

## **Town of Bethlehem Highway Paving Frequently Asked Questions**

### **When are Town of Bethlehem roads repaved and what are the reasons for repaving?**

The Town of Bethlehem maintains over 175 miles of local roads. Our resurfacing program is designed to pave 12 to 13 miles of roadway each year. This schedule allows us to resurface each town road every 12 to 13 years. There are many variables involved in making the decision on which streets need our attention and which streets can wait. The age of the blacktop, traffic conditions (vehicle volume and weight), the structural stability of the sub-base, the severity of the Bethlehem winters, the conditions when the existing pavement was put in place and how good the blacktop mix was prepared all have a bearing on how long a road surface will sustain itself.

### **Why not wait until the road starts to deteriorate and appears to require repaving?**

Blacktop pavement deteriorates on a scale similar to a bell curve. It remains in very good shape for a number of years; but once it starts to show wear, it fails at a rapid rate. If this failure is not caught and corrected within a short time frame, it could mean much more extensive repairs above and beyond a thin overlay of new blacktop. Failure of the roadway pavement causes a poor riding/walking surface and ponding of stormwater, which promotes potholes and extensive cracking that requires costly routine maintenance and generates safety concerns for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians.

### **How is the determination made as to where to repave?**

Every two to three years the Town does a system-wide road assessment on pavement condition where we rate the 175 miles of Town highways. Two of our experienced paving crew leaders conduct the assessment for continuity purposes. We will be adding a sidewalk condition assessment to our program in the near future. This assessment gives us a basis on where we need to focus our efforts to preserve pavement integrity.

Hopefully this has provided some information on how and why our local road system is in good condition and our paving program is so successful. In response to these tight economic times, the funding level for our program has been cut by over 10% in the past two years. We will remain diligent in getting the best value for the taxpayer's dollar and at the same time provide a quality road network the Town and its residents can be proud of.