



MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY PREPAREDNESS GRANT: RIVER RD. AND VICINITY

Project Overview:

The Town is studying the impact of climate change on West Newbury including impacts due to our proximity to the Merrimack River. This analysis will lead to recommendations and actionable items for our community going forward. The impacts of frequent flooding and erosion are blatant along River Road, Coffin Street, and other areas, as is visible in the images below. The MVP Action Grant funds will focus on flood risk and road stability concerns at vulnerable locations subject to Merrimack River flooding. The project will evaluate the risks due to more frequent and extreme flooding events exacerbated by climate change and sea level rise, and will enable the Town to identify and plan for an array of near-(2030), mid-(2050), and long-term (2070) resiliency options. Specifically, the project will focus on River Road and the lower portions of Coffin and Bridge Streets where they intersect with River Road. This directly affects the Rocks Village Bridge, which is a critical connector to Haverhill, Merrimac, and other neighboring municipalities.

Recent Developments:

In August 2023, the \$150,000 State MVP Grant was awarded to West Newbury after a letter-writing campaign of support. The MVP Grant funds were matched by \$50,000 of local funding approved at the Fall 2022 Town Meeting. As part of the Grant, public outreach about the resiliency efforts has been underway, the first of which was a successful boat trip along the Merrimack to allow concerned citizens and Town officials to get a better understanding of the threatened shoreline.



Upcoming Steps:

As part of the MVP process, we're going to be undertaking an existing conditions survey of erosion, watershed delineations, and other factors, as well as a survey of drains and culverts. We will also be continuing to stage events, meetings, and workshops to promote climate change resiliency. The activities will also give rise to potential solutions for shoreline stabilization. The project will conclude in June 2024.

How You Can Help and Where You Can Find Out More:

Stay tuned to activities of the Climate Change Resiliency Committee and Town News as we collaborate to tackle the challenge of climate change. Questions? Contact Christine Wallace, Project Manager at dpwprojects@wnewbury.org.

Food for Thought:

What impacts of climate change have you noticed around West Newbury?



Flooding on River Rd.



Erosion undermining bank



Flooding on River Rd. and Coffin St.

