

# 1 Problem Setup

As input, we are given a directed graph  $G = (V_G, E_G)$ , where each vertex is a geographic position  $s_i \in S^2$ , and each edge  $(i, j)$  has an associated (Olivier-Ricci) curvature  $R_{i,j} \in (-2, 1)$  and an associated latency  $t_{i,j} \in \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}$ .

Intuitively, we want to return a surface in  $\mathbb{R}^3$  that is the graph of a function  $\rho : S^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{>0}$  whose geodesics  $g_{i,j}$  between  $s_i$  and  $s_j$  (and their missing  $\rho$ -coordinates) have length  $\phi_{i,j}$  that is in a linear relationship with the latency.

The strategy to realize this intuition is to create a mesh  $M = (V_M, E_M)$  supported on a subset of  $S^2$  that contains our input positions  $V_G$ . We use a standard [half-edge](#) setup, so that  $E_M$  is a set of ordered pairs (edges are directed). Let  $P$  be the support. Then for each  $s_i \in P$ , we want to assign a  $\rho_i \in \mathbb{R}_{>0}$ , which in turn gives a point  $v_i = (s_i, \rho_i) \in V$ . This setup is made explicit in `mesh/sphere.py`.

A similar setup is found in `mesh/rectangle.py`, where we use  $[0, 1]^2$  instead of  $S^2$ . In general, this setup just requires that the position of any mesh vertex is controlled by a single scalar parameter.

## 2 Objective/Loss Functions

To enforce that the mesh approximates our desired surface, we roughly<sup>1</sup> define the objective functions

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{L}_{\text{geodesic}}(M) &\triangleq \sum_{e \in E_G} (\text{least squares residual of edge } e)^2, \\ \mathcal{L}_{\text{smooth}}(M) &\triangleq -\rho^\top L_C^N \rho, \\ \mathcal{L}_{\text{curvature}}(M) &\triangleq \sum_{\substack{v \in V_M \\ v \text{ close to } (i, j)}} (\kappa(v) - R_{i,j})^2, \\ \mathcal{L}(M) &\triangleq \lambda_{\text{geodesic}} \mathcal{L}_{\text{geodesic}}(M) + \lambda_{\text{curvature}} \mathcal{L}_{\text{curvature}}(M) + \lambda_{\text{smooth}} \mathcal{L}_{\text{smooth}}(M),\end{aligned}$$

where the  $\lambda$ 's are tunable hyperparameters. The other variables will be defined in the upcoming subsections. Our goal is then to minimize  $\mathcal{L}(M)$ .

Note that the loss functions (particularly the geodesic and total ones) also have a dependence on the measured latencies. We omit that as a written parameter because they are treated as fixed (we are really optimizing over the manifold, not over the measured latencies).

### 2.1 Laplacian

Some mesh notation first. If  $i$  and  $j$  are two indices vertices for which  $(v_i, v_j) \in E_M$ , let  $c(i, j)$  be the index such that  $v_i \rightarrow v_j \rightarrow v_{c(i,j)}$  traces a triangle counterclockwise. Note that this index exists and is unique assuming we have a mesh without boundary. On a mesh with boundary, if no  $c(i, j)$  exists, then the half-edge  $(v_i, v_j)$  lies on the boundary.

We also write  $\partial M$  to represent the boundary of our mesh. Abusing notation, we can write things like  $v_i \in \partial M$  or  $(v_i, v_j) \in \partial M$ .

We define the following variables:

$N_{i,j}$	Outward normal of triangle $v_i \rightarrow v_j \rightarrow v_{c(i,j)}$
$A_{i,j}$	Area of triangle $v_i \rightarrow v_j \rightarrow v_{c(i,j)}$
$D_{i,j}$	Vertex triangle areas; diagonal
$\theta_{i,j}$	Measure of $\angle v_i v_{c(i,j)} v_j$
$L_C^N$	Cotangent operator with <a href="#">zero-Neumann boundary condition</a>
$L_C^D$	Cotangent operator with <a href="#">zero-Dirichlet boundary condition</a>
$L_C$	Cotangent operator in the no-boundary case; sparse

<sup>1</sup>The actual definitions are scaled so that the values are comparable regardless of the choice of mesh.

### 2.1.1 Forward Computation

We have the following (standard) definition of the Laplace-Beltrami operator on a mesh:

$$\begin{aligned}
N_{i,j} &= \left( v_i - v_{c(i,j)} \right) \times \left( v_j - v_{c(i,j)} \right), \\
A_{i,j} &= \frac{1}{2} \|N_{i,j}\|_2, \\
D_{i,j} &= \begin{cases} \frac{1}{3} \sum_{\substack{k \\ (v_i, v_k) \in E_M}} A_{i,k} & \text{if } i = j, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases} \\
\cot(\theta_{i,j}) &= \frac{\left( v_i - v_{c(i,j)} \right) \cdot \left( v_j - v_{c(i,j)} \right)}{2A_{i,j}}, \\
\left( L_C^N \right)_{i,j} &= \begin{cases} \frac{1}{2} \cot(\theta_{i,j}) & \text{if } (v_i, v_j) \in \partial M, \\ \frac{1}{2} \cot(\theta_{j,i}) & \text{if } (v_j, v_i) \in \partial M, \\ \frac{1}{2} \left( \cot(\theta_{i,j}) + \cot(\theta_{j,i}) \right) & \text{if } (v_i, v_j), (v_j, v_i) \in E_M, \\ -\frac{1}{2} \left( \sum_{\substack{k \\ (v_i, v_k) \in E_M}} \cot(\theta_{i,k}) + \sum_{\substack{k \\ (v_k, v_i) \in E_M}} \cot(\theta_{k,i}) \right) & \text{if } i = j, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases} \\
\left( L_C^D \right)_{i,j} &= \begin{cases} \frac{1}{2} \left( \cot(\theta_{i,j}) + \cot(\theta_{j,i}) \right) & \text{if } (v_i, v_j) \in E_M, v_i \notin \partial M, \text{ and } v_j \notin \partial M, \\ -\frac{1}{2} \sum_{\substack{k \notin \partial M \\ (v_i, v_k) \in E_M \\ (v_k, v_i) \in E_M}} \left( \cot(\theta_{i,k}) + \cot(\theta_{k,i}) \right) & \text{if } i = j \text{ and } v_i \notin \partial M, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}
\end{aligned}$$

Flipping our attention to meshes without boundary, the two definitions above coincide, so we can write

$$L_C = L_C^{\text{Neumann}} = L_C^{\text{Dirichlet}}.$$

We take special note of this case as this is what is described in great detail in the original heat method paper.

### 2.1.2 Reverse Computation

For the ease of notation, assume that we are using the spherical setup, so  $v_\ell = \rho_\ell s_\ell$ .

We compute

$$\frac{\partial v_i}{\partial \rho_\ell} = \begin{cases} s_i & \text{if } \ell = i, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
\frac{\partial N_{i,j}}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= \begin{cases} \left( v_{c(i,j)} - v_j \right) \times \frac{\partial v_\ell}{\partial \rho_\ell} & \text{if } \ell = i, \\ \left( v_i - v_{c(i,j)} \right) \times \frac{\partial v_\ell}{\partial \rho_\ell} & \text{if } \ell = j, \\ (v_j - v_i) \times \frac{\partial v_\ell}{\partial \rho_\ell} & \text{if } \ell = c(i,j), \\ 0 & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases} \\
\frac{\partial A_{i,j}}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= \frac{1}{4A_{i,j}} N_{i,j} \cdot \frac{\partial N_{i,j}}{\partial \rho_\ell}, \\
\left( \frac{\partial D}{\partial \rho_\ell} \right)_{i,j} &= \begin{cases} \frac{1}{3} \sum_{\substack{k \\ (v_i, v_k) \in E_M}} \frac{\partial A_{i,k}}{\partial \rho_\ell} & \text{if } i = j, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases} \\
\frac{\partial}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cot(\theta_{i,j}) &= \begin{cases} \frac{\left( v_j - v_{c(i,j)} \right) \cdot \frac{\partial v_\ell}{\partial \rho_\ell} - 2 \cot(\theta_{i,j}) \frac{\partial A_{i,j}}{\partial \rho_\ell}}{2A_{i,j}} & \text{if } \ell = i, \\ \frac{\left( v_i - v_{c(i,j)} \right) \cdot \frac{\partial v_\ell}{\partial \rho_\ell} - 2 \cot(\theta_{i,j}) \frac{\partial A_{i,j}}{\partial \rho_\ell}}{2A_{i,j}} & \text{if } \ell = j, \\ \frac{\left( 2v_{c(i,j)} - v_i - v_j \right) \cdot \frac{\partial v_\ell}{\partial \rho_\ell} - 2 \cot(\theta_{i,j}) \frac{\partial A_{i,j}}{\partial \rho_\ell}}{2A_{i,j}} & \text{if } \ell = c(i,j), \\ 0 & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases} \\
\left( \frac{\partial L_C^N}{\partial \rho_\ell} \right)_{i,j} &= \begin{cases} \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cot(\theta_{i,j}) & \text{if } (v_i, v_j) \in \partial M, \\ \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cot(\theta_{j,i}) & \text{if } (v_j, v_i) \in \partial M, \\ \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{\partial}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cot(\theta_{i,j}) + \frac{\partial}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cot(\theta_{j,i}) \right) & \text{if } (v_i, v_j), (v_j, v_i) \in E_M, \\ -\frac{1}{2} \left( \sum_{\substack{k \\ (v_i, v_k) \in E_M}} \frac{\partial}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cot(\theta_{i,k}) + \sum_{\substack{k \\ (v_k, v_i) \in E_M}} \frac{\partial}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cot(\theta_{k,i}) \right) & \text{if } i = j, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases} \\
\left( \frac{\partial L_C^D}{\partial \rho_\ell} \right)_{i,j} &= \begin{cases} \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{\partial}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cot(\theta_{i,j}) + \frac{\partial}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cot(\theta_{j,i}) \right) & \text{if } (v_i, v_j) \in E_M, v_i \notin \partial M, \text{ and } v_j \notin \partial M, \\ -\frac{1}{2} \sum_{\substack{k \notin \partial M \\ (v_i, v_k) \in E_M \\ (v_k, v_i) \in E_M}} \left( \frac{\partial}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cot(\theta_{i,k}) + \frac{\partial}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cot(\theta_{k,i}) \right) & \text{if } i = j \text{ and } v_i \notin \partial M, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}
\end{aligned}$$

## 2.2 Geodesic Distance via the Heat Method

Here are the variables used for this part of the computation:

$\gamma$	Set of points in $V_M$
$h$	Mean half-edge length
$\delta^\gamma$	Heat source (indicator on $\gamma$ )
$u^{\gamma,N}$	Heat flow with zero-Neumann boundary condition
$u^{\gamma,D}$	Heat flow with zero-Dirichlet boundary condition
$u^\gamma$	Heat flow
$q_{i,j}^\gamma$	Intermediate value for computation
$m_{i,j}^\gamma$	Intermediate value for computation
$X_{i,j}^\gamma$	Unit vector in same direction as $\nabla u_{i,j}^\gamma$
$p_{i,j}^\gamma$	Intermediate value for computation
$\phi^\gamma$	Vector of offset geodesic distances
$\tilde{\phi}^\gamma$	Vector of offset geodesic distances

### 2.2.1 Forward Computation

Say we want to find the geodesic distances to a set of points  $\gamma \subseteq V_M$ . Following [Crane et al's Heat Method](#), we use the (approximate) heat flow  $u^\gamma$ , where

$$\begin{aligned}
h &= \frac{1}{|E_M|} \sum_{\substack{i,j \\ (v_i, v_j) \in E_M}} \|v_i - v_j\|_2, \\
\delta^\gamma &= \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } v_i \in \gamma, \\ 0 & \text{if } v_i \notin \gamma, \end{cases} \\
u^{\gamma,N} &= (D - h^2 L_C^N)^{-1} \delta^\gamma, \\
u^{\gamma,D} &= (D - h^2 L_C^D)^{-1} \delta^\gamma, \\
u^\gamma &= \frac{1}{2} (u^{\gamma,N} + u^{\gamma,D}), \\
q_{i,j}^\gamma &= u_i^\gamma (v_{c(i,j)} - v_j), \\
m_{i,j}^\gamma &= q_{i,j}^\gamma + q_{j,c(i,j)}^\gamma + q_{c(i,j),i}^\gamma, \\
(\nabla u^\gamma)_{i,j} &= N_{i,j} \times m_{i,j}^\gamma, \\
X_{i,j}^\gamma &= -\frac{(\nabla u^\gamma)_{i,j}}{\|(\nabla u^\gamma)_{i,j}\|_2}, \\
p_{i,j} &= \cot(\theta_{i,j}) (v_j - v_i), \\
(\nabla \cdot X^\gamma)_i &= \frac{1}{2} \sum_{\substack{k \\ (v_i, v_k) \in E_M}} \left( p_{i,k} - p_{c(i,k),i} \right) \cdot X_{i,k}^\gamma, \\
\tilde{\phi}^\gamma &= (L_C^N)^+ \cdot (\nabla \cdot X^\gamma), \\
\phi^\gamma &= \tilde{\phi}^\gamma - \min(\tilde{\phi}^\gamma).
\end{aligned}$$

Here,  $(L_C^N)^+$  is the [pseudoinverse](#) of  $L_C^N$  (this is necessary as it is singular).

Note that we're being careful about which pieces have a dependence on  $\gamma$ , as we can reuse certain computations if we want to compute distances from multiple sources. We can get the pairwise distance

matrix (that is, get rid of the  $\gamma$  dependence) from

$$\phi_{i,j} = \left( \phi^{\{v_j\}} \right)_i.$$

### 2.2.2 Reverse Computation

Note that  $c(i, c(j, i)) = j$ . This is helpful for reindexing some sums (in particular, the one for  $\nabla \cdot X$ ).

We then have the following partial derivatives:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial h}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= \frac{1}{|E_M|} \left( \sum_{\substack{k \\ (v_\ell, v_k) \in E_M}} \frac{(v_\ell - v_k)}{\|v_\ell - v_k\|_2} \cdot \frac{\partial v_\ell}{\partial \rho_\ell} + \sum_{\substack{k \\ (v_k, v_\ell) \in E_M}} \frac{(v_\ell - v_k)}{\|v_\ell - v_k\|_2} \cdot \frac{\partial v_\ell}{\partial \rho_\ell} \right), \\ \frac{\partial u^{\gamma, N}}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= - \left( D - h^2 L_C^N \right)^{-1} \left( \frac{\partial D}{\partial \rho_\ell} - 2h \frac{\partial h}{\partial \rho_\ell} L_C^N - h^2 \frac{\partial L_C^N}{\partial \rho_\ell} \right) u^{\gamma, N}, \\ \frac{\partial u^{\gamma, D}}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= - \left( D - h^2 L_C^D \right)^{-1} \left( \frac{\partial D}{\partial \rho_\ell} - 2h \frac{\partial h}{\partial \rho_\ell} L_C^D - h^2 \frac{\partial L_C^D}{\partial \rho_\ell} \right) u^{\gamma, D}, \\ \frac{\partial u^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{\partial u^{\gamma, N}}{\partial \rho_\ell} + \frac{\partial u^{\gamma, D}}{\partial \rho_\ell} \right), \\ \frac{\partial q_{i,j}^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= \begin{cases} \frac{\partial u_i^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell} \left( v_{c(i,j)} - v_j \right) - u_i^\gamma \frac{\partial v_\ell}{\partial \rho_\ell} & \text{if } \ell = j, \\ \frac{\partial u_i^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell} \left( v_{c(i,j)} - v_j \right) + u_i^\gamma \frac{\partial v_\ell}{\partial \rho_\ell} & \text{if } \ell = c(i, j), \\ \frac{\partial u_i^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell} \left( v_{c(i,j)} - v_j \right) & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases} \\ \frac{\partial m_{i,j}^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= \frac{\partial q_{i,j}^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell} + \frac{\partial q_{j,c(i,j)}^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell} + \frac{\partial q_{c(i,j),i}^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell}, \\ \frac{\partial (\nabla u^\gamma)_{i,j}}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= \frac{\partial N_{i,j}}{\partial \rho_\ell} \times m_{i,j}^\gamma + N_{i,j} \times \frac{\partial m_{i,j}^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell}, \\ \frac{\partial X_{i,j}^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= - \frac{1}{\|(\nabla u^\gamma)_{i,j}\|_2} \left( I - X_{i,j}^\gamma (X_{i,j}^\gamma)^\top \right) \frac{\partial (\nabla u^\gamma)_{i,j}}{\partial \rho_\ell}, \\ \frac{\partial p_{i,j}}{\partial \rho} &= \begin{cases} \left( \frac{\partial}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cot(\theta_{i,j}) \right) (v_j - v_i) - \cot(\theta_{i,j}) \frac{\partial v_\ell}{\partial \rho_\ell} & \text{if } \ell = i, \\ \left( \frac{\partial}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cot(\theta_{i,j}) \right) (v_j - v_i) + \cot(\theta_{i,j}) \frac{\partial v_\ell}{\partial \rho_\ell} & \text{if } \ell = j, \\ \left( \frac{\partial}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cot(\theta_{i,j}) \right) (v_j - v_i) & \text{if } \ell = c(i, j), \\ 0 & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases} \\ \frac{\partial (\nabla \cdot X^\gamma)_i}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= \frac{1}{2} \sum_{\substack{k \\ (v_i, v_k) \in E_M}} \left( \left( \frac{\partial p_{i,k}}{\partial \rho_\ell} - \frac{\partial p_{c(i,k),i}}{\partial \rho_\ell} \right) \cdot X_{i,k}^\gamma + \left( p_{i,k} - p_{c(i,k),i} \right) \cdot \frac{\partial X_{i,k}^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell} \right), \\ \frac{\partial \tilde{\phi}^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= \left( L_C^N \right)^+ \left( \frac{\partial (\nabla \cdot X^\gamma)}{\partial \rho_\ell} - \frac{\partial L_C^N}{\partial \rho_\ell} \phi^\gamma \right), \\ \frac{\partial \phi^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= \frac{\partial \tilde{\phi}^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell} - \left( \frac{\partial \tilde{\phi}^\gamma}{\partial \rho_\ell} \right)_\gamma. \end{aligned}$$

Note that  $\gamma = \arg \min(\phi)$ , which is where the final subtraction comes from.

### 2.3 Geodesic Loss

We will define the following in this section:

$\tilde{\phi}$	Geodesic distances corresponding to edges in $E_G$
$\tilde{d}$	Centered version of $\tilde{\phi}$
$d$	Normalized and centered version of $\tilde{\phi}$
$\beta$	The least squares linear estimator between $\tilde{\phi}$ and $t$
$\mathcal{L}_{\text{geodesic}}(M)$	The sum of squared residuals when using $\beta$ as an estimator, scaled to be unitless

In this and the following sections, we will abuse notation a bit and write things like  $\phi_e$  to mean  $\phi_{i,j}$ , where  $e = (i, j) \in E_G$ .

#### 2.3.1 Forward Computation

We make the following computations:

$$\begin{aligned}
\tilde{\phi}_e &= \phi_e \text{ when } e \in E_G, \\
\tilde{d} &= \tilde{\phi} - \frac{1}{|E_G|} (\tilde{\phi} \cdot \mathbf{1}) \mathbf{1}, \\
d &= \frac{1}{\sqrt{\frac{1}{|E_G|} \tilde{d} \cdot \tilde{d}}} \tilde{d}, \\
\beta_0 &= \frac{1}{|E_G|} t \cdot \mathbf{1}, \\
\beta_1 &= \frac{1}{|E_G|} t \cdot d, \\
\mathcal{L}_{\text{geodesic}}(M) &= \frac{1}{|E_G| \text{Var}(t)} \|t - (\beta_0 \mathbf{1} + \beta_1 d)\|_2^2.
\end{aligned}$$

#### 2.3.2 Reverse Computation

The partials of the above quantities are as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
\frac{\partial \tilde{\phi}_e}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= \frac{\partial \phi_e}{\partial \rho_\ell}, \\
\frac{\partial \tilde{d}}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= \frac{\partial \tilde{\phi}}{\partial \rho_\ell} - \frac{1}{|E_G|} \left( \frac{\partial \tilde{\phi}}{\partial \rho_\ell} \cdot \mathbf{1} \right) \mathbf{1}, \\
\frac{\partial d}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= \frac{1}{\sqrt{\frac{1}{|E_G|} \tilde{d} \cdot \tilde{d}}} \left( \frac{\partial \tilde{d}}{\partial \rho_\ell} - \frac{1}{|E_G|} \left( d \cdot \frac{\partial \tilde{d}}{\partial \rho_\ell} \right) d \right), \\
\frac{\partial \beta_0}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= 0, \\
\frac{\partial \beta_1}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= \frac{1}{|E_G|} t \cdot \frac{\partial d}{\partial \rho_\ell}, \\
\frac{\partial (\mathcal{L}_{\text{geodesic}}(M))}{\partial \rho_\ell} &= -\frac{2}{|E_G| \text{Var}(t)} (t - (\beta_0 \mathbf{1} + \beta_1 d)) \cdot \left( \frac{\partial \beta_1}{\partial \rho_\ell} d + \beta_1 \frac{\partial d}{\partial \rho_\ell} \right).
\end{aligned}$$

## 2.4 Smoothness Loss

We will define the following:

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{smooth}}(M) \mid \text{A discrete approximation to the Dirichlet energy of } M$$

### 2.4.1 Forward Computation

Following [this tutorial](#), we have

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{smooth}}(M) \propto -\rho^\top L_C^N \rho.$$

In terms of scaling, we divide by the surface area of the mesh when  $\rho = 0$  (that is, the area of a flat plane, a sphere, or similar).

### 2.4.2 Reverse Computation

Differentiating,

$$\frac{\partial(\mathcal{L}_{\text{smooth}}(M))}{\partial \rho_\ell} \propto -e_\ell^\top L_C^N \rho - \rho^\top \frac{\partial L_C^N}{\partial \rho_\ell} \rho - \rho^\top L_C^N e_\ell.$$

## 2.5 Curvature Loss

We will define the following:

$$\underline{B_\epsilon(e) \mid \text{TODO}}$$

### 2.5.1 Forward Computation

We have

*TODO*

### 2.5.2 Reverse Computation

Differentiating,

*TODO*