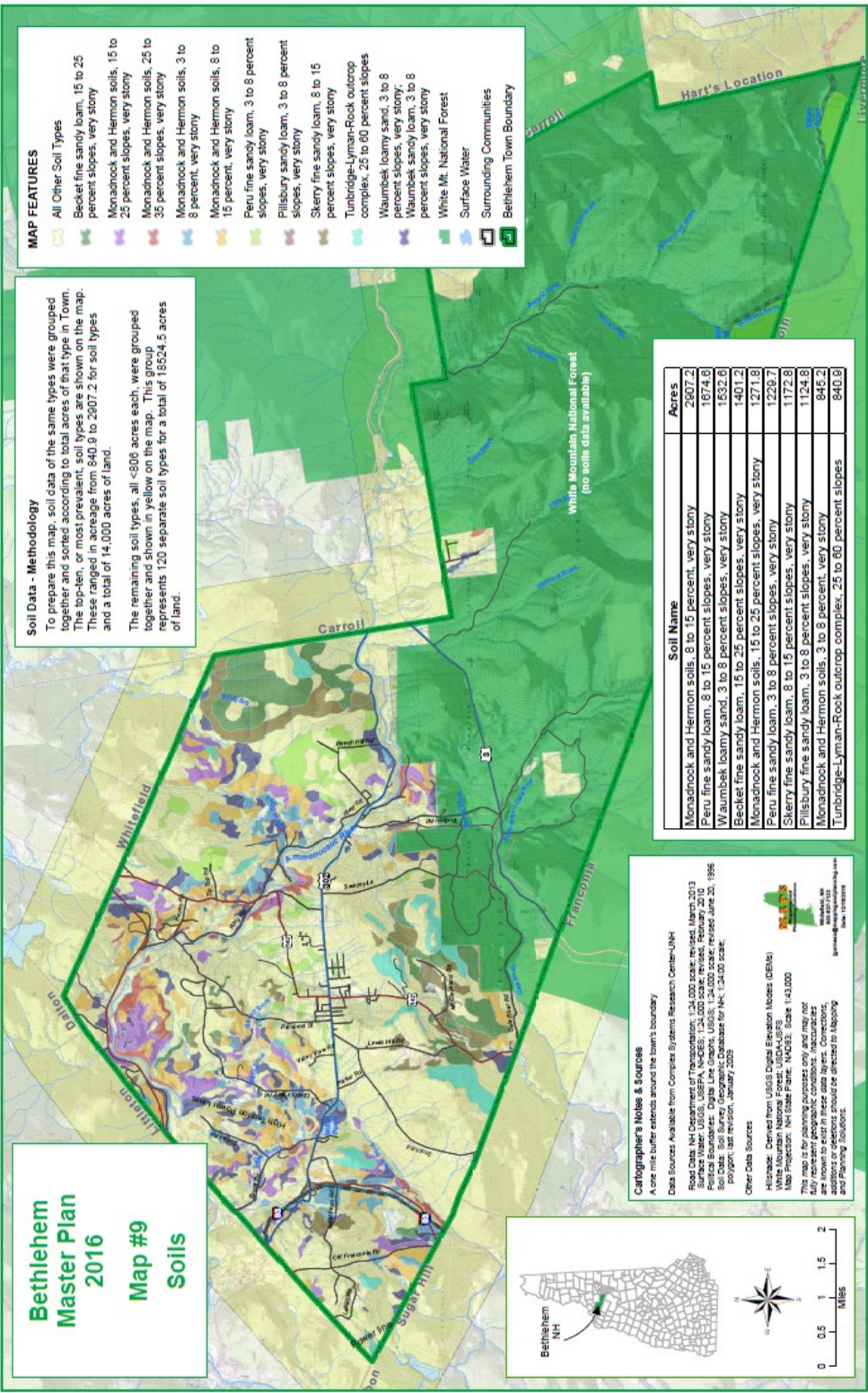


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**MAP #9, SOILS**

*This map will be replaced with an 11" x 17" map in the final hard copy of the Master Plan.*



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## CHAPTER 13: APPENDICES

Appendices included are the following:

- *Appendix A: Statement of Adoption, Bethlehem Master Plan*
- *Appendix B: Community Survey Results – PowerPoint Presentation*
- *Appendix C: Responses to Q37 Regarding “Vision” for Bethlehem*
- *Appendix D: Annual Review Forms*

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**APPENDIX A: STATE OF ADOPTION – BETHLEHEM MASTER PLAN****STATEMENT OF ADOPTION – BETHLEHEM MASTER PLAN**

This publication of the Bethlehem Master Plan, 2016 represents a concerted effort on the part of town government to provide a mechanism for effectively planning for the future needs of the Community of Bethlehem, NH. The Bethlehem Master Plan was developed to be in accordance with NH RSA 674:2. RSA 674:2 requires a community's Master Plan (the Plan) to minimally include "(a) A vision section that serves to direct the other sections of the plan..." and (b) A land use section upon which all the following sections shall be based..."

The stated purpose of this Plan is to produce a community-wide document that will guide the growth and development of the Community for the next ten years and beyond and to preserve the vision that residents have for Bethlehem.

The Planning Board of Bethlehem, NH, in accordance with the provisions of NH RSA 674:4, hereby adopts the Bethlehem Master Plan, 2016, including its findings, recommendations, goals and policies; rescinding and replacing all previous Master Plans for the Town; further the Planning Board designates the Bethlehem Master Plan, 2016 as the planning guideline to be consulted and followed in the performance of its duties; and agrees to implement, to the best of its abilities, the recommendations, goals and policies contained in this Plan.

**Statement of Adoption for the Town of Bethlehem Master Plan, Bethlehem Planning Board**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Bruno, Chairman, Planning Board

\_\_\_\_\_  
David Wiley, Vice Chair, Planning Board

\_\_\_\_\_  
Stephen Gorman, Planning Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Christopher McGrath, Planning Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Marie Stevenson, Planning Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Johnathan Stevenson, Planning Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cassandra Laleme, Board of Selectmen

\_\_\_\_\_  
Debra Bayley, Planning Board Clerk

*\*Signatures are scanned-original signatures on file in the Bethlehem Town Offices.*

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APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS – POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

## Bethlehem Master Plan Update

Survey Results  
July 8, 2015

### Interpret vs Analyze

- To Interpret:
  - Def: To understand the significance of
  - Committee's Responsibility
- To Analyze:
  - Def: To examine methodically by separating into parts and studying their interrelations.
  - Intent of this presentation (MAPS)

### The Numbers

- Mailing
  - 860
    - Mailed to out-of-towners
  - 1400
    - Delivered to every mailbox in Town
  - 2260
    - Total delivered or mailed

### The Numbers (continued)

- Survey Monkey
  - 104
    - Surveys Completed
  - 331
    - Total Surveys Returned
  - 14.6% Return ( $331/2260 = .1464$ )
    - Average return rate 10-15% (SurveyGizmo); 10-20% (Constant Contact)

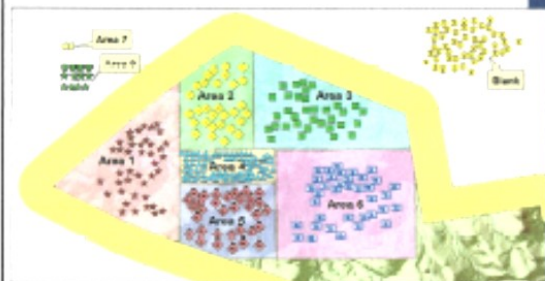
### Methodology

- Each survey was numbered from 1 to 331
- Responses were entered in Geographic Information System
- 146 "fields" x 331 "records" = 48,326 separate entries
- Recorded answers for each using GIS

### Methodology (continued)

SM NO	M	Area	Age	Birth Sex	Year Long	Plan Rec	Residing
1A	3	Blank	16-63 Years	Yes	20+ years	No	Single-Family - 2 acres
1A	6	Area 6	40-65 Years	Yes	20+ years	Blank	Single-Family - 2 acres
1A	20	Area 6	20-45 Years	Yes	1-5 years	Blank	Single-Family - 2 acres
1A	20	Area 6	60+ Years	Yes	20+ years	Blank	Single-Family - 2 acres
1A	60	Area 2	40-65 Years	Yes	11-20 years	Blank	Single-Family - 2 acres
1A	60	Area 2	20-45 Years	Yes	20+ years	Blank	Single-Family - 2 acres
1A	60	Area 6	60+ Years	Yes	10 years	Blank	Single-Family - 2 acres
1A	60	Area 6	60+ Years	Yes	11-20 years	Blank	Single-Family - 2 acres
1A	70	Area 3	40-65 Years	Yes	20+ years	Blank	Single-Family - 2 acres
1A	70	Area 3	20-45 Years	Yes	6-10 years	Blank	Agistment
1A	13	Blank	60-65 Years	Yes	20+ years	Blank	Single-Family - 2 acres
1A	60	Area 2	40-65 Years	Yes	1-5 years	Blank	Single-Family - 2 acres
1A	60	Area 2	65-69 Years	Yes	20+ years	Blank	Single-Family - 2 acres
1A	60	Area 2	65-69 Years	Yes	11-16 years	Blank	Single-Family - 2 acres

### Each location was plotted in GIS



### Analysis

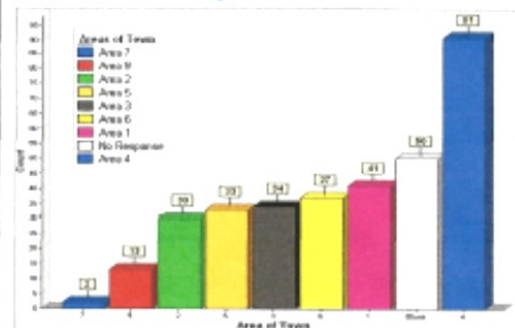
- Using GIS techniques that included sorting and grouping or “summarizing” each field was analyzed creating small sub tables for some fields.
- These tables later become the basis for the graphs you will see in this presentation.

### Analysis (continued)

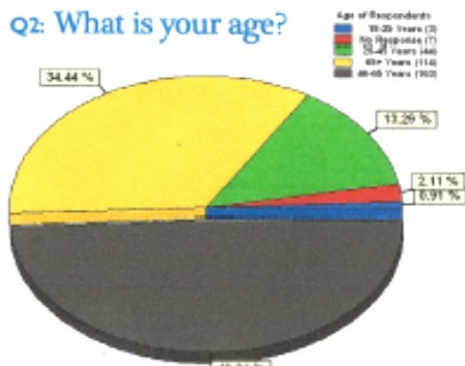
Table		
Area		
OID	Area	Count_Area
0	1	45
1	2	30
2	3	34
3	4	31
4	5	33
5	6	37
6	7	2
7	Blank	13
8	Blank	60

Now on to the questions and responses...

### Q1: Where do you live?



### Q2: What is your age?



### Q3 & 4: Is Bethlehem your primary residence?

- **10**
  - Did not respond, did not indicate number of years and did not indicate a desire to become a resident
- **77**
  - Said they were not residents and of those, 26 said they would not become a resident; 2 did not respond
- **244**
  - Said “Yes” to being a resident
    - 32 = 1-5 years
    - 22 = 6-10 years
    - 36 = 11-20 years
    - 55 = 20+ years
    - 19 = Lifelong
    - 80 = No Response

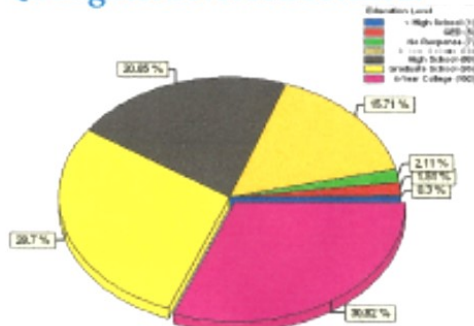
Q5: In which type of housing do you currently live?

- 1 Rooming House (.30%)
- 1 Subsidized Housing (.30%)
- 7 Multi-Family (2.11%)
- 7 Farm (2.11%)
- 9 Mobile Home (2.72%)
- 9 Other (2.72%)

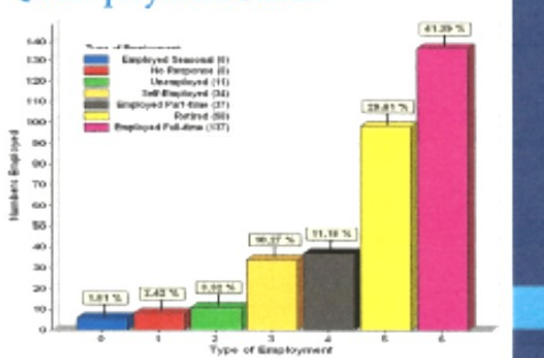
Q5: In which type of housing do you currently live? (continued)

- 11 Apartments (3.32%)
- 11 No response (3.32%)
- 17 Condominium (5.14%)
- 122 Single Family < 2 acres (36.86%)
- 136 Single Family > 2 acres (41.09%)

Q6: Highest Level of Education?



Q7: Employment Status



Q7: Occupation?

- Educator/Teacher (9)
- Nurse/RN (4)
- Architect & IT Manager
- Retail/Clerk (3)
- Attorney/Lawyer (3)
- Inn Keeper (2)
- Artist & Massage Therapist
- Artist/Teacher
- Auto Dealer
- Bartender
- Building supplies sales
- Captain Delta Airlines
- Chef
- Consultant
- Contractor
- Deputy Sheriff
- Digital Commerce Manager
- Director of Engineering
- Director, SPNU-UP
- Disabled
- Disabled veteran
- Engineer & Research Nurse
- Engineer
- Executive
- Financial Services
- Floor Mechanic/Engine Mechanic
- Housewife RN
- HVAC Tech
- Land surveyor / sculptor
- Manager Solid Waste
- Medical Professional
- Nuclear Med Tech
- Office
- Plumber
- Pottery Teacher
- Professor
- Regional Office Manager
- Restaurant Manager
- Retired
- Sales PMH
- School Counselor
- Senior van driver
- Ski Instructor - BW
- Structural Engineer
- Sub in SAU 35 & 84
- Systems Administrator
- USAF-Chief Master Sergeant
- Rounding Salaried Manager

Q8: Where do you work?

- 59 Bethlehem
- 38 Littleton
- 15 Carroll (Twin/BW)
- 14 Whitefield
- 12 Franconia
- 3 Lincoln/Woodstock
- 190 No Response



## Q8: Work Other (locations)?

Area Director	In and out of State	Online and NE
At home	Lake City, FL	Out of State
At home	Lancaster (8)	Pennsylvania
Bedford, NH	Upton (2)	Piedmont Hatch, NH
Berlin	MA (5)	Pittsford
Boston (18)	Manchester, NH (4)	Rutland (11)
Burlington, MA	Hanover, NY	Rhode Island
Canby	Wilton, MA	San Francisco, CA
Carroll (Twinsburg) (2)	Providence	Several towns
Concord, NH (2)	N. Haverhill	Shrewsbury, MA
Connecticut (2)	Watkins, NH (2)	St., VT & Bristol
Crawford Hatch	New Hampton	Sugar Hill
Danbury, CT	New Jersey	Torrington, CT
Disabled veteran	NH/VT	Trenton
Exeter, NH	NJ & PA	Vermont
FRASER'S FARM	Rural Country Region	Waterford, VT
Gorham, NH (2)	Northeastern US	Watford, MA
Hanover, MA	Rutland, VT	Whitefield
Hanover, NH (2)	NYC	Windsorville (1)

## Q9: Familiar with Bethlehem Zoning Ordinances?

- 161
- Yes (48.64%)
- 150
- No (45.32%)
- 20
- No response (6.04%)

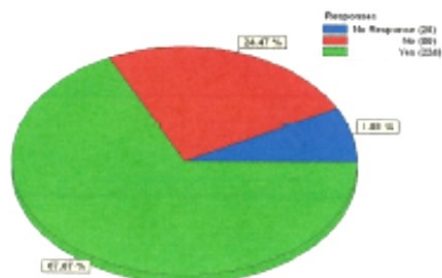
## Q9: Familiar with Bethlehem Zoning Ordinances?

- Of the 161 who said Yes
- 47 = Inadequate (29.19%)
- 67 = Adequate (41.61%)
- 44 = Excessive (27.33%)
- 3 = No Response (1.86%)

## Q11: Do you agree with mobile / manufactured subdivision regulations?

- 234 = Yes (70.69%)
- 75 = No (22.66%)
- 22 = No Response (6.65%)

## Q12: Would you like to see more commercial development...?



## Q13: How do you feel the Town can entice business to come here?

- 206 separate answers (125 No Response)
- Tax breaks or tax incentives...most common
- Other Common threads...
  - Cleaning up the downtown/Main Street area
  - A suggestion to stop "discouraging" new businesses
  - Be more open & receptive to all businesses interests
  - Close the landfill.

A complete list of these comments is available in Appendix: Survey, Q13

Q14: What businesses or services would like to see, or see more of?

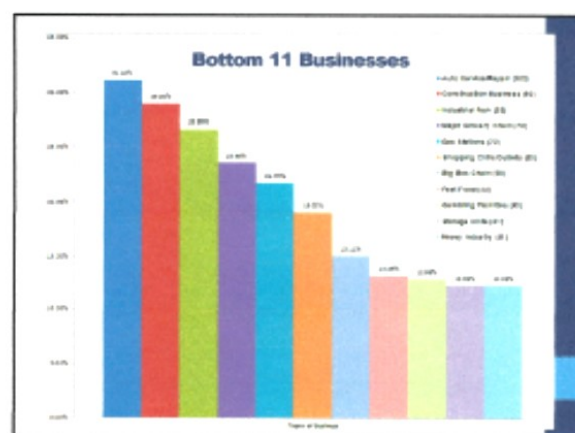
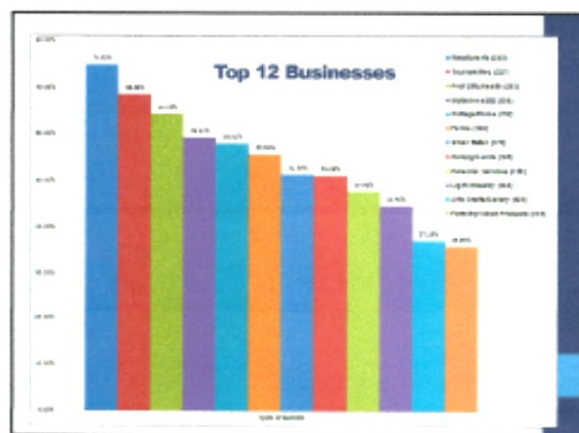
#### The Top Five

1. Restaurants
2. Tourism/Recreation
3. Professional Offices/Healthcare
4. Motels/Inns/B&Bs
5. Cottage & Home Industries

Q14: What businesses or services would like to see, or see more of?  
(continued)

#### The Bottom Five

1. Big Box Chain
2. Fast Food
3. Gambling
4. Storage Units
5. Heavy Industry

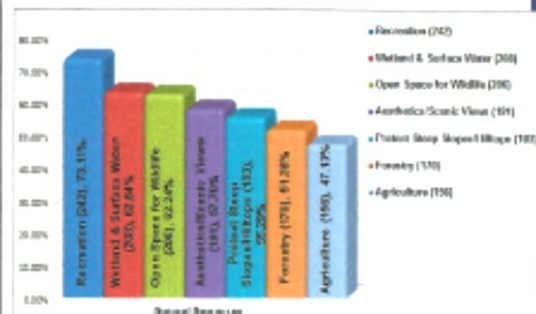


Q14: What other businesses or services would like to see, or see more of?

- 3 - businesses to reduce taxes
- 2 - hardware store
- 2 - medical marijuana growing/dispensary
- 2 - Dunkin Donuts
- 2 - Industrial Park on Route 116
- 11 small retail stores/variety of types

A complete list of these comments is available in Appendix Survey\_Q14

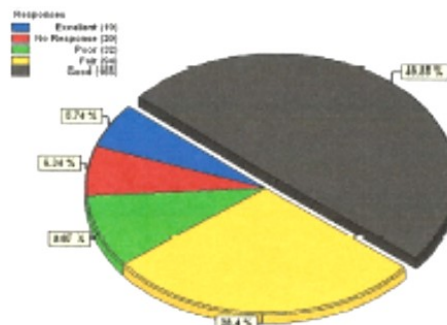
Q15: The Town should actively promote more conserved land for...



### Q15: Natural Resources Other...

- Large Variety of answers
- Most Common Thread...
  - We have enough protected land
- Samples...
  - Plenty of land!
  - Protected drinking water
  - Protecting the environment
  - This can all be done and still develop land
  - Too much property owned by town, state and fed
- A complete list of these comments is available in Appendix Survey\_Q15

### Q16: What is the general condition of town roads in Bethlehem?



### Q16.1: Are any of the following traffic conditions a problem...truck traffic?

- **The Majority**
  - Truck traffic on Route 302 and "Main Street"
- **Sample Responses...**
  - (17) Route 302
  - 302 Jake breaks
- 302, 142, Trudeau
- Trucks and campers on 302
- Near School
- Long Hill
- A full list of comments is in Appendix Survey\_Q16.1

### Q16.2: Are any of the following traffic conditions a problem...traffic speed?

- **The Majority**
  - Main Street, Route 302 & the Downtown area.
- **Other problems**
  - Lewis Hill Road, Agassiz Street and Route 142.
- For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q16.2

### Q16.3: Are any of the following traffic conditions a problem...traffic noise?

- **The Majority**
  - Main Street & Route 302
- **Mainly**
  - "Truck" noise
  - Use of "Jake Brakes".
- For a complete list of the comments that Appendix Survey\_Q16.3

### Q16.4: Are any of the following traffic conditions a problem...traffic turning & entering?

- **Major areas of concern are...**
  - Route 302 & 142
  - Route 302 & Trudeau Road
  - Post Office/Coffee Shop/School
- For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q16.4



**Q16.5: Are any of the following traffic conditions a problem...inadequate street lightning?**

- 67 Written Responses
- 36 That lighting is "ok", "fine" or "no problem", etc.
- 6 Think there are already too many
- 21 Think lighting is inadequate in some places

*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q16.5*

**Q17: Are there areas where parking is inadequate?**

- 171 Written Responses/160 No Response
- Majority
  - Post Office
  - Main Street
  - Bethlehem Elementary School
  - Town Hall

*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q17*

**Q18: Are there areas where handicap parking is inadequate?**

- 106 Written Responses/225 No Response
- 65 No problem or similar comment
- Majority
  - Post Office
  - Main Street
  - Bethlehem Elementary School
  - Town Hall

*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q18*

**Q19.1: Do you think improvements are needed such as...better roadway shoulders?**

- 159 Written Responses/272 No Response
- 17 No problem or similar comment
- Majority
  - Long Hill
  - Route 142
  - River Road
  - Brook Road

*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q19.1*

**Q19.2: Do you think any roads need improvements such as...better signage?**

- 36 Written Responses/295 No Response
- 21 No problem or similar comment
- Samples (no majority)
  - 116 to 142
  - Banner over 302 for events
  - To much signage – eye sore
  - Everywhere

*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q19.2*

**Q19.3: Do you think any roads need improvements such as...unpaved to paved?**

- 35 Written Responses/296 No Response
- 20 No problem or other similar comment
- Samples (no majority)
  - All private roads need to be paved
  - Beaver Pond and River Road
  - Pave Prospect to the bridge
  - When money allows

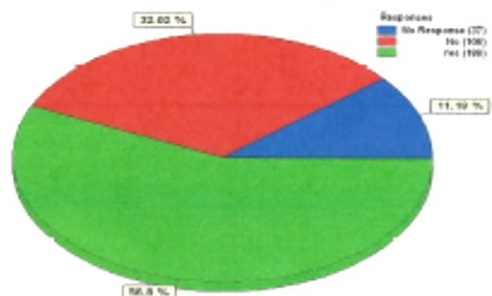
*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q19.3*

#### Q19.4: Do you think any roads need improvements such as...other?

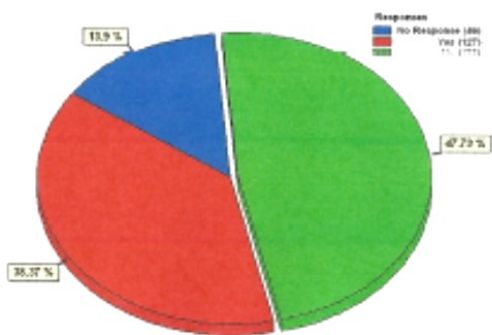
- 102 Written Responses/239 No Response
- 9 No problem or similar comment
- Common Threads
  - At least 22 ...“paving & resurfacing”
  - At least 5 ...regarding “drainage”
  - Work on Trudeau/Brook...more than others

For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q19.4

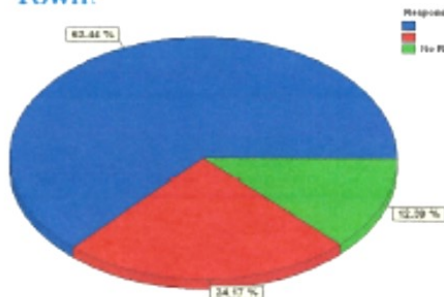
#### Q20: Should there be more bicycle paths and/or lanes through the Town?



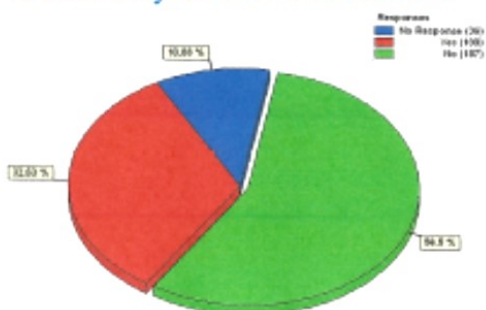
#### Q21: Should there be more sidewalks?



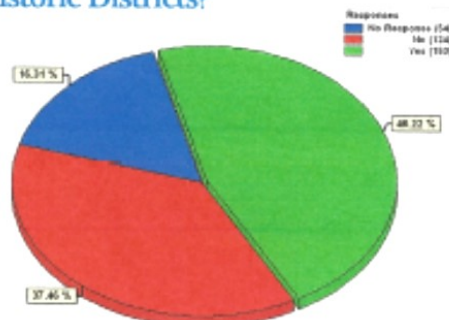
#### Q22: Should there be more linked trails (snowmobile & hiking) through Town?



#### Q23: Should the Town allow ATV accessibility on the Town's roads?



#### Q24: Should the Town establish Town Historic Districts?



**Q25: Are there historic sites in Town that should be protected now?**

- Common Threads
- Colonial Theatre
- Railroad Station at Maplewood
- Maplewood
- Ivie Church & other churches
- Victorian Homes
- Town Building
- Complete list in Appendix: Survey\_Q25

**Q26: Would like to see more or less of the following types of housing?**

	More	Same	Less	No Opinion	No Response	No Opinion & No Response
Single (1900)	118	77	3	38	88	81
Two-family/duplex	57	88	83	68	95	123
Multi-unit (3-4 units)	20	81	125	47	64	111
Condominiums/town houses	84	89	54	38	55	93
Apartment buildings	31	70	139	32	58	91
Elderly housing	108	188	8	36	46	82
Affordable housing	80	87	83	34	57	91
Conversion of large houses into apartments	41	86	131	48	58	104
Mobile homes	15	84	132	41	59	100
Cluster developments	65	82	189	45	38	104

**Q27: Are you interested in the development of alternative energy projects?**

RANKING	Very Interested	Moderately Interested	Not Interested	Do not have enough information	No Response
Gas to Energy Projects	71	66	82	88	54
Hydro Power	197	81	49	88	62
Solar Energy	171	69	19	33	40
Wind Farms	198	67	72	40	44
Geothermal Projects	115	73	27	67	49

**Q28: Do you have additional comments about alternative energy projects?**

- 89 Written Responses/242 No Response
- 6 No comments
- Wide variety of comments...a few small common groups
  - At least nine comments about Wind Farms...most against
  - At least 10 comments about Landfill gas...most for harnessing it
  - At least 7 comments about the River...hydro power

*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q28*

**Q29: Community Services...Please rate these services?**

- These had a high “no opinion” and “no response rate”

- Animal Control
- Day Care
- Welfare Administration
- Public Meeting Rooms
- Cemetery Care

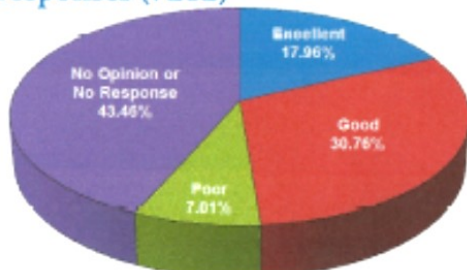
**Q29: Community Services...Please rate these services? (continued)**

- Ranked excellent more often than good
  - Gazebo Concerts
  - Library
- Ranked good more often than poor
  - All other departments
- Ranked poor
  - High-speed internet
- Many respondents skipped

*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q29*



**Q29: Overall rating of Community Services analyzing the total possible responses (7282)**



**Q30: Town spending for this Community Services should be...**

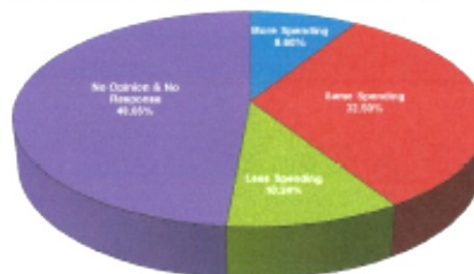
- Overall...Spending should stay the "same"
- The following departments received high "no opinion" marks possibly indicating little knowledge of these departments
  - Day Care
  - Welfare Administration
  - High Speed Internet

**Q30: Town spending for this Community Services should be...(continued)**

- High Speed Internet was indicated as needing "more" spending
- Like Q29, many respondents skipped this entire section or left the question "blank".

*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q30*

**Q30: Overall "spending" results for Community Services analyzing the total possible responses (7282)**



**Q31: What is your opinion about the landfill?**

- 55 People did not respond
- Positive & negative responses nearly equal
- Common Threads...
  - Shut it Down
  - Very well managed...excellent operation
  - Here so we must deal with it
  - Trash must go somewhere...necessary evil
  - Issue solved...get over it
  - Hurts the environment
  - Eyesore
  - No expansion
  - Serving community well

*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q31*

**Q32: What is your opinion about the Northern Pass?**

- 48 people did not respond
- Mostly negative responses
- Common Threads
  - Bury it
  - Do not allow
  - No, No, No
  - Let it fly

*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q32*



**Q33: What changes do you think would improve Bethlehem?**

- 73 people did not respond
- Common threads
  - Lower taxes
  - More businesses
  - Close the dump
  - Clean up downtown
  - Clean up old or dilapidated buildings
  - Improve town water

*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q33*

**Q34: What is your biggest concern about the present and future of Bethlehem?**

- 70 people did not respond
- Common threads...
  - Increasing tax rate
  - Not enough business /businesses not coming
  - Over development
  - Safe water
  - Young people leaving
  - Affordability
  - Cleaning up Main Street buildings/appearance

*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q34*

**Q35: What do you consider the best thing about living/owning property in Bethlehem?**

- 75 people did not respond
- Common Threads...
  - Quiet
  - Friendly/Neighbors
  - Privacy & Simple life
  - Closeness to Littleton
  - Scenic & natural beauty
  - Quality of life
  - Small town feel

*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q35*

**Q36: What service (or services) is NOT being provided that should be?**

- 75 people did not respond
- Common Threads...
  - Services for young adults/more to do
  - High speed internet
  - Drug store
  - Hardware Store
  - More shops & restaurants
  - Road repair/maintenance
  - Transportation links (BW, Littleton, Portland)

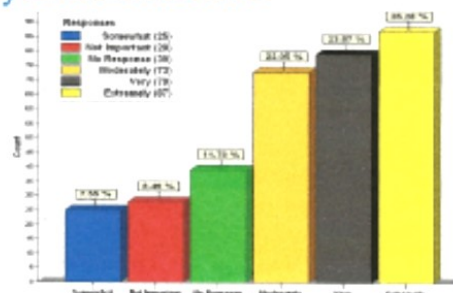
*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q36*

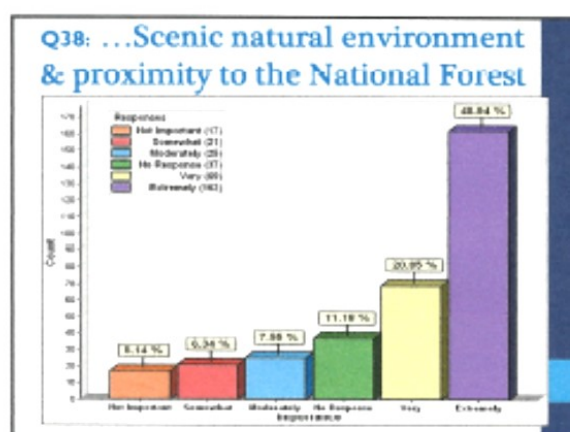
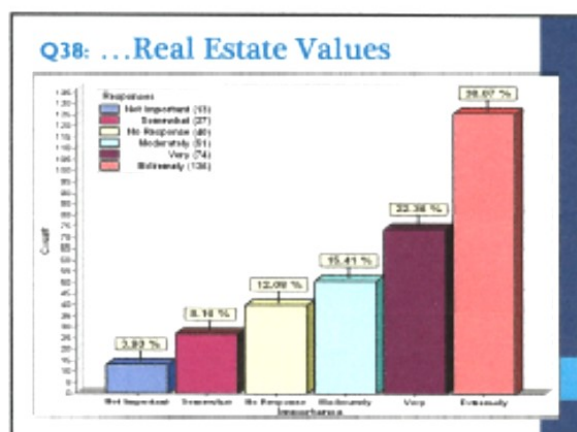
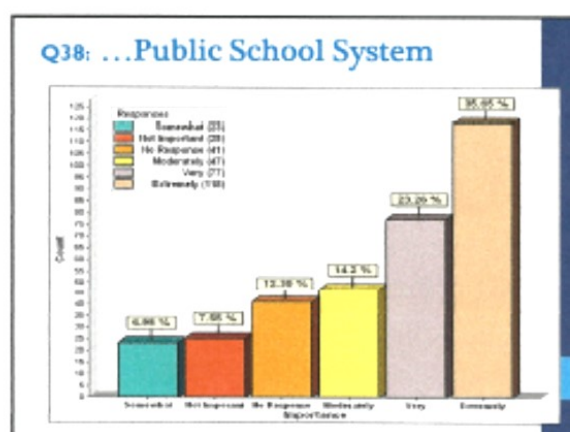
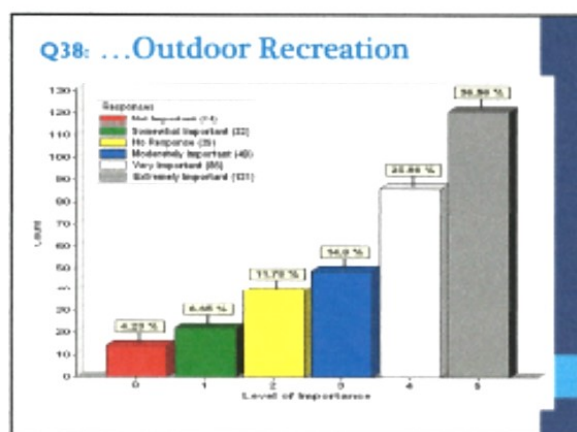
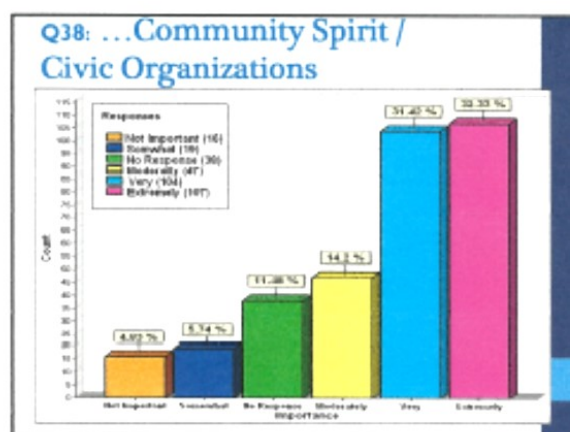
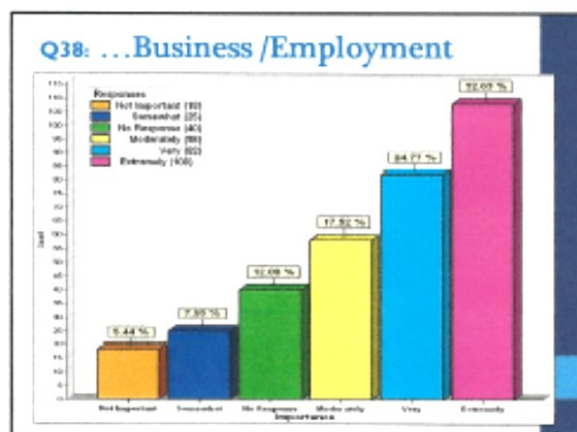
**Q37: Please describe YOUR vision of what Bethlehem should be like twenty years from now?**

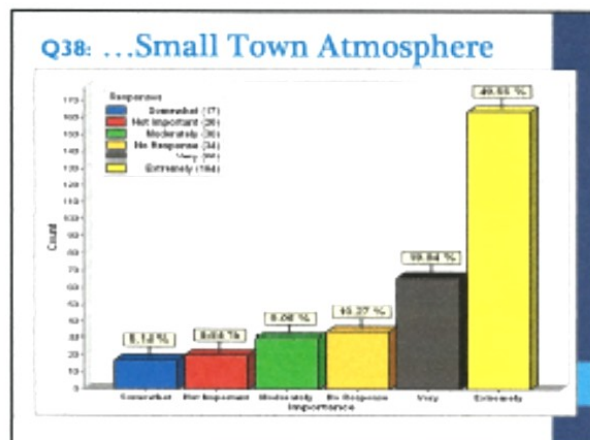
- 107 people did not respond
- Common Threads...
  - Busy small town with low taxes
  - A quaint and vibrant downtown/Main Street
  - More basic services
  - Events/lectures/cultural/historic
  - A town thriving with jobs, tourism and recreation
  - More businesses in appropriate locations/business incentives

*For a complete list of comments, please see Appendix Survey\_Q37*

**Q38: Please rank the following according to their importance to you...Architecture**







### Digital Copies

- Digital Copies of this presentation and Appendix that includes lists of all comments made by respondents is available by signing up tonight or emailing

• [jgarneau@mappingandplanning.com](mailto:jgarneau@mappingandplanning.com)

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**APPENDIX C: RESPONSES TO Q37 REGARDING “VISION” FOR BETHLEHEM****Q37: Please describe your vision of what Bethlehem should be like twenty years from now?****Please Note**

Although every effort was made to accurately transcribe comments from the Community Survey, it was difficult at times to read and interpret some comments. Therefore, the Bethlehem Planning Board apologizes for any statements that may not have been transcribed exactly as intended.

Also, it should be noted that 107 respondents to the Community Survey left this question blank.

Comments
10 restaurants / more shops / lower property taxes
20 years from now I see it being a year round tourist attraction with lots of events, lectures, festivals that celebrate its history and surroundings
2035 well I hope they take care of the grave yards and do nothing to detract from the natural beauty of this town
A balance of development and sustainable growth with charm & character being retained
A busy small town with low taxes
A changing, growing, smart, developing town to encourage tourism stops, shops and revenue to maintain towns operation budget demands, without penalty to residents
A cleaned up neat country town
A community offering its residents a springboard to the beauty of nature that surrounds it; a place where families can comfortably raise their children on modest means; a town not overrun by commercial development
A community where families are able to bring up children with old fashion values
A cultural center for artists / artisans and healers
A destination community offering great cultural and natural attractions. Population about 5000 with good working, riding trails and roads
A destination site / town with more artsy / interesting stores, restaurants, cultural events. Promote outdoor activities, farming.
A downtown area with commerce, a well-organized industrial park that employs resident, Hotels that attract tourists and new residential construction to house the residents of a prosperous and growing town
A historic downtown with more curb-appeal along all major roads. A new Inn at Maplewood or townhomes to encourage tourism again

Comments
A mecca for arts and crafts, where tourists will come to eat, browse, walk, golf and enjoy the charm that Bethlehem has to offer
A more refined, rural cultured community with the best schools, recreational parks, Ball fields, Playgrounds with a positive happy atmosphere that people keep making Bethlehem THE place in Northern NH to visit and move into finding work, affordable homes
A more vibrant and growing community
A more vibrant Main Street for tourists with light industry on RT 116 and small farms around town
A Multi-dimensional self-supported town with job opportunity and reasonable taxes and government intrusion
A multi-generational and diverse community supported by residents who present a beneficial view of progress and history in balance
A new generation has given new life to the town and found a way to take control of those run down campgrounds on 302 and the empty store fronts to turn this town into a sustainable community. There is a big community garden and more job/housing opportunities
A nice place to live, with place to work. People having services in the town for shopping, eating, working, car repairs, home repairs, etc. We need to be a self-sufficient town where any citizen can live, work & have all their needs met
A place that normal people can find descent work and who can afford to live here.
A place that preserves its past thru planned development
A place where families find value in coming to visit and stay for a while with a nice selection of recreation, arts, music, business, and places to eat.
A premier vacation destination for outdoor enthusiasts.
A quaint village with a Main St. full of unique stores and restaurants. Homes with acreage of untouched fields and woods
A real community and democratic government - open and honest
A small community!
A small retirement town with all public transportation from the Mass border to Bethlehem and in Bethlehem, NH.
A small town with a thriving center and a tax-base supported by tech talent and small tech companies (R+D, Mfg.) - campus development with industry and university partners. Entrepreneur incentives
A sustainable community
A tax friendly town; I live in a glorified hunting camp log cabin, my land is in current use and I pay over \$5k for property taxes; can't you see what is happening in this town; it's all people from MA who came make six figures nobody can afford to retire
A thriving active town with successful in character businesses that maintains the unique quaintest of the area

Comments
A thriving community and cost of living that is reasonable
A thriving community with jobs available.
A thriving small town with more businesses in order to provide more tax relief
A thriving tourist town
A thriving town with jobs tourism and tons recreation.
A town that embraces its natural environment
A town that has more opportunities for younger families to move into town. The only way to accomplish this is to increase tax base with light industry, small box stores, and doctors' offices
A town that openly embraces individuals from all demographics that seeks out all types of businesses. Also more housing, such as housing developments.
A town the residents will still love, but not a place an average family can't afford to live in
A vibrant Main St. with stores (of all sizes), hotels, restaurants where you can walk and see people visiting year round. Also an office building or two. Without that Main St. will continue to shrink
A vibrant small town characterized by antique shops, small restaurants, and gift shops, and where you can stroll down the street (on a decent sidewalk) and enjoy its charm. Oh yeah- and the dump is closed for GOOD. No more trash from out of state - no
A vibrant walkable Main Street with a variety of restaurants and businesses. Local hiking and cross country trails combined with a greater concentration of parks.
A well run town with visual appeal and continuation of concerts and support of local businesses
Abandoned properties if the taxes aren't taken under control - attract business and developers by making owning here affordable - then a wonderful place to raise a family or retire
about the same
Affordable place to live with a tax base not too heavy based on education
All dilapidated buildings removed resurgence in commerce and a warm and welcome community for children.
Almost the same
An affordable town with a thriving and quaint downtown that supports the arts and local artists, farmers, entrepreneurs
An upscale Littleton



Comments
Arts, shops, restaurants - B&Bs. Maybe an annual or semi-annual attraction that draws people to Bethlehem
Artsy, active, outdoorsy, inclusive, small town
Beautiful small shops lining the Main St. All buildings painted and well kept
Bethlehem could be the pride of NH with a plan and enthusiasm. Small retail stores that are supported by the town. A "charming", tasteful place that encourages knowledgeable tourists. More of a cultural center. Our theater is an example of what can hap
Bethlehem should always be a place where people feel extraordinarily fortunate to live.
Bethlehem should have real antique shops instead of junk shops/most of Main St. is in need of building maintenance and upgrades – painting etc.
Bethlehem will not grow much - my opinion is that it will be about the same as now or worse - some things may go away
Better roads, lower taxes and more small business employment opportunities for local people
Better roads. More business. Lower taxes
Better tax base
Bigger and better
Broke - we cannot sustain the increase tax load we property owners face
Bucolic
Bucolic village with vibrant down-town
bucolic, live and let live, with perhaps fewer visionaries
Bustling with locals and tourists visiting unique small shops, great restaurants, historical tours (we love the Lantern Tour offered by B&B owner several years ago!)
Busy downtown all year, with cars parked on main street that would force traffic to slow down and tourists to stop in town and walk around
Busy people love the views and old time feel
Busy with people being able to walk to shops and services
Cannot see that far ahead. We take it every year as it comes

Comments
Clean up Main St. - get rid of the 10 or 20 junk yards in town. No more camper trailers on lots becoming permanent living places
Clean, quiet, quaint and beautiful. Busy up-town, recreational trails, bike routes, user friendly!
Clean. Bring job to our town and demolish run down building not being kept up to code.
Cohousing downtown. Better general store - good local produce, meat, etc. Upscale food manufacturing downtown.
Continue to make it family friendly by keeping up the pool, library, and park areas. Keep it safe from crime!!!!
Deserted if things don't get more interesting
Develop an industrial park on 116 and get some big business in
Expanded historical society.
Few more Main St businesses.
Ghost town. No one can afford to live here or wants to. Town owns all taxed property
Good schools. Forums and events for a balanced exchange of ideas. Evidence of decision making that always values our 20 year future on the table.
Historical Buildings in good repairs, developed tourism/recreation, dining, small shopping. Like now, but a little more.
Historically preserved, no big industry, increase in agriculture and small town business.
Hope that we can hold the family here
I'll be dead
I can't imagine that far in the future. You should be asking that for the next 10 years. Get some businesses here.
I envision a town that has grown at a sustainable level and still maintains a small town feel. I see a thriving village district with additional locally owned shops that attract both local and tourist dollars.
I feel that it important to keep the small town feel on Main Street but on the outskirts we should attract businesses like industrial parks or other companies.
I hope just the same! Maybe a small industrial base to help keep taxes down and provide jobs.
I hope that it is able to remain the small town as it is but still provide good school and library

Comments
I like Bethlehem as a small town. Would like to see it stay that way
I like the antique look of the late 18 or 1900s
I love hearing Dick Robie talk about the businesses that were here and would love to see hardware or similar return so more shopping for necessities could happen in town
I probably won't be alive
I see a quaint village where people flock to for the beauty, rest and fun things to do.
I still want the quaint New England village feel. I think there is a way to grow, but still retain our village appeal
I want to see an Arts Hotel in town. Can you imagine? Everything in it is made by a local artist or artisan, including furniture, bedding, art, toiletries- and if course, Art. It would have a small conference center, that would attract groups to com
I won't be there or here, but with the fine library and schools I see a better place to live. The cities may be unbearable so country living will appeal
I would hope it would be much the same but more vibrant and a little more bustling. More kids and more kids' activities. And more welcoming for people who move here by choice from elsewhere.
I would like to no franchises allowed - only independent businesses
I would like to see a more consolidated village "Main St." area with some development in area close to the highway for newer businesses. Strength of Bethlehem is that it's ideal for retirees and young families. We need to retain the beauty of Main St.
I would like to see a town that has taken advantage of clean energy specifically wind & solar
Improve and use what we have. Limited development. A thriving village where we want to bring friends and family
Increase property values, small businesses being developed
Increase to tourist facilities - recreational facilities for youth and elderly
It should look like Littleton - keeping small specialty shops in town and revenue producing stores on outskirts
It's described in questions #33, #34 and #36. Locals dropping the prejudice attitude toward tourists (such as flatlanders to their face). Making for a friendlier atmosphere instead of intimidating. Grow up, act like adults looking for a more attractive
Its environment protected against pollution and further development and much of its land owned by the town. Littleton has enough stores, etc. and is nearby. I would like to see Bethlehem as the town of recreation with lots of hiking / biking trails
It's rebuilt, shined up. People wanting to come here

Comments
Just as is....
Just like now, but the run down apartments / houses
Just the way it is with lower taxes
Keep friendly, small town atmosphere and maintain slow population growth. More public lands
Larger tourist accommodations expanded Main St. shops and restaurants
Less for sale signs, Main St thriving, lower taxes
less property taxes
let economy work
Light industry....more business
Look the same. Small middle class population - low to middle incomes - taxes too high to promote growth
Lower taxes
Lower the taxes
Make town more inviting - cleaned up. Bring in business - less on taxes
Modest "Main St." commercial development; preservation of its bucolic beauty
More accessible to middle - income families
More art, music, crafts, inns, restaurants. More to attract tourism and new residents
More business
More business to tax. Structure and allow lower taxes for the residents
More businesses
More businesses so taxes are less

Comments
More businesses, public transportation
More historic architecture styles to go along with what's already there. No Dollar Store or fast food. Make it an alternative to what is becoming sprawl.
More industry
More industry in well-defined areas, more residents who appreciate the environment, more hotels. Independent, with as few national chain stores as possible.
More of the same - better roads
More restaurants & place to stay other than just the beautiful Inns we have
More small businesses that can hire more people.
More vibrant than ever, more local places to eat and sleep; no landfill
Move all mobile homes out of Bethlehem....town gets first option to buy and disperse of same when the time is right.
Much like it is but a bit more self-supporting - that means more small businesses and a larger permanent population to support it.
Nice touristy, friendly town with more nightlife and fine dining and more outfitters to support all of the recreational activities in the immediate area.
No idea
No increase in population, no heavy or polluting industry, favored tourist destination
No sex offenders, fire and police department you can trust, less apartments. Town officials who care about the town and not lining their own pockets and are honest
No vision. Let the residents individually decide
Not a bedroom community but instead, a community that has industry and commercial enterprises that don't depend on government services.
Not a city, or even a huge town like Littleton, but a nice town that has some restaurants and a few stores that are open in the evening past 5 and just a little bit more business- wise.
Not a lot different from today
Not much change - A great place to raise a family. More diverse tax base = lower taxes
Not much different from its present beauty. The downtown area should be revitalized.

Comments
Not to be over developed, only for needed services
Not too big of growth I love a lot of country small town warmth and friendliness
Not too much different than it is now.
Not very different; a little nicer, greener, more walkable and with some more place to go and things to do, particularly downtown
One of "Best Towns" for 2035. Gradual growth - cottage industries - small manufacturing - citizen open mindedness
One or two medium sized hotels in town, a few smaller ones. All year around. Overnight tourists would walk to restaurant and small shops in town that would open after hotels would come in. Second home owners would come after downtown is better developed
People are more respectful, considerate and nicer. Mail service becomes consistently accurate. We still have beautiful views, lots of trees and easy access to nature trails
Pretty much the center as the same - some new construction business growth on 116 - school tax in check
Pretty much the same without a toxic waste dump and drag strip
Quaint town, but well-lit and having a well maintained look to Main St.
Quaint - Vital
Quiet and quaint
Recreation area, attraction, employment opportunities.
Relatively unchanged. Ginger bread encouraged
Remain small & quiet
Respect for the past, but protect what is best now. Open spaces, more open government
Restoration of Main Street homes, expansion of locally owned shops. Similar to today only with more of the run-down buildings removed or renovated
Restore historic buildings, great restaurants, great shopping, bustling downtown both winter and summer embracing the quaintness. More open minded minds making decisions about how money is spent. Both golf clubs thriving. NO chains, box stores EVER
Retain the small town feel.
Rural area with retail and tourism. Light industry landfill issue resolved. Google care friendly our own silicon valley / start up center for New England



Comments
Same
Same - with honest government
Same as it is now- but without the dump and with more stuff to do
Same as it is now with vacant buildings cleaned up
Same because due to the votes few growth will be hard and slow, but it is getting better. Tax rate will at its current growth will make homes unaffordable to local younger families
Same small town with more historic significant opportunities
Senior living around golf course. Tear down houses. Tear down cottages on 302 - make entry to our town. Nice and pretty and natural
Should have more Main Street business but also should have had some industrial growth as well
Should remain a beautiful small New England town
Similar, but with more commercial, an historic downtown district and a better tax base
Similar in the way it is quiet and simple, but let's keep things maintained and functional (i.e. let's not let the pool get run down)
Similar to now - no mini malls or rampant development. Support small business and it will thrive!
Similar to now, but more small businesses - tourism related and light industry
Similar to what it was 100 years ago. Parades, celebration, community spirit.
Small town living in the White Mts. Cost effective with great services.
Small town. Rural scenery. Preservation well managed. No big box stores. Preservation of beautiful mansions. Tourist destination
Some business brought in that fits our town that would help with the tax base
Some small professional businesses (software company? Accounting firm?). Bedroom community for Littleton is fine, too. Lots of families with young children. Dump closed for good. Historic buildings still there. Dilapidated buildings cleaned up. Hi
Some sort of attraction / destination business in town that will support area growth
Still a small town but with more small business to alleviate the tax structure.

Comments
Still quaint. That is what tourists like
Still the quaint town setting it has now, but with more stores open on this Main St. too bad to see vacant buildings
Tax reduction and clean industry providing job opportunities that attract our youth to stay here and continue to promote positive growth
Tech hub that attracts outdoors - loving techies - think Silicon Valley of NH
That the dump is closed, the Northern Pass never happened, small business have joined Main Street keeping with the architectural designs that identify Bethlehem and the town. It has a positive and very active group of people on the boards that have our
The beauty spot of NH. Well maintained homes, vibrant downtown with store fronts, small hotels and B&Bs, unique character, recreational hot spot - golf - rec department, cultural hot spot
The landfill should be closed. There should be more small shops and restaurants along Main St. There should be a town square on the corner of Agassiz and Main. Property taxes must be lower and more small farms around. I'd like to see someone pursue ...
The Main Street area should be filled with businesses like a "Rockport" or "Bar Harbor"
The same
The same caring community it is today!
The same, with maybe more businesses, some little stretch next. Rt. 3 with some chain business some MFG
The town that links all the towns in our area as one area to visit. To have its history refurbished and attract business who have goods and services to be sold beyond the area and not need to rely on population of Bethlehem alone to see their success.
The town would have some sort of business on Main Street that keeps the old characteristic alive. The landfill will be shut down, and hopefully not polluting the river. The Theater and WREN will still be active and providing cultural activities.
Thriving Main St. with lots of businesses. Industrial park on Rt. 116
Thriving quaint downtown. Restaurants, shops, professional offices... buildings properly maintained and taken care of. Bigger business in appropriately zoned areas...
Thriving tourist location
Thriving with lots of families and less homes for sale. More business that fit the community - no more organic / hippie type
Tourist traffic
Town owns all property and no one would or want to live here
Very similar to today. Historic buildings will be revitalized and well-maintained. Parking will be ample downtown and no large commercial businesses will be in the quaint village.

Comments
Vibrant business community on main street
Vibrant Main Street quiet back roads.
Vibrant Main St. w/ more shops, restaurants, hotels & artisans
Vision includes continued support for strong school system, where families continue to see art. My vision includes healthy small business owners and busy Main Street where our recreation and tourism industry collaborates w/ our Main Street to capitalize o
We're no longer pretending that we're better than other towns, that we don't need new businesses to improve main street experience. After that we have a vibrant main street with all year tourist foot traffic. Bethlehem Country Club is privately owned
We would like to see less town owned property on Main St. We would like not to have to buy bottled water
Without changes in town politics I see foreclosed and a lot of abandoned properties
Without tax changes not by the homeowners only - bankruptcy
Would be a nice village town resort for families to enjoy hiking, fishing, biking, skiing
Would love to see downtown Bethlehem become more of a tourist/shopper destination with more variety than arts.

**APPENDIX D: ANNUAL REVIEW FORMS**

**ANNUAL REVIEW - YEAR ONE**

At a minimum, the Town of Bethlehem Planning Board shall review the Master Plan on an annual basis and record what actions have been taken to achieve the goals as outlined in the Implementation Table in this Chapter.

Bethlehem, NH  
Master Plan, 2016

REVIEWED AND APPROVED

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Planning Board

CONCURRENCE OF APPROVAL

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Selectpersons

Changes and notes regarding the 2016 Bethlehem Master Plan

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*Please use reverse side for additional notes*      

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ANNUAL REVIEW - YEAR TWO

At a minimum, the Town of Bethlehem Planning Board shall review the Master Plan on an annual basis and record what actions have been taken to achieve the goals as outlined in the Implementation Table in this Chapter.

Bethlehem, NH  
Master Plan, 2016

REVIEWED AND APPROVED

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Planning Board

CONCURRENCE OF APPROVAL

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Selectpersons

Changes and notes regarding the 2016 Bethlehem Master Plan

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*Please use reverse side for additional notes*      



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ANNUAL REVIEW - YEAR THREE

At a minimum, the Town of Bethlehem Planning Board shall review the Master Plan on an annual basis and record what actions have been taken to achieve the goals as outlined in the Implementation Table in this Chapter.

Bethlehem, NH  
Master Plan, 2016

REVIEWED AND APPROVED

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Planning Board

CONCURRENCE OF APPROVAL

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Selectpersons

Changes and notes regarding the 2016 Bethlehem Master Plan

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ANNUAL REVIEW - YEAR FIVE

At a minimum, the Town of Bethlehem Planning Board shall review the Master Plan on an annual basis and record what actions have been taken to achieve the goals as outlined in the Implementation Table in this Chapter.

Bethlehem, NH  
Master Plan, 2016

REVIEWED AND APPROVED

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Planning Board

CONCURRENCE OF APPROVAL

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Selectpersons

Changes and notes regarding the 2016 Bethlehem Master Plan

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ANNUAL REVIEW - YEAR SIX

At a minimum, the Town of Bethlehem Planning Board shall review the Master Plan on an annual basis and record what actions have been taken to achieve the goals as outlined in the Implementation Table in this Chapter.

Bethlehem, NH  
Master Plan, 2016

REVIEWED AND APPROVED

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Planning Board

CONCURRENCE OF APPROVAL

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Selectpersons

Changes and notes regarding the 2016 Bethlehem Master Plan

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[illegible]

ANNUAL REVIEW - YEAR SEVEN

At a minimum, the Town of Bethlehem Planning Board shall review the Master Plan on an annual basis and record what actions have been taken to achieve the goals as outlined in the Implementation Table in this Chapter.

Bethlehem, NH  
Master Plan, 2016

REVIEWED AND APPROVED

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Planning Board

CONCURRENCE OF APPROVAL

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Selectpersons

Changes and notes regarding the 2016 Bethlehem Master Plan

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[illegible]

ANNUAL REVIEW - YEAR EIGHT

At a minimum, the Town of Bethlehem Planning Board shall review the Master Plan on an annual basis and record what actions have been taken to achieve the goals as outlined in the Implementation Table in this Chapter.

Bethlehem, NH  
Master Plan, 2016

REVIEWED AND APPROVED

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Planning Board

CONCURRENCE OF APPROVAL

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Selectpersons

Changes and notes regarding the 2016 Bethlehem Master Plan

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[illegible]

ANNUAL REVIEW - YEAR NINE

At a minimum, the Town of Bethlehem Planning Board shall review the Master Plan on an annual basis and record what actions have been taken to achieve the goals as outlined in the Implementation Table in this Chapter.

Bethlehem, NH  
Master Plan, 2016

REVIEWED AND APPROVED

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Planning Board

CONCURRENCE OF APPROVAL

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Selectpersons

Changes and notes regarding the 2016 Bethlehem Master Plan

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[illegible]

ANNUAL REVIEW - YEAR TEN

At a minimum, the Town of Bethlehem Planning Board shall review the Master Plan on an annual basis and record what actions have been taken to achieve the goals as outlined in the Implementation Table in this Chapter.

Bethlehem, NH  
Master Plan, 2016

REVIEWED AND APPROVED

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Planning Board

CONCURRENCE OF APPROVAL

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of the Selectpersons

Changes and notes regarding the 2016 Bethlehem Master Plan

*Please use reverse side for additional notes* 

## This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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**Stone Church**

**Photo Credit:** <http://www.flickrriver.com/places/United+States/New+Hampshire/Bethlehem/>



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