

**From:** [Richard Lemanczykafka](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Resolution # 38, regarding the mill-overlay assessments for Prior Ave.  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 18, 2021 10:51:42 AM

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WE are formally objecting to the 2019 Prior Ave Mill and Overlay assessment. My statement is as follows...

We our the owners of the house/lot at 1946 Selby Ave. We bought this home in November of 1987, and thus have resided here for 33 years! That was the last time the city did any major road work on Prior Ave, for which we were NOT assessed any cost! Our taxes evidently paid for that, as well they should. Since then this mill-overlay has been the first major work done on Prior Ave. and as all of us who live here know that it IS a **very busy public city artery** that runs along the side of our house. Being such a very busy city artery, which thousands of cars use as a North-South shortcut from Pierce Butler to Summit, it was more than troubling when we discovered that we'd be responsible for a large chunk of the cost of this project. That was outrageously shocking!

We understand these projects are expensive and that the money needs to come from some where. Should a person who lives in Alaska have to contribute to the maintenance of the road that runs along my lot, probably not. Should we set up a toll booth on every street block and charge a car every time they make use of that specific block of road? We'll that doesn't make sense either. We get that this is a very debatable subject, so I'll tell you my perspective and let you make decisions based on the collective input and the laws in place.

Our property value didn't increase by \$2,778 between when this mill and overlay started and completed on Prior Avenue in 2019. Would people be slightly more interested in buying my property in the future knowing the street was just redone, possibly right after the project completed? Does this equate to a likely higher resale value, maybe on the order of a couple hundred dollars at most in 2019? But now that the road has a couple years of wear and tear on it, no not at all! Even if the value did slightly increase due to the road resurface, this similarly effects the property adjacent to me (my neighbors) at 1948 Selby Ave, and the property adjacent to them. We all use Prior Avenue equally. It would be very incorrect to say that the corner lot owners use Prior (the cross street) any more than anyone else living on our block of Selby. So to assess a \$2,778 bill to us, and no bill to our nextdoor neighbors who live the same street is very irrational.

There are thousands of cars that drive on Prior Avenue past our house every day, and you can add to that hundreds of bike riders. The majority of these people (I'll guess over 75%) likely don't even live within a block distance of Prior Avenue. So even if the cost of the repair was evenly spread amongst those that live within a block distance of Prior Ave, it would still be an unfair process.

Certainly one can't say that only St. Paul residents use this stretch of Prior Ave, and that they all use it equally, but we believe the most fair way to divide the costs is to use the general fund. We don't like the idea that part of our property taxes goes to pay for the small roads that are in some other corner of the city that we never travel on, but we understand that is the price one has to pay to live in a city. All public city roads should be maintained by everyone who lives in that city, with the value of everyone's property determining the share of the cost they incur.

Thus, we request that you remove our “special assessment” for the 2019 Mill and Overlay. And that you take funds out of the general fund to cover this cost. If you truly believe that this now two year old road maintenance project has increased the value of my property and have facts to back it up, then increase the assessed value of my property by that likely tiny amount, and then in the future that will ever so slightly increase my percentage of what I pay for my property taxes compared to those who didn’t have a slight property value increase from this project.

We also don’t like that lawyers need to be involved in situations like these. It collectively cost the city more money, or in other words decreases its effectiveness. It’s better if the city follows the laws in place, so that there is no need to bring in lawyers to force the city leadership to follow the laws. In the case of the way the city is assessing their mill and overlay projects, they are breaking the law, at our expense. As a result we have the right and obligation to hire a lawyer to fight this injustice, but unfortunately at everyone’s expense, though more of our expense than anyone else’s. Please eliminate this special assessment so we don’t have to go down this unfortunate path. We believe that we are already paying outrageously high city taxes, as well as the other assessments, (which to us are just sneaky ways of getting around not calling them tax increases!) and strongly believe the costs for the mill-overlay should come from general fund expenses!

Sincerely,  
Richard & Vickie Lemanczykafka  
1946 Selby Ave  
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