

# Mississippi River Bank Erosion Concerns

## Background

Bank stabilization and erosion control along the Mississippi River has been an ongoing issue for riparian property owners for quite some time. As this is considered a water of the state, any stabilization work that would occur below the Ordinary High Water line (OHW) requires a permit through the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as well as a grading permit and potentially an Environmental Permit (processed as a Conditional Use Permit) through the City.

While there are varying methods that can be contemplated for stabilization projects, along rivers, one of the more effective methods is the placement of riprap. There has been some misunderstanding or confusion from the public in terms of whether riprap would be an acceptable method. If there is a demonstrated need for riprap, such as with steep slopes, riprap, combined with natural vegetation interspersed between the rocks, is actually a preferred stabilization method. However, the cost of this type of stabilization project (and many others as well) can be prohibitive for many property owners, thus allowing an erosion issue to promulgate.

Erosion concerns are really a corridor wide concern, rather than a single lot here or there, and thus, a comprehensive approach to addressing bank stabilization and erosion issues is necessary. However, funding seems to be the greatest obstacle to addressing this issue on a broader issue. Periodically, the Anoka Conservation District (ACD) has some funds available as a reimbursement for bank stabilization design and/or implementation. But, this funding, when available, is limited, and oftentimes not enough to sufficiently address even a single parcel.

## Objective

In order to improve the City's position to potentially secure funds to assist with bank stabilization issues, an inventory of shoreline would be beneficial. Within the ACD's 2015-2019 Comprehensive Plan, it was noted that a shoreline inventory of the Mississippi River had been completed, but it stopped at the eastern limit of Ramsey. In response to the ACD's Comprehensive Plan, the City commented that the inventory should be extended to Ramsey's western limit. The City will work with the ACD (or other agencies) to complete a shoreline inventory to get a baseline of erosion concerns, which can then be used to potentially leverage funding to assist with bank stabilization projects.

## Desired Outcome

After completion of a shoreline inventory, the City could identify priority sites and contact those riparian land owners along the Mississippi River to gauge their willingness to participate in a project and provide the necessary cost share dollars oftentimes required to qualify for various funding opportunities. The City will assist with funding applications and coordination with various agencies to see projects implemented.