

Vietoris–Rips Thickenings of Euclidean Submanifolds

Henry Adams and Joshua Mirth

Department of Mathematics, Colorado State University

Motivation

Given a metric space, X , can we produce a simplicial complex which is homotopy equivalent to X ? One solution to this question is the Vietoris–Rips complex, $\text{VR}(X; r)$. Hausmann [3] proves that for X a Riemannian manifold and a sufficiently small scale parameter r there is a homotopy equivalence $\text{VR}(X; r) \simeq X$. In fact, Latschev [4] shows that if $Y \subset X$ is a sufficiently dense sampling then $\text{VR}(Y; r) \simeq X$. However, $\text{VR}(X; r)$ loses the metric properties of X ; if $\text{VR}(X; r)$ is not locally finite, then it is not metrizable. We seek to address this with the *Vietoris–Rips thickening* of X .

Definitions

Let X be a metric space and r a scale parameter with $r \geq 0$. The **Vietoris–Rips complex** of X with scale parameter r , $\text{VR}_{\leq}(X; r)$, has vertex set X and a simplex for every finite subset $\sigma \subset X$ such that $\text{diam}(\sigma) \leq r$.

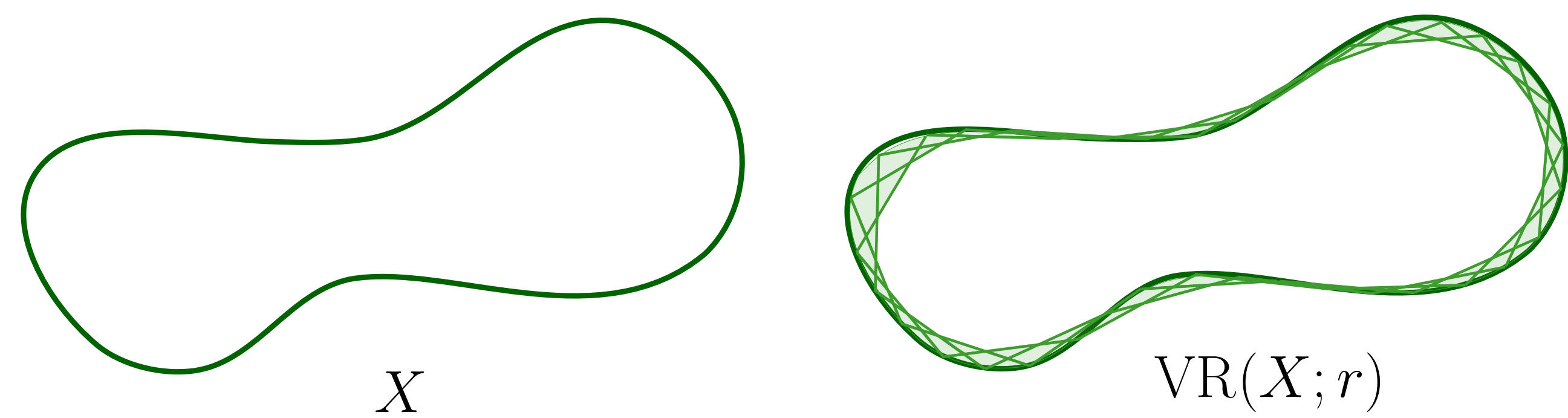


Figure 1: A manifold and (a subset of) its Vietoris–Rips complex.

The geometric realization $|\text{VR}(X; r)|$ consists of all finite convex linear combinations of points in $\text{VR}(X; r)$. The **Vietoris–Rips thickening**, $\text{VR}^m(X; r)$ is $|\text{VR}(X; r)|$ equipped with the 1-Wasserstein metric:

$$d_W \left(\sum_{i=0}^k \lambda_i x_i, \sum_{j=0}^{k'} \lambda'_j x'_j \right) = \inf_{p_{i,j} \geq 0} \left\{ \sum_{i,j} p_{i,j} d(x_i, x'_j) \mid \sum_j p_{i,j} = \lambda_i, \sum_i p_{i,j} = \lambda'_j \right\}$$

$\text{VR}^m(X; r)$ is a metric thickening of X [1]. This means that in general $\text{VR}^m(X; r)$ is not homeomorphic to $\text{VR}(X; r)$.

Theorem (Adamaszek, Adams, Frick)

Let X be a complete Riemannian manifold and r sufficiently small. Then $\text{VR}^m(X; r) \simeq X$.

Background

We are interested in the case where $X \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ is a set with positive reach [2]. In particular, for $k \geq 2$, all C^k manifolds have positive reach [5]. The **reach**, τ , of X is the distance to its medial axis. To define the medial axis, consider the set of points without the nearest point property:

$$Y = \{y \in \mathbb{R}^n \mid \exists x_1 \neq x_2 \in X \text{ with } d(y, x_1) = d(y, x_2) = d(y, X)\}.$$

The **medial axis** is then the closure of Y . The set of all points in \mathbb{R}^n within τ of X is a tubular neighborhood, Tub_τ .

Main Theorem

Let $X \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ with reach $\tau > 0$. Then for all $r < \tau$ we have $\text{VR}^m(X; r) \simeq X$.

Proof Outline

Let $f: \text{VR}^m(X; r) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^n$ be the linear projection map, $\pi: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow X \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ the nearest-point map, and i the inclusion of $X \hookrightarrow \text{VR}^m(X; r)$. Then πf and i are homotopy inverses:

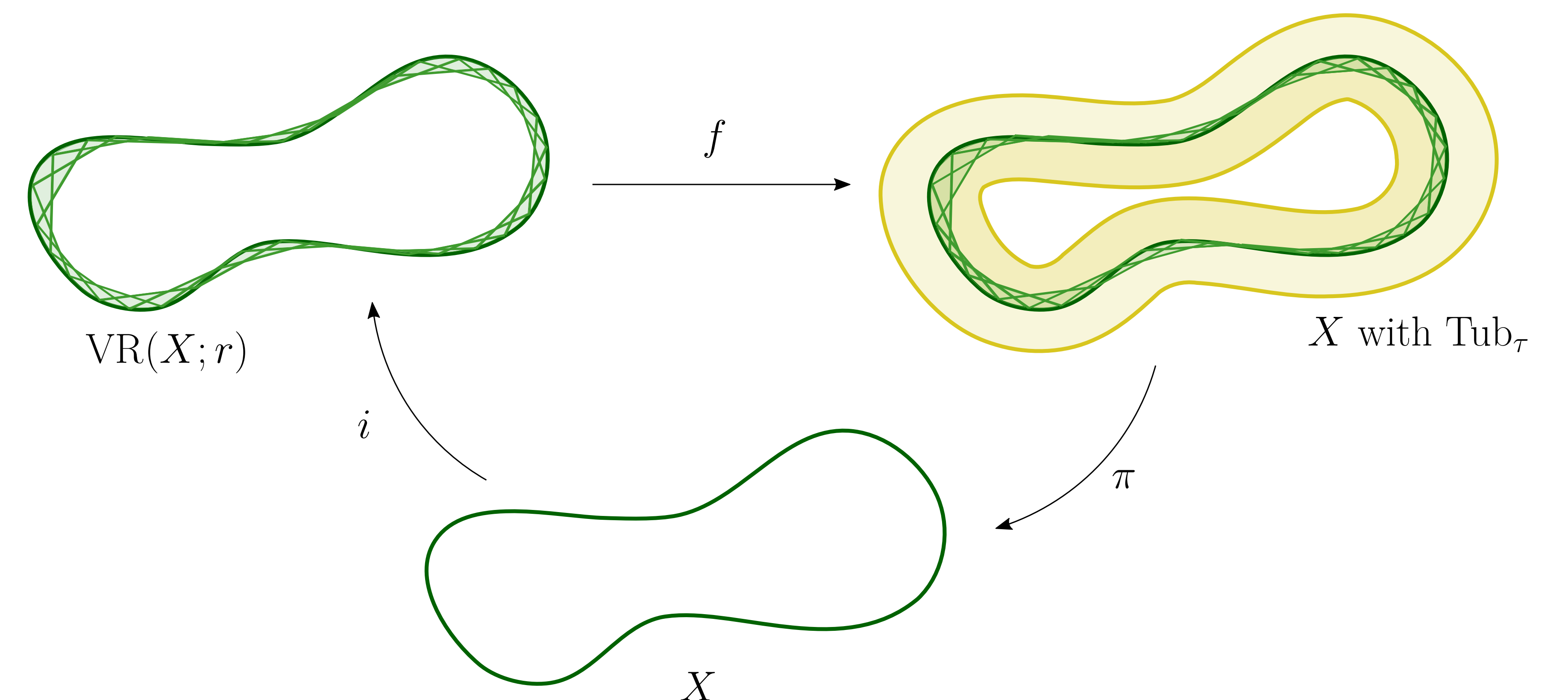


Figure 2: The homotopy equivalence between $\text{VR}^m(X; r)$ and X .

Note that π is well-defined and continuous because $f(\text{VR}^m(X; r))$ lies within Tub_τ . We have $\pi f \circ i = \text{id}_X$ and $i \circ \pi f \simeq \text{id}_{\text{VR}^m(X; r)}$ via a linear homotopy.

References

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