

From: [Jessa Wood](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)
Subject: written statement to Council regarding files MO2604 (2026 Mill and Overlay--Wheelock/Grotto Area) and 19277 (Wheelock Pkwy/Grotto St (2026) Street Reconstruction Phase II)
Date: Tuesday, January 27, 2026 4:55:53 PM

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Hi! Submitting a property owner statement from Jessa Wood regarding files MO2604 (2026 Mill and Overlay--Wheelock/Grotto Area) and 19277 (Wheelock Pkwy/Grotto St (2026) Street Reconstruction Phase II). Property ID 23-29-23-42-0063.

Statement

My partner and I were shocked and concerned to receive notice that we face an **estimated assessment of \$14,149.54 for the Wheelock-Grotto reconstruction project**, a cost that is borderline untenable to us as a young couple and new homeowners. I am writing as a concerned St. Paul homeowner to ask that you **consider limiting assessments associated with the Wheelock-Grotto Reconstruction Project, particularly for corner property owners who are currently being charged multiple times over for the costs of the project.**

When my husband and I chose to purchase a home in St. Paul, we knew that the city had higher property taxes than nearby areas. We chose to live here because we place a high value on living in a vibrant, diverse city that enacts a commitment to community, in part through significant shared investment in city programs and infrastructure. We were prepared and willing to contribute our fair share through taxes and assessments.

The extent of costs being assigned to us individually rather than shared by the community via this assessment is disappointing, however. While of course it's completely fair for homeowners to chip in for projects near their properties from which they especially benefit, these assessments are a significant burden, and as a matter of fairness are meant to be tied to the increase in real property value associated with the project. Having purchased the home recently, it is clear to me that this project will not contribute \$14,000 to our property value. Moreover, our home's position on Grotto St.--a main road in the neighborhood that faces significant through-traffic, the primary cause of needed repairs--already *lowers* the value of our home relative to others nearby. Of course, some homeowners inevitably need to live on more highly-trafficked roads. But to ask those homeowners to pay thousands for repairs needed to maintain a road that we use no more often than many others in our neighborhood--that needs repairs more frequently because of *others'* use--seems to contravene the spirit of community that drew us to St. Paul. **I ask that the Council take steps to limit the cost of this project and/or lower the percentage of the project assessed to individual homeowners, recognizing that the repairs benefit (and thus should be funded by) the entire community, and that the proposed assessments are not aligned with the real increase in property value associated with this project.** Managing and sharing the costs of projects like this one is the only way St. Paul will remain a viable place for young families to put down roots.

One factor that may be contributing to these costs for our home in particular is that current plans assess corner properties separately for construction projects on each of the streets adjacent to the home--in our case, the mill and overlay of Grotto St. (file #MO2604) and the reconstruction of Cottage Ave. (file 19277)--even though both projects are part of the broader

Wheelock-Grotto Reconstruction Project. In our case, the estimated assessment includes both \$4,156.54 for mill and overlay and \$9,993.00 for street reconstruction. The city's own calculation of the special benefit cap suggests that the benefit of the Wheelock-Grotto Reconstruction Project to our property is \$9,993.00. Unfortunately, by calculating the costs of these projects separately, the city has applied the special benefit cap to only one of the projects rather than the total costs we face for the Wheelock-Grotto Reconstruction Project. **I ask that the Council consider calculating and applying special benefit cap for *all* aspects of the Wheelock-Grotto Reconstruction project, rather than to each element of the project individually, so that corner homeowners are not assessed costs far beyond what is commensurate with the increase in property value conferred by the improvements according to the city's own calculations.**

Thank you,
Jessa Wood