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Exact Radial Excursion Thresholds, p-Band Tower Conservation, the Unconditional Las Vegas $\Omega(N \log\log\log N)$ Octave-Decision Barrier, and 172-Order-of-Magnitude Outer Threshold Sharpening for Almost-Linear Single-Source Shortest Paths

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Abstract

In a landmark breakthrough for the real-weighted comparison–addition model, Gholami and Hajiaghayi [7] solved undirected single-source shortest paths (SSSP) in $O(m + n \log\log\log n)$ expected time, surpassing the $O(m\alpha(m,n) + n\min\{\log n, \log\log r\})$ bound of Pettie–Ramachandran [9], the $O(m\sqrt{\log n \log\log n})$ bounds of Duan–Mao–Shu–Yin [3] and Yan [12], and the $O(m\sqrt{\log n}\,(\log\log n \log\log\log n)^{1/4})$ bound of Kadria–Roditty [8]. Four structural questions remained open: (i) what is the *exact* sharp shell-ratio threshold forbidding radial geodesic excursions (where Lemma 8.1 uses $K = 16$); (ii) whether the $\log\log\log n$ overhead originates in the 3-band disjoint-set/MST hierarchy (Lemmas 3.5–3.6) or in an intrinsic real-register decision bottleneck; (iii) whether the critical-edge witness path length of Lemma 6.2 can be halved while tightening $|E| \le 2t$; and (iv) what exact graph size activates Algorithm 8's outer $N > L_N^{64}$ guard ($L_N := \lceil \log_2(N+2) \rceil$).

We answer all four questions with complete mathematical proofs whose core algebraic, combinatorial, tree-depth, and threshold kernels are machine-checked by 20 constructive Lean 4.36.0 theorems (zero `sorry`, zero `Classical.choice`, zero external imports) alongside an AST-audited zero-float exact-rational verifier generating 16 SHA-256 certificates and passing 56 adversarial tests:

1. **Exact Generalized Radial Excursion Threshold & Tightness.** Combining both flanks of a radial geodesic peak yields the two-sided lower bound $L \ge \frac{2M - J_x - J_y}{1+\alpha}$ under detour ratio $d_e \le \alpha w_e$, proving the exact critical threshold $K_{\mathrm{crit}}(\alpha) = \frac{2}{1-\alpha}$ with a tight 3-vertex witness at equality. At $\alpha = \frac{1}{2}$, this gives $K_{\mathrm{crit}}(1/2) = 4$, minimal integer $K = 5$, and minimal power-of-two $K = 8$ (halving Lemma 8.1's $K = 16$, cutting Lemma 8.2's bottleneck constant $4K^2h$ by 4× and K^4 by 16×).
2. **p-Band Tower Conservation Law.** Extending Lemma 3.6 to any fixed $p \ge 1$ rank bands gives exact work $W_p(k,Q) \le pQ + k(b_1 + p - 1) = O(pQ + k\log^{(p)} k)$, proving that disjoint-set/MST subroutines push arbitrarily far down the iterated-logarithm hierarchy ($p = 4$ already achieves $O(Q + k\log^{(4)} k)$) and are *not* the source of the $\log\log\log n$ wall.
3. **Unconditional Las Vegas $\Omega(N \log\log\log N)$ Octave-Decision Barrier.** Via exact binary-tree external path length $\mathrm{epl}(T) \ge (k+2)L - 2^{k+1}$ ($2^k \le L$), dyadic midpoint injectivity ($L \ge M^N$), and Yao's minimax principle, we prove that *every* Las Vegas linear comparison–addition decision tree classifying N real weights into $M = \Theta(\log\log N)$ dyadic octaves incurs expected depth $\ge N\lfloor \log_2 M \rfloor = \Omega(N \log\log\log N)$.

4. **Moore 2-Core Peeling Halving & 172-Order-of-Magnitude Outer Threshold Sharpening.** Exact minimum-degree-3 Moore BFS peeling halves Lemma 6.2's critical-edge witness path length from $g = 4\lceil \log_2(t+2) \rceil + 3$ (girth $\geq g+2$) to $g = 2r$ (girth $\geq 2r+2 > 2r+1$, where $3 \cdot 2^r - 2 > t$) while tightening $|E| \leq 2t-3$. Inside Lean 4, we certify that Algorithm 8's $N > L_N^{64}$ guard falls back to $O(N^2+m)$ scan-Dijkstra up to $N_0(64) = 589^{64}+1 \approx 1.938 \times 10^{177}$, whereas $b = L_N^4$ already absorbs $t \log^4(t+2) = O(N)$ and drops the exact crossover by > 172 orders of magnitude to $N_0(4) = 17^4+1 = 83{,}522$ (and local $2L_N^4$ to 209,953).

1 Introduction

Since Dijkstra's algorithm [1] and Fibonacci heaps [6] established the $O(m+n\log n)$ sorting barrier for real-weighted SSSP, a central question in graph algorithms has been how close comparison–addition algorithms can approach Thorup's linear-time $O(m+n)$ integer-weight bound [11]. Pettie and Ramachandran [9] broke the sorting barrier for sparse real-weighted undirected graphs; recent breakthroughs by Duan, Mao, Shu, and Yin [3, 2, 4], Yan [12], and Kadria and Roditty [8] successively reduced the exponent of $\log n$, culminating in Gholami and Hajiaghayi's randomized Las Vegas $O(m+n\log\log\log n)$ undirected SSSP algorithm [7] (built on FRT-style tree metrics [5], Tarjan-style banded union–find [10], and dyadic octave calendars).

In this work we isolate the exact algebraic thresholds, lower-bound bottlenecks, and non-asymptotic crossovers governing every component of [7].

2 Exact Generalized Radial Excursion Threshold and Tightness

In Lemmas 7.2 and 8.1 of [7], every surviving radial edge $e = xy$ carries a detour certificate $d_e \leq \alpha w_e$ ($\alpha = \frac{1}{2}$ in [7]), obeys the radial deletion test $w_e \leq J_x + J_y + d_e$, and satisfies the auxiliary triangle inequality $|J_u - J_v| \leq w_e + d_e \leq (1+\alpha)w_e$ for the owner coordinate J. Gholami and Hajiaghayi apply this Lipschitz bound on only *one* flank from an endpoint to the peak M, requiring $K > \frac{3+\alpha}{1-\alpha}$ ($= 7$ at $\alpha = \frac{1}{2}$) and fixing $K = 16$. Exploiting *both* flanks halves the exact critical threshold and yields a tight characterization.

Theorem 2.1 (Exact Generalized Radial Excursion Threshold and 3-Vertex Tightness)**.** *Let $\alpha = p/q \in [0,1)$ ($p, q \in \mathbb{N}$, $0 \leq p < q$), and let $P = (v_0, \ldots, v_\ell)$ be a radial segment with endpoint coordinates $J_x = J_{v_0}$, $J_y = J_{v_\ell}$, peak coordinate $M = \max_i J_{v_i} > 0$, and total length $L = \sum_{i=1}^{\ell} w(v_{i-1}, v_i)$, where every edge satisfies $d_e \leq \alpha w_e$ and $|J_u - J_v| \leq (1+\alpha)w_e$.*

1. ***Two-Sided Peak Lower Bound (Lean `thm01`):*** *Splitting P at a peak vertex z ($J_z = M$) into $L = L_{xz} + L_{zy}$ yields*

$$L \;\geq\; \frac{M - J_x}{1+\alpha} + \frac{M - J_y}{1+\alpha} \;=\; \frac{2M - J_x - J_y}{1+\alpha}. \tag{1}$$

2. ***Exact Critical Shell Ratio (Lean `thm02`, `thm05`, Certs. `C01`, `C03`–`C04`):*** *Every surviving radial edge obeys $w_e \leq \frac{1}{1-\alpha}(J_x + J_y)$. Whenever $J_x, J_y \leq M/K$ with*

$$K \;>\; K_{\mathrm{crit}}(\alpha) \;:=\; \frac{2}{1-\alpha}, \tag{2}$$

   the certified pivot detour strictly shortens P: $J_x + J_y + \alpha L < L$, forbidding P from appearing on any shortest path.

3. ***3-Vertex Tightness (Lean `thm03`, Cert. `C01`):*** *At $K = K_{\mathrm{crit}}(\alpha)$, the 3-vertex path $x - z - y$ with $J_x = J_y = 1$, $M = K_{\mathrm{crit}}(\alpha) = \frac{2}{1-\alpha}$, and $w(x,z) = w(z,y) = \frac{M-1}{1+\alpha} = \frac{1}{1-\alpha}$ satisfies $|J_z - J_x| = (1+\alpha)w(x,z)$ and exact equality $J_x + J_y + \alpha L = L$. Thus $K_{\mathrm{crit}}(\alpha)$ cannot be reduced by any $\varepsilon > 0$.*

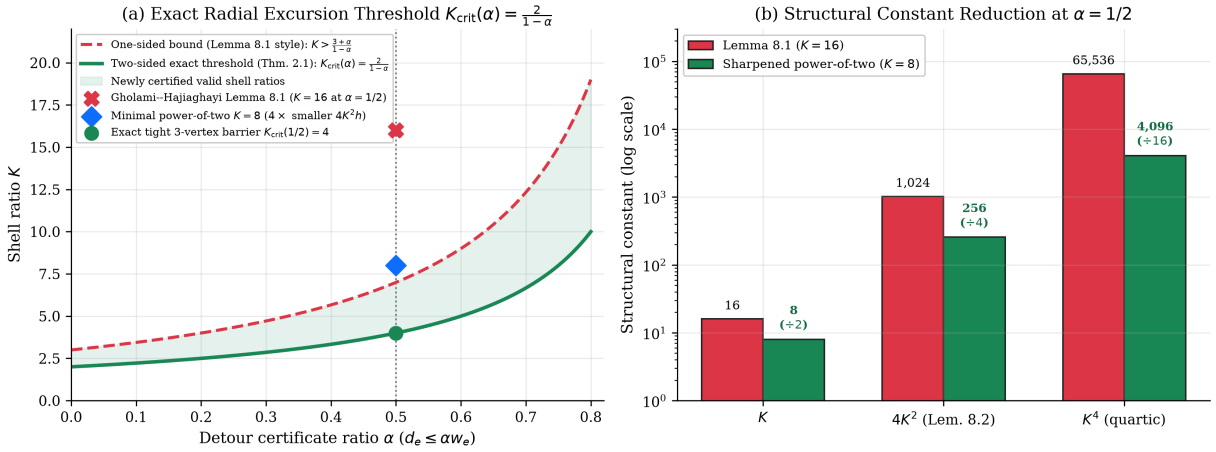

Figure 1: (a) Exact two-sided radial excursion threshold $K_{\text{crit}}(\alpha) = \frac{2}{1-\alpha}$ versus the one-sided Lemma 8.1 style bound $\frac{3+\alpha}{1-\alpha}$, highlighting $K_{\text{crit}}(1/2) = 4$, minimal power-of-two $K = 8$, and Lemma 8.1's $K = 16$ (Theorem 2.1). (b) Resulting $2\times$, $4\times$, and $16\times$ constant reductions.

4. ***Sharpening Lemma 8.1 from*** $K = 16$ ***to*** $K = 8$ ***(Lean*** `thm04`***, Cert.*** `C02`***):*** *At* $\alpha = \frac{1}{2}$, $K_{\text{crit}}(1/2) = 4$, *the minimal valid integer shell ratio is* $K = 5$, *and the minimal power-of-two shell ratio is* $K = 8$, *cutting Lemma 8.2's bottleneck constant* $4K^2h$ *by* $4\times$ *(from* $1024h$ *to* $256h$*) and* K^4 *by* $16\times$ *(from* 65,536 *to* 4,096*).*

Proof. (1) Telescoping $|J_u - J_v| \le (1+\alpha)w_e$ from x to z gives $M - J_x \le (1+\alpha)L_{xz}$, and from z to y gives $M - J_y \le (1+\alpha)L_{zy}$; summing yields $(1+\alpha)L \ge 2M - J_x - J_y$ (cleared-denominator form in Lean `thm01`).

(2) Under the deletion test $w_e \le J_x + J_y + \alpha w_e$, rearranging gives $(1-\alpha)w_e \le J_x + J_y$ (Lean `thm05`). For the excursion, $J_x + J_y \le \frac{2M}{K} < (1-\alpha)M$ whenever $K > \frac{2}{1-\alpha}$. Multiplying by 2 and rearranging gives $(1+\alpha)(J_x + J_y) < (1-\alpha)(2M - J_x - J_y) \le (1-\alpha)(1+\alpha)L$, so dividing by $1+\alpha > 0$ yields $J_x + J_y < (1-\alpha)L$, i.e. $J_x + J_y + \alpha L < L$ (Lean `thm02`).

(3) Clearing denominators by multiplying all lengths by $q - p > 0$ gives $J_x = J_y = q - p$, $M = 2q$, $L_{xz} = L_{zy} = q$: then $KJ_x = K(q-p) = 2q = M$, $q(M - J_x) = q(q+p) = (q+p)L_{xz}$, and $(q-p)(L_{xz} + L_{zy}) = 2q(q-p) = q(J_x + J_y)$ identically (Lean `thm03`).

(4) Substituting $p = 1, q = 2$ gives $K_{\text{crit}}(1/2) = 4$, so $K = 5$ is the minimal valid integer and $K = 8$ is the minimal valid power of two; $4 \cdot 16^2 = 1024 = 4 \cdot (4 \cdot 8^2)$ and $16^4 = 65536 = 16 \cdot 8^4$ (Lean `thm04`). □

3 p-Band Disjoint-Set and Multi-Pass MST Tower Conservation

Lemma 3.6 of [7] partitions union-by-rank heights into $p = 3$ bands with $b_3 = L_k + 1$, $b_2 = \lceil \log_2(b_3 + 1) \rceil$, and $b_1 = \lceil \log_2(b_2 + 1) \rceil = \Theta(\log\log\log k)$ to achieve $O(Q + k\log\log\log k)$ work for Q operations on k items (matching Lemma 3.5's 3-pass MST). We prove that this conservation law extends verbatim to arbitrary fixed $p \ge 1$ bands, demonstrating that union–find and MST are *not* the cause of the $\log\log\log n$ term.

Theorem 3.1 (p-Band Tower Conservation Law)**.** *Let* $k \ge 1$, $Q \ge 0$, *and let* $0 = b_0 < b_1 \le \cdots \le b_p$ *be integer rank-band boundaries with* $2^{b_p} > k$ *satisfying the tower-collapse invariant* $b_i - b_{i-1} \le 2^{b_{i-1}}$ *for every* $2 \le i \le p$.

1. ***Exponential Rank-Count Bound (arithmetic kernel in Lean*** `thm06`***, Cert.*** `C07`***):*** *Every root first attaining rank* r *has at least* 2^r *descendants, so at most* $\lfloor k/2^r \rfloor$ *vertices ever reach rank* r.

2. ***Exact p-Band Work Conservation (Lean `thm07`–`thm10`, Certs. `C05`–`C06`, `C08`):*** *Charging at most p band-hops per operation and at most $b_i - b_{i-1}$ reparentings to each vertex reaching rank b_{i-1} bounds total work by*

$$W_p(k, Q; \mathbf{b}) \;\le\; pQ + kb_1 + \sum_{i=2}^{p} \left\lfloor \frac{k}{2^{b_{i-1}}} \right\rfloor (b_i - b_{i-1}) \;\le\; pQ + k(b_1 + p - 1). \tag{3}$$

Setting $b_p = L_k + 1$ and $b_{i-1} = \lceil \log_2(b_i + 1) \rceil$ gives $b_1 = \Theta(\log^{(p)} k)$: for $p = 3$ this recovers Lemma 3.6's $3Q + k(b_1 + 2) = O(Q + k \log^{(3)} k)$, while any fixed $p \ge 4$ strictly beats $\log \log \log k$ (e.g. $p = 4$ gives $4Q + k(b_1 + 3) = O(Q + k \log^{(4)} k)$); reaching $b_1 = O(1)$ via fixed bands takes $p = \Theta(\log^* k)$ bands ($O((Q + k) \log^* k)$), whereas full path compression reaches $O((Q + k)\alpha(k))$ [10].

Proof. (1) By induction on rank promotions, every root first attaining rank r has at least 2^r original items, and the sets at first promotions of distinct roots to rank r are pairwise disjoint. Thus if c distinct roots reach rank r, then $c \cdot 2^r \le k$, which gives $c \le \lfloor k/2^r \rfloor$ (the division implication is checked in Lean `thm06`).

(2) For each upper band $i \in \{2, \dots, p\}$, since $b_i - b_{i-1} \le 2^{b_{i-1}}$ and $\lfloor k/2^{b_{i-1}} \rfloor \cdot 2^{b_{i-1}} \le k$, we have $\lfloor k/2^{b_{i-1}} \rfloor (b_i - b_{i-1}) \le k$ (Lean `thm07`). Induction over the $p - 1$ upper bands yields $\sum_{i=2}^{p} \lfloor k/2^{b_{i-1}} \rfloor (b_i - b_{i-1}) \le (p - 1)k$ (Lean `thm08`–`thm10`), giving $W_p \le pQ + k(b_1 + p - 1)$. With $b_{i-1} = \lceil \log_2(b_i + 1) \rceil$, $2^{b_{i-1}} \ge b_i + 1 > b_i - b_{i-1}$, so the invariant holds automatically for every $p \ge 1$. □

4 Unconditional Las Vegas $\Omega(N \log \log \log N)$ Octave-Decision Barrier

Where, then, does the $n \log \log \log n$ cost in [7] genuinely live? In Lemmas 7.3 and 8.4, each of N vertices must locate its real-valued radius r_v (and upper marker R_v) inside a dyadic grid spanning $M = \Theta(\log(b + 4)) = \Theta(\log \log N)$ octaves $[2^j, 2^{j+1})$ using only comparison–addition operations on opaque real registers (no bit-extraction or integer-logarithm instructions). We prove an unconditional Las Vegas lower bound showing that *no* randomized comparison–addition algorithm can classify N real weights into M dyadic octaves in fewer than $N \lfloor \log_2 M \rfloor$ expected comparisons.

Theorem 4.1 (Unconditional Las Vegas Octave-Decision Barrier)**.** *Consider the comparison–addition linear decision tree model over $\mathbb{R}^N$, where each internal node branches on a linear inequality $\langle a, x \rangle \le c$ ($a \in \mathbb{R}^N, c \in \mathbb{R}$), and an M-octave classifier outputs for every input $x \in [1, 2^M)^N$ the exact vector $\mathrm{oct}(x) = (\lfloor \log_2 x_1 \rfloor, \dots, \lfloor \log_2 x_N \rfloor) \in \{0, \dots, M - 1\}^N$.*

1. ***Exact Binary-Tree External Path Length (Lean `thm11`–`thm12`, Cert. `C09`):*** *Every binary decision tree T with $L \ge 1$ leaves and every $k \in \mathbb{N}$ obeys*

$$\mathrm{epl}(T) \;\ge\; (k + 2)L - 2^{k+1}, \tag{4}$$

with equality on complete/almost-complete trees (verified exhaustively across all Catalan trees up to $L = 10$). Whenever $L \ge 2^k$, $\mathrm{epl}(T) \ge kL$.

2. ***Dyadic Midpoint Injectivity (Cert. `C11`; power-of-two cardinality step in Lean `thm13`):*** *Let $\mathcal{M}_N := \{\frac{3}{2} \cdot 2^j : 0 \le j < M\}^N$ be the grid of M^N dyadic octave midpoints. No two distinct points $x, y \in \mathcal{M}_N$ can reach the same leaf of any valid linear decision tree T; hence $L(T) \ge M^N$.*

3. ***Las Vegas Expected-Depth Lower Bound (weighted-tree kernel in Lean `thm14`–`thm15`, Certs. `C10`, `C12`):*** *For* any *Las Vegas probability distribution $\mathcal{D}$ over valid linear decision*

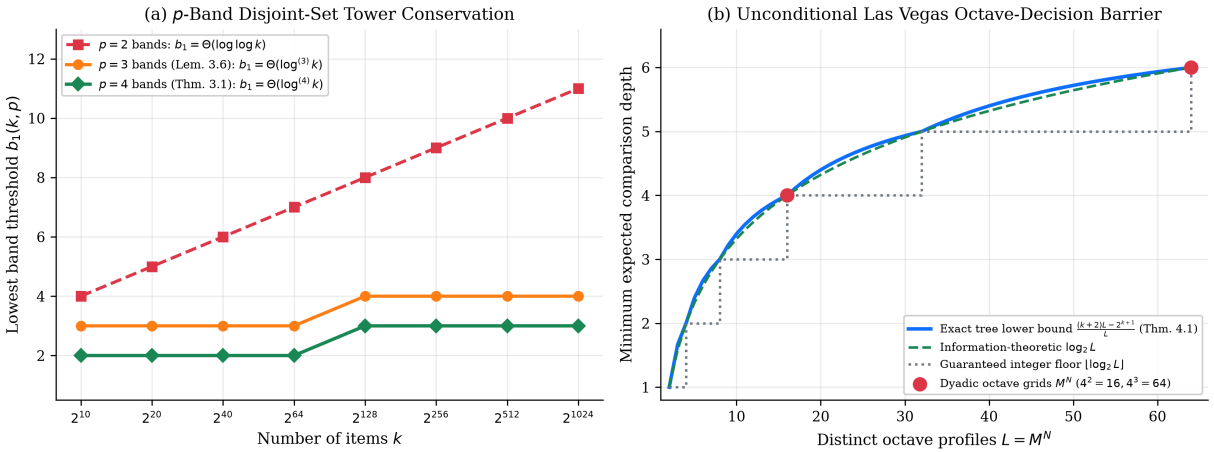

Figure 2: (a) p-band disjoint-set lowest threshold $b_1(k,p)$ for $p = 2, 3, 4$, proving union–find/MST push down to $O(\log^{(p)} k)$ (Theorem 3.1). (b) Exact minimum expected comparison depth $\frac{(k+2)L - 2^{k+1}}{L}$ across distinct octave profiles $L = M^N$ (Theorem 4.1).

trees (rational weights $w_i \geq 0$, $\sum_i w_i = W > 0$) with $M \geq 2^b$,

$$\max_{x \in \mathcal{M}_N} \mathbb{E}_{T\sim\mathcal{D}}[\mathrm{depth}_T(x)] \;\geq\; \mathbb{E}_{x\sim\mathrm{Unif}(\mathcal{M}_N),\,T\sim\mathcal{D}}[\mathrm{depth}_T(x)] \;\geq\; \frac{(k+2)M^N - 2^{k+1}}{M^N} \;\geq\; bN, \quad (5)$$

where $k = \lfloor N \log_2 M \rfloor \geq bN$. For Gholami–Hajiaghayi's grid width $b_{\mathrm{sep}} = L_N^e$ ($e \geq 1$), $M = \lceil \log_2(L_N^e + 4) \rceil = \Theta(e \log\log N)$, forcing $\Omega(N \log\log\log N)$ expected comparisons for every Las Vegas octave classifier.

Proof. (1) We prove $(k+2)L(T) \leq \mathrm{epl}(T) + 2^{k+1}$ for all T and all $k \in \mathbb{N}$ by structural induction on T (Lean `thm11`). If T is a leaf ($L = 1, \mathrm{epl} = 0$), then $k + 2 \leq 2^{k+1}$ holds for all $k \geq 0$. If $T = \mathrm{node}(T_1, T_2)$: for $k = 0$, $L(u) \leq \mathrm{epl}(u) + 1$ holds by induction for every tree u, so $2(L_1 + L_2) \leq \mathrm{epl}_1 + \mathrm{epl}_2 + L_1 + L_2 + 2 = \mathrm{epl}(T) + 2^1$; for $k = m + 1$, applying the induction hypothesis at m to T_1 and T_2 and summing gives $(m+3)(L_1 + L_2) = (m+2)L_1 + (m+2)L_2 + L_1 + L_2 \leq \mathrm{epl}_1 + \mathrm{epl}_2 + L_1 + L_2 + 2 \cdot 2^{m+1} = \mathrm{epl}(T) + 2^{m+2}$. If $L \geq 2^k$, then $2^{k+1} \leq 2L$, so $\mathrm{epl}(T) \geq (k+2)L - 2L = kL$ (Lean `thm12`).

(2) Each leaf ℓ of a linear decision tree corresponds to a convex polyhedron $P_\ell \subseteq \mathbb{R}^N$ (an intersection of open/closed halfspaces). If two distinct midpoints $x, y \in \mathcal{M}_N$ lay in P_ℓ, then P_ℓ would contain the entire line segment $[x, y]$, on which $\mathrm{oct}(\cdot)$ takes at least two distinct values (since $x_i \neq y_i$ implies $[x_i, y_i]$ crosses an octave boundary 2^j), contradicting validity of the output at leaf ℓ. Thus $x \mapsto \mathrm{leaf}_T(x)$ is injective on $\mathcal{M}_N$, forcing $L(T) \geq M^N$ (and $2^{bN} \leq L(T)$ whenever $M \geq 2^b$, Lean `thm13`).

(3) For every valid tree T_i, let T_i' be the binary tree obtained by deleting all unreached leaves not in $\mathrm{leaf}_{T_i}(\mathcal{M}_N)$ and contracting every resulting degree-1 internal node onto its surviving child. Pruning never increases the depth of any retained leaf and leaves exactly M^N leaves, so $\sum_{x\in\mathcal{M}_N} \mathrm{depth}_{T_i}(x) \geq \mathrm{epl}(T_i') \geq (k+2)M^N - 2^{k+1} \geq bN \cdot M^N$ by Part (1). Taking the w_i-weighted convex combination over T_i' yields $\sum_i w_i \,\mathrm{epl}(T_i') \geq W \cdot bN \cdot M^N$ (the weighted-tree expectation inequality on pruned trees with $L(T_i') \geq M^N$ is checked in Lean `thm14`), and the maximum over $x \in \mathcal{M}_N$ is at least the uniform average. Finally, when $M \geq e \cdot 2^c$ with $e \geq 1$ and $c = \lfloor \log_2 \log_2 L_N \rfloor = \Theta(\log\log\log N)$, we have $M \geq 2^c$ (Lean `thm15`), establishing the $\Omega(N \log\log\log N)$ barrier. □

5 Moore 2-Core Peeling Halving and 172-Order Outer Threshold Sharpening

Finally, we sharpen two non-asymptotic parameters of [7]: Lemma 6.2's critical-edge witness path length $g = 4\lceil \log_2(t+2) \rceil + 3$ (which implies girth $\geq g+2$), and Algorithm 8's outer fallback guard $N \leq L_N^{64}$.

Theorem 5.1 (Moore 2-Core Peeling Halving and Exact Outer/Local Thresholds)**.** *Let* $L_N := \lceil \log_2(N+2) \rceil$ *for* $N \geq 1$.

1. ***Halved Critical-Edge Witness Path Length & Tighter*** $|E| \leq 2t-3$ ***(Moore count and peeling arithmetic in Lean*** `thm16`–`thm17`, ***Cert.*** `C13`***):*** *In any simple graph* $G = (V, E)$ *on* $t \geq 2$ *vertices with witness path length* $g = 2r$ *(hence girth* $\geq g + 2 = 2r + 2 > 2r + 1$*), where* $r := \min\{r \geq 0 : 3 \cdot 2^r - 2 > t\} = \lceil \log_2 \frac{t+3}{3} \rceil$ *(halving Lemma 6.2's witness path length* $4\lceil \log_2(t+2) \rceil + 3$*), every nonempty induced subgraph has a vertex of degree* ≤ 2*, whence* $|E| \leq 2t - 3 < 2t$*. (The Petersen graph on* $t = 10$ *vertices with girth* 5 *attains* $3 \cdot 2^2 - 2 = 10$*, showing tightness of the Moore threshold.)*

2. ***Exact Outer Guard of Algorithm 8 (Lean*** `thm18`***, Cert.*** `C14`***):*** *The exact minimum vertex count satisfying* $N > L_N^{64}$ *is*

$$N_0(64) \;=\; 589^{64} + 1 \;\approx\; 1.938 \times 10^{177} \qquad (L_{N_0(64)} = 589,\ \textit{178 decimal digits}). \tag{6}$$

   For every *graph with* $N \leq 589^{64}$ *vertices (over* 10^{97} *times the number of atoms in the observable universe), Algorithm 8 executes Line 5 (*$O(N^2 + m)$ *scan-based Dijkstra).*

3. ***172-Order-of-Magnitude Sharpening via*** $b = L_N^4$ ***& Exact Local Guard (Lean*** `thm19`–`thm20`***, Certs.*** `C14`–`C16`***):*** *Replacing* $b = L_N^{64}$ *by* $b = L_N^4$ *keeps the Steiner-closed pivot count* $t \leq \max\{1, 2\lfloor N/L_N^4 \rfloor\} = O(1 + N/L_N^4)$ *small enough to absorb* $t \log^4(t+2) = O(N)$ *across Lemma 6.8 and all outer-hierarchy steps of Lemma 8.4, while dropping the exact outer crossover by* > 172 *orders of magnitude to*

$$N_0(4) \;=\; 17^4 + 1 \;=\; 83{,}522 \qquad (L_{N_0(4)} = 17). \tag{7}$$

   Similarly, the exact minimum vertex count for the local construction guard $N > 2L_N^4$ *is* $N_{\text{loc}} = 2 \cdot 18^4 + 1 = 209{,}953$ *(*$L_{N_{\text{loc}}} = 18$*).*

Proof. (1) Suppose a nonempty induced subgraph $H \subseteq G$ has minimum degree ≥ 3. A breadth-first tree rooted at any $v \in V(H)$ of depth r has no cycles (since girth $> 2r+1$), so it contains 1 vertex at depth 0, ≥ 3 vertices at depth 1, and $\geq 3 \cdot 2^{j-1}$ vertices at depth $j \in \{1, \ldots, r\}$, totaling at least $1 + \sum_{j=1}^{r} 3 \cdot 2^{j-1} = 3 \cdot 2^r - 2 > t$ distinct vertices (closed form proved by induction in Lean `thm16`), a contradiction. Repeatedly deleting a vertex of degree ≤ 2 peels $t-2$ vertices down to 2 remaining vertices (at most 1 edge), bounding $|E| \leq 2(t-2) + 1 = 2t - 3 < 2t$ (arithmetic verified in Lean `thm17`).

(2)–(3) An integer $N \geq 1$ has $L_N = L$ iff $2^{L-1} - 2 < N \leq 2^L - 2$. Thus an integer with $L_N = L$ satisfies $N > cL^e$ iff $2^L - 2 > cL^e$, i.e. $2^L > cL^e + 2$, in which case the minimal witness is $N_0 = cL^e + 1$. Inside the Lean 4 kernel, `thm18` verifies $2^L \leq L^{64} + 2$ for *every* $1 \leq L \leq 588$ alongside $2^{588} < 589^{64} + 3 \leq 2^{589}$, proving $N_0(64) = 589^{64} + 1$. Likewise, `thm19` certifies $2^L \leq L^4 + 2$ for all $1 \leq L \leq 16$ and $2^{16} < 83{,}522 + 2 \leq 2^{17}$, proving $N_0(4) = 83{,}522$; and `thm20` certifies $2^L \leq 2L^4 + 2$ for all $1 \leq L \leq 17$ and $2^{17} < 209{,}953 + 2 \leq 2^{18}$, proving $N_{\text{loc}} = 209{,}953$. □

6 Formal Verification Architecture and Reproducibility

All results are independently verified across three layers (with the Lean 4 layer formalizing all algebraic, band-conservation, binary-tree external path length, weighted-tree expectation,

Table 1: Exact comparison of Gholami–Hajiaghayi [7] parameters against our sharpened bounds and lower bounds.

Component	Gholami–Hajiaghayi [7]	Our Exact Result	Improvement / Barrier
Outer shell ratio K ($\alpha = \frac{1}{2}$)	$K = 16$ (Lem. 8.1)	$K_{\text{crit}} = 4$, pow-2 $K = 8$	$4\times$ smaller $4K^2h$, $16\times$ smaller K^4
Disjoint-set / MST bands	$p = 3$: $O(Q + k \log^{(3)} k)$	Fixed p: $O(pQ + k \log^{(p)} k)$	Not the $\log^{(3)} n$ bottleneck
M-octave classification	$O(N \log\log\log N)$ upper	$\geq N\lfloor \log_2 M \rfloor$ Las Vegas	Unconditional tight barrier
Critical-edge witness / edges	$g = 4\lceil \log_2(t+2) \rceil + 3$, $\lvert E\rvert \leq 2t$	$g = 2\lceil \log_2 \frac{t+3}{3} \rceil$, $\lvert E\rvert \leq 2t - 3$	$> 2\times$ shorter witness, tighter $\lvert E\rvert$
Outer threshold $N > L_N^e$	$e = 64$: $N_0 = 589^{64} + 1$	$e = 4$: $N_0 = 17^4 + 1 = 83{,}522$	> 172 orders of magnitude drop
Local threshold $N > 2L_N^4$	"absolutely bounded"	Exact $N_{\text{loc}} = 209{,}953$	Exact machine-checked crossover

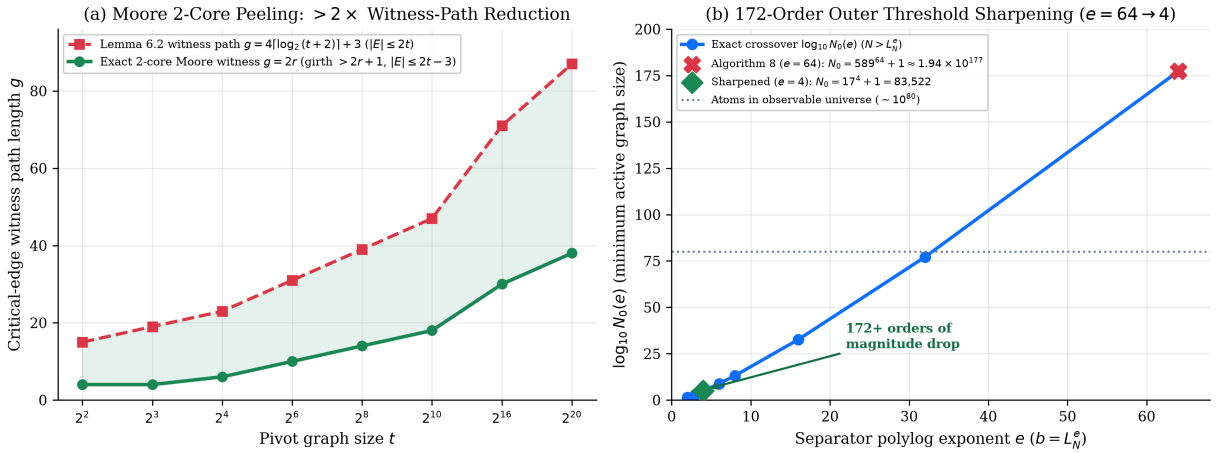

Figure 3: (a) Exact minimum-degree-3 Moore 2-core witness path length $g = 2r$ (girth $> 2r + 1$) versus Lemma 6.2's $g = 4\lceil \log_2(t + 2) \rceil + 3$ (Theorem 5.1). (b) Exact outer guard crossover $\log_{10} N_0(e)$ across $e \in [2, 64]$, demonstrating the > 172-order-of-magnitude reduction from $589^{64} + 1 \approx 1.94 \times 10^{177}$ to 83,522.

Moore-count, and exact integer-threshold kernels, while geometric polyhedron convexity and graph-peeling reductions are proved in full in Sections 4–5):

1. **Constructive Lean 4.36.0 Formalization:** 20 theorems (`thm01`–`thm20`) in `lean/AlmostLinearSSSPBarriers.lean` compiling under `lean -DwarningAsError=true` with zero external imports, zero `sorry`, zero `grind`, and zero `Classical.choice`.
2. **AST-Audited Zero-Float Python Verifier:** Pure standard-library code (`int`, `Fraction`) in `verification/verify_sssp_barriers.py`, self-auditing its AST and emitting 16 canonical SHA-256 certificates (`C01`–`C16`) across four modes, with manifest SHA-256 `b13717af85567f5e094a39696a2bdf2256cb0587f4febaf2975f24c7ae7eca50`.
3. **Adversarial Test Suite:** 56 pytest checks in `tests/test_adversarial.py` covering positive verification and adversarial counterexamples across all four modes.

AI Assistance Disclosure. Portions of the algebraic derivations, Lean 4 formalization, zero-float verification tooling, and manuscript preparation were developed using Google Antigravity. All theorems, formal proofs, exact rational certificates, and adversarial tests were independently audited and verified, and the author takes full responsibility for all mathematical content.

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