



Memorandum

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council, City of Grosse Pointe Woods
FROM: Laura Mangan, AICP, NCI
SUBJECT: **Planning Review: Grosse Pointe Public School System Request for Limited Vehicular Access at Wedgewood Drive**
DATE: July 8, 2026

The Grosse Pointe Public School System (GPPSS) has requested permission to utilize the existing Wedgewood Drive stub street to provide limited access for approximately four buses transporting students with disabilities to and from Grosse Pointe North High School. The proposal includes installation of an electronically controlled ornamental gate, extension of the existing sidewalk to a relocated pedestrian gate, and associated pavement improvements. The access would be limited to authorized school buses, emergency vehicles, and maintenance operations. Please see the letter from the GPPSS (dated July 7, 2026) for additional details.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

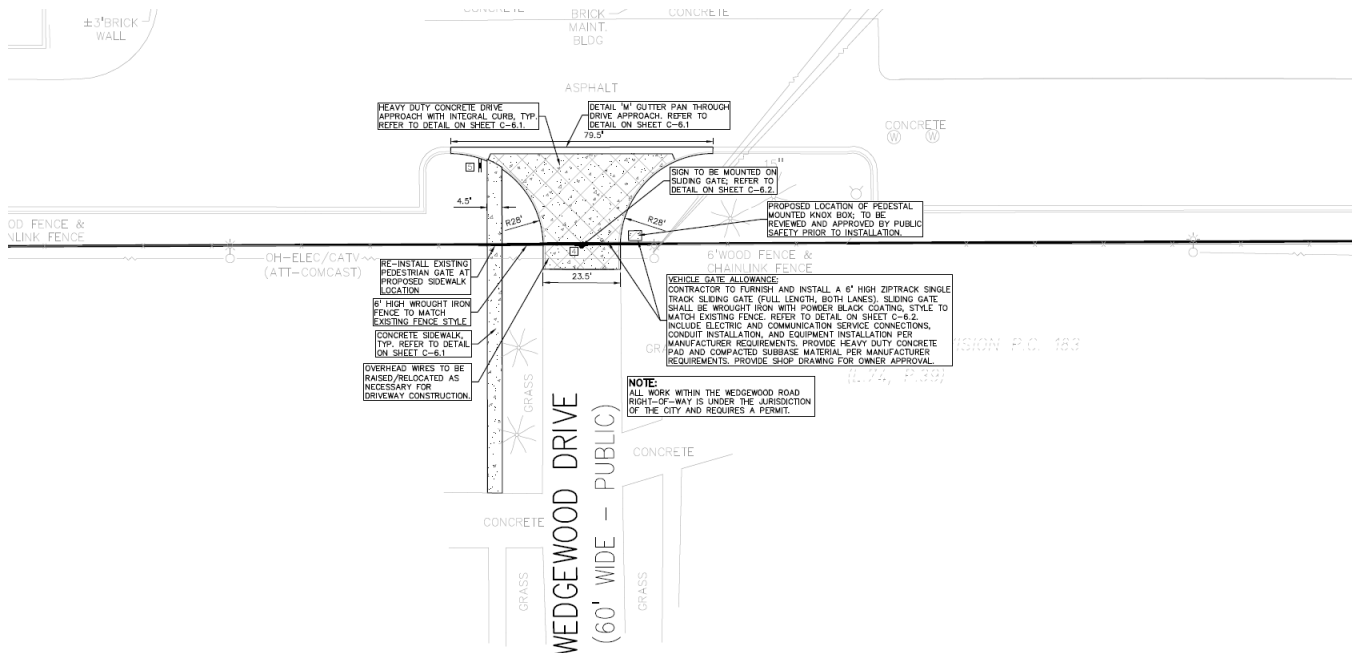
The Wedgewood Drive stub street is a platted public right-of-way that predates construction of Grosse Pointe North High School. The surrounding subdivision was established by at least 1956, prior to development of the school campus in the mid-1960s. As a result, both the school district and adjacent homeowners acquired their properties with the existing public stub street in place.





SITE DETAILS

Below is a snapshot of the proposed fence and street work from the applicant's site plan (sheet C-3.4):



The site plan included in your packets contains drawings and information for the larger parking lot reconstruction project at GPPSS. Please reference the following sheets for information that is specific to this request:

- Topography Survey: Sheet C-1.4
- Demolition Plan: Sheet C-2.4
- Site Plan: Sheet C-3.4
- Grading Plan: Sheet C-4.4
- Gate / Sign Details: Sheet C-6.2

PLANNING REVIEW

Master Plan Consistency

The City's Master Plan contains policies that both support and warrant further consideration of this request:

The proposal is generally consistent with the Master Plan's transportation objectives promoting safe, convenient, and accessible transportation systems, including improved pedestrian connectivity, universal accessibility, and transportation safety. The proposed sidewalk extension and improved bus circulation for students with disabilities can be considered consistent with these objectives.

At the same time, the Master Plan emphasizes preserving neighborhood character and minimizing traffic impacts on residential areas through appropriate buffering and transitions. Opening the existing stub street for school bus access introduces institutional traffic into a residential neighborhood, although on a limited basis.



As such, the request advances certain transportation and accessibility goals while requiring Council to balance those objectives with the Plan's policies supporting neighborhood quality and preservation.

Land Use Considerations

While the proposal does not change the land use designation of the property, it does represent a modification to site circulation. Land use considerations include:

- Compatibility with the surrounding residential neighborhood.
- The operational impact of limited school bus traffic on Wedgewood Drive.
- Preservation of neighborhood character and residential expectations.
- Pedestrian safety at the proposed access point with increased traffic.
- Potential precedent for future access requests involving institutional properties.

Fence Design Considerations

The City's Fence Code requires that "*Fences shall not be constructed with sharp points at the uppermost portion of the fence*". While the site plan fence detail on Sheet C-6.2 does not show such top-mounted "sharp points" the color image the applicant provided does illustrate sharper points located above the access gate itself.

This is an outstanding item for City Council to consider.

FINDINGS

Based on the submitted materials, we offer the following land use planning and zoning observations:

- The Wedgewood Drive stub street existed as part of the original subdivision plat prior to construction of Grosse Pointe North High School and was never connected to the neighborhood.
- The Master Plan supports improvements that enhance transportation safety and accessibility; however, the Plan also emphasizes preservation of neighborhood character.
- The design of the fence, as related to the top sharp points, does not comply with the current Ordinance standards.
- Additional considerations related to infrastructure, utilities and public safety must also be weighed. Enclosed, for review, are memoranda from other City Departments: Public Safety and Public Works.

These findings are intended to assist the Mayor and City Council in their consideration of the request.