

Barrington, RI

COASTAL SEA LEVEL RISE AND STORM SURGE: TRANSPORTATION FACT SHEET



PLANNING FOR SEA LEVEL RISE ON YOUR ROADS

This fact sheet aims to provide municipal leaders and practitioners with a survey of Barrington's transportation infrastructure elements that may be affected by sea level rise and storm surge. In addition to explaining and presenting the data, this fact sheet will outline strategies that may help in adapting to these conditions, and point towards resources that will enable further investigation.

Relevance

The impacts of Sea Level Rise (SLR) are often perceived as distant, but the assets being built today will still be within their design life when future effects of sea level rise are felt. In addition, sea level rise will magnify the impacts of 100-year storm surge events by raising the water level. Though current federal guidelines only require federally funded assets be built to survive a 100-year storm event, the impact of a 100-year storm event is likely to change during the design life of the assets currently under consideration in Rhode Island.

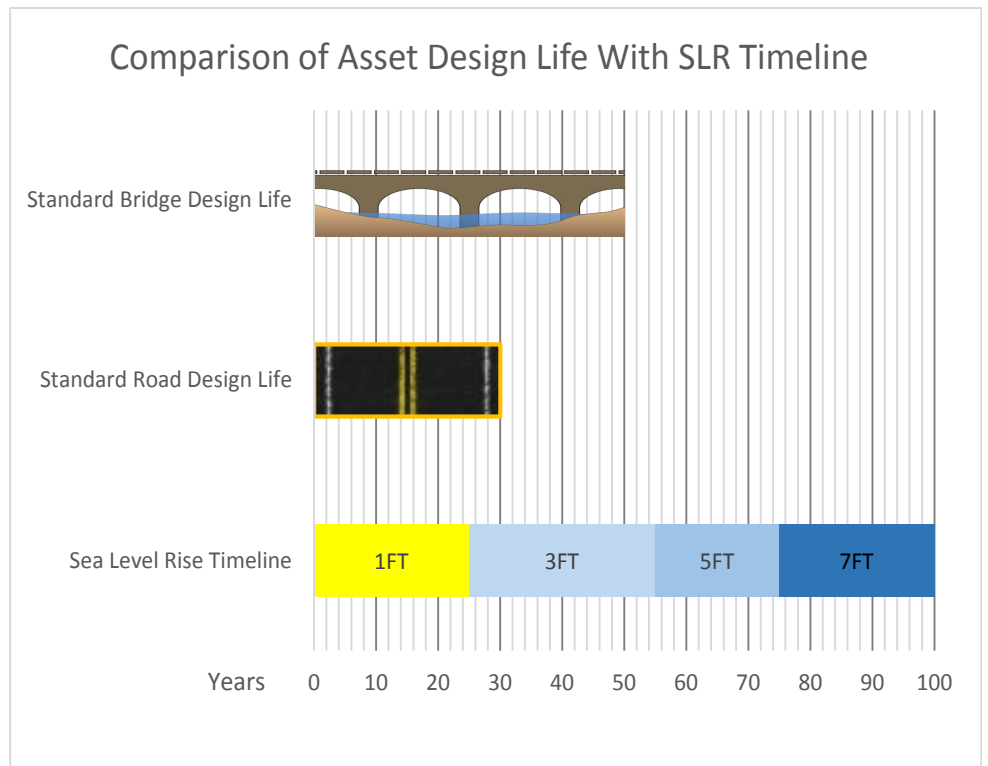


Figure 1

Data and Methodology



To help Rhode Island's cities and towns prepare for these changing conditions, the Statewide Planning Program (SPP) has engaged in an effort to analyze the potential impacts created by sea level rise and storm surge. Using data developed under the name "STORMTOOLS" by the Coastal Resources Management Council and the University of Rhode Island, SPP identified the assets that could be impacted (exposure), and their vulnerability. As a result of this analysis, SPP identified the roads and bridges most likely to be impacted by Sea Level Rise, and scored their relative vulnerability based on the severity of the hazard they face and the potential impact of asset damage on the transportation system as a whole.

Figure 2: Flooding near Sauchest Point: June 2013

Barrington, RI

Barrington Roads Exposed to Sea Level Rise

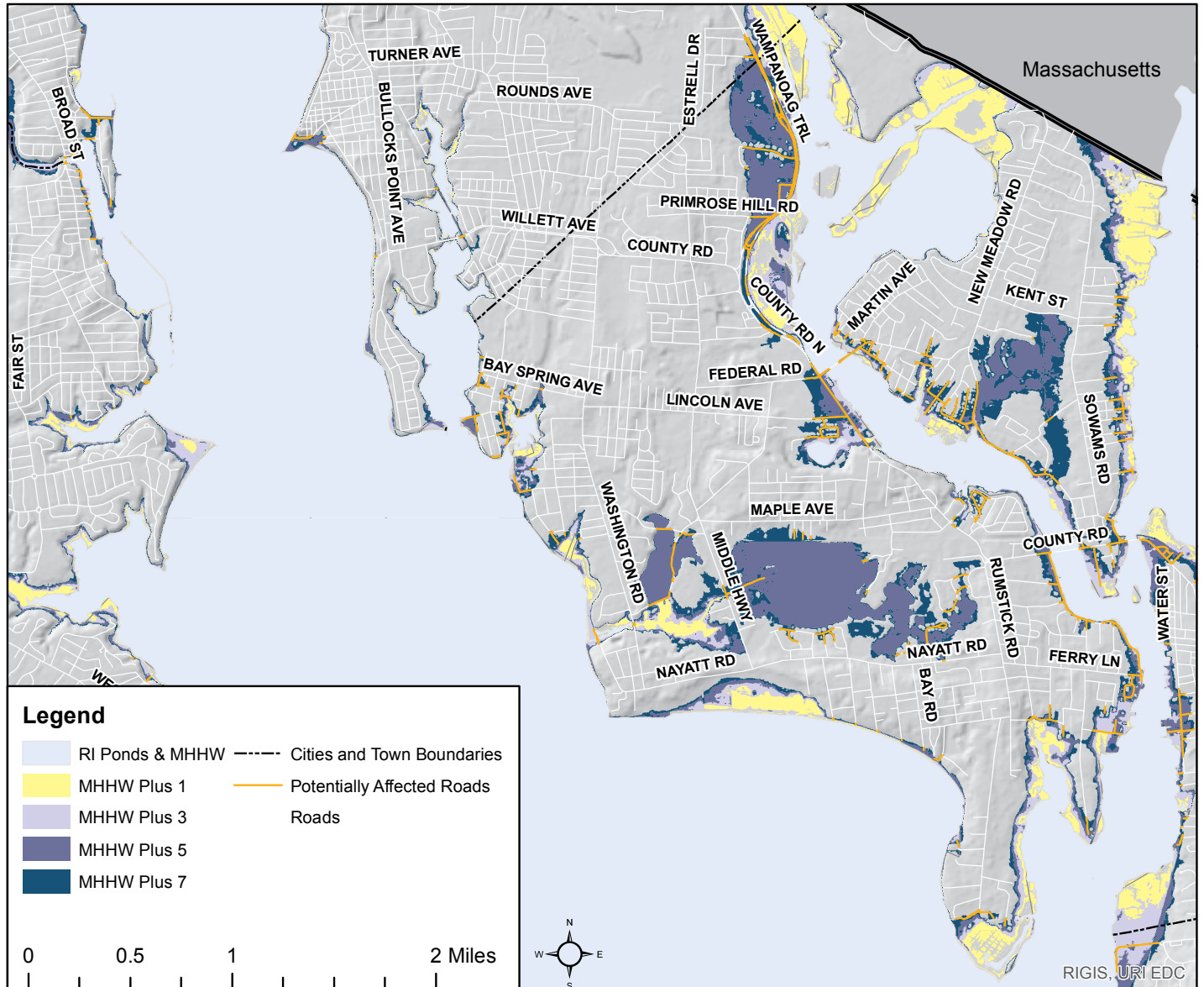


Figure 3

In the event of seven feet of sea level rise, a total of 156 miles of road in Rhode Island could be exposed to inundation, 70% of which would occur on local roads. For Barrington, 14 miles of roadway inundation can be expected. Of this, 61% (~9 mile) are local. Barrington's road infrastructure is the fourth most vulnerable in the state of Rhode Island to sea level rise.

Figure 4

Top 10 Road Assets in Barrington Vulnerable to Sea Level Rise (SLR)												
Mun. Rank	Road Name	1 Ft of SLR	3 Ft of SLR	5 Ft of SLR	7 Ft of SLR	Total Linear Feet	Evac. Route	Intermodal Facility	Functional Classification	Vuln. Score	State Rank	
1	WAMPANOAG TRL	0	0	5,839	6,210	12,049	No	Yes	Minor Art.	8.27	3	
2	COUNTY RD N	0	0	0	1,253	1,253	Yes	Yes	Principal Art.	7.90	5	
3	COUNTY RD	14	140	2,655	1,096	3,904	No	Yes	Principal Art.	7.71	7	
4	NEW MEADOW RD	0	354	1,338	2,555	4,247	Yes	No	Minor Art.	7.20	13	
5	MATHEWSON RD	0	1,772	2,056	572	4,400	No	No	Minor Coll.	5.68	49	
6	MASSASOIT AVE	5	6	582	712	1,304	Yes	No	Minor Art.	5.19	87	
7	COUNTY RD S	0	0	0	580	580	No	Yes	Principal Art.	4.90	110	
8	WASHINGTON RD	17	14	14	7	51	Yes	No	Major Coll.	4.37	156	
9	MIDDLE HWY	0	0	31	320	352	Yes	No	Minor Art.	4.30	164	
10	HALF MILE RD	0	0	0	1,209	1,209	No	No	Local	4.10	188	

Barrington, RI

Barrington Bridges Exposed to Sea Level Rise

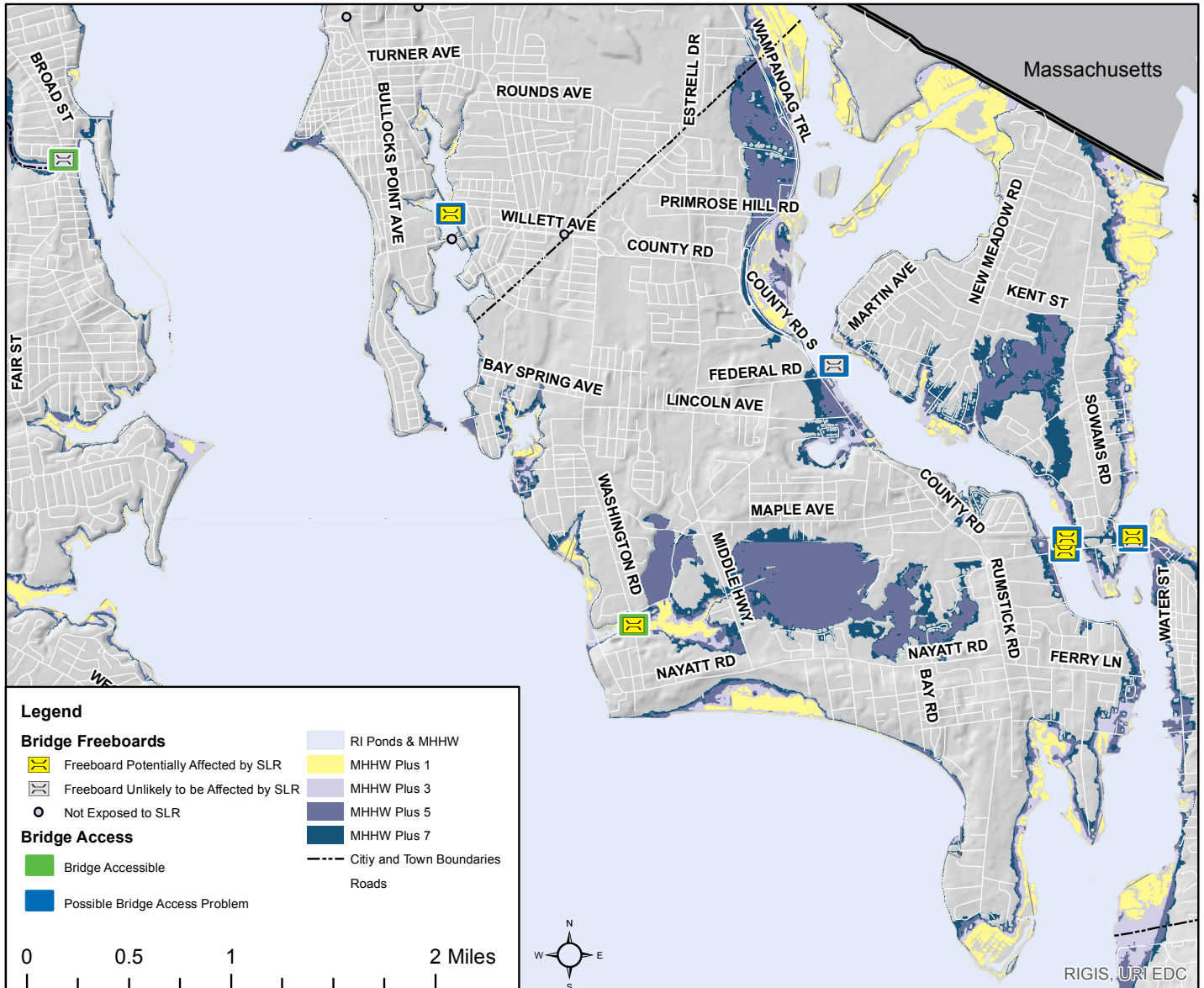


Figure 5

In the event of seven feet of sea level rise, a total of 90 bridges in Rhode Island cause concern either due to potential freeboard height or accessibility problems. In Barrington there are six bridges of concern, two of which are non-motorized facilities. Barrington's bridge infrastructure is the fifth most vulnerable in the state of Rhode Island to sea level rise.

Figure 6

Top 10 Barrington Bridge Assets Vulnerable to Sea Level Rise											
Mun. Rank	Bridge Name	Facility Carried	Feature Intersected	Inches of Freeboard Relative to 7ftSLR	Terrain Crossed	Landing Access	Intermodal Facility	Evac. Route	AADT	Vuln. Score	State Rank
1	Barrington	RI 114/103 CNTY RD	BARRINGTON R	-10	MHHW	Problem	Yes	No	19,999	9.00	2
2	Warren	RI 114/103 CNTY RD	WARREN R	14	MHHW	Problem	Yes	No	19,999	9.00	3
3	Barrington River EBBF	E BAY BICYCLE FAC	BARRINGTON R	-36	MHHW	Problem	Yes	No	0	6.00	47
4	Palmer River EBBF	E BAY BICYCLE FAC	PALMER R	-36	MHHW	Problem	Yes	No	0	6.00	48
5	Central	MASSASOIT AV	BARRINGTON R	15	MHHW	Problem	No	No	7,777	5.90	60
6	Noyatt	WASHINGTON RD	NAYATT POND	-18	Water	Access	No	Yes	1,600	5.00	69

Barrington, RI



Barrington Roads Exposed to 100-Year Storm Surge Events

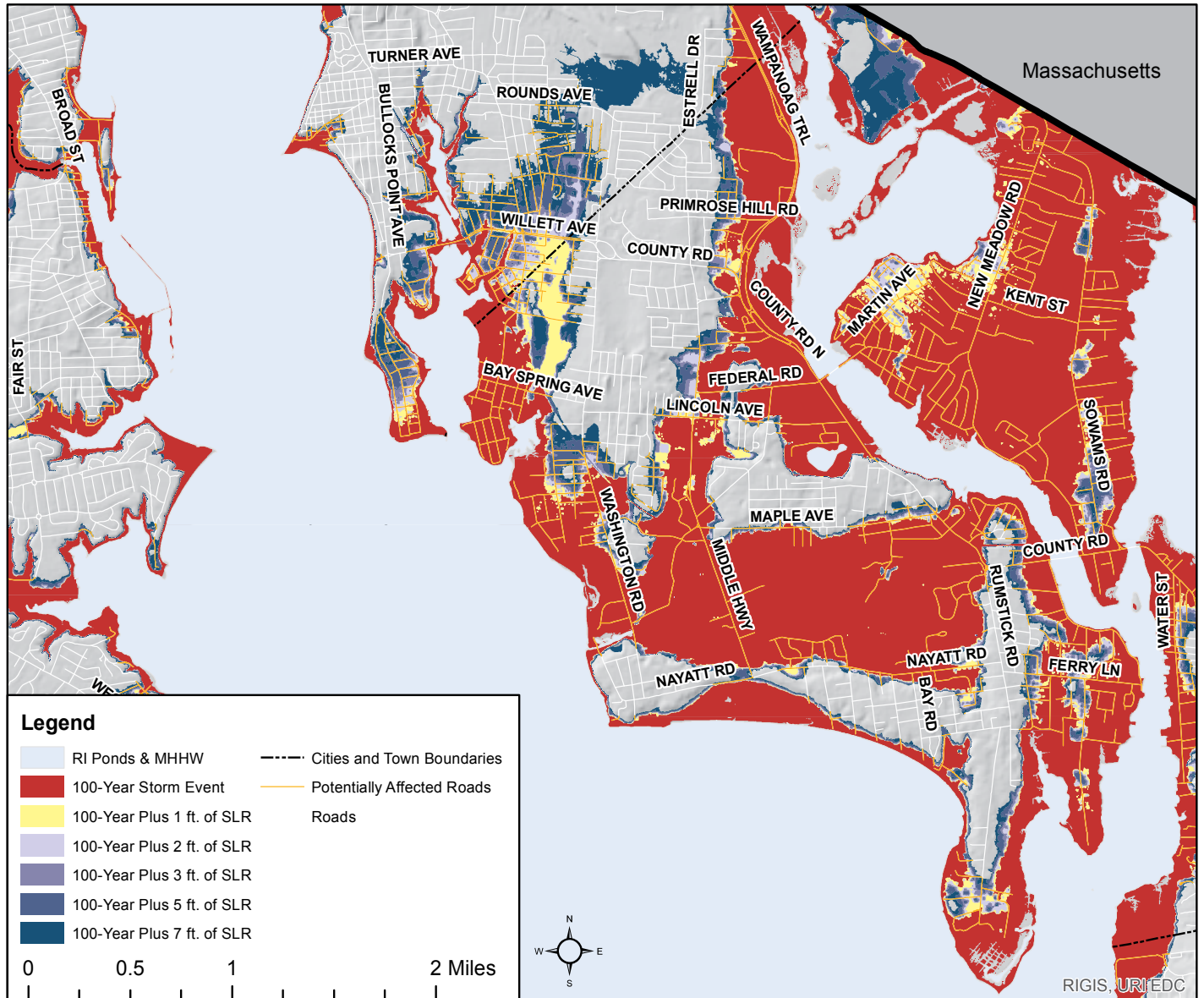


Figure 7

In the event of seven feet of sea level rise and a 100-year storm surge event, a total of 573 miles of road in Rhode Island will potentially be exposed to inundation, 73% of which will occur on local roads. For Barrington, 74 miles of roadway inundation can be expected, 72% (~53 miles) of which are local roadways. Barrington's road infrastructure is the second most vulnerable in the state of Rhode Island to storm surge.

Figure 8

Top 10 Road Assets in Barrington Vulnerable to 100-Year Surge Events												
Mun. Rank	NAME	No SLR	1 Foot of SLR	3 Feet of SLR	5 Feet of SLR	7 Feet of SLR	Total Linear Feet	Evac. Route	Intermodal Facility	Functional Classification	Vuln. Score	State Rank
1	COUNTY RD N	2,875	0	0	0	0	2,875	Yes	Yes	Principal Art.	9.40	1
2	WAMPANOAG TRL	15,144	157	399	0	0	15,699	No	Yes	Principal Art.	8.38	13
3	COUNTY RD S	2,667	63	0	0	0	2,730	No	Yes	Principal Art.	8.37	14
4	COUNTY RD	7,136	337	1,372	703	779	10,327	Yes	Yes	Principal Art.	8.01	29
5	MASSASOIT AVE	3,578	114	0	0	0	3,692	Yes	No	Minor Art.	7.80	35
6	NEW MEADOW RD	11,830	912	316	0	0	13,057	Yes	No	Minor Art.	7.73	38
7	MIDDLE HWY	6,126	576	1,769	148	320	8,940	Yes	No	Minor Art.	7.53	49
8	FEDERAL RD	2,666	131	147	107	166	3,217	Yes	No	Minor Art.	7.31	58
9	SOWAMS RD	7,753	854	1,718	1,263	0	11,588	Yes	No	Major Coll.	6.94	84
10	FERRY LN	2,169	379	300	116	98	3,062	Yes	No	Major Coll.	6.77	94

Barrington, RI



Barrington Bridges Exposed to 100-Year Storm Surge Events

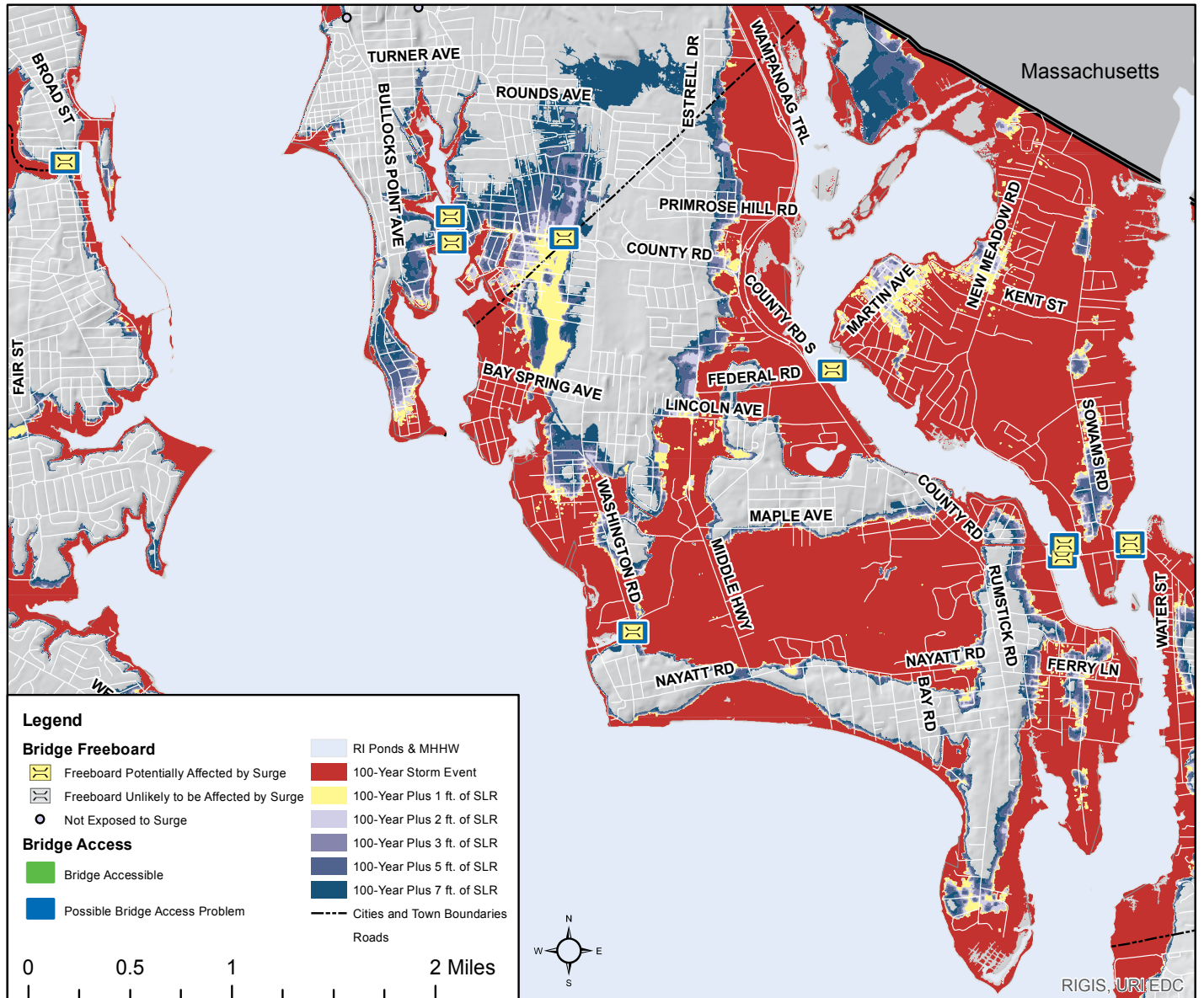


Figure 9

In the event of seven feet of sea level rise plus a 100-year storm surge event, a total of 148 bridges statewide cause concern either because of potential free-board height or accessibility problems. In Barrington there are six bridges of concern, two of which are non-motorized facilities. Barrington's bridge infrastructure is the tenth most vulnerable in the state of Rhode Island to storm surge.

Figure 10

Top 10 Barrington Bridge Assets Vulnerable to Sea Level Rise Plus a 100-Year Storm Surge Event											
Mun. Rank	Bridge Name	Facility Carried	Feature Intersected	Inches of Freeboard Relative to 7FtSLR	Terrain Crossed	Landing Access	Intermodal Facility	Evac. Route	AADT	Vuln. Score	State Rank
1	Barrington	RI 114/103 CNTY RD	BARRINGTON R	-190	MHHW	Problem	Yes	No	19,999	9.00	10
2	Warren	RI 114/103 CNTY RD	WARREN R	-166	MHHW	Problem	Yes	No	19,999	9.00	11
3	Central	MASSASOIT AV	BARRINGTON R	-153	MHHW	Problem	No	No	7,777	6.80	47
4	Nayatt	WASHINGTON RD	NAYATT POND	-193	Water	Problem	No	Yes	1,600	6.10	63
5	Barrington River EBBF	E BAY BICYCLE FAC	BARRINGTON R	-204	MHHW	Problem	Yes	No	0	6.00	72
6	Palmer River EBBF	E BAY BICYCLE FAC	PALMER R	-216	MHHW	Problem	Yes	No	0	6.00	73

Barrington, RI

Next Steps

Given the potential scale of the impacts of sea level rise and storm surge on transportation infrastructure, local communities will need to find a way to prepare. A variety of approaches are available, and programs exist to help communities execute these strategies. Identifying preparedness strategies will require undertaking further analysis, formulating a clear adaptation strategy, and then taking advantage of planning opportunities that may present themselves.



Further Analysis

The most important step is the pursuit of further analysis. The data contained in this factsheet serves as introduction to municipal level transportation issues associated with sea level rise and storm surge. The data contained here and in Technical Paper #167: Vulnerability of Municipal Transportation Assets to Sea Level Rise and Storm Surge (published by SPP and available at <http://www.planning.ri.gov/geodeminfo/data/slr.php>) will enable local decision makers to prioritize the assets that may require engineering analysis or another more detailed study. Decision makers would also be advised to consult The methodology for STORMTOOLS, a key source of data for this project, which is available on-line at <http://www.beachsamp.org/the-science-behind-stormtools/>.

Figure 11: Consideration of Sea Level Rise can be included in regular planning activities

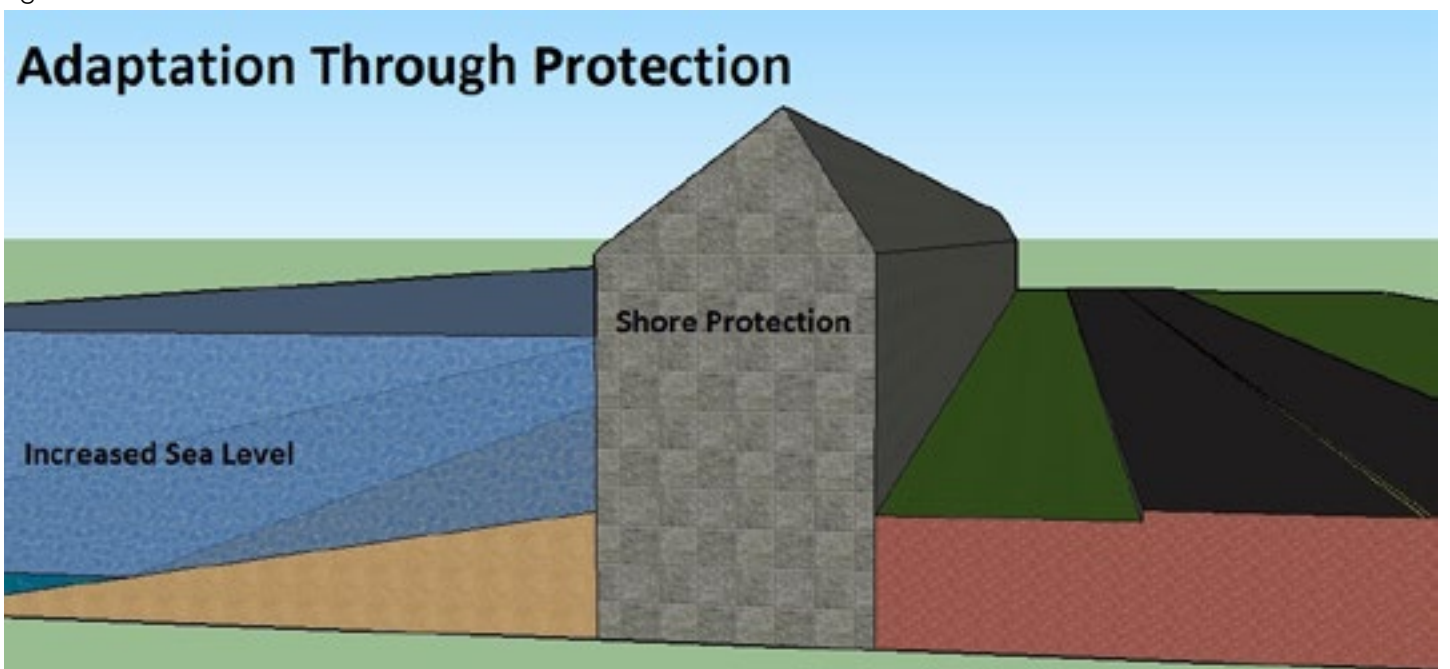


Adaptation

Once the nature of the ongoing changes are understood, a policy should be developed by the city or town to prepare for the changes holistically. The specific policies to be implemented will vary widely based on the community, the assets under threat, and the resources available. The policies can broadly be described as Protect, Accommodate, Retreat, and Do Nothing.

Protect: Though often popular, this is the most financially expensive option. A municipality can seek to safeguard an asset by building sea walls, or take a slightly more green approach by attempting to artificially recreate the types of dune or wetland structures that naturally stabilize a shoreline. These approaches often offer short term security if well designed and implemented, but their effectiveness in the long term may be limited by further changing conditions and the resources required for maintenance.

Figure 12



Barrington, RI



Accommodate: Accommodation can imply a number of built solutions that take into account sea level rise and storm surge. An engineering oriented solution would be to elevate the assets in question above the waterline, while another option would be to rebuild the asset in a way that suits the new conditions better, for example by rebuilding a road using a new alignment on higher ground.

Retreat: If built solutions are infeasible, a community may decide to simply abandon the asset. Private stakeholders may take over responsibility for the asset, or the need for its maintenance may diminish as users of the asset leave the area. Though undoubtedly the most efficient solution from a fiscal perspective, there are complex legal issues involved that remain unresolved.

Do Nothing: Communities may choose to take no action in response to rising sea levels. In effect this would consist of maintaining the status quo infrastructure, regardless of risk and the increasingly common inundations. In practice this approach may closely resemble retreat, as assets are incapacitated with increasing regularity until all those served by the assets move away. The financial strain of repeated maintenance could have significant fiscal effects on communities.

Planning Opportunities

Once the subject of sea level rise and storm surge have been adequately researched, and an overall municipal adaptation strategy has been adopted, decision makers should attempt to take advantage of planning opportunities that may allow the city or town to begin implementation of their planning goals. A key first step to this process will be building awareness amongst staff and the public, either by direct outreach or simply through informal discussions.

As awareness grows, the community would be well served simply by keeping their readiness policy goals in mind when conducting their regular planning activities, such as comprehensive planning, or zoning compliance review. More concrete policies like overlay zones and rolling easements may become important tools for communities seeking a way to realize their policy goals.

Communities that are critically threatened by sea level rise and storm surge may seek to directly invest in readiness measures using municipal funds. Additional funding may be available to aid in this process from state and federal sources. Placing eligible projects for consideration in the State Transportation Improvement Plan, or other sources of Federal and State funding, is a good way to leverage local funding.

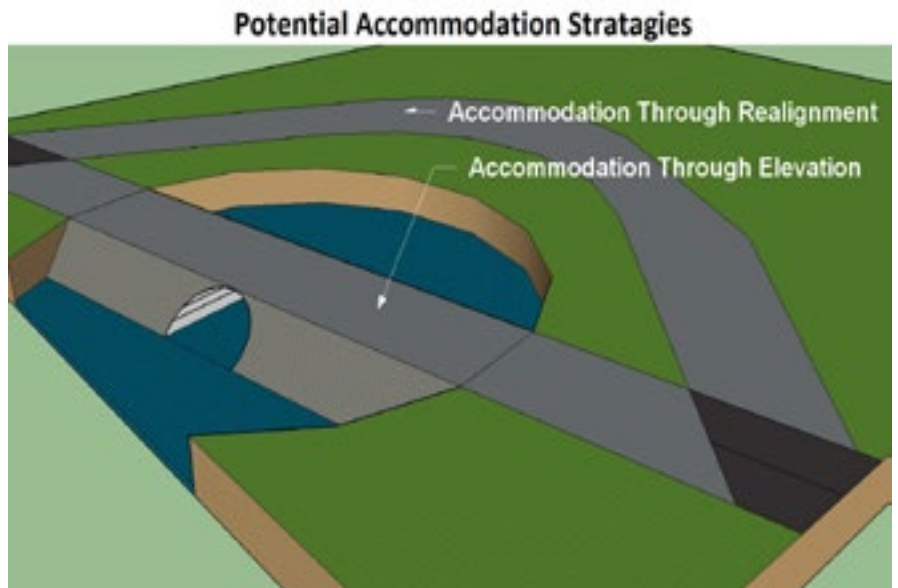


Figure 13

Figure 14

