Preliminary East Lyme Crash Data Analysis
Complete 12/16 by Selectman Jason Deeble
with Support from Representatives at CT DOT

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Introduction

At the December 3rd meeting of the East Lyme Board of Selectmen, a motion was discussed that would authorize the use of automatic speed ticketing cameras in East Lyme. During this discussion, no specific data was introduced.

The question of whether or not to use these devices raises several, serious big-picture and granular detail questions regarding the people living, working, and driving through East Lyme will be policed. In other words, this is not a decision to be taken lightly or to be considered without a full, comprehensive understanding of the matter.

In the absence of meaningful or useful data, one is left to rely on anecdotes and personal experience. Personal anecdotes and experience are important and can help provide context. However, you simply cannot set public policy based on personal anecdotes and personal experience. History is rife with examples of leaders and lawmakers eschewing data with disastrous results. Human beings are emotional creatures that can be frightened into making the wrong decision, goaded into fights, and enticed by frivolities. Data is key to having a dispassionate discussion and making prudent decisions.

Since no data was brought before the Board, I reached out to the Connecticut Department of Transportation for assistance. They pointed me towards their publicly available database on crash statistics (found at ctcrash.uconn.edu) and helped guide me through which measures would be meaningful in this context.

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Part 1
Crash Data from Connecticut's Crash Data Repository

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This table represents data from the Connecticut Department of Transportation on SECOG, a collection of 16 neighboring cities and towns in southeastern Connecticut of which East Lyme is a member. The COG designation is used for all manner of analyses and comparisons. Each column shows a different measure. Notes on the measures and the source of the data is provided on the following page.

	ESTIMATED POPULATIONS AS OF JULY 1, 2024	Number of crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of crashes 2024	Number of speeding related crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of speeding related crashes 2024	Number of aggressive driving crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of aggressive driving crashes 2024	DVMT 2024	Annual VMT 2024	Crashes per million VMT 2024	Speeding related crashes per million VMT 2024	Aggressive driving crashes per million VMT 2024
New London	28,081	8305	852	356	43	3282	348	384,734	140,812,644	6.051	0.305	2.471
Norwich	39,993	11634	1304	1129	97	4947	534	891,192	326,176,272	3.998	0.297	1.637
Preston	4,855	1360	124	199	16	692	57	216,095	79,090,770	1.568	0.202	0.721
Waterford	19,910	5251	485	312	23	2883	251	750,998	274,865,268	1.765	0.084	0.913
Old Lyme	7,721	1559	169	211	17	762	76	457,967	167,615,922	1.008	0.101	0.453
Franklin	1,900	619	61	72	8	312	39	130,182	47,646,612	1.280	0.168	0.819
Groton	38,762	7757	842	748	52	3460	419	919,745	336,626,670	2.501	0.154	1.245
Ledyard	15,575	1599	54	350	17	555	20	230,843	84,488,538	0.639	0.201	0.237
East Lyme	19,004	3443	493	390	42	1925	311	574,223	210,165,618	2.346	0.200	1.480
Stonington	18,782	4120	478	450	48	1913	228	608,141	222,579,606	2.148	0.216	1.024
Salem	4,326	620	72	93	3	295	33	147,762	54,080,892	1.331	0.055	0.610
Lyme	2,421	187	28	43	8	36	5	46,014	16,841,124	1.663	0.475	0.297
Colchester	15,752	2174	228	357	22	960	91	530,784	194,266,944	1.174	0.113	0.468
Montville	17,913	3898	425	616	61	1652	171	624,931	228,724,746	1.858	0.267	0.748
Lisbon	4,249	1080	112	192	15	455	55	223,504	81,802,464	1.369	0.183	0.672
Griswold	11,683	1529	191	233	25	626	85	313,637	114,791,142	1.664	0.218	0.740
Bozrah	2,426	492	56	115	14	109	14	154,372	56,500,152	0.991	0.248	0.248
Voluntown	2,650	356	39	71	7	132	15	75,712	27,710,592	1.407	0.253	0.541
Data Source: Connecticut Crash Data Repository. Data queried on 12/12/25												
Note: 2024 data is preliminary and subject to change.												

The following is an explanation of the variables used in this analysis and where they came from.

Town	Town name
ESTIMATED POPULATIONS AS OF JULY 1, 2024	Value is from: https://portal.ct.gov/dph/-/media/departments-and-agencies/dph/population/town-pop/pop_towns2024pdf.pdf?rev=4b45057d69654233a886771dd48bcfa4&hash=5104946F83014CE996BB3930DE956160
Number of crashes 2015 - 2024	Value queried from Connecticut Crash Data Repository: https://www.ctcrash.uconn.edu/
Number of crashes 2024	Value queried from Connecticut Crash Data Repository: https://www.ctcrash.uconn.edu/
Number of speeding crashes 2015 - 2024	Value queried from Connecticut Crash Data Repository: https://www.ctcrash.uconn.edu/
Number of speeding crashes 2024	Value queried from Connecticut Crash Data Repository: https://www.ctcrash.uconn.edu/
Number of aggressive crashes 2015 - 2024	Value queried from Connecticut Crash Data Repository: https://www.ctcrash.uconn.edu/
Number of aggressive crashes 2024	Value queried from Connecticut Crash Data Repository: https://www.ctcrash.uconn.edu/
DVMT 2024	Daily VMT values are published online by CTDOT: https://portal.ct.gov/dot/-/media/dot/policy/roadwayinformationsystems/roadwayinventorysection/dvmt_urbanizedareacogcountytown.pdf?rev=2805fad607584a17a0033415b2ed10f4&hash=C02D5B07E62E621E6D8A1D77802B7D52
Annual VMT 2024	(DVMT*number of days per year) Annual VMT derived by multiplying daily VMT by number of days in a year, which for 2024 is 366
Crashes per million VMT 2024	[(Number of crashes/Annual VMT)*1,000,000)] Average number of crashes per million VMT, derived from Annual VMT and total number of crashes for year 2024
Speeding crashes per million VMT 2024	[(Number of speeding crashes/Annual VMT)*1,000,000)] Average number of speeding crashes per million VMT, derived from Annual VMT and total number of speeding crashes for year 2024
Aggressive driving crashes per million VMT 2024	[(Number of aggressive driving crashes/Annual VMT)*1,000,000)] Average number of aggressive driving crashes per million VMT, derived from Annual VMT and total number of aggressive driving crashes for year 2024
NOTE	The link for the crash dashboard is https://gis.cti.uconn.edu/portal/apps/experiencebuilder/experience/?id=7c5c94e8c1e54f33b43c00254e46e7fc

This is the same data as the **first table**. Only now, the towns are sorted by population from smallest to largest. This was my initial comparison figuring that population size was as good a measure as any to begin analyzing the data.

Sorted by **Estimated Popuation as of July 1, 2024**

	ESTIMATED POPULATIONS AS OF JULY 1, 2024	Number of crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of crashes 2024	Number of speeding related crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of speeding related crashes 2024	Number of aggressive driving crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of aggressive driving crashes 2024	DVMT 2024	Annual VMT 2024	Crashes per million VMT 2024	Speeding related crashes per million VMT 2024	Aggressive driving crashes per million VMT 2024
Franklin	1,900	619	61	72	8	312	39	130,182	47,646,612	1.280	0.168	0.819
Lyme	2,421	187	28	43	8	36	5	46,014	16,841,124	1.663	0.475	0.297
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Preston	4,855	1360	124	199	16	692	57	216,095	79,090,770	1.568	0.202	0.721
Old Lyme	7,721	1559	169	211	17	762	76	457,967	167,615,922	1.008	0.101	0.453
Griswold	11,683	1529	191	233	25	626	85	313,637	114,791,142	1.664	0.218	0.740
Ledyard	15,575	1599	54	350	17	555	20	230,843	84,488,538	0.639	0.201	0.237
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Stonington	18,782	4120	478	450	48	1913	228	608,141	222,579,606	2.148	0.216	1.024
East Lyme	19,004	3443	493	390	42	1925	311	574,223	210,165,618	2.346	0.200	1.480
Waterford	19,910	5251	485	312	23	2883	251	750,998	274,865,268	1.765	0.084	0.913
New London	28,081	8305	852	356	43	3282	348	384,734	140,812,644	6.051	0.305	2.471
Groton	38,762	7757	842	748	52	3460	419	919,745	336,626,670	2.501	0.154	1.245
Norwich	39,993	11634	1304	1129	97	4947	534	891,192	326,176,272	3.998	0.297	1.637

Data Source: Connecticut Crash Data Repository. Data queried on 12/12/25

Note: 2024 data is preliminary and subject to change.

East Lyme has the fifth-largest population in SECOG making it one of the bigger communities.

This **second table** represents the same information but is now sorted by Annual VMT. This metric was suggested by CT DOT. It stands for Annual Volume of Miles Traveled. That is a rough estimate of the number of miles driven over roads in these towns and makes for a useful comparative measure when evaluating transportation data.

Sorted by **Annual VMT 2024**

	ESTIMATED POPULATIONS AS OF JULY 1, 2024	Number of crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of crashes 2024	Number of speeding related crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of speeding related crashes 2024	Number of aggressive driving crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of aggressive driving crashes 2024	DVMT 2024	Annual VMT 2024	Crashes per million VMT 2024	Speeding related crashes per million VMT 2024	Aggressive driving crashes per million VMT 2024
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Bozrah	2,426	492	56	115	14	109	14	154,372	56,500,152	0.991	0.248	0.248
Preston	4,855	1360	124	199	16	692	57	216,095	79,090,770	1.568	0.202	0.721
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Data Source: Connecticut Crash Data Repository. Data queried on 12/12/25

Note: 2024 data is preliminary and subject to change.

This suggests that East Lyme is the sixth-most traveled community in SECOG. Not a surprise since it has the fifth-largest population.

This **third table** shows the crashes per million VMT 2024. That is a measure of how many crashes per million miles traveled in 2024. East Lyme's standing compared to other towns moves up to top four.

Sorted by **Crashes per milliion VMT 2024**

	ESTIMATED POPULATIONS AS OF JULY 1, 2024	Number of crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of crashes 2024	Number of speeding related crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of speeding related crashes 2024	Number of aggressive driving crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of aggressive driving crashes 2024	DVMT 2024	Annual VMT 2024	Crashes per million VMT 2024	Speeding related crashes per million VMT 2024	Aggressive driving crashes per million VMT 2024
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Data Source: Connecticut Crash Data Repository. Data queried on 12/12/25

Note: 2024 data is preliminary and subject to change.

This graph suggests that East Lyme is right where one might expect it to be when it comes to crashes. One might argue that the fifth-largest town with the sixth-largest VMT should not be the fourth-largest total crashes. However, the difference in these rankings is slight. Further inspection of this data set reveals other, salient differences.

This **fourth table** represents a ranking by speeding related crashes per million VMT in 2024. That is a measure directly related to speeding which is the stated purpose of the proposed automatic speeding ticket cameras.

Sorted by **Speeding Related Crashes per Million VMT 2024**

	ESTIMATED POPULATIONS AS OF JULY 1, 2024	Number of crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of crashes 2024	Number of speeding related crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of speeding related crashes 2024	Number of aggressive driving crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of aggressive driving crashes 2024	DVMT 2024	Annual VMT 2024	Crashes per million VMT 2024	Speeding related crashes per million VMT 2024	Aggressive driving crashes per million VMT 2024
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Data Source: Connecticut Crash Data Repository. Data queried on 12/12/25

Note: 2024 data is preliminary and subject to change.

At this point, it is clear to see that, when specific data related to speed is considered, East Lyme falls to the bottom half of SECOG's ranking. As opposed to the previous graph, this is a large discrepancy and suggests that East Lyme does not have a problem with speeding. If anything, one might argue that East Lyme is successful at controlling speeds without the use of automatic speed ticketing cameras.

Finally, this **fifth table** has the data sorted by the last column which shows aggressive driving crashes per million VMT in 2024.

Sorted by **Aggressive Driving Crashes per Million VMT 2024**

	ESTIMATED POPULATIONS AS OF JULY 1, 2024	Number of crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of crashes 2024	Number of speeding related crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of speeding related crashes 2024	Number of aggressive driving crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of aggressive driving crashes 2024	DVMT 2024	Annual VMT 2024	Crashes per million VMT 2024	Speeding related crashes per million VMT 2024	Aggressive driving crashes per million VMT 2024
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Data Source: Connecticut Crash Data Repository. Data queried on 12/12/25

Note: 2024 data is preliminary and subject to change.

When looking at specifically aggressive behavior by drivers, East Lyme climbs to the top three. This could be statistically significant since it is nestled in between two other towns that have nearly double EL's population. Just as speeding is underrepresented in our crash data, it appears aggressive driving is overrepresented. East Lyme drivers do not seem to have a speeding problem as much as they seem to have an aggression problem. It is my understanding that automatic speed ticketing cameras do not capture data on aggressive driving and will do little to discourage it.

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Part 2
Mapping the Data and Differentiating Between I-95 and East Lyme's State/Local Roads

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This data also comes from Connecticut's Crash Data Repository. The color code goes from green representing a low volume of crashes to red indicating a high volume of crashes.

There are clearly a few areas that are problematic when it comes to crashes. They are:

1. At the southern end of the Rocky Neck Connector
2. The T intersection where routes 156 and 161 meet.
3. The intersection at Flanders Four Corners
4. Interstate 95

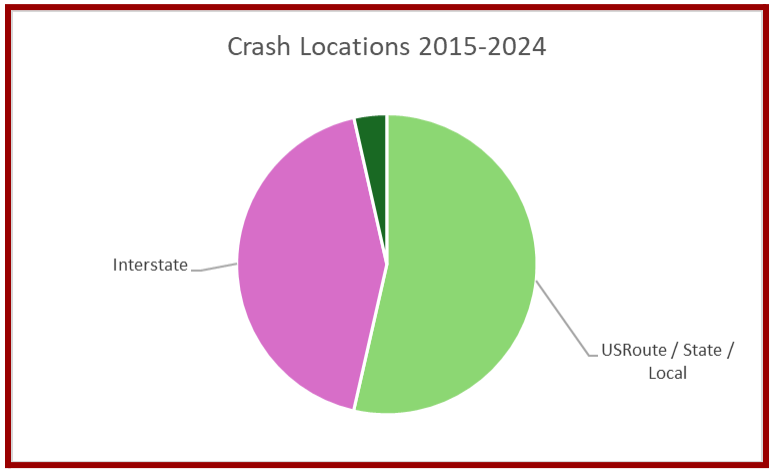
Since the East Lyme Board of Selectmen has no control over I-95, it is worth leaving that part out of this discussion. Doing that, however, would mean we should probably disaggregate all the I-95 data from the previous tables too. That can be done but requires coordination between multiple state agencies and a little more time. For right now, I can offer another table that can be used to separate I-95 data from state and local road data for East Lyme.

That table can be found on the next page.

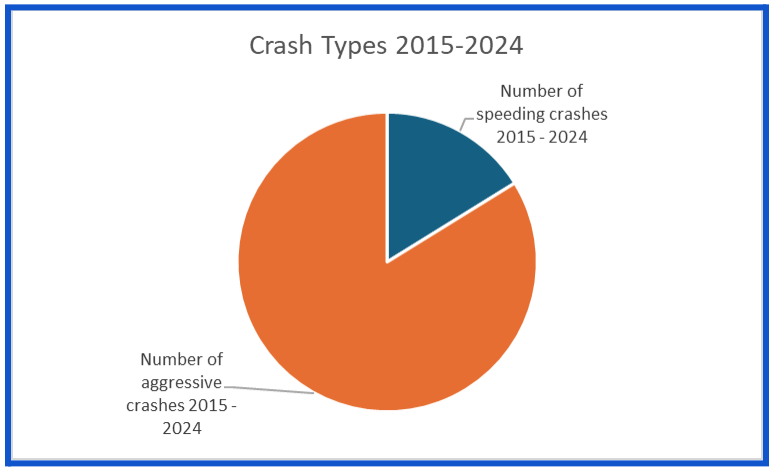
Town	Route	Number of Crashes 2015-2024	Number of crashes 2024	Number of speeding crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of speeding crashes 2024	Number of aggressive crashes 2015 - 2024	Number of aggressive crashes 2024
East Lyme	USRoute / State / Local	2,092	235	239	22	1,155	138
	Interstate	1,676	227	183	19	1,030	161
	Private Property	138	31	6	1	34	12
	All	3,906	493	428	42	2,219	311

Data Source: Connecticut Crash Data Repository. Data queried on 12/15/25

Note: 2024 data is preliminary and subject to change.

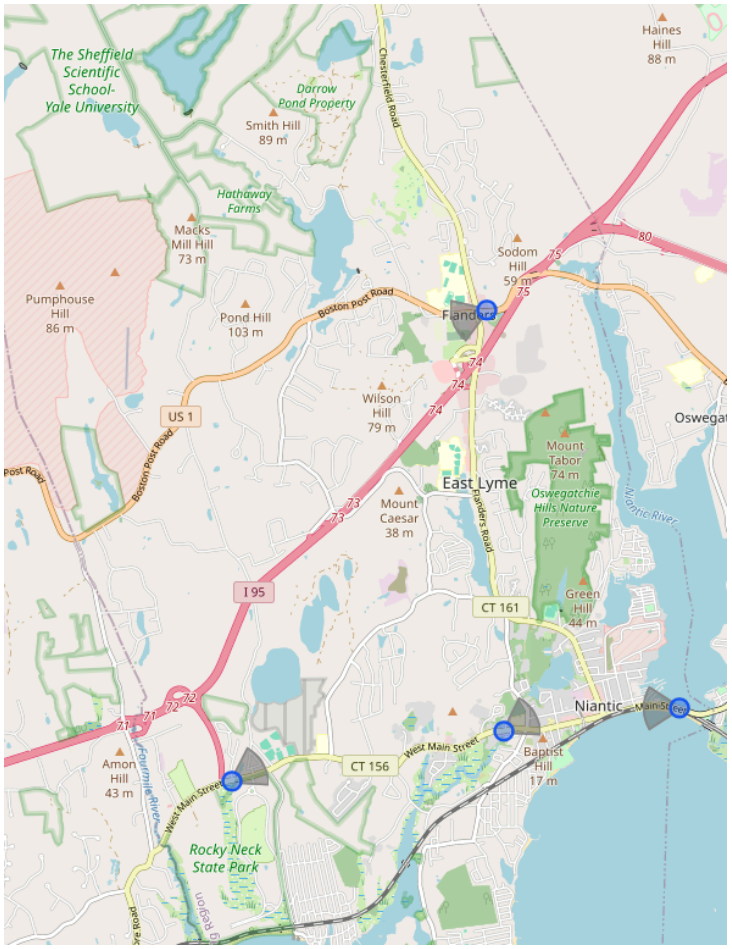


This **first pie** chart looks at the relative volumes of crashes on I-95, state and local roads, and private roads. Surprisingly, there are more crashes on local and state roads than there are on I-95. The difference between the two groups is not enormous but is notable. The number of crashes on private roads is negligible. Further analysis of these relationships would be interesting and might be important to this discussion but, for right now, it's not a priority



This **second pie chart** compares the types of crashes on state and local roads. There are more crashes due to aggressive drivers than crashes due to speeding on all the state and local roads through East Lyme. The ratio is about 5 to 1.

Since the last meeting of the Board of Selectmen, it was revealed to members and to the general public that there are a series of automatic license plate readers positioned around town. This fact was curiously left out of our conversation on 12/3 despite several specific comments concerning automatic license plate readers (ALPR) and general discussion of town surveillance overall. On the left is the previous graphic from CT DOT. The right shows ALPRs according to an online resource available at deflock.me. There is clear overlap regarding crash data and the placement of these cameras.



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Part 3
Conclusions and Recommendations

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Conclusions

According to the data from the CT Crash Data Repository, the town of **East Lyme does well controlling crashes related to speed without the use of automatic speed ticketing cameras**. The data would suggest a drastic change in policing for the sake of reducing speed is not necessary at this time.

An analysis of the data suggests **East Lyme is struggling with crashes associated with aggressive driving**. Perhaps police could put their efforts into curbing this set of behaviors among motorists. The East Lyme Police Department defines an aggressive driver as someone who, “changes lanes frequently, abruptly or unnecessarily, [is] distracted by cell phone conversation, eating, music, etc., uses high beams to push a driver aside, speeds and tailgates, rushes yellow lights, runs red lights, expresses frustration while driving, uses obscene hand gestures.” It’s worth noting that speeding is a subset of these behaviors.

There are several automated cameras up around town already but their purpose and what happens to the data they generate remains a mystery. According to the maps made available to the public from CT Crash Repository and deflock.me, there is overlap between where the automatic license plate readers are and where the majority of crashes happen in town. There seems to be no evidence that these automated surveillance cameras deter traffic accidents, speeding, or aggressive driving.

This and any analysis of speeding and aggressive driving crashes in East Lyme can only happen if quality data is available to the public. The staff at the Connecticut Department of Transportation was enormously helpful. Their tools were available for free and are very comprehensive. If not for them, we would be flying blind in this situation.

Recommendations

The Board of Selectmen should delay any further discussion of an ordinance authorizing the use of automatic speed ticketing cameras until the following three conditions are met:

1. **The East Lyme Board of Selectmen must be presented with an inventory of technologies used for ongoing surveillance of the residents and motorists of East Lyme with specific information about (1.) what data is collected, (2.) who has access to the data, (3.) what the purpose of the surveillance technology is, and (4.) whether or not the data collected is shared with/sold to any third party.**

    Such information is made available in any number of contexts. Banking privacy statements are issued to customers frequently. Websites disclose what they do with your data in user agreements as soon as you sign up for services. It only stands to reason that public institutions who are beholden to the public should make information about the public available to the public in a way that is easy for them to access and understand.

2. **The East Lyme Board of Selectmen must be presented with a detailed analysis made using current transportation data showing that there is a need for automatic speed ticketing cameras.**

    I am a sixth grade science teacher with patience and a spreadsheet. I am not an expert. I was not trained on how to deal with data sets. My conclusions must be accepted with a healthy dose of skepticism and I will absolutely defer to authority. However, without any other information presented to the Board, this data and these conclusions are all we have to work with at this moment.

3. **The East Lyme Board of Selectmen needs to be presented with ordinance language that requires regular, publicly-available evaluations of any system employed to monitor drivers in East to ensure there is no bias.**

    If vendors will not provide specific details about the data they collect to the general public, they should be dismissed as a potential partner. Bias can only be identified if information is made available for the public to use. For example, what if these cameras detect red cars better than black cars? Without any data, it is impossible to show that there is or is not bias within the system. We are left only to trust the vendor's intentions and integrity. Such an arrangement is not in the interest of East Lyme residents and would be a dereliction of duty by us, the leaders they elected to act in their best interest.