

PH 24-6 Comments Submitted to City Council Ward 5 Regarding 2025 Property Taxes

From: MARK Newton <311631@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, December 2, 2024 3:57 PM
To: *CI-StPaul_CC-Ward5 <CC-Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Property Taxes

Hi, I live on Idaho Ave W & Fisk St, I'm very very disappointed in the amount the property taxes are possibly increasing for the 2025 year. I plan to retire in four years and my wife maybe in seven. When we retire, these property taxes will force us to move from our home we've lived in for 25+ years, I don't want to spend my retirement years working. This will force us to move out of the city or possibly out of Minnesota. Let's be realistic this is not sustainable for retirees who have a lower middle class retirement. We're both born and raised in St. Paul. Please make the right decision.

Mark

From: Ann and Jeff Galbus <galbjw7@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, December 2, 2024 7:26 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Property tax increase

I am writing to express my extreme dissatisfaction in the 2025 proposed increase in property tax. I have lived in ward 5 for 19 years and in St. Paul for over 25 years. My proposed increase is almost 15% equaling over \$1000 in increase. We will be paying almost \$9000 annually. It feels like th council is pushing people out. Rather than increase taxes how about a better look at what and where the money is being spent. We had a recent city sales tax increase and now a significant property tax increase This seems excessive.

My wife and I are very disappointed.

Jeff Galbus
642 wheelock parkway west
St. Paul MN 55117

From: SUE SHETKA <+16516901321>
Sent: Monday, December 2, 2024 6:58 AM
To: VM-CouncilWard5 <VM-CouncilWard5@stpaulmn.onmicrosoft.com>
Subject: Shared Voicemail (CC-Ward 5-AA-CQ)

Council Member Kim, I am a low income senior citizen on a shrinking fixed income. I just finished paying the first half of my 2020 four property taxes. I cannot afford a 7.9% property tax increase for 2025. Rent increases are already capped at 3%. Now is the time to cap property taxes for 2025 at 3% anyway. My Social Security benefits income for 2025 is only going to increase a pathetic 2.5%. My PER COLA 4/20/25 is only going to increase a pathetic 1.25%, so it is critical that property taxes be capped at 3% for 2025.

Your urgent attention to an action regarding this matter is critical. Please. Thank you. My name is Sue.
651-690-1321. Bye for now.

You received a voice mail from [SUE SHETKA](#).

From: Robyn Fine <robynkayefj@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2024 8:53 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: 2025 proposed property taxes

I am writing to you today to express my horror of the increase in my property taxes for 2025. I received the notice of the increase of 22.43% and I about lost it. I have only lived in my home in St. Paul since 2022 and to have a property tax increase of this amount is alarming and unacceptable. I am a single person with only one income. I will no longer be able to afford to pay my mortgage payment with the increase in property taxes. How can we remedy this? To treat the homeowners in St Paul is an abomination!

I look forward to your response

Sincerely,
Robyn Fine
1037 Chatsworth St N
St. Paul, MN 55103

From: RICHARD FUNDAKO <+16513572259>
Sent: Wednesday, November 27, 2024 10:03 AM
To: VM-CouncilWard5 <VM-CouncilWard5@stpaulmn.onmicrosoft.com>
Subject: Shared Voicemail (CC-Ward 5)

Hello, I'm a resident of Ward 5. My name is Rich Fondakowski, address 1238 E Como Blvd. Saint Paul. I'm calling just to, you know, give feedback on the enormous property tax increase of 22%, actually 22 1/2% for my property this year. And the City of Saint Paul is probably the largest consistently way above that average. So anyway, I just want to appeal that. I think the city has to start getting its act in order. You can't be doing 25% increases in property tax to in this day and age. It just doesn't work. So I'd be happy to discuss it, but that's my feedback and maybe it means something, maybe not. But bottom line is if you want to have a city, you better have a way of least keeping property owners that can afford to live here. We're already losing businesses. Let's not lose worse make it any worse. Thanks very much for listening. Bye bye.

You received a voice mail from [RICHARD FUNDAKO](#).

From: Lauren Harmeyer <lauren.harmeyer@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 12:26 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: 2025 Budget

Dear Council Member Kim,

I am writing to you to express my support for keeping the Saint Paul portion of property tax increase at 5%, instead of the proposed 7.9%. I have read that this is supported by Council Members Noeker and Johnson and I ask you to join them. I love Saint Paul, but was very sad to have a conversation with an across the alley neighbor in which she said she is afraid she will no longer be able to afford her home. For context, her property tax increase was above 22%. While keeping the Saint Paul portion at 5% will not solve all her concerns, it will offer a little relief and show Saint Paul neighbors that the Council sees that many neighbors are struggling. I am afraid that Saint Paul will become a city that only the upper middle class and above can afford and our beautiful, vibrant city will hollow and wither away.

Sincerely,

Lauren Harmeyer
1028 Argyle St
Saint Paul MN 55103

From: Cell Phone MN <+16512300721>

Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 2:14 PM

To: VM-CouncilWard5 <VM-CouncilWard5@stpaulmn.onmicrosoft.com>

Subject: Shared Voicemail (CC-Ward 5)

Hello, my name is Mike Tamale. I believe I live in your ward. I live at 1388 E Como Blvd. In Saint Paul and I just got my property tax notice, proposed property tax notice, and I'm sure you're getting a million of these calls. And I don't know about anybody else, but mine went up 19.29% from last year, which is, let's see here, \$1700 more. So I'm at \$10,300 a year. Obviously, I live in a nice house and a great location across Lake Como. I'm not crying about that, and I don't mind paying high property taxes. But I mean this is approaching 1000 a month. I am still working but I'm retiring September 1st and our family income, my wife's retiring then too So we'll basically go to no income other than Social Security, of which half will go, oh, not half, at least a third will go to property tax to live in our house. And so I'm not a happy guy. My number, in case you want to call, is 651-230-0721. I can read that. I can go to Tax Court and complain about it. I don't know what good that'll do. Can I get that? You know, everybody's got it tough, and most people have it tougher than me, so I'm not claiming any different than that. But when I retired June 1st, I'm not sure I can afford to pay my property taxes and I grew up in Saint Paul on my lifelong Saint Paul guy. And anyways, just thought I'd let you know that it's hard to take and I'm not sure where this is going to lead to our family and our home here. 651-230-0721 Mike Tally, thanks. Bye.

You received a voice mail from [Cell Phone MN](#).

From: A S <astaunton1776@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 12:25 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Taxes

Please do not vote for anything that rises our taxes! We are taxed too much already.

Thank you for your time. Anthony Staunton

From: Jamie Proulx <jamiieproulx@mac.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 1:46 PM
To: *CI-StPaul_CC-Ward5 <CC-Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Property tax bill - 2025

Hello,

I'm writing with urgency to add my voice to the outrageous property tax bills coming out to St. Paul residents.

I live in Como Park. I'm married with 3 children. Our bills are at capacity but we pay them and still give to our church.

Our property tax bill is going up 34% next year. For us, that means an extra \$222/month. This is on top of health care going up, medications going up, etc.

Our property taxes have gone up consistently but never by 34%. I have no idea how we will pay this. The property valuation on our home went up by 20% which is ridiculous. And who cares what my property value is since I don't get any money from that supposed equity.

I certainly don't see an increase in public services by 34%.

I can't come to a public hearing because I already have a 2nd job to help pay our bills, so I can only send an email. Please carry this forward.

I want to live in St. Paul and I want to love living in Como Park. But it's so expensive and it brings us so much financial pain to live here.

For our family, this increase will lead to:

1. Eating less - we have to cut somewhere.
2. Giving less to school - they're always asking for help with bus money or field trip money. We just can't help and give more.
3. Doing anything fun that costs money as a family. We just can't spend extra.
4. Visiting my family in North Dakota. We can't afford the gas money.
5. Supporting any levies in future elections. There's NO WAY I will vote YES for anything. I am tapped out.

Obviously there are other impacts. I'm just beginning to grapple with this. I'll need to take on more hours and lose more time with my kids for one.

Please do whatever we can to cut these increases. It's outrageous and I don't see any benefit.

Sincerely,

Jamie Proulx

From: John Berglund <jberglund.891@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 7:19 PM
To: Hwa Jeong Kim <HwaJeong.Kim@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Taxes

Hello Hwa Jeong Kim,

I just read an article in the St Paul Pioneer Press indicating that the city council was going to ask the Mayor to cut close to \$6 million from his budget proposal.

I am in favor of that. I applaud any effort to reduce property taxes. We just got our proposed 2025 tax statement. It shows a nearly 13% increase to over \$5000. The estimated increase adds close to \$50/month to our expenses. Anything that can be done to chip away at that would be appreciated.

Thank you,

John Berglund

From: Diane <dianeweise1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 5:11 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: Property taxes

Rebecca, my city Council person, told me to write to all the city council members my frustrations. So I am. My roommate received her proposed property taxes today. They are going up almost 30%. Really? How can that be? Is the city/county trying to drive people out of their homes? Why is the mayor proposing a larger budget when obviously the city doesn't have the money to do so. Why force all these extra taxes on people? If you want people to stay in the city, you need to get control of your spending. The taxpayers are your credit card. If the city or state wants money, all they do is swipe the taxpayers to get their money. We have to somehow live on a budget and cut things if need be. I would love to see the city cut things instead of proposing more money for their budget. Go on the Highland page on Facebook and read about everyone complaining about their high property taxes. If you say you are really for your constituents, then please stop spending our money and put more of that money into our pocketbook.

Diane Weise

From: Judith F <judithfeldman1@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 1:47 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Reining in the mayor's proposed burden on taxpayers

I just saw my proposed property tax online a few days ago and while aghast, it's seems business as usual in the state.

The Mayor's proposed tax levy must be tamed for absolute necessities.

I believe that if you can't provide years of salaries and upkeep of facilities like parks/rec centers we already have, you do NOT build more. Our tax money should go to projects such as residential, not just major artery street repair, and sidewalks. Beautification of streets and sidewalks seems moot, when they are in terrible shape. When I am visiting a new city I DO look at how their streets and sidewalks are kept. Not the flowers that adorn.

We need funding to deal with the Snelling/University situation—drug dealing, loitering, vacant buildings such as CVS. I feel terrible for the store owners in that neighborhood and those who have to witness the area's degradation. We want to be SAFE in our city. I think citizens would vote that Number One of the agenda, not a city water walk.

It feels like the city's lower and middle income families who need to live in St. Paul are stuck with taxes assessments, high rents or property that are very difficult to tolerate(along with the almost 10% sales tax).

I hope you and the other council people band together and bring a "reality" check to the mayor that makes our constituents proud of the leadership, not fearful of shelling out more dollars and not seeing enough in return.

I would like to know if there is a specific Budget "person" who is honest with the mayor/councilpeople as to what St. Paul actually needs rather than a Mayor or department leads want. I was disheartening to read about former SPPS Superintendent using funds inappropriately for what I view as fluff activities. Is there someone to do department reviews and see if duplicated or find places to cut costs, even if people need to find new placements. Is there anyone who oversees all programs to see if successful and worth renewing. It does seem like once a program is instituted, at least I, don't know where to find periodic reviews of progress/no progress or any data.

Judith Feldman

From: Bill Leslie <wwleslie@hotmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, November 26, 2024 7:15 AM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Ward 4 Budget Community Meeting Happening TOMORROW

Council Members Jalali and Kim: I write to add our names to the list of those opposing the 7.9% average property tax increase for St. Paul (payable 2025). Why is it too much? Please consider that the rate of inflation has been just over 3% in 2024, and the increase in the value of the average St. Paul home has

been less than 2%. We understand that the cost of government has gone up, but just like the rest of us, government must live within its means. Like the rest of us, it must prioritize, be creative and make do. As senior citizens on incomes that don't keep up with inflation, my wife and I can't afford the proposed 10.5% increase in our property taxes (it's not sustainable long term). I support those who are calling for an average property tax increase of no more than 5%.

Thanks for your attention to this matter,
Bill Leslie and Judy Lykins
1228 Hoyt Ave W, St Paul 55108

From: Galen McKay <galenmckay@yahoo.com>

Sent: Monday, November 25, 2024 2:06 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1 <Ward1@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward2 <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward3 <Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward4 <Ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward6 <Ward6@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; #CI-StPaul_Ward7 <Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: Fw: [Neighborhood News] Property tax increase?

Please see below for some of the internal discussions going on in neighbors regarding property taxes.....

Begin forwarded message:

From: S Mason <sonjalmason@gmail.com>

Date: November 25, 2024 at 1:01:10 PM CST

To: hollyashlandlaurel@googlegroups.com

Subject: Re: [Neighborhood News] Property tax increase?

Reply-To: hollyashlandlaurel@googlegroups.com

It is true that LGA [has decreased over the years relative to inflation](#) (LGA = [local government aid](#) the poorly named term for returning some of the tax dollars paid at the state level to the local communities from whence they come) and that non-profits don't pay property tax in St Paul (or anywhere else in Minnesota) and these both impact City Budget tremendously.

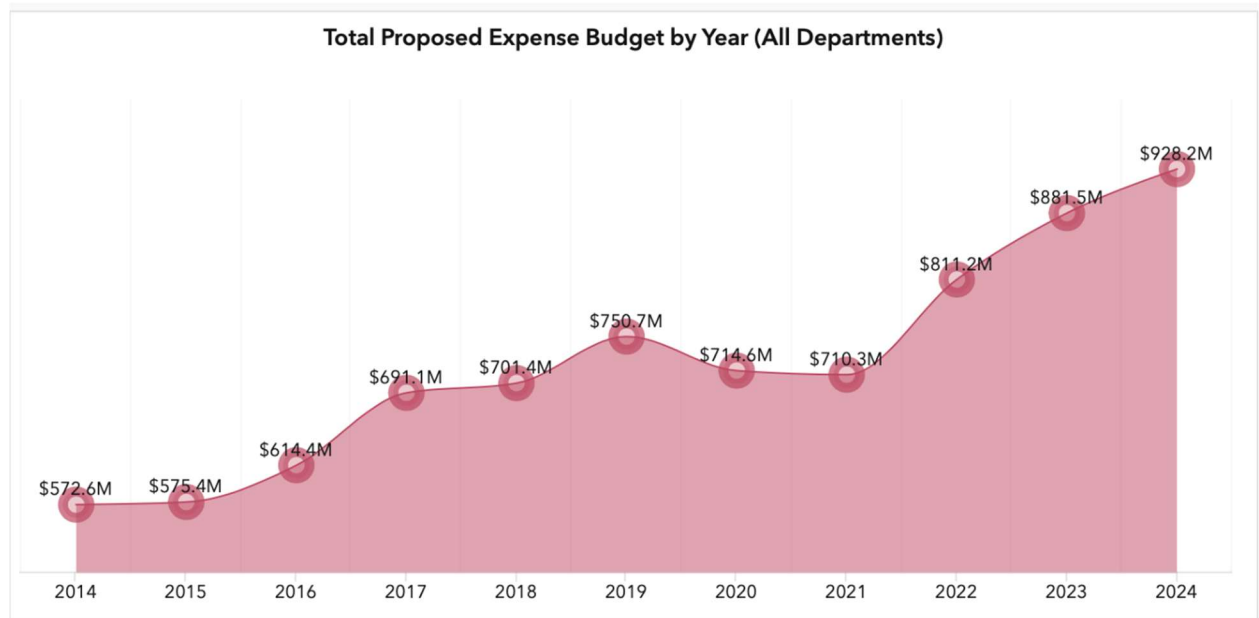
But these alone are not the only issue, and neither of these are something we have control of at the city level.

What the City has control over directly is setting the **expense budget**. Let's look at these numbers—I goggled these numbers, then clicked on the first one that gave me the amount in the search results.

- 2024 Budget \$855 Million ([MPR](#))
- 2024 Budget \$844 Million ([strib](#))
- 2023 Budget \$782 Million ([Stpaul.gov](#))
- 2022 Budget \$713 Million ([minnpost](#)) "...unveiling a 2022 budget that boosts spending by almost 13 percent ..."

So the budget has increased by 142 M in three years.

Can we find older data? Yes, we can. This chart is from the City's Open Budget page — :



<https://information.stpaul.gov/apps/a51b8a3f83b346e4a317c00c7a11d4db/explore>

(If that link doesn't work, google stpaul.gov open budget)

Note: the numbers on the chart are different from the sources above — I assume this is the difference between proposed budget and actual spending — which would show that the city consistently spent more than it said it would.

Is that just inflation? Using this [calculator](#), it's not just inflation:

572.2 2014 dollars = 763.5 2024 dollars

575.4 2015 dollars = 766.3 2024 dollars

614.4 2016 dollars = 808.1 2024 dollars

691.1 2017 dollars = 889.9 2024 dollars

701.4 2018 dollars = 881.7 2024 dollars

750.7 2019 dollars = 926.9 2024 dollars

714.6 2020 dollars = 871.6 2024 dollars

710.3 2021 dollars = 827.5 2024 dollars

811.2 2022 dollars = 875.0 2024 dollars

881.5 2023 dollars = 913.2 2024 dollars

928.2 2024 dollars = 928.2 2024 dollars

Highlights from the [PiPress article](#)

“If we don’t have enough money to maintain our parks facilities, why are we putting in the budget more money to build new facilities?” said Gregory Blees, who served as a city budget director in the 1980s under then-Mayor George Latimer and later as a city council financial analyst. “That’s a major frustration with our whole committee.”

St. Paul’s effective property tax rate for median-value homes — 1.39% of estimated market value — is already the highest of all of Minnesota’s 20 regions, and the sales tax rate, 9.875%, is the highest in the state.

During 2020 to 2023, St. Paul was the only one of Minnesota’s five largest cities to lose population. At least two major private employers located downtown announced this year they would leave the city [...]

Recommendations

Among some of the report’s recommendations:

- Establish a committee to advocate for more voluntary payments in lieu of property taxes from tax-exempt entities.
- Don’t approve Parks and Recreation design or construction funding this year or next for any facilities or park that doesn’t currently exist, including the East Side Community Center, Mississippi River Balcony, River Learning Center at Crosby Park, a multi-purpose regional athletic complex and new or enhanced water features citywide.
- Don’t approve sales tax bond issues until the city’s Office of Financial Services prepares a comprehensive bonding and debt service report.
- Don’t use long-term bonds to pay for police and fire public safety vehicles that have a short shelf life and will not survive the life of the bond issue.

From: Jean Walley <jeanmwalley@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 24, 2024 9:37 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Subject: 2025 tax increase

Council woman Kim:

Please do what you can to prevent the Mayor's extreme tax levy from passing these heavy costs to the community. I have lots of friends ready to move across the river.

thank you,

Jean M. Walley
1302 Folsom St, St Paul, MN 55117

From: Don Magnuson <donsouthsiderec@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, August 17, 2024 8:35 AM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward5 <Ward5@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Subject: tax levy

Hello,

The proposed property tax levy is a terrible idea for many reasons. Here are a few.

My salary didn't go up that much so why does the city get to increase taxes by more than double what my pay raise was?

How do we expect housing to be affordable when the city takes such a big chunk in taxes?

The city has many bloated budgets in other areas and could trim their budget rather than increase it.

A full month of my salary every year goes to pay property tax. I repeat. One month. Property taxes have more than tripled since I moved in.

What do I get for my money? Minimal police protection. Schools I wouldn't dare send my kids to. A system that protects perpetrators but not the public. Public transit too unsafe to use in many areas.

Sincerely,

Don Magnuson

East Como
