



Southern Maine Planning & Development Commission Town of York Comprehensive Plan SLR Chapter

PARTNERS

Town of York and Maine
Geological Service



PROJECT DESCRIPTION (completed June 2013)

Sea level is rising according to one hundred years of records from the Portland, ME tide gauge. Along with this change, storms are becoming more frequent and intense, and damages are increasing. The important question for the Town of York is: "How should the Town respond and adapt?" This chapter inventories the best available data on historical and recent trends in sea level change, and offers the best available current predictions for the future. This Chapter establishes the rational basis on which the Town's policy response to sea level rise is based.

APPROACH

Outreach

- An initial public meeting was held before the start of Task which identified SLR scenarios
- Second public meeting was held upon completion of the Draft Inventory and Analysis section of the SLR chapter
- Third public meeting presented policy and Draft Implementation recommendations.
- Meetings with public officials in Planning, Code Enforcement, GIS, Public Works, York Sewer District GIS and Emergency Services

Analysis

- Assemble the best-available topographic data and integrate it into the Town's GIS system.
- Determine the shape of an accurately mapped shoreline, placed at the elevation
- Assemble the best-available topographic data and integrate it into the Town's GIS of the Highest Annual Tide (HAT) with four inundation scenarios: HAT plus 2', HAT plus 4', Storm of Record plus 2' and Storm of Record plus 4'.
- Estimate the potential impact of each inundation scenario to: built environment, roads and bridges, public water system, public sewer system, residential buildings, public buildings, non-residential buildings and facilities, natural environment, beaches, low- and high-marsh and adjacent uplands, provision of emergency services.

Formulate Recommendations

Identification of: potential adaptation infrastructure projects, potential open space acquisitions; potential regulatory changes such as required freeboard in the Floodplain Management Ordinance, using HAT to establish the shoreline on zoning maps, and using a higher contour when determining shoreland setbacks; and potential engineering studies.

THE RESULTS

The SLR Chapter was approved by referendum in November 2013.

NEEDS

Funds for capital improvements. Findings presented in the SLR chapter include (1) Most significant impact will be to York Sewage Treatment Plant. (2) Significant impacts to transportation infrastructure including beach access. (3) Modest impact on building with the exception of larger storms

LESSONS LEARNED

Well developed scientific approach to explaining sea-level rise and its impacts can end with serious consideration of consequences.

APPLICABILITY TO OTHER MUNICIPALITIES

Major applicability for all coastal communities undertaking and/or updating comprehensive plans. Should probably be included in all comp plans for coastal communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue to fund sea-level rise analysis and adaptation strategy work in our most vulnerable coastal zones.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Town of York Adaptation to SLR Chapter <http://www.yorkmaine.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=Y-RZTBdyMqY%3d&tabid=177>

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J.T. Lockman, Planning Director SMPDC 1999-2012 also served as PM for this project.

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