

***PLAN OF CONSERVATION  
AND  
DEVELOPMENT***



***BETHLEHEM  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
P.O. BOX 160  
BETHLEHEM, CT 06751***

**REVISED & ADOPTED BY PLANNING COMMISSION: 8/4/2022  
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## ***I. INTRODUCTION***

At least once every ten years the Town of Bethlehem is required by State Statute to prepare or amend and then adopt a Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD). The Town of Bethlehem Planning Commission is the eight-member elected board mandated to perform the work necessary to renew the plan. The POCD is intended to be a document outlining the goals, policies, and standards for decision-making regarding the future growth of Bethlehem. In preparing this plan the Commission requested input from town residents as well as from other town boards and agencies in order to provide the Commission with their perspective and concerns regarding the valuable features and assets of Bethlehem that are important to preserve and protect in order to maintain the rural character and beauty of our town.

The Plan of Conservation & Development is a guide to be used in making decisions on development and future growth of the Town of Bethlehem in order to benefit the economy, welfare, and prosperity of the Town's residents.

### **A. Purpose of the Plan of Conservation & Development**

Bethlehem has long treasured its rural character and its farming heritage. These characteristics are a central part of our community identity. Over the years, the desire to maintain this rural identity and to protect the agricultural nature of the community has continued to be a priority.

The purpose of this Plan of Conservation & Development is to serve as a road map providing direction and guidance in decision-making for future conservation and development of the community as a whole.

The Plan provides broad goals coupled with specific objectives that provide guidance for the future development of the community. It is a document that reflects the interests, concerns, and objectives of the community at large as interpreted by the Planning Commission.

It is accepted that under State Statute, a Plan of Conservation & Development is not a binding document when adopted. It is advisory by State Statute, a blueprint of recommendations and broad goals for the future to be implemented by the adoption of policies and regulations by those municipal boards and commissions that are empowered to do so by State Statute. It must be clearly understood that a POCD does not convey powers that the adoption of a series of municipal powers provided by traditional implementing (zoning) statutes would convey. A Plan gives no additional power to a Planning Commission than it does not already possess. However, the guidelines laid out in this document are essential for obtaining grants such as Open Space Grants.

### **B. Statutory Reference**

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended, requires municipal Planning Commissions to prepare, adopt, and amend a plan of conservation and development for the municipality. A plan must:

1. Contain a statement of policies, goals, and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality;
2. Provide for a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets, sidewalks, multipurpose trails and other public ways as appropriate;
3. Be designed to promote, with efficiency and economy, the coordinated development of the municipality and general welfare and prosperity of the people of the municipality;
3. Recommend the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation, agricultural and other purposes;
4. Recommend the most desirable density of population in the several parts of the municipality;
5. Take into account the State Plan of Conservation & Development and note any inconsistencies it may have with the State plan;
6. Make provision for the development of housing opportunities (including opportunities for multifamily dwellings, consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity) for all residents of the municipality and the planning region in which it is located;
7. Promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low- and moderate-income households, and encourage the development of housing that will meet the housing needs identified in the State Housing Plan prepared under C.G.S. Section 8-37t and the State Plan of Conservation & Development;
8. Be reviewed and, if required, amended at least once every ten years; and
9. Include recommendations of the Commission for the location of streets and bridges, public recreational facilities, the extent of municipal water supply, wastewater disposal systems, solid waste disposal areas and other public utilities, and the general location of other municipal buildings and facilities.

In addition, a plan may:

1. Show conservation and preservation of traprock and other ridgelines;
2. State the Commission's recommendations regarding a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets, and other public ways for airports, parks, playgrounds, and public grounds for general location, relocation, and improvement of public buildings for the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether public or privately owned, for water, sewage, light, power, transit, and other purposes, and for the extent and location of public housing projects;
3. Include recommended programs for the implementation of the plan, including a schedule and proposed budget for public capital projects, a program for enactment and enforcement of land use regulation controls, building, housing codes and safety regulations and plans for implementation of affordable housing, open space acquisition, and the protection with a focus on the development of "greenways";
4. Include such other recommendations as the Commission deems beneficial to the municipality;
5. Include all necessary and related natural resource inventory maps, explanatory material, charts, or other pertinent data and information relative to the past, present, and future demographic trends of the municipality;

6. Include plans for the redevelopment and improvement of districts and neighborhoods that, in the Commission’s judgment, contain special problems or show a trend toward reduced real property values.

Communities have found that the underlying philosophy regarding the development and implementation of municipal POCDs has changed and evolved since adoption of the initial State statute. Today there is recognition of certain inadequacies of past planning efforts. Although many of the same elements (land use inventory and analysis, population demographics including density, trends, and forecasts, etc.) are still developed and analyzed, a POCD is not limited to what only appears in this document.

The Plan should contain the necessary flexibility to allow for changes in the uses of land within the context of adopted policies. The Plan is developed to provide a consistent direction for the use of other municipal boards and commissions having jurisdiction over specific aspects of the plan. The Plan should also provide for the required statutory documentation to be developed to allow for the community’s participation in the Connecticut State Farmland Preservation Program.

**C. Scope of the Plan of Conservation & Development**

Bethlehem adopted its first Plan of Development in 1958. This first Plan, prepared by Technical Associates, identified the Town as an agricultural community and projected that it would retain its rural character in the future. A Plan prepared twenty years later, in 1978, by Land Planning and Design Services, recognized that Bethlehem had remained a small, agricultural community as previously forecasted, but found that its small-town character had visibly changed. In 2008, the population of Bethlehem had grown to more than 3,596 residents. Not unlike the other towns surrounding Waterbury, the community was growing at an annual rate of 2.5%. Since this time period, the number of new land subdivisions and subsequent building permits has steadily decreased.

The Plan of Development dated 1978 projected a 1990 population based on the expected growth rate at that time, as shown below:

**1978 POPULATION PROJECTIONS OF BETHLEHEM’S GROWTH  
1978 TO THE YEAR 2000**

	<b>Slow Growth</b>	<b>Existing Trend</b>	<b>Rapid Growth</b>
<b>1990</b>	2,650	2,930	3,220
<b>2000</b>	2,900	3,310	3,720

The actual population by 1990 had grown to 3,071, approximately halfway between the existing growth being experienced in 1978 and the rapid growth rate projections formulated at that time.

Growth calculations were not available at the time of print in 2019; however, the most recent population is 3,595. Over the years, State Statutes in addition to case law, settled in some instances by the United States Supreme Court, have significantly changed and limited what a community may do to limit growth.

Recognizing the continuing pressures of growth, particularly of a residential nature, and acknowledging the statutory mandate to have a current community plan, the Town of Bethlehem Planning Commission has undertaken the preparation of a revision to its existing POCD. At the outset, the Commission established one goal: to continue to prioritize maintenance of the existing natural, historical, and traditional character of Bethlehem in a manner consistent with the inevitable continuation of new residential growth.

As noted earlier, this Plan is a basic land use reference guide. Refinement of the data contained herein and continual additions to the Plan based upon more current data are essential to keeping the planning policies and land use **ordinances** of the Town up to date. For their study and analysis, the Planning Commission has concentrated on the following elements:

#### *Population*

A population analysis utilizing data derived from the Connecticut Economic Resource Center (CERC) to determine the amount and character of growth that has occurred and can be expected to occur in the years to come so that decision regarding municipal land use and expenditures can be made. Most comparisons are made between Bethlehem and the planning region to which it belongs, the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments. The 2019 comparisons between Bethlehem and Litchfield County are included. Additional comparisons are made between Bethlehem and neighboring communities.

#### *Natural Resources*

An inventory and analysis of natural resources was developed and prepared by the Town of Bethlehem Conservation Commission. This Natural Resources Inventory is maintained to identify appropriate valuable natural resources for conservation and preservation.

#### *Land Use*

An inventory and analysis of existing land uses is shown in the Bethlehem Farms and Agricultural Land Use Map (Appendix F). This information will help determine suitable locations for future building commensurate with the ability of the land to support its development. This is in turn will:

- A. Provide recommendations for orderly development of the types of service, commercial, professional, and occupational opportunities needed by the community and which would traditionally be used by Bethlehem residents; and
- B. Ensure orderly development with the appropriate municipal and educational services that are required to safely manage and operate the community.

## **II. HISTORY OF BETHLEHEM (Credited to Joseph Shupenis)**

The following is a brief timeline of the history of the Town of Bethlehem:

- Pre-1703:** The Native American village in Bethlehem was called “Nonnewaug.” Other Native Americans had a village at the junction of the two rivers.
- 1703:** Right to acquire the North Purchase (Bethlehem & Judea), which was given to Woodbury.
- 1710:** Native Americans sold the North Purchase to Woodbury.
- 1723:** North Purchase lots were sold to proprietors.
- 1734:** Fourteen families move into Bethlehem from seven different towns.
- 1738:** Joseph Bellamy, a Great Awakening preacher and writer, was called to preach during “Winter Privileges.” He set up the first theological school in Bethlehem, and changed the name of the town to “Bethlem.”
- 1738-1744:** First church services were in a barn. The first church was built on Kasson Road – *The Congregational Society of Bethlem*.
- 1748:** A library company was established.
- 1750:** “Great Plague” during which thirty people died. The Center Store opened.
- 1753:** “Burying Grounds” was opened on the Bellamy Estate.
- 1754:** Construction began on the Bellamy House.
- 1755:** Great Earthquake occurs, during which many springs opened up.
- 1760:** “Great Sickness” (Plague of 1760).
- 1760s:** Franklin Milestones (3) are set up by the Franklin family.
- 1764-1768:** A new first church was built on the Green, which then became the Town Center.
- 1770:** Five new schools are opened.
- 1776:** Captain Andrew Martin and forty-four Householders sign a proclamation to support the American Revolution.
- 1780:** Carmel Hill Cemetery was established.
- 1787:** Bethlem was recognized as a separate town, and Robert Crane was elected First Selectman.



- 1790:** First Federal Census occurs indicating 1,056 people (178 families) in the Town.
- 1790-1820:** Western migration begins, and people begin leaving Bethlehem.
- 1800-1900:** Bethlem was largely an agricultural town with three mercantile stores and limited manufacturing with the help of Bird's Pond (1802), Long Meadow (1846), and Wood Creek Pond (1853) Manufacturing Companies. They included a grist mill, wooden bird factory, sawmills, two wagon shops, shingle-making factories, and many leather goods factories.
- 1807:** Episcopal Parish was established.
- 1829-1835:** Episcopal Church (later called Christ Church) was started with bricks from a kiln on Magnolia Hill (Richard Butkus' farm).
- 1836-1838:** First Church was moved again to its present site.
- 1839-1840:** The Town House, Bethlem's first town building was built. The building held the library and a select schoolroom. It is now called the American Legion Hall.
- 1859:** Bethlem Methodist Church was established and sold in 1929.
- 1860:** Bethlem's population was 761 people.
- 1861:** Evergreen Cemetery begins interments.
- 1881:** Bethlem's earliest school records are saved from nine separate school districts.
- 1886:** Arch Bridge was built for \$1,060.
- 1887:** First commercial fruit orchard was established at the Bloss Farm (now called March Farms).
- 1890:** The Town's name was changed back to Bethlehem.
- 1891:** The Bethlehem Grange was established.
- 1912:** The people of Bethlehem built Old Memorial Hall.
- 1914:** The library was moved to the old Center School building.
- 1915:** A Roman Catholic mission church was set up in a store on East Street by St. John's Parish.
- 1923:** All schools were consolidated. Most children went to school at the old town office building and in a church room.
- 1924:** The Bethlehem Fair was started.

- 1926:** A new school was built on East Street with four rooms.
- 1929:** The Church of Nativity was built in a Spanish Mission style.
- 1930:** Bethlehem's population sank to a low of 543 people.
- 1938:** Bethlehem started to be called the "Christmas Town."
- 1940:** The Town Office Building was built, and the basement was used by the Bethlehem Volunteer Fire Company.
- 1945:** Most of Bethlehem had electricity. Ice harvesting on local ponds ceased.
- 1946:** The Abbey of Regina Laudis was established.
- 1952 & 1958:** Bethlehem Consolidated School adds eleven more classrooms, an auditorium, and cafeterias.
- 1960:** The population of Bethlehem rose to nearly 1,500 people.
- 1968:** Old Bethlem Historical Society was started, and Regional School District #14 was established.
- 1969:** A new library building was opened.
- 1972:** North Purchase was constructed.
- 1974:** The present-day Town Hall was built.
- 1976:** Old Bethlem Historical Society started using the Old Town Building as a museum.
- 1981-1982:** Old Memorial Hall was destroyed by fire and rebuilt by Bethlehem citizens.

### **III. OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION**

#### **The Town of Bethlehem Open Space Committee**

Mission Statement: The Open Space Committee shall establish environmentally and aesthetically based criteria to assist in recommending to the Board of Selectmen those parcels of land most suitable for preservation. It is essential that the process continues to employ creative foresight, public education, and community awareness.

The future of open space in the Town of Bethlehem will be largely dependent on how the community crafts a balance between growth and protection of its natural resources.

The Open Space Committee shall seek input from all interested parties, evaluate relevant learned information and, in an effort to preserve the Town's unique character for future generations, present updated recommendations as necessary.

#### **The Bethlehem Land Trust**

Mission Statement: To permanently protect and preserve local farmland, fields, forests, and wetlands through acquisition or easement; to conserve the natural, scenic, and historic resources of these properties and educate the public about them; and, where feasible, to provide access for their enjoyment by the community at large.

The Bethlehem Land Trust (BLT) is a private, tax-exempt nonprofit organization and is run by a Board of Directors. The Bethlehem Land Trust is dedicated to the conservation of open space and helping to maintain the rural character of Bethlehem. Education is also an important component of its mission, and the Bethlehem Land Trust provides information to landowners on options available to them for the protection of their undeveloped lands. BLT also sponsors Earth Day activities and conducts nature walks and wildlife presentations.

The BLT currently owns 250.1 acres and holds easements on 108.9 acres, for a total of 359 acres. The Bellamy Preserve in the center of Town has walking trails, as do the Long Horizon and the Two Rivers Preserves.

Over the past few years, the Bethlehem Land Trust has increased its fundraising efforts to help maintain its preserves, fight invasive species, and to provide financial assistance to Bethlehem landowners who may in the future wish to place a protective easement on an open space or farm parcel. See *Bethlehem Committed Open Space Map* (Appendix F)

**IV. DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**

For a complete view of the Demographic Profile of the Town of Bethlehem, refer to *Bethlehem, Connecticut: CERC Town Profile 2019* (Appendix A)

**A. General Population Trends**

An analysis of population trends is of vital importance to Town officials and residents in making decisions about their community. This summary describes past and current population trends in Bethlehem and how these trends compare to its rural neighbors and other Towns in the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments. It also forecasts estimates of the current and future population based on these trends.

Population projections are guidelines based on historical trends and assumptions about their future. The Town may periodically review these trends and their assumptions and make revisions, as needed, to take into account the changes that actually are being experienced. The Town’s small population base makes accurate projections extremely difficult, as a single new development can substantially alter the estimates.

As stated in the 2008 Regional Plan of Conservation & Development, the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) had 281,895 residents in 2006 according to U.S. Census estimates, an increase of 9,301 people (3.4%) since 2000 and 20,814 (8.0%) since 1990. This region was growing faster than the State of Connecticut, with a rate of 8.1% between 1990 and 2006, compared to 6.6% for the State as a whole.

Waterbury contains more than a third of the region’s population and has remained stable between 1990 and 2006. By contrast, cities such as Hartford, New Haven, and Bridgeport decreased in population. Without taking into account the City of Waterbury, the population of the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments grew 14.8% between 1990 and 2006.

**B. Total Population of Bethlehem**

Bethlehem is located in south-central Litchfield County, in the northwestern portion of the Naugatuck Valley.

**BETHLEHEM’S POPULATION GROWTH HISTORY  
1970-2020  
EXISTING TRENDS**

1970 Population	1978
1990 Population	3071
1999 Population	3298
2006 Population	3577
2010 Population	3607
2020 Population	3595

Although the rate of population growth has continued to decline since 2010, there will still be a net increase in the total population for which the Town must plan. The following table summarizes the population growth rates.

**POPULATION OF BETHLEHEM  
AS COMPARED TO LITCHFIELD COUNTY & STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
2000-2020**

YEAR	TOWN OF BETHLEHEM	LITCHFIELD COUNTY	STATE OF CONNECTICUT
2000	3,422	182,193	3,405,565
2010	3,607	189,927	3,574,097
2013-2017	3,490	184,454	3,594,478
2020	3,595	193,116	3,604,591

*Source: CT Economic Resource Center (CERC) Town Profile 2019*

**C. Bethlehem's Growth Rate Comparisons**

**RATE OF POPULATION GROWTH OF BETHLEHEM COMPARED TO  
REGION, STATE, & NEIGHBORING RURAL COMMUNITIES  
1970-2020**

	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-1998	2000-2006	2017-2020
<b>BETHLEHEM</b>	33.8%	19.5%	6.1%	4.5%	1%
<b>REGIONAL GROWTH</b>	10.0%	6.4%	INA	3.4%	1.5%
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>	5.8%	2.5%	0.5%	INA	0.1%

*INA: Information not available*

**NEIGHBORING TOWN GROWTH RATES  
1970-2020**

	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-1998	2000-2006	2017-2020
<b>BETHLEHEM</b>	33.4%	19.4%	6.1%	4.5%	1.0%
<b>THOMASTON</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.5%	0.7%
<b>MIDDLEBURY</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	10.6%	2.3%
<b>WATERTOWN</b>	4.7%	5.0%	6.0%	3.1%	0.1%
<b>WOODBURY</b>	18.3%	17.1%	7.2%	6.1%	0.5%

*Source: CT Economic Resource Center (CERC)*

Conclusions that can be reached from an examination of the above statistics are:

1. Since 1970, Bethlehem has experienced a growth percentage in excess of that experienced by the State, the region, and the surrounding communities.
2. The population growth rate has continuously slowed from 1970. The rate has dramatically dropped from the rates experienced 1970 through 1998.

3. Since 2010, population growth has stagnated as a result of the 2007 to 2009 recession. From 2007 to 2016, the number of births dropped by 14.4%.

**D. Population Density Demographics**

Analyzing the population density of Bethlehem and comparing it with the density of the surrounding communities can make a better measurement of the impact of the growth that has been experienced in Bethlehem. Bethlehem’s density per square mile, despite its growth rate, is well below all other towns in the region. Only Woodbury and Oxford have reasonably comparable figures.

**NUMBER OF PEOPLE PER SQUARE MILE  
1970-2017**

	1970	1980	1990	1998	2006	2013-2017
<b>BETHLEHEM</b>	99	133	159	168	184	180
<b>WOODBURY</b>	161	190	223	239	267	266
<b>OXFORD</b>	136	202	264	282	375	396
<b>WATERTOWN</b>	638	669	702	774	767	758

*Source: CT Economic Resource Center (CERC) 2019 Data  
NOTE: The Town of Bethlehem is 19.7 square miles in size.*

**HOUSEHOLD POPULATION DENSITY:  
NUMBER OF PEOPLE PER HOUSEHOLD  
1970-2017**

	1970	1980	1990	1998	2000	2013-2017
<b>BETHLEHEM</b>	3.23	N/A	2.73	2.69	2.75	2.64
<b>REGION</b>	3.19	N/A	2.62	2.50	2.64	2.65

*Source: NVCOG Regional Profile 2019 Data*

**E. Population Projections**

Population projections from the Connecticut State Data Center indicated that, up to 2015, the region’s population would continue to grow, but at a much slower rate than in the past. From 2025 to 2040, the region’s population is projected to shrink by 1.2%, losing approximately 5,355 residents. The urban core is projected to grow at the fastest rate, adding 7,856 residents between 2015 and 2040, a 3.3% increase. Waterbury, which has a much higher birth rate than the rest of the region, is projected to grow by 7.3%.

**F. Current Population Age Demographics**

**AGE DISTRIBUTION  
2013-2017**

<b>AGE SEGMENT</b>	<b>BETHLEHEM</b>	<b>LITCHFIELD COUNTY</b>
<b>UNDER 5</b>	3%	4%
<b>5-14 YEARS OLD</b>	13%	11%
<b>15-24 YEARS OLD</b>	11%	11%
<b>25-44 YEARS OLD</b>	20%	21%
<b>45-64 YEARS OLD</b>	36%	33%
<b>65+</b>	17%	19%

*Source: CT Economic Resource Center (CERC) 2019 Data*

The region’s population is aging. In 1990, the median age was 34.3; by 2000, it increased to 37.6, and by 2018 reached 41.5 years old. The urban core has the youngest median age at 37.4 years old, while the outer ring is the oldest at 46.7 years old.

From 2000 to 2018, the outer ring population grew at 12.2%, far faster than the region, state, and nation. These towns have the lowest population densities, the highest incomes, and the highest proportion of elderly residents. From 2000 to 2018, the number of residents over the age of 65 increased by 20.3%, with the fastest growth in the inner ring (37.3%) and outer ring (52.7%). During the same period, the urban core saw a decrease in elderly residents (-0.1%).

The aging trend will accelerate as Baby Boomers reach retirement age. The population over the age of 65 is projected to balloon from 70,934 in 2015 to over 89,451 by 2040. The working-age population (15-64 years old) is expected to stay stable until 2020, and then decline slightly through 2040. As Baby Boomers age into retirement, millennials (born between 1980 and 2000) will make up a greater portion of the region’s workforce.

As of 2015, there are 79,727 children under the age of 15 years old, making up 17.7% of the total. This age group is expected to decline to 75,456 by 2040. Inner ring and outer ring communities are projected to see their populations under age 15 decrease by over 11.4%.

**G. Unit Housing Demographics**

**HOUSING UNITS  
1970-2017**

	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>HOUSING UNITS</b>	743	1074	1262	1356	1473	1640
<b>PERIOD INCREASE</b>	N/A	331	188	94	117	167
<b>UNITS PER YEAR</b>	N/A	33.1	18.8	11.8	11.7	18.6

**H. Unit Housing Cost Demographics**

In 2019, the median, or “mid-range,” home price in the State of Connecticut was \$270,100 versus a Litchfield County median price of \$250,100. Below is a comparison of median home prices in neighboring rural towns from 1998 to 2019.

(It should be noted that these figures are not adjusted for the total numbers of sales per town nor unique large or small valued sales that may produce misleading comparisons, **nor have the dollar amounts been adjusted for inflation.**)

**COMPARABLE MEDIAN PRICES OF HOMES  
BETHLEHEM & NEIGHBORING TOWNS**

	1998	1999	2007	2019
<b>BETHLEHEM</b>	\$142,500	\$207,000	\$335,000	\$353,300
<b>MORRIS</b>	\$197,000	\$155,000	\$367,500	\$339,000
<b>WASHINGTON</b>	\$300,000	\$197,000	\$600,000	\$465,900
<b>WATERTOWN</b>	\$125,900	\$125,000	\$260,000	\$243,000
<b>WOODBURY</b>	\$175,900	\$220,000	\$430,000	\$350,800

*Source: CT Economic Resource Center (CERC) 2019 Data*

**I. Affordable Housing Demographics**

The U.S. Census Bureau uses 30% of household income as a standard for measuring housing affordability. In order to be considered affordable, homeowners should pay 30% or less of their income for housing. As of 2017, 35.6% of households pay 30% or more of their income for housing. Renters (48.8%) are more likely to pay 30% or more of their income toward housing than homeowners (29.3%). More than half of urban core renters pay 30% or more of their income for housing. Low-income households may qualify for publicly assisted housing programs such as Section 8 vouchers, deed restrictions, and Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) or Farmer’s Home Administration (FmHA) mortgages. Over 83% of publicly assisted housing units are found in the urban core, with more than half in the City of Waterbury.

Municipalities that have less than 10% affordable housing are subject to Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) Section 8-30g, which limits the conditions under which towns may deny applications for such developments. According to data from the State of Connecticut, as of 2017 only 1.84% of Bethlehem’s housing stock was considered affordable.

**COMPARISON OF MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOMES FOR  
SURROUNDING RURAL TOWNS  
2013-2017**

	<b>MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>
<b>STATE OF CONNECTICUT</b>	\$73,781
<b>LITCHFIELD COUNTY</b>	\$76,438
<b>BETHLEHEM</b>	\$91,712
<b>MORRIS</b>	\$89,107
<b>WASHINGTON</b>	\$93,975
<b>WATERTOWN</b>	\$77,946
<b>WOODBURY</b>	\$82,923



**J. Employment Demographics**

**EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS**

	1997		1998		2007		2017	
	# Empl.	% Unemp.	# Empl.	% Unemp.	# Empl.	% Unemp.	# Empl.	% Unemp.
<b>BETHLEHEM</b>	1,967	4.8%	1,867	2.8%	1,953	3.7%	1,891	3.8%
<b>REGION</b>	N/A	4.3%	131,309	3.8%	N/A	N/A	101,000	3.8%
<b>STATE</b>	N/A	5.0%	1,651,900	3.4%	1,780,481	4.6%	1,827,070	4.1%

*Source: Connecticut Department of Labor*

**LOCAL EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS**

	1970	1996	2007	2017
<b>% Residents Employed within Bethlehem</b>	29.0%	25.0%	34.3%	8.5%

**TOTAL NON-AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT  
BETHLEHEM & NEIGHBORING MUNICIPALITIES  
1970-1997**

	1970	1980	1990	1996	1997
<b>REGION</b>	79,750	89,980	99,600	98,420	101,060
<b>BETHLEHEM</b>	110	160	300	460	420
<b>MORRIS</b>	120	110	780	250	240
<b>WASHINGTON</b>	790	1040	1,300	1,480	1,430
<b>WATERTOWN</b>	4,010	6,650	8,040	9,480	9,900
<b>WOODBURY</b>	1,190	1,640	2,110	1,950	2,080
<b>STATE</b>	1,222,920	1,440,100	1,659,700	1,599,800	1,628,000

*Source: Connecticut Department of Labor, Local Area Unemployment Statistics: 2018  
Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW): 2019*

**K. Job Creation**

In 2018, there were 817 jobs available in Bethlehem. The employment opportunities were filled by both residents and non-residents as either employees or self-employed. The major employers were Wellspring Foundation, Newport Academy, the Abbey of Regina Laudis, the Town of Bethlehem, Woodhall School, and Regional School District #14.

**L. Poverty Level**

Between 2013 and 2017, the poverty level for the Town of Bethlehem was 6.0%. In comparison, the poverty level in Litchfield County was 6.8% and the poverty level for the State of Connecticut was 10.1%.

**M. Education Demographics**

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT  
2013-2017**

	<b>BETHLEHEM</b>	<b>STATE</b>
<b>HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE</b>	27%	27%
<b>ASSOCIATES DEGREE</b>	7%	8%
<b>BACHELORS DEGREE OR MORE</b>	40%	38%

*Source: CT Economic Resource Center (CERC) Town Profile 2019*

Most public-school students from Bethlehem attend the schools in Regional School District #14. This district has 1,656 students and serves the Town of Bethlehem as well as the Town of Woodbury.

## V. **LANDSCAPE INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS (Credited to the Conservation Commission)**

### A. **Inventory & Analysis Policy 1 – Land Resources**

*“An ongoing effort will be made to continue to inventory and analyze the land resources of the Town of Bethlehem.”*

**Objective:** To identify those landscape features having natural processes most likely to be adversely affected by development and are therefore a limitation to development. The following such landscape features should be analyzed in order to determine development potential.

#### 1. Soil Suitability for Onsite Disposal

A controlling feature that must be analyzed to determine development potential is the soil suitability for onsite septic disposal systems. A site-specific analysis is to be made of the suitability of the mechanical ability of the soil to accept and efficiently process sewage. The location, texture, and hydraulic properties of this very important landscape feature will determine the extent to which a particular soil can perform one of its natural functions for processing effluent. Building development in poorer soils may result in the mechanical failure of a septic system, possibly polluting the groundwater supply and adversely affecting human health. The importance of soil renovation for septic processing becomes extremely important in areas where no public sewers exist nor are planned, which in the case of Bethlehem is the entire town.

#### 2. Depth to Seasonal High-Water Table

Another significant landscape feature to be analyzed is the depth of soils to seasonal high-water table. This depth determines the mechanical ability of soils to store water in times of peak flow and gradually disperse it to surface and groundwater supplies as peak flow subsides. The height to which water rises is an indicator of the importance of one soil type over another in the natural flood control process. This landscape feature is important for many reasons including the following:

- (i) Building development in areas of high-water table may place greater pressures on areas of low water table and could eventually cause downstream flooding and surface erosion.
- (ii) Land development has the potential for polluting surface and groundwater supplies from siltation and surface runoff, particularly in high-water table areas.
- (iii) Development in high-water table areas may eliminate potential sources of surface and subsurface water supplies.
- (iv) Maintenance of building sites may increase because of alternate freezing and thawing in the water table above the frost line.

3. Depth to Bedrock

The depth to bedrock at each site is a landscape feature that is not easily destroyed by development, but it does directly influence project location and development costs. Construction in shallow areas necessitates costly blasting which may result in increased costs to repair any damage. In addition, blasting may disturb the hydrologic process that recharges groundwater and bedrock water supplies. The general landscape process of bedrock location does not impact a site as much as either soil suitability for onsite septic disposal or depth to high-water table, but it still is a factor to be considered.

4. Topography

Topography can be divided into two elements, slope and elevation. The latter element is significant when determining scenic quality but has little effect on determining the development potential. Slope, however, is much more important, particularly when there are location circulation systems that accompany building construction and may have a significant impact on development.

5. Groundwater Resources

A site-specific analysis of groundwater resources is of particular importance to a town such as Bethlehem because of its geographic location and its geomorphology. Located within the Pomperaug River watershed, the surface and groundwater resources should be adequately protected as development increases. The same resources should be utilized in order to support such development. The landscape features most adversely affected by development are the stratified drift aquifers and the area of recharge directly above this geologic deposit. Generally located adjacent to three major rivers, these aquifers are capable of yielding relatively high quantities of potable water. Any of these deposits, having an estimated (by U.S. Geologic Survey data) saturated thickness of 40 feet, should not be developed to any great extent. Substantial increases of impervious surface reduce the recharge of the aquifer, and consequently the development potential of this resource is low.

**B. Inventory & Analysis Policy 2 – Development Potential**

*“To assess the development potential of Bethlehem’s land area based upon those physical and demographic factors that may impact the future of the community at large.”*

Objective: Using the factors identified above, determine the development potential of Bethlehem’s land areas. With the use of USGS data and GIS mapping capabilities, the individual landscape resources can be categorized and mapped to demonstrate the degree of limitations for development. Areas of severe and very severe limitations should be encouraged to be avoided, as should important groundwater resources.

To people who have lived in Bethlehem for any length of time and who have come to appreciate its 19.7 square miles, the conclusion that there is little suitable land for intensive concentrated development is obvious. In general, large blocks of land reasonably suited for building and construction are limited to the eastern half of Bethlehem exclusive of the northeast corner, and to the southwest corner. In these areas

only the steep hillsides adjacent to the rivers and streams exhibit a lower restricted development potential.

The central ridge (Main Street) of Bethlehem is already more extensively developed than other sections of the town. While building in this area should be avoided due to fragile bands of wetlands and highly concentrated septic installations servicing restaurants, multi-family homes, and single-family residences, this priority must be carefully balanced against the need for affordable housing. All development in the Pomperaug River, Nonnewaug River, and Spring Brook watersheds should be done with caution so as not to negatively impact the water quality of Hart Farm Well Field in nearby Woodbury.

**C. Inventory & Analysis Policy 3 – Soil Erosion**

*“To assess the current state of soil erosion in Bethlehem and discover and identify those sites where erosion already exists including those sites located on both public and private land that require remedial action.”*

In the past, Bethlehem unfortunately neglected the effect of existing soil erosion. As a result, significant problem sites currently exist and require remediation. Without remediation, there is the potential for danger to the public health, safety, and welfare. The policy of the Town of Bethlehem, acting through its Inland Wetlands Agency and Public Works Department as well as private residents, should be to discover and inventory the sites that are eroded, prioritize their remediation, and facilitate the implementation of corrective action within the quickest possible timeframe.

**D. Current Land Uses**

As has been the experience for many years, there are currently two predominant land uses in Bethlehem: residential and agricultural. The only other uses of considerable size would fall into the public or quasi-public/institutional category, including Town facilities, parks, schools, the Abbey of Regina Laudis, the Watertown Fire District Reservoir, and the Bethlehem Fair Society, Inc. fairgrounds.

With one of the largest percentages of open, undeveloped land in Litchfield County, it is not hard to believe that nearly 50% of the land in Bethlehem is forested or serves as open land devoted to farm use. However, only 3% of land in Bethlehem, approximately 400 acres, is permanently protected; 90% of the open land is privately owned. A few acres have been converted to commercial use, primarily along Main Street, to provide retail goods and services to the growing numbers of consumers in Town. The Magnolia Hill section of Bethlehem contains the largest combined farming tract, extending from the vicinity of Route 132 to the Woodbury town line and from the Watertown town line to Paradise Valley Road and Route 132. The remaining active farms are separated by intrusions of residential development.

In general, dwellings are concentrated along the principal roads of Bethlehem. The center of Town, East Street, West Street, Main Street, the Flanders Road area, as well as the Lake Road-Main Street area show the greatest density of residential properties. This excludes the seasonal cottages and homes converted to year-round use in Kasson Grove.

Aside from scattered older homes and a few minor subdivisions, the northwestern section of Bethlehem is the least developed area of Bethlehem. The Wood Creek Valley is poorly suited for building. The excessively steep slopes, rock outcrops, and poorly drained soils, together with the existing limited road access across the valleys have discouraged developers from proposing subdivisions in this section of Bethlehem. These constraints will probably continue to forestall extensive development except along existing roads in the area.

## **VI. LAND USE POLICIES & OBJECTIVES**

### **A. Land Use Policy 1 – Preservation of Natural Features**

*“To develop land use policies and other policies that will encourage the continued preservation of the natural features of Bethlehem.”*

In determining the location of future development in Bethlehem and in evaluating specific building projects, the Planning Commission endorses the following objectives and policies:

1. Preservation of environmentally sensitive natural resources by regulating the encroachment of development on these resources to the extent permitted by State Statutes. Whenever possible, opportunities to join open space easements should be encouraged.
2. Continued exclusion from development of lands having no potential for subsurface disposal systems, including wetlands, excessive slopes, and high bedrock, as defined in the Connecticut State Health Code. Provision should be made to allow for the use of these lands for recreation, open space, and environmental protection by using these areas as buffers, habitat corridors, wetland enhancement and mitigation, and other similar uses that are in the interest of the community.
3. Permanently setting aside lands through acquisition by the Town Open Space Fund, donations, Bethlehem Land Trust, or through the use of conservation restrictions within the meaning of Section 47-42a of the Connecticut General Statutes.
4. To the extent possible, avoid development in the central ridge along the Main Street area unless such development would reduce impact on wetlands and water quality or balance the effect of development by mitigation, understanding that this is also the most sensible location for future affordable housing projects.
5. Preservation of the quality of surface water supplies both in Bethlehem and in surrounding communities by encouraging limited development in the critical water supply watersheds. (See *Water Resources* map on page 34)
6. Continuation of an awareness program for existing and potential sources of pollution in water supply watersheds and taking corrective action where necessary.
7. Provision of educational and other assistance to homeowners regarding the installation and care of septic systems, wells, underground petroleum storage tanks, and other conservation issues.
8. Establishment and enforcement of runoff and sediment and erosion control measures and standards for all new construction. Construction includes any excavation such as driveways, ponds, etc. where because of the local slope and

site topography, such measures are warranted and should not be limited to the construction of structures only. The commission, agency, and/or department with jurisdiction for permitting and enforcing should be granted power to enforce sediment and erosion control procedures and should be held responsible for enforcing the control measures that are under their jurisdiction.

**B. Land Use Policy 2 – Preservation of Farmland & Other Open Space**

*“To encourage the preservation of farmland and other open space.”*

Objective #1: Encourage the Board of Selectmen to create an Agricultural Commission or similar organization to support Bethlehem’s farmers. This organization could work with such third-party organizations as the USDA, CT Farmlink, and others to encourage retention and preservation of agricultural lands; offer educational opportunities regarding new farm technologies and farm product development; provide guidance on financial and estate planning to assure long-term continuation of farming operations; lobby for the protection of farming rights; and gather information on new developments important to the farming operations in Bethlehem.

Objective #2: Continue to encourage preservation of a greater portion of open space within subdivisions. Open space dedicated to productive or potentially productive farmland should be provided for and encouraged under Section 3.20 of the Bethlehem Planning Regulations.

Objective #3: Encourage landowners with property that is not within a subdivision to retain open space by designating, under Section 12-107e of the Connecticut General Statutes, as “open space” all undeveloped land that: (i) is at least four acres in size, exclusive of the acreage assessed as the “building lot”; (ii) is not a part of property used for commercial and/or industrial use; (iii) is not designated as “farmland” under Section 12-107c of the Connecticut General Statutes; and (iv) is not designated as “forest land” under Section 12-107d and 12-76 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Implementation of the above policies will require an ordinance to be drafted and approved at a Town Meeting.

**C. Land Use Policy 3 – Development Capacity of Land**

*“To attempt to ensure that any new building that occurs be located on land suitable for supporting the development.”*

Objective #1: To ensure compliance with the Bethlehem Septic System Ordinance, Chapter 109 of the Town Book of Ordinances, whereby the standard minimum lot size on parcels that are not part of subdivisions should be altered only when engineering studies deem a waiver from the septic ordinance is appropriate. Current engineering and technical data should be reviewed from time to time to ascertain the minimum standards are adequate. Procedures for the granting of such a waiver should be investigated and developed by the Board of Selectmen with input from the Torrington Area Health District and the Planning Commission.



Objective #2: Provide for alternatives to the design of conventional subdivisions by adopting alternate design standards as part of the subdivision regulations that allow for imaginative use of land to provide for a variety of housing needs while still respecting the limited development capacity of the land.

**D. Land Use Policy 4 – Infrastructure Considerations**

*“To encourage new development in locations where existing roads and other facilities are capable of supporting increased use without major improvements by the Town.”*

Objective: To allow for the continuing development of existing residential use in areas adjacent to arterial or primary collector roads capable of supporting increased traffic.

**E. Land Use Policy 5 – Industrial and Commercial Development**

*“Discourage heavy industrial or major commercial developments.”*

Bethlehem is not urban and does not have infrastructure to support any heavy industrial uses nor any regional commercial areas. Bethlehem does not have any sewerage systems nor plans to build any such infrastructure in the future.

Objective: Encourage smaller-scale commercial development that is environmentally sensitive, such as professional and educational offices and institutions.

**F. Land Use Policy 6 – Historic Building Preservation**

*“To continue, support, and enforce the “Historic District” designation to preserve significant structures and areas within the Town of Bethlehem.”*

While Bethlehem has established a Historic District in the Town Center, there is concern that its requirements have not been consistently applied and followed. Absent consistent application of these requirements, there is a risk that the Center area will over time lose its distinctive character.

Objective #1: The Historic Commission should undertake expanded communication with District residents to proactively publicize requirements and processes that are in place for approval of modifications to historic buildings.

Objective #2: The Historic Commission should work with the Town Building Official to develop a process for rigorous enforcement in situations where historic requirements have not been followed.

## ***VII. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSIONS***

Some general recommendations that the Board of Selectmen should consider are:

- A. Examination of the current and future needs and services for senior citizens.
- B. Development of a long-term capital plan for road improvements and repairs.
- C. Evaluation of current and potential future walkways in Town, as well as opportunities for associated beautification and aesthetic enhancement.
- D. Undertake studies to assess the need for affordable housing in the Town as well as what types of housing are desired but lacking.
- E. Adopt ordinances that residents find appropriate to protect the health, welfare, and safety of the Town while maintaining rural character and preserving natural resources.
- F. In conjunction with the Planning Commission, undertake the necessary studies to determine the desired and sustainable population density for the Town of Bethlehem and make recommendations accordingly.
- G. The Land Uses Map (Appendix E) reflects the Planning Commission's understanding of desired future land uses in the Town as of the date of this document. Working with the Planning Commission, evaluate whether any changes are desired and if so, how best to achieve them.
- H. Maintain a policy of "sewer avoidance" given that the Town of Bethlehem does not maintain a sewerage system and has no plans to construct such infrastructure.

## ***VIII. TOWN PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW***

### **A. Needs Assessment**

The facilities of the Town including the Town Hall, Memorial Hall, Library, Fire Department, Town Garage, Town Transfer Station, Town cemeteries, Long Meadow Lake, Swendsen Preserve, and other recreational sites should be reviewed for their adequacy to meet the growing needs of the community. Particular attention to be paid to recreational needs and the facilities required to meet them.

### **B. Renovation and Capital Plan**

The Board of Selectmen should maintain a continuing plan for renovation and expansion as well as provide a summary to the Town during the annual budget process.

A long-term capital plan should be developed that reflects any needed renovation and expansion of Town-owned facilities.

**IX. BETHLEHEM MAPS OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT**

Seven maps have been prepared and are included as part of this Plan of Conservation & Development.

- Appendix B - Bethlehem Contours
- Appendix C - Bethlehem Contours & Elevations
- Appendix D - Bethlehem Water Resources
- Appendix E - Bethlehem Land Use
- Appendix F - Bethlehem Committed Open Space
- Appendix G - Bethlehem Farms & Agriculture Land Use
- Appendix H - Bethlehem Farmland Soils

The first two maps show contours and elevations along with hillshade areas. The next two maps indicate those areas and locations where future development may be restricted due to natural resources and land use. The Committed Open Space map details current land use and those areas that should be targeted for future preservation. The Farms and Agriculture Land Use map includes land currently used for agriculture and those lands that could be used for prime agricultural purposes. Also identified are those areas that include important natural resources and watersheds. These maps, when considered in total, provide a guideline for the planning of future land use.

Regarding the Bethlehem Land Use Map (Appendix E) on page 35, it should be noted that residential land uses are in units per acre according to the following density benchmarks:

High Density	=	More than 8 Dwelling Units per Acre
Medium Density	=	2-7.99 Dwelling Units per Acre
Medium Low Density	=	1-1.99 Dwelling Units per Acre
Low Density	=	Less than 1 Dwelling Unit Per Acre

All of the above maps should undergo continual review and updating in order to incorporate new technical findings and changes in use.

**X. NONNEWAUG FALLS OPEN SPACE ACTION AREA: AN AREA OF SPECIAL CONCERN**

The area surrounding Nonnewaug Falls has been identified for over 40 years as an area of special concern that should be preserved as permanent open space. In 1967, this area was designated as one of seven Open Space Action Areas within the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments. At that that time, a comprehensive master plan was developed. Again in 1976, the regional planning agency included this area in its Regional Plan. The 1998 Regional Plan of Conservation & Development recommended Nonnewaug Falls Open Space Area as a priority recreational and open space preserve.

Today, this area should be considered a very high priority for open space preservation. Currently the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments is coordinating a regional planning effort to assist Bethlehem, Watertown, and Woodbury to acquire and permanently preserve over 2,000 acres that have been identified as “Nonnewaug Falls Open Space Action Area.”

## **XI. IMPLEMENTATION**

This Plan of Conservation & Development is designed to be a blueprint for the future of Bethlehem. It is only the beginning of a rational approach to understanding the limitations and assets of the Town. More focused analysis is needed in the areas of open space, recreation, road improvements, the location of municipal facilities, and capital improvement planning. These analyses should be done by those officials and boards and/or committees responsible for implementation of the various functions. The Planning Commission, along with other municipal boards and commissions, must continue the comprehensive planning process and add on to this basic land use plan.

This document will be of little value if the objectives and policies are not implemented. Some recommendations can easily be put into effect within the existing regulatory structure. Other policies and objectives will need the cooperation of multiple municipal boards and commissions. For example, the Board of Selectmen is the appropriate agency to adopt modification of road standards and to recommend funding for an ongoing improvement program. The Conservation Commission is well suited to designing and recommending comprehensive open space policies. The Torrington Area Health District enforces the State Health Code. Bethlehem's Planning Commission enforces the Municipal Septic Ordinance and enforces the Town Subdivision Ordinance. The Town should adopt ordinances that residents find appropriate to protect the health, welfare, and safety of the Town while maintaining rural character and preserving natural resources.

Recognizing that this Plan is of no value unless everyone works together to implement its goals, the Planning Commission strongly recommends the creation of a "POCD Implementation Committee" made up of representatives from each of the stakeholder organizations listed in this plan. At minimum, meetings should be held annually for the purpose of updating all Town groups regarding efforts to move along the goals in this document.

Within this framework, the recommendations contained in this Plan should be adopted and implemented for Bethlehem to grow in harmony with its natural and cultural heritage.

## **XII. CONSISTENCY WITH THE STATE PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT**

This plan is consistent with the State Growth Management Principles as described in the State Plan of Conservation and Development (2013-2018).

## **XIII. WORKS CITED**

*Town of Bethlehem Plan of Conservation & Development*, Effective October 14, 1999

[www.cerc.com](http://www.cerc.com), *Bethlehem, Connecticut: CERC Town Profile 2019*

Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley, *Regional Plan of Conservation & Development*, Effective June 13, 2008.



# Bethlehem, Connecticut

CERC Town Profile 2019 *Produced by Connecticut Data Collaborative*

**Town Hall** Belongs To  
 P.O. Box 160 Litchfield County  
 Bethlehem, CT 06751 LMA Waterbury  
 (203) 266-7677 Naugatuck Valley Planning Area



## Demographics

### Population

	Town	County	State
2000	3,422	182,193	3,405,565
2010	3,607	189,927	3,574,097
2013-2017	3,490	184,454	3,594,478
2020	3,595	193,116	3,604,591
'17 - '20 Growth / Yr	1.0%	1.5%	0.1%

	Town	County	State
Land Area (sq. miles)	19	921	4,842
Pop./Sq. Mile (2013-2017)	180	200	742
Median Age (2013-2017)	48	47	41
Households (2013-2017)	1,295	74,605	1,361,755
Med. HH Inc. (2013-2017)	\$91,712	\$76,438	\$73,781

	Town	State
Veterans (2013-2017)	186	180,111

### Age Distribution (2013-2017)

	0-4	5-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+	Total
Town	111 3%	446 13%	383 11%	711 20%	1,261 36%	578 17%	3,490 100%
County	7,668 4%	20,218 11%	21,158 11%	38,329 21%	61,693 33%	35,388 19%	184,454 100%
State	186,188 5%	432,367 12%	495,626 14%	872,640 24%	1,031,900 29%	575,757 16%	3,594,478 100%

### Race/Ethnicity (2013-2017)

	Town	County	State
White Alone, Non-Hispanic	3,357	164,992	2,446,049
Black Alone	34	3,560	376,240
Asian	11	3,546	156,450
Native American	0	330	9,385
Other/Multi-Race	70	5,405	294,408
Hispanic or Latino	32	10,510	551,916

	Town	County	State
Poverty Rate (2013-2017)	6.0%	6.8%	10.1%

### Educational Attainment (2013-2017)

	Town	State
High School Graduate	691 27%	673,582 27%
Associates Degree	183 7%	188,481 8%
Bachelors or Higher	1,020 40%	953,199 38%

## Economics

### Business Profile (2018)

Sector	Units	Employment
Total - All Industries	112	816
23 - Construction	24	147
31-33 - Manufacturing	NA	NA
44-45 - Retail Trade	6	44
56 - Administrative and Waste Services	12	39
62 - Health Care and Social Assistance	7	329
Total Government	10	75

### Top Five Grand List (2018)

	Amount
Eversource	\$4,585,980
Health Real Estate Holdings LLC	\$3,113,950
Millspaugh Properties LLC	\$1,402,600
Monroe Operations	\$1,145,300
Watertown Fire District	\$1,143,900
Net Grand List (SPY 2016-2017)	\$369,816,439

### Major Employers (2018)

Newport Academy	Region 14
Town of Bethlehem	Wellspring
Woodhall School	

## Education

### 2018-2019 School Year

	Grades	Enrollment
Regional School District 14	PK-12	1656

### Smarter Balanced Test Percent Above Goal (2017-2018)

	Grade 3		Grade 4		Grade 8	
	Town	State	Town	State	Town	State
Math	58.9%	53.8%	46.1%	51.3%	50.9%	43.0%
ELA	71.6%	53.1%	65.2%	54.9%	65.5%	56.1%

### Pre-K Enrollment (PSIS)

	2018-2019
Regional School District 14	20

### Rate of Chronic Absenteeism (2017-2018)

	All
Connecticut	10.7%
Regional School District 14	8.7%

### 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate (2017-2018)

	All	Female	Male
Connecticut	88.3%	91.8%	85.1%
Regional School District 14	97.4%	99.1%	95.0%

### Public vs Private Enrollment (2013-2017)

	Town	County	State
Public	85.3%	84.0%	86.8%
Private	14.7%	16.0%	13.2%

# Bethlehem, Connecticut

## CERC Town Profile 2019



Connecticut  
Economic  
Resource Center

### Government

Government Form: Selectman - Town Meeting

Total Revenue (2017)	\$10,832,743	Total Expenditures (2017)	\$9,574,665	Annual Debt Service (2017)	\$0
Tax Revenue	\$8,850,080	Education	\$7,155,551	As % of Expenditures	0.0%
Non-tax Revenue	\$1,982,663	Other	\$2,419,114	Eq. Net Grand List (2017)	\$489,510,704
Intergovernmental	\$1,634,796	Total Indebtedness (2017)	\$7,155,551	Per Capita	\$142,341
Per Capita Tax (2017)	\$2,523	As % of Expenditures	74.7%	As % of State Average	94.3%
As % of State Average	86.1%	Per Capita	\$2,081	Moody's Bond Rating (2017)	-
		As % of State Average	82.8%	Actual Mill Rate (2017)	23.41
				Equalized Mill Rate (2017)	17.73
				% of Net Grand List Com/Ind (2017)	6.7%

### Housing/Real Estate

Housing Stock (2013-2017)

	Town	County	State
Total Units	1,640	88,068	1,507,711
% Single Unit (2013-2017)	91.7%	73.6%	59.2%
New Permits Auth (2017)	2	142	4,547
As % Existing Units	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%
Demolitions (2017)	0	32	1,403
Home Sales (2017)	34	1,753	21,880
Median Price	\$353,300	\$250,100	\$270,100
Built Pre-1950 share	18.0%	31.2%	29.3%
Owner Occupied Dwellings	1,104	57,330	906,798
As % Total Dwellings	85.3%	76.8%	66.6%
Subsidized Housing (2018)	32	4,817	167,879

Distribution of House Sales (2017)

	Town	County	State
Less than \$100,000	0	57	536
\$100,000-\$199,999	5	563	5,237
\$200,000-\$299,999	13	538	6,681
\$300,000-\$399,999	9	315	3,863
\$400,000 or More	7	280	5,563

Rental (2013-2017)

	Town	County	State
Median Rent	\$1,016	\$995	\$1,123
Cost-burdened Renters	70.7%	47.3%	52.3%

### Labor Force

	Town	County	State
Residents Employed	1,891	101,000	1,827,070
Residents Unemployed	75	4,014	78,242
Unemployment Rate	3.8%	3.8%	4.1%
Self-Employed Rate	18.3%	13.0%	10.0%
Total Employers	112	6,177	122,067
Total Employed	816	61,496	1,673,867

Connecticut Commuters (2015)

Commuters Into Town From:	Town	Residents Commuting To:	
Bethlehem, CT	170	Waterbury, CT	201
Woodbury, CT	71	Bethlehem, CT	170
Watertown, CT	65	Woodbury, CT	108
Waterbury, CT	38	Southbury, CT	106
Southbury, CT	35	Watertown, CT	95
Litchfield, CT	20	Danbury, CT	81
Thomaston, CT	20	Torrington, CT	67

### Quality of Life

Crime Rates (per 100,000 residents) (2017)

	Town	State
Property	278	1,777
Violent	28	228

Disengaged Youth (2013-2017)

	Town	State
Female	1.1%	4.2%
Male	0.0%	5.6%

	Town
Library circulation per capita	3.42

Distance to Major Cities

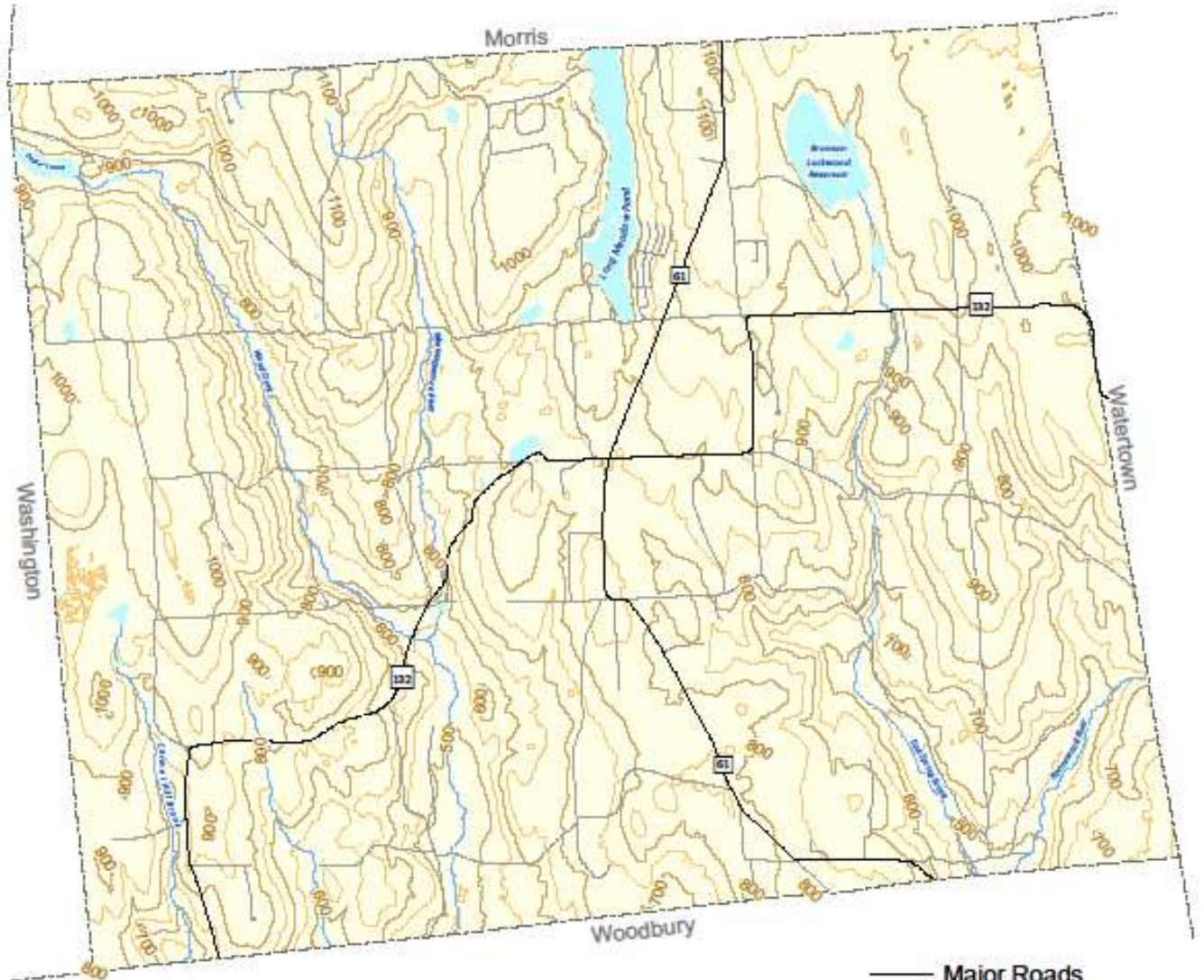
	Miles
Hartford	29
New York City	77
Providence	93
Boston	123
Montreal	270

Residential Utilities

<b>Electric Provider</b>
Eversource Energy (800) 286-2000
<b>Water Provider</b>
Municipal Provider Local Contact
<b>Cable Provider</b>
Charter Communications of Western CT (800) 827-8288



# Bethlehem Contours



- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Water
- Water Bodies
- Municipal Boundaries
- Contours**
- 100 ft
- 50 ft

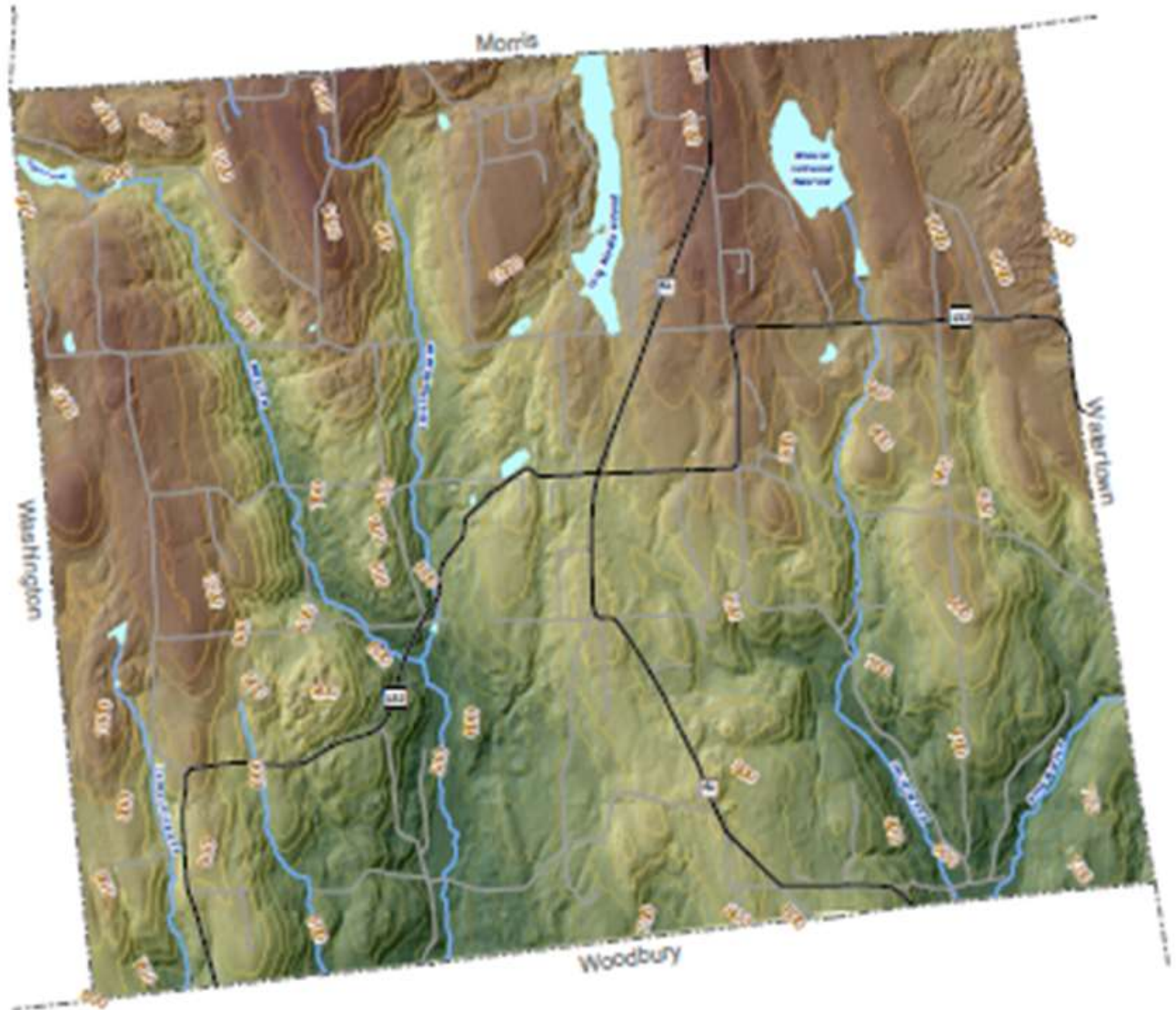
For planning purposes only.  
Delineations may not be exact.

Sources:  
CT 911 Roads: CT DESPP/TeleAtlas  
Contours 2016, Hydrography,  
Municipal Boundaries: CT DEEP



Revised: 5/1/2016 Document Path: E:\GIS\GIS\projects\_municipal\2016\160525\160525\_Contours.aprx

# Bethlehem Contours & Elevation



For planning purposes only.  
 Distances may not be exact.

Sources:  
 CT 811 Service, CT DEP/PADEC  
 Contours 2008, Hydrography,  
 Municipal Boundaries CT DEP



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Scale 1:50,000

- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Water
- Water Bodies
- Municipal Boundaries

### Contours

100 ft

50 ft

### Elevation

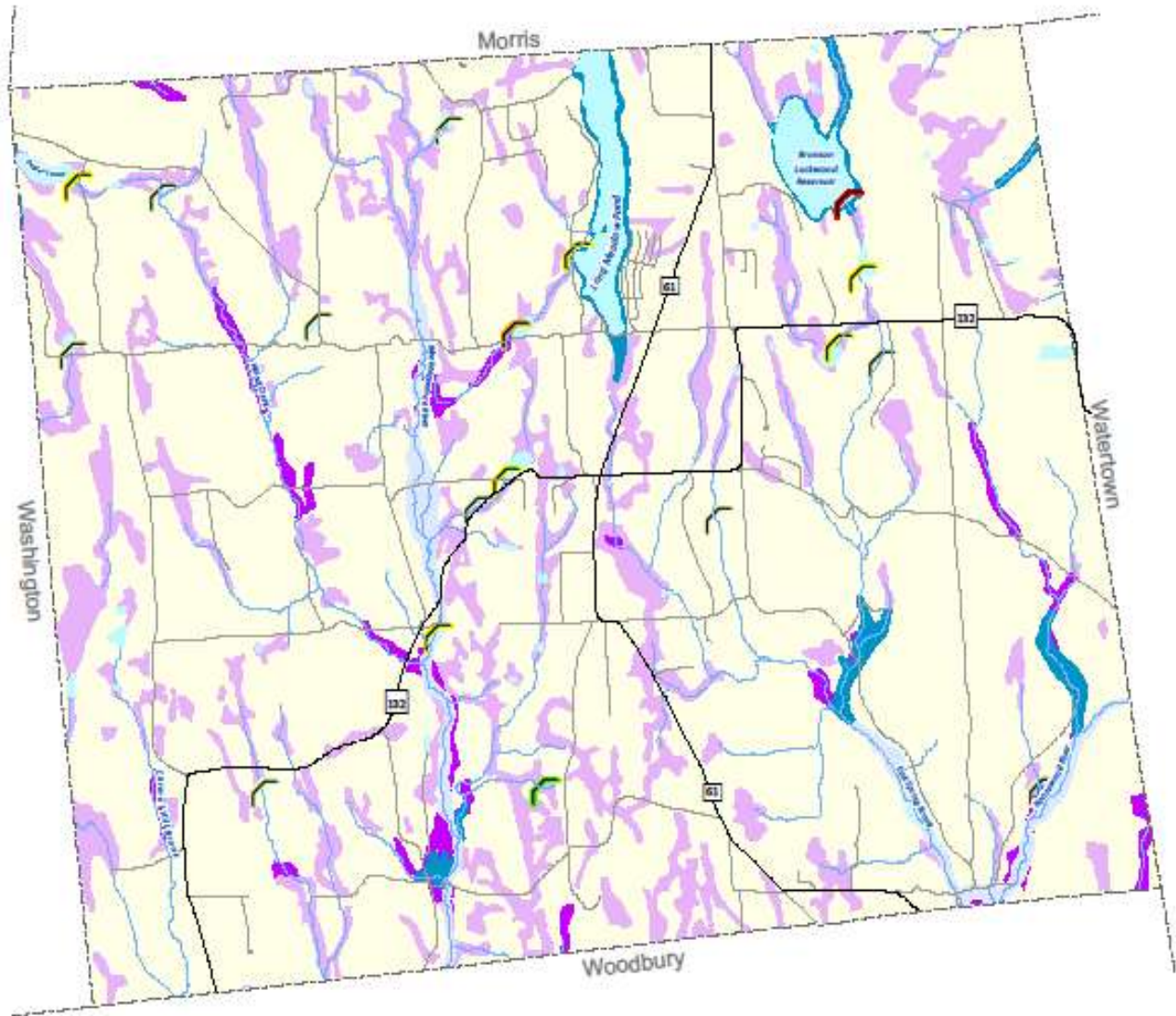
High : 1133

Low : 442



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# Bethlehem Water Resources



For planning purposes only.  
Delineations may not be exact.

Sources:  
CT 911 Roads: CT DESPP/TeleAtlas  
Parcels: New England Geosystems  
Wetland Soils, Hydrographs.



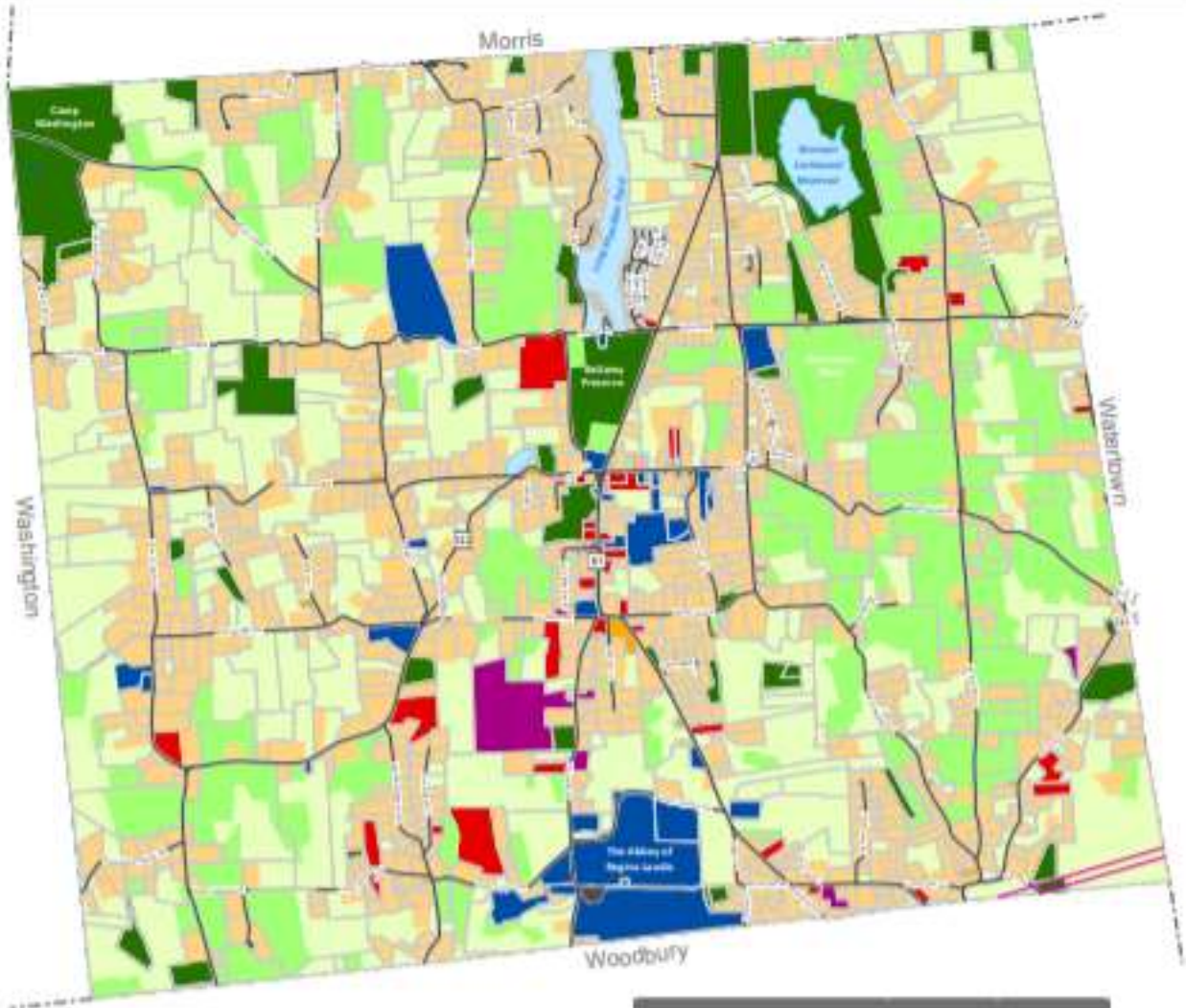
Miles  
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Updated: 5/1/2015 Document Path: E:\GIS\GIS\Projects\GIS\_Maps\GIS\MapDocs\Bethlehem\_Water\_Resources.mxd



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# Bethlehem Land Use 2017



Land use classification was determined on a parcel by parcel basis using 2012 NAIP satellite imagery (USDA), 2012 leaf-off aerial photography (CTDESPT), Google StreetView 2011, Municipal assessor information, NVEDG open space data, and COGCTV 2008 georeferenced land use information.

Other Sources  
 CT 611 Roads CT DESPT/leafOff  
 Parcels: New England Geographic

For planning purposes only.  
 Distortions may not be exact.

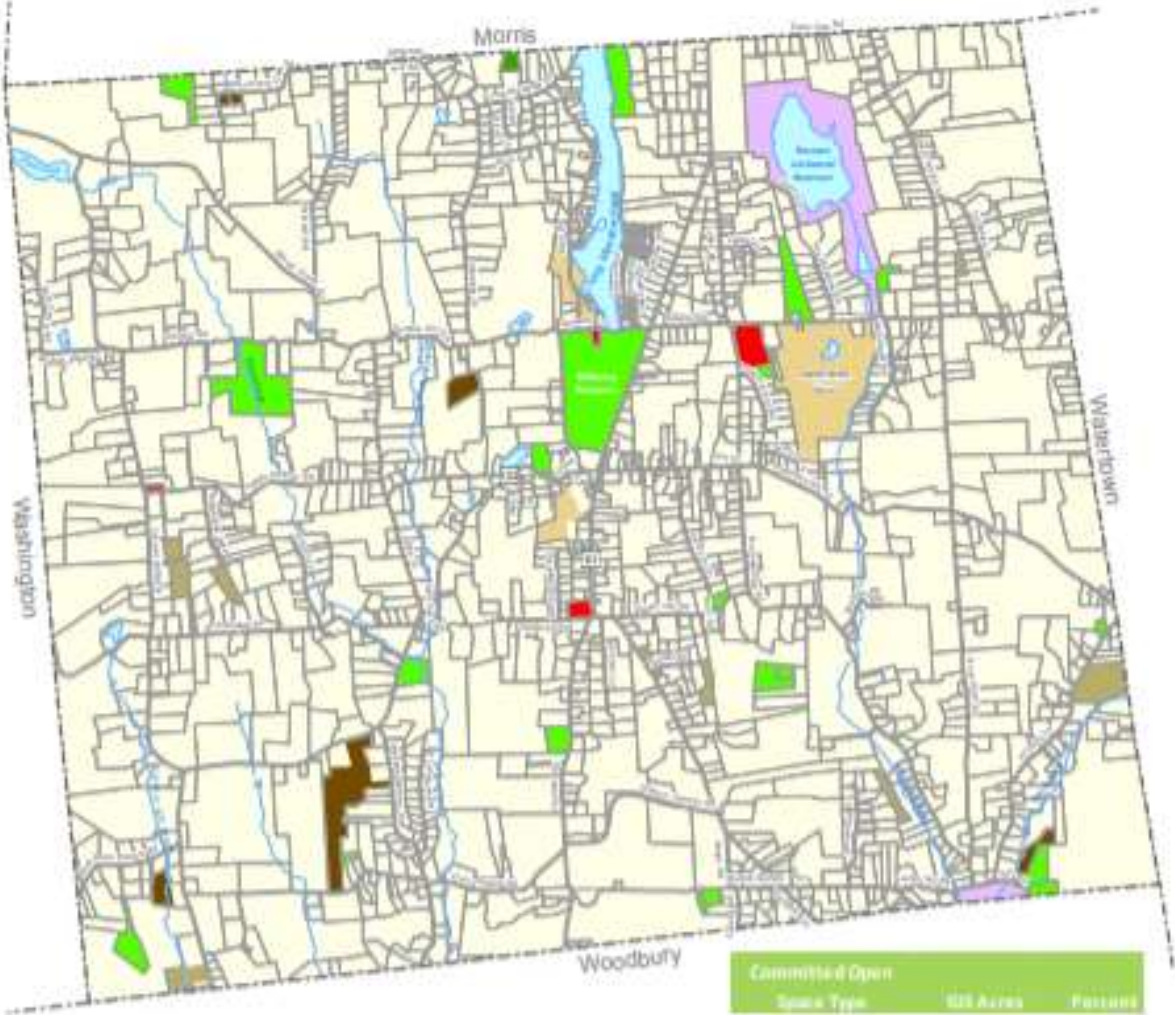


Electric Transmission Lines



Land Use Category	GIS Acreage	Percent
Agriculture	2,307.5	18.3%
Commercial	210.3	1.7%
Community Facility	452.5	3.6%
Industrial	105.9	0.8%
Recreational or Open Space	784.9	6.2%
Residential - Low	4,124.5	32.8%
Residential - Medium-Low	74.3	0.6%
Residential - Medium Density	39.4	0.3%
Residential - High Density	2.6	0.0%
ROW	392.4	3.1%
Undeveloped	3,895.1	31.0%
Water	187.0	1.5%
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>12,576.4</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

# Bethlehem Committed Open Space 2017



For planning purposes only.  
 Definitions may not be exact.

Sources:  
 Towns of Bethlehem  
 CT 911 Roads: CT GISPP/InfoActive  
 Parcels: New England Geosystems  
 Hydrography: CT DEEP

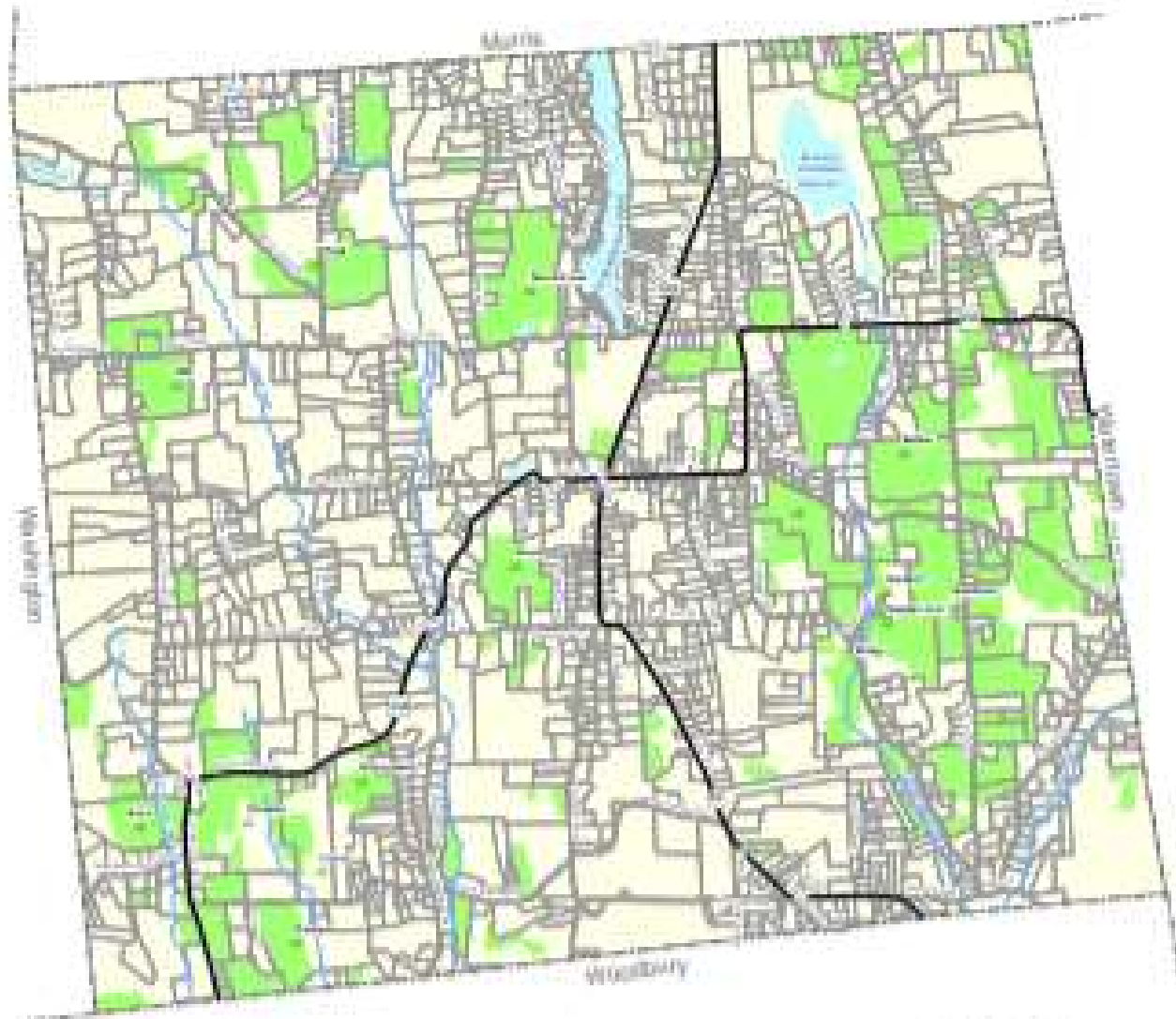


### Committed Open Space

- Cemetery
- Easement
- Land Trust
- Local
- Private
- State
- Water Company

Committed Open		
Open Space Type	600 Acres	Percent
State	4	0.5%
Easement	87	10.0%
Land Trust (outside)	5	0.6%
Land Trust	279	32.2%
Water Company	219	25.3%
Local	172	19.8%
Private	75	8.7%
Cemetery	36	1.0%
<b>Open Space:</b>	<b>847</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Bethlehem:</b>	<b>12,376</b>	<b>6.9%</b>

# Bethlehem Farms and Agricultural Land Use



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Source:  
U.S. EPA, 2004  
North Star Paper Company  
Sustainable Ink, 2004

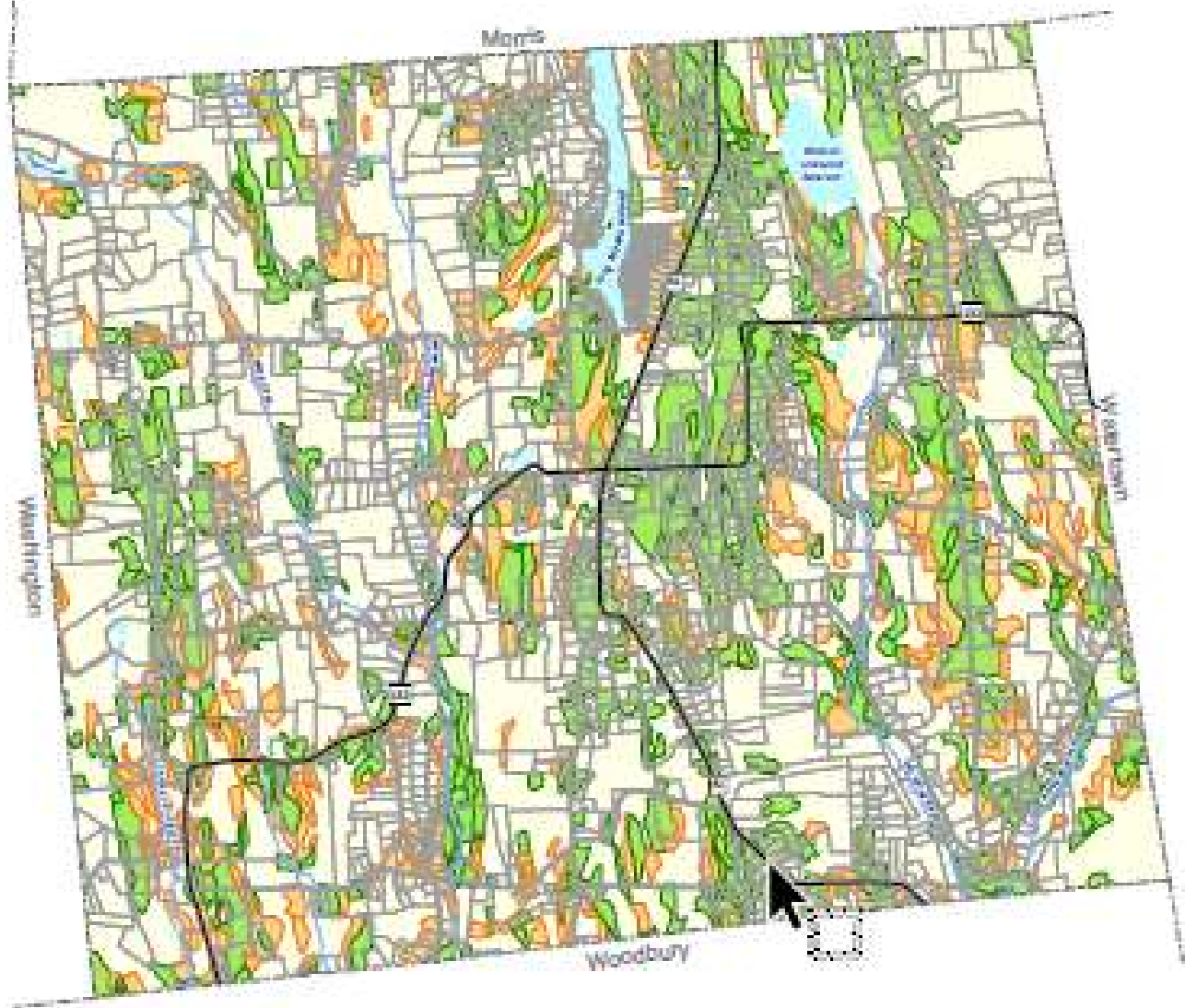


- Large Farms
- ▬ Major Roads
- ▬ Local Roads
- ▬ Water
- ▭ Municipal Boundaries
- ▭ Fiscal Boundaries
- Agriculture



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# Bethlehem Farmland Soils



The planning process is only a guide.  
 Delineations may not be exact.



Source:  
 CT 811 Maps, CT DEP/Debris  
 Records: New England Geographic  
 Records, Hydrography, Municipal Boundaries CT DEP



- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Water
- ▭ Municipal Boundaries
- ▭ Parcel Boundaries

- Farmland Soils**
- Prime Farmland Soils
  - Statewide Important Farmland Soils