

NVISION ZERO PROGRESS REPORT

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Table of Contents

Introduction	_____	03
Vision Zero Overview	_____	04
Crash Reporting	_____	05
Crash Severity	_____	06
Crash Data Overview	_____	07
High Intensity Crash Network	_____	11
Crash Causes	_____	14

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“Preventing crashes within the region requires a comprehensive response that looks at transportation planning, design, policy, enforcement, education and communication in order to most greatly impact the flaws within our transportation system.”

-NVCOG Resolution 23-04

Introduction

The Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments believes that fatalities and serious injuries are unacceptable on our roadways. It aims to achieve its goal of zero deaths and serious injuries from traffic crashes by 2060.

In September 2022, the Board of the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments adopted a commitment to the goal of zero traffic deaths following the principles of Vision Zero. NVCOG intends to leverage transportation planning, design, policy, enforcement, education, and communication to achieve the goal of eliminating deaths and serious injuries from traffic crashes by 2060. One fatality is too many, but the 151 deaths in the region from 2019-2022 demonstrate the need for safety-focused action by NVCOG and its member municipalities.

This report, the first in a series of annual updates on the region's Vision Zero progress, contains information about crash frequency, severity, location, and mode disparity. NVCOG also published companion reports with similar data for each municipality.



Vision Zero Overview

This section includes information about the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments' Vision Zero strategy and State crash reporting methodology.

Vision Zero is a departure from the traditional approach to transportation planning because it argues that traffic deaths are preventable and that saving lives does not have to be expensive. But Vision Zero is about more than safety. According to the Vision Zero Network, the goal is to have safe, healthy and equitable transportation for everyone. This strategy is a comprehensive program of road safety that includes using the best in modern engineering safety practices that requires a coordinated effort to address engineering, education, enforcement, and emergency response. Sweden implemented Vision Zero in the 1990s. The idea later spread to the rest of Europe and now the United States.



**NVCOG is the first
Connecticut
Council of
Governments to
adopt a Vision Zero
commitment.**

In recent years, the federal government and several states have been implementing initiatives to reduce transportation deaths and injuries through awareness, education, and enforcement. In 2021, the Connecticut General Assembly established the Vision Zero Council of Connecticut. The council is an interagency work group that is developing statewide policies to eliminate transportation-related deaths and serious injuries.

Crash Reporting

The data included in this report is sourced from the University of Connecticut's Connecticut Crash Data Repository (CTCDR). The CTCDR is a tool that provides access to select crash information collected by state and local police.

The CTCDR is comprised of crash datasets from the Department of Public Safety and the Connecticut Department of Transportation. Data includes date, route, route class, collision type, injury severity, etc. While the repository is useful for research and informational purposes, some data entries may be missing or incomplete. The 2022 NVision Zero Report covers January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Connecticut Crash Data Repository. The header features the UCONN logo and the site title. A navigation bar includes links for 'Main Menu', 'Login', 'Register', and 'User Guide'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains introductory text about the repository's purpose and a 'Notes to users' section with several bullet points. The right column features a 'Connecticut Traffic Deaths' table and a list of user tools categorized into 'Basic Users' and 'Advanced Users'.

Year to Date as of Feb 12			
2024	2023	2022	2021
39	36	37	20

2023	2022	2021
322	367	302

UCONN

Access the Connecticut Crash Data Repository at ctcrash.uconn.edu.

Crash Severity

Connecticut uses the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria for categorizing the injury severity level for a person involved in a crash.

While property damage-only crashes are inevitable, crashes resulting in roadway deaths and serious injuries are both preventable and unacceptable. As NVCOG works to create a region that provides safe mobility for all, mitigating the serious public health issue posed by roadway serious injuries and fatalities is crucial.



FATAL INJURY

Any injury that results in death within 30 days after the crash in which the injury occurred.



SUSPECTED SERIOUS INJURY

Any injury other than fatal which results in serious bodily harm, including severe laceration, blood loss, broken/distorted extremities, and crush injuries.



SUSPECTED MINOR INJURY

Any injury that is evident at the scene of the crash other than fatal or serious injuries. Examples include lump on the head, abrasions, bruises, and minor lacerations.



POSSIBLE INJURY

Any injury reported which is not a fatal, suspected serious, or suspected minor injury. Possible injuries are reported by the person or are indicated by their behavior, but no wounds or injuries are readily evident.



NO APPARENT INJURY

There is no reason to believe that the person received any bodily harm from the motor vehicle crash; there is no physical evidence of injury and the person reports no change in normal function.

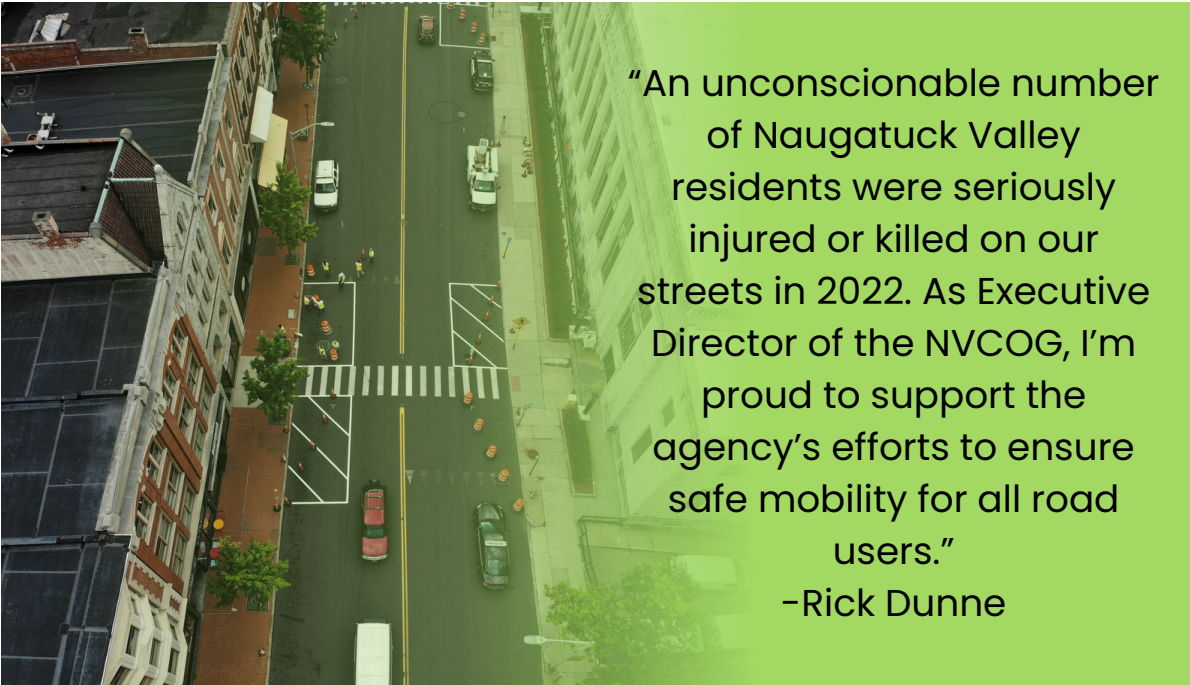
Crash Data Overview

In 2022, 12,427 total crashes occurred on streets within NVCOG's boundaries; crashes resulted in 243 serious injuries or deaths.

TOWN	DRIVER FATALITIES/ SERIOUS INJURIES	VULNERABLE ROAD USER ¹ FATALITIES/ SERIOUS INJURIES	TOTAL FATALITIES AND SERIOUS INJURIES
ANSONIA	10	0	10
BEACON FALLS	0	0	0
BETHLEHEM	1	0	1
BRISTOL	27	4	31
CHESHIRE	19	2	21
DERBY	5	1	6
MIDDLEBURY	8	0	8
NAUGATUCK	3	3	6
OXFORD	0	0	0
PLYMOUTH	4	0	4
SEYMOUR	6	0	6

¹ Vulnerable road users are defined as pedestrians, bicyclists, and users of other non-motorized vehicles.

TOWN	DRIVER FATALITIES/ SERIOUS INJURIES	VULNERABLE ROAD USER FATALITIES/ SERIOUS INJURIES	TOTAL FATALITIES AND SERIOUS INJURIES
SHELTON	21	0	21
SOUTHBURY	5	0	5
THOMASTON	5	1	6
WATERBURY	76	20	96
WATERTOWN	8	2	10
WOLCOTT	5	0	5
WOODBURY	3	1	4
TOTAL	209	34	243



Crashes by Severity

While most traffic incidents result in no apparent injuries, far too many led to serious injury or death in 2022; 0.9% of all people impacted by crashes within NVCOG were seriously injured or killed. 50 persons were killed in crashes and another 194 individuals endured a serious injury. These issues are not unique to the Naugatuck Valley region; the State of Connecticut fell short of its transportation safety performance measure targets in 2022. Still, the NVCOG region accounted for a greater share of serious injuries and fatalities than its population proportion.

TOWN	NUMBER OF PEOPLE IMPACTED	SHARE OF IMPACTED PEOPLE
FATAL INJURY	51	0.2%
SUSPECTED SERIOUS INJURY	194	0.7%
SUSPECTED MINOR INJURY	1,991	7%
POSSIBLE INJURY	2,150	7.6%
NO APPARENT INJURIES	23,998	84.6%
TOTAL	28,383	100%

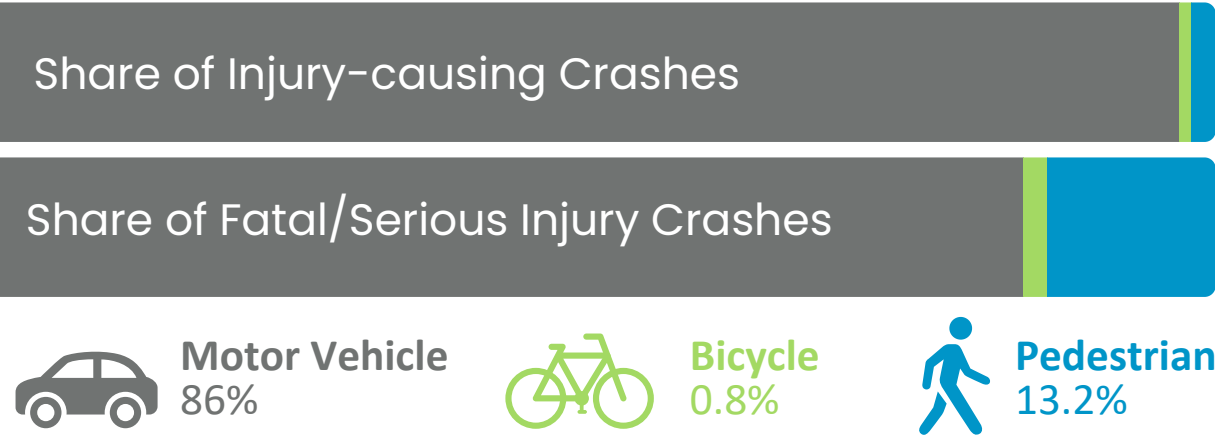
Crashes by Mode

People walking and biking were involved in less than 2% of all crashes, but 14% of those resulted in serious injury or death. Disproportionate crash impacts demonstrate the need for infrastructure and policies that ensure safe mobility for vulnerable road users.

MODE	NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN A CRASH	SHARE OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN A CRASH	NUMBER OF FATALITIES/SERIOUS INJURIES	SHARE OF FATALITIES/SERIOUS INJURIES
MOTOR VEHICLE	28,091	99.3%	209	86%
BICYCLE ²	40	0.1%	2	0.8%
PEDESTRIAN ³	164	0.6%	32	13.2%
TOTAL	28,295	100%	243	100%

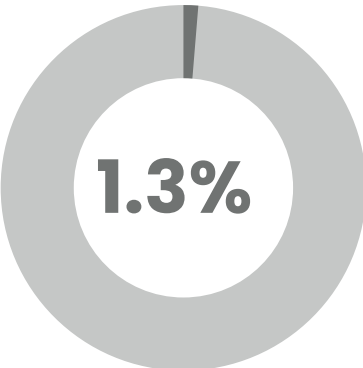
2 Includes “occupants of non-motor vehicles” and “other cyclists.”

3 Includes “other pedestrians”

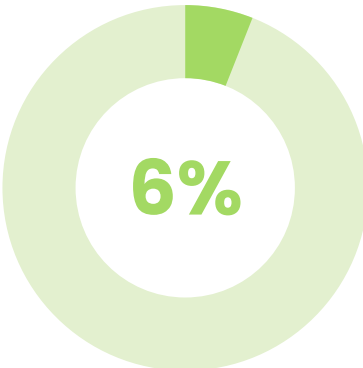


Crashes that Result in Serious Injury or Death

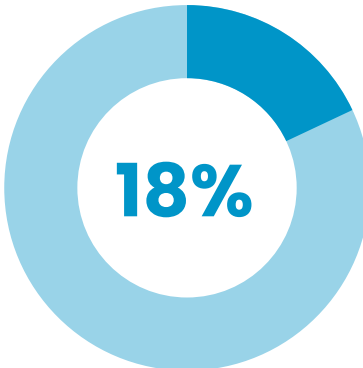
Non-motorized users are much more likely to be seriously injured or killed than those in a car.



of motor vehicle involved crashes



of bicycle involved crashes

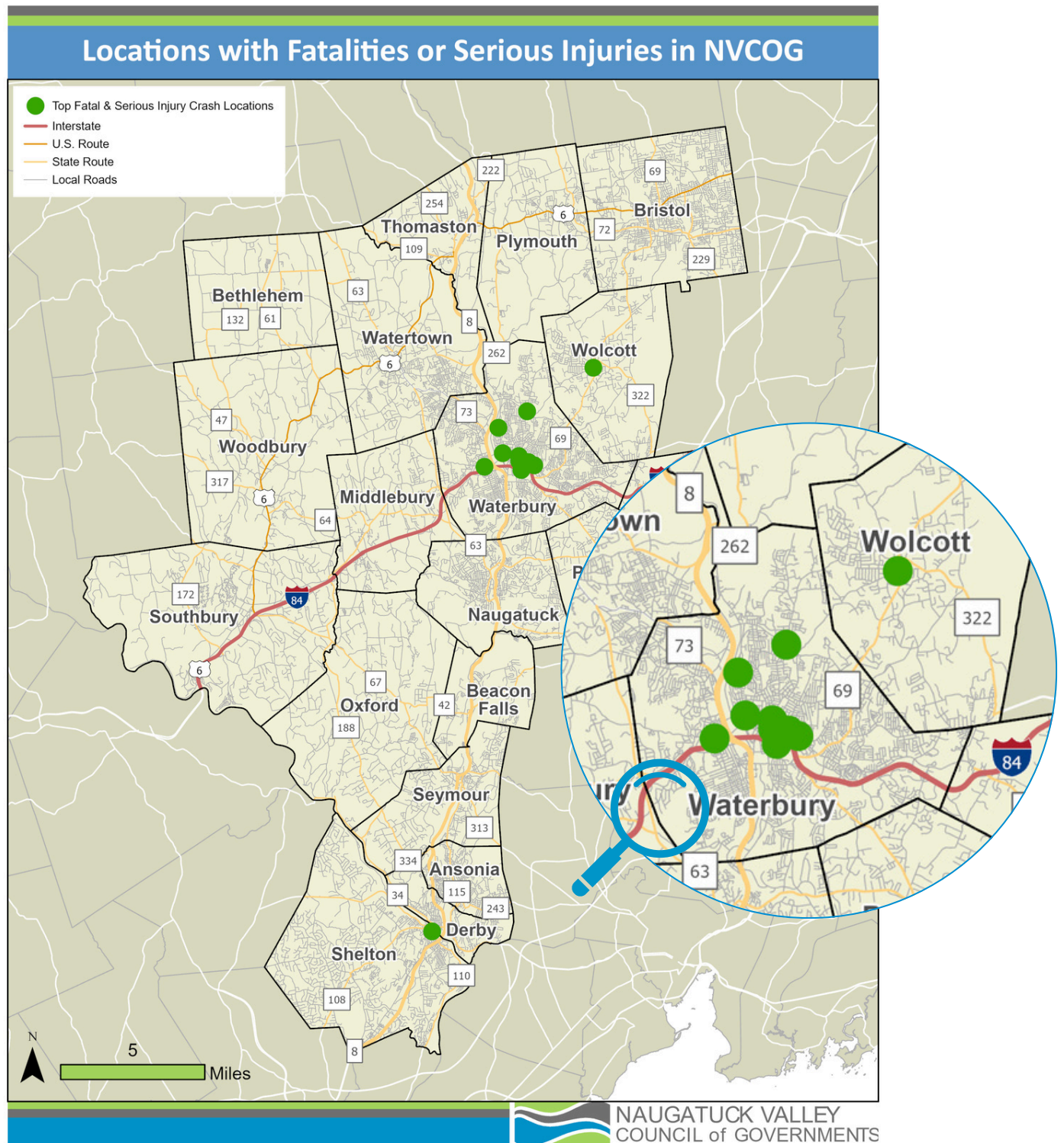


of pedestrian involved crashes



24% of crashes resulting in serious injury or death impact pedestrians and bicyclists

High Intensity Crash Network



Injury-causing Locations by Intersection

Crashes resulting in serious injury and death occur across the NVCOG region but are concentrated in several high-crash corridors. 8% of serious injuries and fatal crashes occurred on ten high crash corridors.

TOWN	INTERSECTION	COUNT	J40
SHELTON	Howe Ave (Rt 108) & Bridge St & Center St	2	Yes
WATERBURY	Baldwin St & McMahan St & Ramp	2	Yes
WATERBURY	Chase Ave & Hill St	2	Yes
WATERBURY	East Main St & mall driveway	2	Yes
WATERBURY	East Main St & Maple St	2	Yes
WATERBURY	East Main St & Williams St	2	Yes
WATERBURY	Highland Ave & Vernon St	2	No
WATERBURY	Lincoln St & Fiske St	2	No
WATERBURY	North Elm St & Kingsbury St	2	Yes
WOLCOTT	Wolcott Rd (Rt 69) & Potuccos Ring Rd	2	No

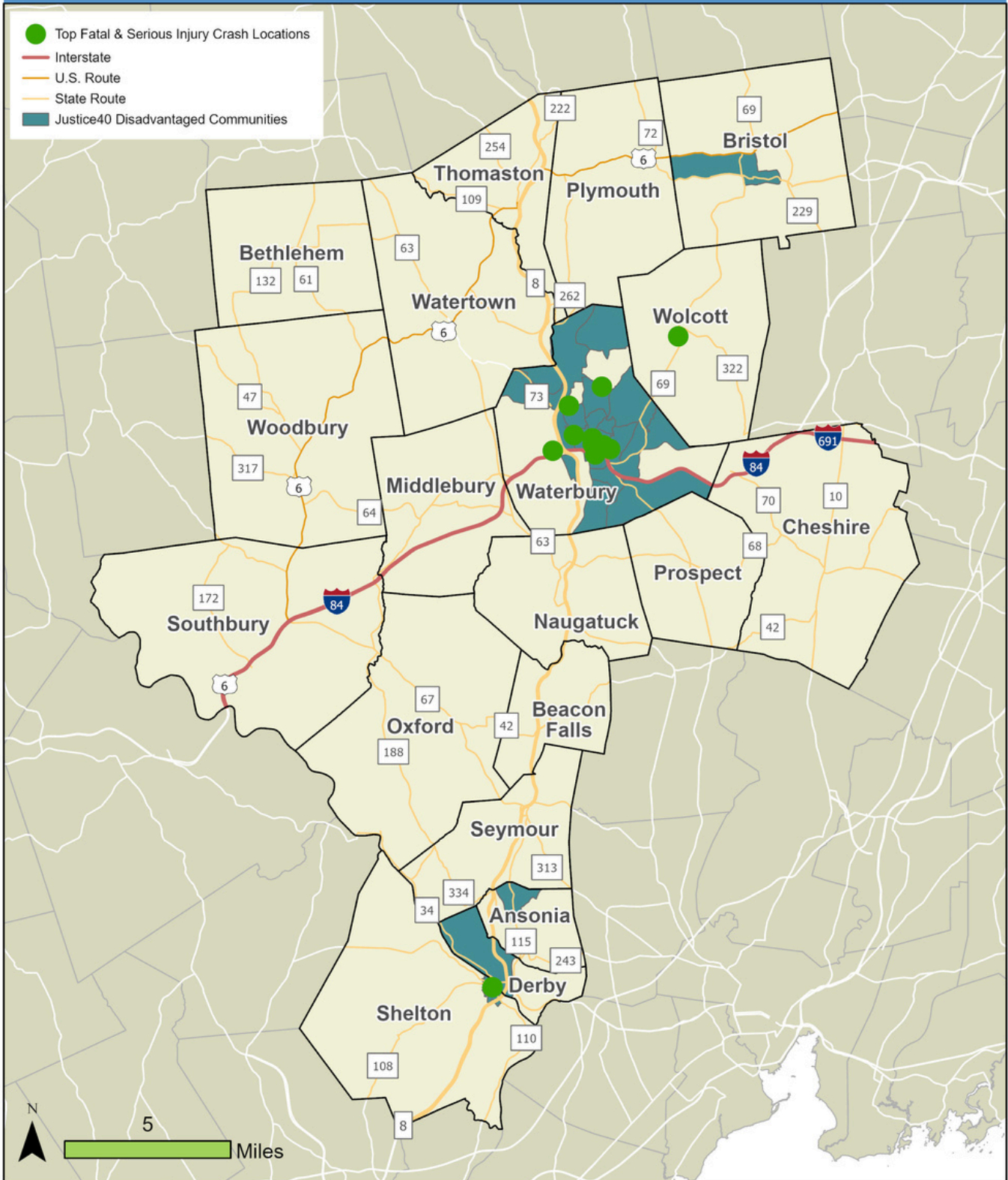
Injury-causing Locations by Justice-40 and Underserved Communities

To prioritize equity-driven transportation planning, the NVCOG uses demographic profiles to identify minority populations and underserved communities in the region. The NVCOG prepares demographic profiles for the Title VI Environmental Justice populations, as well as Justice 40 communities. All data comes from the American Community Survey 2016-2020 five-year estimates.

Environmental Justice communities score greater than one standard deviation above the mean on both the proportion of minorities residing in a Census tract and the proportion of households making less than 1.5x the federal poverty level. Environmental Justice communities are in Derby, Ansonia, Waterbury, and Bristol. Some communities, such as Cheshire, Naugatuck, Seymour, and Shelton, contain tracts that satisfy just one of these criteria.

The NVCOG uses the USDOT's Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer to identify Justice 40 communities. This interactive tool employs 2020 Census Tracts and various datasets to analyze the compounded challenges stemming from inadequate transportation investment. Justice 40 encompasses five key factors: Transportation Insecurity, Climate and Disaster Risk Exposure, Environmental Challenges, Health Susceptibility, and Social Vulnerability. The NVCOG's Justice 40 communities mirror its Environmental Justice communities.

Locations with Fatalities or Serious Injuries in Disadvantaged Communities



Crash Factors

Analysis of crash factors is crucial for understanding why serious injury and fatal crashes occur and how best to prevent them. Unfortunately, limited data is focused on the key drivers of Connecticut crashes in 2022, with significant portions reliant on self-disclosure or reporting to recording officers. Consequently, while this report seeks to determine what driver behaviors and infrastructure issues may be causing crashes in the NVCOG region, it underscores the imperative for more comprehensive data to support forthcoming analyses.

Traffic surface and weather conditions are often thought of as significant factors in a motor vehicle crash. While important, 79.5% of crashes occurred in clear weather conditions and 68% of crashes occurred during daylight. Given this information, the data supports greater focus on other crash factors, such as speed, driver condition at the time of a crash, and distracted driving.

Contributing Action

A plurality of drivers were recorded as having no contributing action to a crash. Importantly, however, 13.52% followed too closely, 12.87% failed to stay in lane, and 6.19% failed to yield right-of-way. Myriad contributing actions are outlined in the data, highlighting many forms of driver error.

Speed

In 5.2% of crashes, drivers were reported to be driving too fast for conditions, above the speed limit, or racing. While this is a high rate already, lived experience and external sources suggest speed is a more prevalent issue than the data demonstrates.

Driver Impairment

While the vast majority of drivers were apparently normal at the time of a crash (88.64%), 1.66% were under the influence, 0.74% were asleep or fatigued, and 0.46% were emotional. These three factors are widely believed to frequently lead to crashes.

Distracted Driving

73.27% of drivers involved in a crash were reported as not distracted; again, there is reason for suspicion that this reporting underestimates levels of distracted driving. Still, 0.87% of drivers involved in a crash were reported to have been using electronic devices at the time of a crash.

**VISION ZERO
ELIMINATES ALL
TRAFFIC FATALITIES
AND SERIOUS INJURIES
WHILE INCREASING
SAFE, HEALTHY,
EQUITABLE MOBILITY
FOR ALL.**



A Regional Council of Governments and
Metropolitan Planning Organization

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