

Economic Development Commission

Town of Bethel, Connecticut

Bethel Municipal Center * 1 School Street * Bethel, Connecticut 06801

(203)794-8540 Facsimile (203) 778-7520

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, April 9, 2025

4:00 PM

Meeting Room "A"

PRESENT- Chairman Nick Vitti, Jay Streaman, Kevin McMahon, and Steve DeMoura.

Also present was Janice Chrzescijanek, Economic Development Director

ABSENT~ Ed Tomasko, John Lennon, John Francis

CALL TO ORDER~ Chairman Vitti called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. with the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES- Kevin McMahon made a motion to approve the minutes of the special meeting dated 3/12/25, Jay Streaman seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Kevin McMahon noted there was an error in the section where the tallying of the vote to approve the sale of 19 Trowbridge Drive to Artic Builders, LLC. Minutes stated he "ABSTAINED", when in actuality he voted "NO". Kevin McMahon voted to approve the minutes of 3/12/2025 as amended. Nick Vitti seconded the motion. Vote, all in favor. Motion accepted.

Kevin McMahon made a motion to approve the minutes of special joint meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission on 3/18/2025. Jay Streaman seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Steve DeMoura abstained. Motion accepted.

CONSIDERATION OF TAX DEFERRAL APPLICATION 20 Trowbridge Drive~

The commission held a lengthy discussion, Chairman Vitti noted that CGS 12-65B entitled Bethel to enact the ordinance to allow the EDC to grant tax abatements on assessments. Bethel Code Book Chapter 98 Article VIII defines the requirements and procedures for application. Vintage and Classic, LLC. of 20 Trowbridge Drive has completed an application. As of July, they have been paying taxes on the land. The EDC has processed two assessment deferral

TOWN CLERK
BETHEL, CT.

2025 APR 16 P 12:15

RECEIVED

applications in the past, one for Steve DeMarco at 155 Greenwood Avenue and one for Caraluzzi's at 86 Greenwood Avenue for the second floor.

Kevin McMahon said the owner will have to defend the cost of the building project. There is a distinction regarding the property because the town developed and sold the property. The owner is estimating the cost for construction will be \$3.5 million dollars and the applicant is seeking full deferral for seven years.

If the property owners were to build elsewhere in town it would be a different story.

The development of the lots were years in the making with significant, substantial improvements.

After thorough consideration the Economic Development Commission has recommended to not approve the applications.

Kevin McMahon made a motion to forward the application to the Board of Selectmen for review with the Economic Development Commission's recommendation of denying the request, the motion was seconded by Jay Streaman, Vote all in favor. Motion accepted.

ECONOMIC DIRECTORS REPORT~ (See attached).

Janice reported that we are moving forward with the accelerator program having completed 4 of the required 6 months. See the attached project overview.

The EDC met in a joint meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding the Transit Oriented District. After a presentation by David McCollum, Bethel Land Use Coordinator, the Planning and Zoning Commission voted to direct the staff to prepare an amendment to the TOD Overlay Zone District Map. This vote is intended to eliminate the west side of the TOD District based upon a map created by Eric Swenson.

Planning and Zoning Commission is going to hold a public hearing. The Planning Zoning Commission voted to do away with 90% of the district.

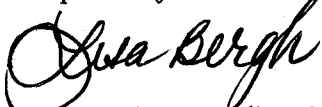
As a side note, Janice noted that the expenditures for development of all of the lots and ultimately the sales on Trowbridge the town have realized a \$1,000,000.00 profit.

ADJOURN-

A motion to adjourn was made by Steve DeMoura , the motion was seconded by Kevin McMahon. Vote was taken, all in favor, motion approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:13 PM

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Bergh, Recording Secretary



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MONTHLY REPORT

MARCH AND APRIL 2025

2025 INITIATIVES

- Business Retention and Expansion
- Workforce Development
- **Marketing Plan**
- Attract and Develop Small-Scale Manufacturing, Business Incubators, Makerspaces, Coworking Facilities
- Parking and Mobility
- Transportation
- **Commercial Real Estate Land and Redevelopment Opportunities – See below**

**Bolded items have new updates*

EDC SUBCOMMITTEES

1. **Business Meet and Greet** - Subcommittee Members: Nick Vitti, Kevin McMahon and Ed Tomasko
2. **Marketing Plan** - Subcommittee Members: John Francis and Jay Streaman
 - **Main Street Accelerator Program through CT Main Street.**
 - Committee members: Chris Bruno- Edison Kitchen, Honorah O'Neill - Rainy Day Paperback, Leila Roxo - Pink Lemon, and Kathryn Hebert – Sustainable Bethel.
 - Completed month four of a six-month project.
 - Review - project proposal attached
3. **Parking and Mobility**
 - Subcommittee Members: Steve DeMoura, John Lennon, and Jay Streaman
 - Plan is being reviewed by the Planning & Zoning Commission.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

Business Visitation Program – 894 visits

Business Assistance (relocation, financial, expansion, location, permit) – 1,372

New Businesses

1. Sun Bear Tree Care LLC, 72 Turkey Plain Rd
2. SH&A Market Place, LLC, 41 Apollo Rd

4. C.O.R.E. Inspired Learning Limited Liability Company, 24 Stony Hill Road
5. Zuccaro Media LLC, 5 Benedict Rd
6. Pediatric Penguin LLC, 25 Grand St, Apt. 5,
7. GR BEAUTY STUDIO LLC, 269 Greenwood Ave, ste 4
8. Imranul Haque LLC, 29 Great Hill Dr
9. Tryzub Investments LLC, 13 Long Hill Rd
10. AdminEase Solutions LLC, 263 Greenwood Ave
11. L&M REDITUS LLC, 601 Lexington Blvd
12. Seidell Health & Wellness LLC, 6 Galloping Hill Rd
13. Bris&Co. LLC, 29 Hawleyville Road
14. 217 Greenwood Ave LLC, 217 Greenwood Ave
15. DJ Corona LLC, 10 Codfish Hill Road Ext
16. Goodwin Architecture Plus PLLC, 21 Judd Ave
17. Eagles Wings Courier & Transportation Services LLC, 34 Drummers Lane

Commercial Real Estate Land and Redevelopment Opportunities

- Transit Oriented Development update – see attached
- TIF

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

Inventory

Date	Available Commercial Properties	Occupancy Rate*	Sq. Footage Available	Available Sites	Acres Available
April	14	98.1%	203,719	1	5.49
February 2025	13	98.3%	119,816	2	8.51
January 2025	13	98.3%	158,301	2	8.51
November 2024	13	98.3%	136,062	2	8.51
October 2024	13	98.3%	142,760	2	8.51
July 2024	9	98.8%	143,182	1	3.02 – Expansion
June 2024	8	98.9%	37,967	1	3.02 – Expansion
May 2024	8	98.9%	37,219	1	3.02 – Expansion
April 2024	8	98.9%	38,569	1	3.02 – Expansion
March 2024	8	98.9%	39,919	1	3.02 – Expansion
February 2024	6	99.2%	34,487	1	3.02 – Expansion

* Occupancy Rate: Available Commercial Properties / 750 commercial properties

Source LoopNet

Current Commercial Development/Redevelopment

Building	Square Feet	Estimated Completion
8 Trowbridge Dr.- Coronet Machinery	7,500	Q1 2025
48 Stony Hill Road – The Grand at Stony Hill	9,606 – Retail	Q1 2024
6A Francis J. Clarke Circle	19,600	Q2 2025
15 Trowbridge Dr. – Advance Testing Systems	15,000	Q2 2025
185 Grassy Plain - Rizzo	100,000	Q2 2025
36 Stony Hill Road – The Farms at Stony Hill	20,900 - Medical	tbd
20 Trowbridge Dr. – Legacy Overland	20,000	tbd
21 Trowbridge Drive	30,000 sq ft	tbd

Commercial Sales Transactions

Building	Sale Date	Sale Price	Price/SF	SF
5 School St.	1/8/24	\$120,000	\$105.26	1,140
45 Turkey Plain Rd.	1/23/24	\$950,000	\$950.00	1,000

8 Francis J. Clarke Circle	2/12/24	\$1,500,000	\$79.26	18,926
268 Greenwood Avenue	5/17/2024	\$1,100,000	\$114.58	9,600
12 Stony Hill Road	6/11/2024	\$430,000	n/a	.34 acres
14 Stony Hill Road	6/11/2024	\$570,000	\$192.31	2,964
4B Elizabeth Street	8/23/24	\$165,000	\$144.00	1,150
10 Trowbridge Drive	9/9/24	\$3,675,000	\$95.45	38,500
12-20 P.T. Barnum Square	9/23/24	\$695,000	\$204.47	3,399
81/83 Stony Hill Road	10/2/2024	\$30,500,000	\$300.94	101,349
8 Francis J. Clarke Circle	2/3/2025	\$2,250,000	\$118.90	18,926
159 Greenwood Ave.	2/7/2025	\$1,200,000	\$170.90	7,020
20 Trowbridge	2/7/2025	\$410,000	n/a	2.55 acres

2025 YTD - \$3,860,000

2024 YTD - \$39,705,000

2023 YTD - \$17,849,000

CLARKE PARK EXPANSION

Property Status

Property	Offer Accepted	Contract	P&Z Application Review	Application Approved
19 Trowbridge Drive	Yes	In Process		
20 Trowbridge Drive	Yes	Complete/Closed	Approved	Jan. 2025
21 Trowbridge Drive	Yes	Complete/Closed	In Process	
23 Trowbridge Drive	Yes	Complete/Closed		

- Offer approved by BOF and P&Z referral on 4/8/2025.
- Public hearing and BOS approval scheduled for 4/15/2025. Followed by Special Town Meeting.
- See attached project summary

ECONOMIC DATA

Bethel Labor Statistics

	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
February 2025	11,968	11,441	527	4.4%
January 2025	12,105	11,631	474	3.9%
December 2024	11,139	10,852	287	2.6%
November 2024	11,128	10,840	288	2.6%
October 2024	11,117	10,872	245	2.2%
September 2024	11,063	10,809	254	2.3%
August 2024	10,964	10,637	327	3.0%
June 2024	11,165	10,906	259	2.3%
May 2024	11,151	10,762	389	3.5%
April 2024	10,891	10,589	302	2.8%
March 2024	11,064	10,671	393	3.6%
February 2024	10,959	10,445	514	4.7%
January 2024	10,991	10,525	466	4.2%

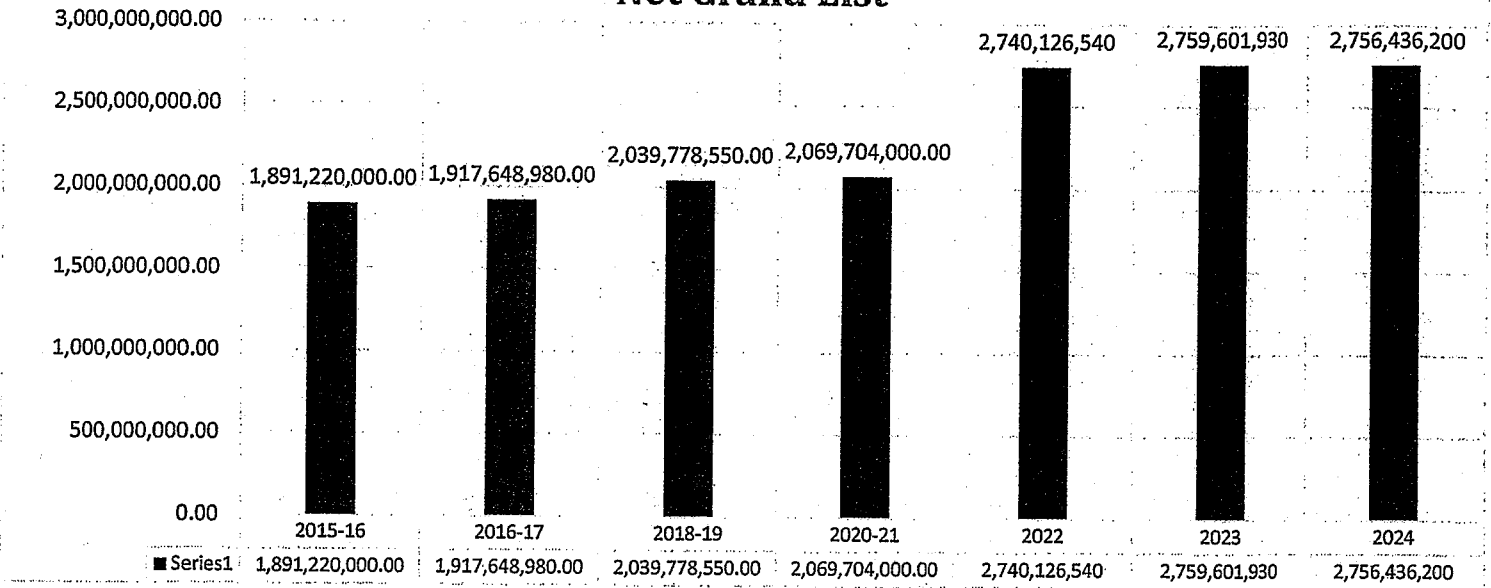
Source: CT Department of Labor

*Danbury LM UR – 4.3%

Connecticut UR – 4.5%

Net Grand List

Net Grand List



2024

	# of Accounts	Gross Assessment	Exemptions	Total Net Assessment
Real Estate	7,469	2,380,243,610	7,874,590	2,372,369,020
Commercial				
Industrial				
Personal Property	1,390	232,661,750	44,016,650	188,645,100
Motor Vehicle	18,553	196,594,620	1,172,540	195,422,080
Final Total			53,063,780	2,756,436,200

2023

	# of Accounts	Gross Assessment	Exemptions	Total Net Assessment
Real Estate	7,677	2,354,931,190	5,286,410	2,349,644,780
Commercial				216,817,550
Industrial				82,418,210
Personal Property	1,435	230,698,100	44,555,950	186,142,150
Motor Vehicle	18,568	225,442,660	1,627,660	223,815,000
Final Total	27,680	2,811,071,950	51,470,020	2,759,601,930

2022

	# of Accounts	Gross Assessment	Exemptions	Total Net Assessment
Real Estate	7,660	2,341,692,170	3,932,950	2,337,759,220
Commercial				216,471,260
Industrial				82,045,110
Personal Property	1,360	213,542,730	44,046,350	169,496,380
Motor Vehicle	18,310	234,899,610	2,028,670	232,870,940
Final Total	27,330	2,790,134,510	50,007,970	2,740,126,540

*Reassessment year

WHO WE ARE

CT MAIN STREET ACCELERATOR COMMITTEE

Chris Bruno - Restaurateur

Leila Roxo - Owner, Pink Lemon

Nora O'Neil - Owner, Rainy Day Paperback

Kathryn Hebert - Town of Bethel, Chair of the Sustainable Bethel Commission

Janice Chrzescijanek - Town of Bethel, Director of Economic Development

MISSION:

To foster the growth, resilience, and prosperity of Downtown Bethel by providing valuable information and defining engaging experiences.

GOALS:

- Boost tourism, foot traffic, and local commerce.
- Strengthen business collaboration and partnerships.
- Develop a distinctive and memorable brand identity.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

THE VISION:

Create a website that delivers essential information on businesses, landmarks, events, parking, transportation, and activities in Downtown Bethel, while fostering business collaboration and showcasing engaging experiences to boost tourism and commerce.

FUNDING:

Local Business Sponsorships -

Businesses contribute in exchange for advertising

TIMELINE:

Launch 1st Quarter 2026

KEY BENEFITS:

- **Boost Local Commerce** – Increases visibility for businesses, driving customer engagement and sales.
- **Enhance Tourism** – Showcases attractions, events, and activities, encouraging visitors to explore Downtown Bethel.
- **Strengthen Business Connections** – Provides opportunities for businesses to collaborate.
- **Improve Accessibility** – Offers real-time information on parking, transportation, and navigation.
- **Promote Community Engagement** – Keeps residents informed about local events and initiatives.
- **Encourage Economic Growth** – Drives foot traffic to downtown establishments, supporting local job creation.
- **Provide a Centralized Resource** – Serves as a go-to hub for residents, visitors, and businesses alike.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- **Fosters Local Pride** – Highlights Downtown Bethel's unique character, history, and offerings, strengthening community identity.
- **Enhances Connectivity** – Creates a centralized platform for residents, businesses, and visitors to stay informed and engaged.
- **Encourages Civic Participation** – Promotes local events, volunteer opportunities, and initiatives to inspire community involvement.
- **Supports Local Businesses** – Increases exposure and customer engagement, helping small businesses thrive.
- **Improves Quality of Life** – Provides easy access to essential resources, making it more convenient to live, work, and play in Downtown Bethel.
- **Strengthens Economic Resilience** – Drives local spending and investment, ensuring long-term sustainability for the community.
- **Enhances Public Awareness** – Educates residents and visitors about town improvements, new developments, and cultural attractions.

GET INVOLVED. JOIN US!

1. Contribute Content & Information

- *Business Listings*: Provide details like name, contact info, website, hours, and services.
- *Photos & Videos*: Submit high-quality images of your storefronts, products, and events.

2. Provide Financial Support

3. Participate in Content Creation

- *Event and Experience Submissions*: Share upcoming events and collaborate with other businesses to define experiences.

4. Help Maintain & Update Information

- *Self-Service Business Portal*: Update your listings.
- *Community Ambassadors*: Participate in a small business committee to oversee content updates.
- *Volunteer Support*: Dedicate time or staff to assist with website updates.

5. Promote the Website

- *Websites & Social Media*: Add a link to the website in your marketing materials.
- *Physical Locations*: Display QR codes or signage directing customers to the site.
- *Email Newsletters*: Mention the site in their regular customer communications.

6. Provide Feedback & Improvement Suggestions

- *Provide input* on the features you need.



March 14, 2025

Attention: Mr. Paul Shanley, Chair of the Planning and Zoning Commission
Planning and Zoning Commission Members

re: Transit Oriented Development

Dear Mr. Shanley and the Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission,

We, the Economic Development Commission, write to you regarding your Commission's ongoing discussions to modify the Transit Oriented Development Overlay Zone ("TOD"). While we understand the importance of periodically reassessing long-term plans, it is essential to recognize that the Bethel Forward plan was developed collaboratively by Economic Development and Planning & Zoning, shaped through extensive community input.

When the Bethel Forward plan was first proposed, downtown Bethel faced significant challenges. Businesses were struggling, and the vacancy rate had reached an all-time high. Given that many members of both Commissions were not part of the original planning process, it is especially important to reaffirm the plan's goals.

Developed over several years by DPZ, one of the nation's leading planning firms, the plan was shaped by input from hundreds of residents, business owners, and community leaders. Its recommendations led to the creation of the TOD, designed to foster a vibrant, sustainable, and economically resilient downtown, guided by the following principles:

- **Mixed-Use Development** – Encouraging a dynamic, walkable community by integrating residential, commercial, and retail spaces.
- **Pedestrian-Oriented Design** – Enhancing safety and accessibility through improved sidewalks, crosswalks, and streetscapes.
- **Transit Accessibility** – Reducing car dependency by promoting development near transit hubs.
- **Diverse Housing Options** – Providing a mix of housing types and affordability levels to support a diverse population.
- **Economic Revitalization** – Stimulating local businesses and attracting investment by increasing foot traffic and downtown activity.

- **Sustainable Growth** – Promoting compact, efficient land use to minimize sprawl and support long-term environmental sustainability.
- **Public Spaces & Amenities** – Developing parks, plazas, and gathering spaces to foster community engagement and enhance quality of life.

In 2020, these principles were reaffirmed in the Plan of Conservation and Development. We believe that we should continue to uphold them to ensure that downtown Bethel grows in ways that benefit residents, businesses, and the broader community.

Addressing Community Concerns

While TOD has contributed to Bethel's positive growth, our downtown is still evolving. Business turnover, particularly in retail and personal services, remains a challenge, reinforcing the need for continued efforts to strengthen and stabilize the local economy.

We recognize concerns regarding large-scale housing developments, including those under 8-30g and along Route 6/Stony Hill. However, TOD has fostered well-planned, gradual growth. It is crucial to differentiate the positive effects of TOD in downtown Bethel from broader housing trends across town. In fact, the controlled, incremental development within the TOD underscores the importance of thoughtful regulations to ensure sustainable growth. Additionally, the economic advantages of increased activity and tax revenue are significant and should not be overlooked.

Concerns about increased school enrollment and municipal service costs have not been supported by data. There is no evidence of a significant rise in school population or municipal service demand within the TOD. In fact, TOD principles promote:

- **Efficient Land Use** – Compact, walkable development minimizing the need for costly infrastructure expansions such as new roads, water, and sewer lines.
- **Cost-Effective Municipal Services** – Higher population density allows for more efficient delivery of essential services like police and fire protection, reducing per capita costs for the town.

Parking and mobility have also been topics of concern. However, a recently completed **Parking and Mobility Plan**, prepared by Hardesty & Hanover, assessed future traffic conditions over a 20-year period, accounting for potential development and redevelopment. While it recommended infrastructure improvements for safety and traffic calming, it did not identify significant parking or mobility issues. In fact, TOD enhances parking and mobility by fostering a more efficient and sustainable transportation system, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure and promoting alternatives, such as cycling and public transit.

Concerns about train service in Bethel are understandable. Recent data indicates that ridership is still rebounding from the COVID-19 pandemic. However, TOD transit extends beyond rail to include buses, biking, and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. Even with limited train service, TOD strategies can still create a more walkable, connected, and economically vibrant community. By focusing on mixed-use zoning, bike and pedestrian-friendly streets, and

enhanced public spaces, Bethel can strengthen its appeal while preparing for future transit expansions.

Regardless of current transit options, TOD's core principles—walkability, mixed-use development, and reduced car dependency—continue to support economic growth, livability, and sustainability. Prioritizing smart, intentional growth will allow Bethel to:

- Boost the local economy
- Attract residents and businesses
- Enhance quality of life
- Promote long-term sustainability

This vision remains at the heart of the **Bethel Forward plan and TOD.**

Advancing Transit and Infrastructure

Bethel has already made progress in strengthening its transportation network and downtown infrastructure, including but not limited to:

- **Streetscape Enhancements** – Completed Phase 1, which includes new municipal signage, public parking signage, School Street sidewalks, and upgraded lighting.
- **Downtown Bus Shelters** – Secured a grant from HART and installed new bus shelters downtown.
- **Mobility & Parking Improvements** – Secured \$120,000 in funding to complete a comprehensive mobility and parking plan, aligning with the Bethel Forward plan.
- **\$4.5 Million TOD Communities Challenge Grant** – Awarded funding for infrastructure improvements around Diamond Avenue and the Diamond-Greenwood intersection, enhancing connectivity and vibrancy -grant funding remains in process.
- **Bus Transit Advocacy** – The Director of Economic Development serves on the HART Board of Directors, working to improve Bethel's bus transit services.
- **Train Access Planning** – Developed a conceptual plan for west-side train access and continue to collaborate with the DOT on potential solutions.
- **Bicycle Infrastructure & Regulations** – Integrated bike regulations in the TOD to promote multi-modal transportation options.
- **Infrastructure Funding** – Along with pursuing grant opportunities, the EDC has been exploring additional ways to support infrastructure investment. We are currently discussing the establishment of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, which would generate funding for public improvements by capturing the growth in property tax revenues from new development.

Additional Benefits of Bethel's TOD Zone

State Funding Opportunities

Connecticut actively supports TOD as a strategy for sustainable growth and community revitalization. Maintaining a TOD zone allows Bethel to remain eligible for crucial state funding, including but not limited to:

- **Responsible Growth and Transit-Oriented Development (RGTOD) Grant** – Up to \$2 million for sustainable land use and TOD projects.
- **Transit-Oriented Development Fund** – Low-interest loans of up to \$3 million for pre-development and property acquisition in TOD zones.
- **Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** – Varies, supporting housing, public facilities, and economic development.
- **Sustainable CT Community Match Fund** – Provides dollar-for-dollar matching grants for local sustainability initiatives.

These TOD funding opportunities provide Bethel with a competitive municipal advantage in contrast to other municipalities that lack a TOD, and enable Bethel to enhance transit accessibility, stimulate economic development, and build a more connected, sustainable community.

Economic and Tax Benefits

TOD supports sustainable growth while enhancing Bethel's financial stability through:

1. Higher Property Values & Tax Revenues

- Properties in TOD zones appreciate faster, generating higher tax revenues. Some examples of TOD-driven redevelopment include:
 - **25 Grand Street** – Generates over \$100,000 in new tax revenue.
 - **80 South Street** – Generates over \$19,000 in new tax revenue.
 - **86 Greenwood** – Annual tax revenue increased by \$40,000, bringing in two new businesses to Bethel.
 - **155 Greenwood Avenue** – Annual tax revenue grew from \$10,300 to \$105,000, with five new businesses opening in Bethel.
 - **9-11 Diamond Avenue** – Proposed new development which is projected to generate \$100,000–\$200,000 annually while creating new commercial space with plans to attract a boutique hotel, maker, coworking and art spaces, and light manufacturing businesses. The development will also include open space and recreational trails.
- The **tax per acre** approach, which was explained in the Bethel Forward plan, evaluates property tax revenue based on land use efficiency rather than just total revenue per parcel. It helps us understand which developments generate the

highest tax revenue relative to the land they occupy, often leading to more sustainable redevelopment decisions. The key principles of tax per acre analysis is that dense development produces more tax revenue. A multi-story mixed-use building generates more tax revenue per acre than a single-story strip mall or large parking lot and compact development provides more value per square foot than sprawling low-density areas. To apply tax per acre analysis, we can compare three different types of land uses in Bethel's downtown:

- **A Single-Story Retail Building with a Large Parking Lot**
 - Lot Size: 1 acre
 - Building Size: 5,000 sq ft
 - Annual Property Tax Revenue: \$20,000
 - Tax Per Acre: \$20,000
 - **A Multi-Story Mixed-Use Development (Retail + Residential/Office)**
 - Lot Size: 1 acre
 - Building Size: 40,000 sq ft (Retail on ground floor, apartments/offices above)
 - Annual Property Tax Revenue: \$200,000
 - Tax Per Acre: \$200,000
 - **A Surface Parking Lot**
 - Lot Size: 1 acre
 - Annual Property Tax Revenue: \$5,000
 - Tax Per Acre: \$5,000
2. **Greater Economic Activity & Sales Tax Revenue**
 - TOD promotes foot traffic, supporting local businesses and increasing sales tax revenue.
 - Businesses on the west side of the tracks continue to struggle due to a lack of density, reinforcing the need for TOD.
 3. **Efficient Land Use & Lower Infrastructure Costs**
 - Compact development reduces infrastructure expansion costs.
 - Higher-density areas allow for more cost-effective municipal services.
 4. **Attracting Investment & Development Fees**
 - TOD attracts private investment, leading to new construction, permitting, and fees.
 5. **Reduced Vacancy Rates & Increased Commercial Tax Base**
 - Mixed-use TOD areas experience lower vacancy rates, ensuring more stable tax revenue.

Bethel's TOD strategy remains a vital component of our long-term vision for a thriving, sustainable, and economically resilient community. The Bethel Forward plan was shaped through extensive collaboration and expert planning, and its principles continue to support smart growth, increased economic activity, and enhanced quality of life.

While concerns have been raised, data and experience show that TOD fosters efficiency, walkability, and business growth without imposing undue burdens on infrastructure or municipal services. The success of TOD in Bethel will provide increased property values, higher tax revenues, improved mobility, and greater access to state and federal funding opportunities that directly benefit the town.

Without Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), our downtown will continue to face challenges with underutilized and vacant industrial properties, restricting its economic potential. Limited highway access makes this land unattractive to most industrial businesses, while the noise, truck traffic, and pollution associated with such operations are incompatible with nearby businesses and residential areas. As a result, the area remains underutilized, generating lower tax revenues and offering little support to the local economy. Without strategic redevelopment, vacancies will persist, and we will continue to attract uses like the bus depot on Durant Avenue, which do not drive economic growth, create jobs, or contribute to a thriving downtown.

By reaffirming our commitment to TOD, Bethel can continue to leverage these benefits, ensuring a vibrant downtown, attracting investment, and fostering a more connected and sustainable future for residents and businesses alike. We encourage the Commission to uphold the integrity of the Bethel Forward plan and TOD and support its continued implementation as a framework for responsible and strategic development.

We appreciate your time and consideration and look forward to continued discussions and collaboration to build a stronger Bethel.

Sincerely,



Nicholas Vitti, Chair of the Economic Development Commission

cc:

Economic Development Commission

Beth Cavagna, Director of Land Use

Janice Chzescijanek, Director of Economic Development



TOWN OF BETHEL LAND USE DEPARTMENT

Clifford J. Hurgin Municipal Center
1 School Street
Bethel, Connecticut 06801

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION AMENDED SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

March 18, 2025

6:30 p.m.

Bethel Municipal Center
Meeting Room D & Google Meet

TOWN CLERK
BETHEL, CT.

2025 MAR 28 A 10:26

RECEIVED

Commissioners Present: P. Shanley, *Chair*; D. Ryan, R. Legnard, J. DeRosa, K. Parsons, E. Brudvig, D. Cuny

Commissioners Absent: K. Grant, *Vice-Chair*; S. Braden, M. Kozlowski

Staff Present: B. Cavagna, *Planning & Zoning Official*, D. McCollum, *Land Use Coordinator*; A. Martinez, *Recording Secretary*

Meeting to Order: P. Shanley called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m. and led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance. Commission and Staff introduced themselves.

Economic Development Commission introduced themselves: J. Chrzescijanek, *Director*; N. Vitti, *Chairman*; J. Francis, *Vice Chair*; J. Streaman, *Secretary*; K. McMahon, and E. Tomasko.

The following decisions were made:

Motion by K. Parsons, seconded by D. Cuny to direct Staff to prepare an Amendment to the TOD Overlay Zone District Map to eliminate the West side of the TOD District based on a map prepared by E. Swenson, Director of Bethel Public Works, as presented at the Commissions Special Meeting on January 23, 2025 for the following reasons:

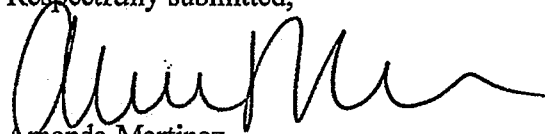
- lack of connectivity with the train station from West to East.
- There is no possibility of a train crossing other than having to go overhead which is expensive and not in the best interest of the tax payer.
- Concerns for the density which is being built in Downtown
- Along with walkability and reduction of parking.

Motion passed (4-3-0). K. Parsons, D. Ryan, P. Shanley, D. Cuny – yes.
E. Brudvig, B. Legnard, J. DeRosa – no.

ADJOURN:

Motion by J. DeRosa, seconded by K. Parsons, to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

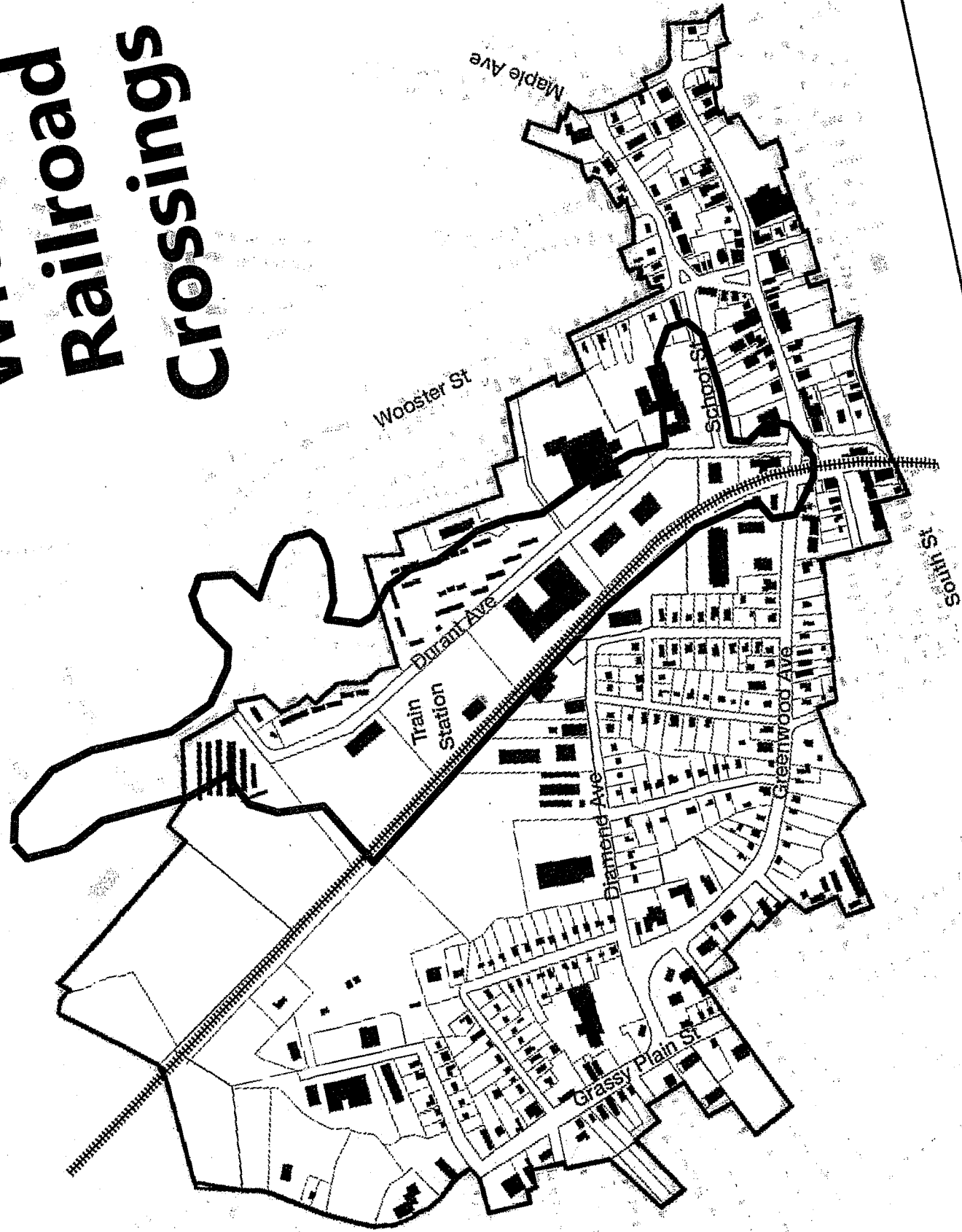
Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda Martinez', written in a cursive style.

Amanda Martinez
Recording Secretary

“This is an abbreviated version to file all motions that were made and the completed minutes will be filed within 7 business day”.

Without Railroad Crossings



WHO WE ARE

WHAT WE DO

HOW WE HELP

Search here..



CMSC & CRCOG Summit

10 YEARS OF TOD & THE ROAD AHEAD

WHO WE ARE

WHAT WE DO

HOW WE HELP

PRESENTED BY PARKVILLE MANAGEMENT

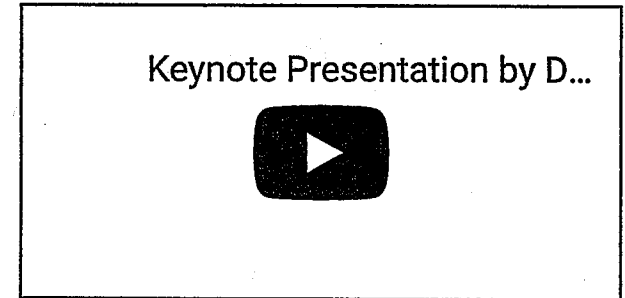
PANEL PRESENTATION



Our Spring Summit: 10 Years of TOD & the Road Ahead was hosted on March 20th, 2025 at Parkville Market in Hartford.

Find all of the panels on [Youtube](#)

CMSC partnered with the [Capitol Region Council of Governments \(CRCOG\)](#) to look at Connecticut's history with transit-oriented development, review three distinct case studies and look to the future of TOD in CT.



Scroll down to find information on TOD, our speakers, PDF's of their presentations, pictures from our event and our event sponsors.

Recorded by IntersectMedia

What Is TOD?

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) has been traditionally defined as the practice of centering mixed-use, walkable development around transit stations. Higher-density housing, and complementary uses such as retail, public space and other amenities are placed within walking distance of the stations. TOD promotes community connectivity and accessibility while offering greater transportation options and reducing reliance on cars.

At the March TOD Summit, David Kooris, Executive Director of Connecticut Municipal Development Authority (CMDA), pointed out that a Transit-Oriented Connecticut exists at the following three scales:

1. TOD, Transit-Oriented Developments: the site – a single property or assemblage of properties;
2. TON, Transit-Oriented Neighborhoods: the area surrounding transit stations; and
3. TOC, Transit-Oriented Communities: the regional scale, stitches the neighborhoods together.

Micromobility

WHO WE ARE

WHAT WE DO

HOW WE HELP



INTERESTED IN PROMOTING MICROMOBILITY IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

Consider participating in CRCOG's contract with VEO (a vendor that provides e-bicycles, e-scooters and other micromobility devices) through the Capitol Region Purchasing Council. Please contact Pauline Yoder to learn more: pyoder@crcog.org. The attached flyer provides more information about the CRPC.

Explore TOD Projects in the Capitol Region

WONDERING WHAT 10 YEARS OF TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT LOOKS LIKE?

[View the StoryMap](#)

The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) has developed a transit-oriented development (TOD) StoryMap that explores the investment and development around rail and our Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations in the region, also known as CTfastrak. The TOD StoryMap visualizes the change in development over time, and highlights both the stations and specific developments around the stations that offer new housing and commercial opportunities for the Capitol Region. Capturing public and private investment, this tool also demonstrates the value of investing in transit-oriented corridors within the Capitol Region to grow meaningful opportunities in proximity to transit. Check out recent projects and what is still on the way with our TOD StoryMap.

Take CRCOG's Survey! Your input is needed. Please participate in CRCOG's active surveys to improve our communities:

- [Transportation Safety Action Plan Survey](#)
- [Public Participation Plan Survey](#)

David Kooris, Executive Director, Connecticut Municipal (Re)Development Authority (CMDA)

View Keynote Presentation

ctmuniredevelopmentauthority@gmail.com

David Kooris is the first Executive Director of the Connecticut Municipal Redevelopment Authority (CMDA), a statewide quasi-public authority established to provide towns and cities across Connecticut with the resources necessary to realize substantial housing production in their downtowns and transit station areas.

Mr. Kooris previously held various public and civic sector positions focused on urban revitalization and placemaking, resilience and emissions reduction, and coordinated land use and transportation planning including: President of Stamford Downtown; Board Chair of the Connecticut Port Authority; Deputy Commissioner at the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development; Director of Resilience at the Connecticut Department of Housing; Director of the Office of Planning and Economic Development and Executive Director of the Redevelopment Agency for the City of Bridgeport; and Vice President and Connecticut Director at Regional Plan Association.

Clarke Park Project Financial Overview – April 2025

Project Budget

Project Costs	Approved Budget	Costs
Construction	\$1,213,000.00	\$1,213,000.00
Construction Admin. and Inspections	\$98,000.00	\$51,390.00
Contingency	\$196,650.00	
Change Order – Electricity		\$197,906.56
<i>Total:</i>	<i>\$1,507,650.00</i>	<i>\$1,462,296.56</i>

Property Sales

Property	Price Per Acre/Acreage	Total Asking Price	Offer Accepted	Offer Price Per Acre	Real Estate Commission	Profit
19 Trowbridge Drive	\$125,000/ 3.02	\$377,500	\$300,000	\$99,337	\$15,000	\$285,000
20 Trowbridge Drive	\$175,000/ 2.55	\$446,250	\$410,000	\$160,784	\$20,500	\$389,500
21 Trowbridge Drive	\$175,000/ 3.09	\$540,750	\$500,000	\$161,812	\$25,000	\$475,000
23 Trowbridge Drive	\$175,000 / 4.54	\$794,500	\$725,000	\$159,691	\$36,250	\$688,750
<i>Total:</i>		<i>\$2,159,000</i>	<i>\$1,935,000</i>		<i>\$96,750</i>	<i>\$1,838,250</i>

Cost/Profit:

Contributions	Urban Act	MAA	Total
Total Project Cost:			\$1,462,296.56
State Cost	\$635,017.00	\$54,708.00	\$689,725.00
Town Cost			\$772,571.56
		Town Sales:	\$1,838,250.00
		Town Cost:	(\$772,571.56)
		Total Profit:	\$1,065,678.44