

City of Poway COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

APPROVED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
APPROVED AS AMENDED (SEE MINUTES)	<input type="checkbox"/>
DENIED	<input type="checkbox"/>
REMOVED	<input type="checkbox"/>
CONTINUED _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resolution No. <i>13-033</i>	

DATE: October 1, 2013
TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
FROM: Penny Riley, City Manager *[Signature]*
INITIATED BY: Robert J. Manis, Director of Development Services *[Signature]*
Steve Crosby, City Engineer *[Signature]*
SUBJECT: A Resolution Confirming that the City Council does not intend to widen Espola Road as shown in the Espola Road Improvement Project Final Environmental Impact Report and a Workshop on Future Espola Road Pedestrian Safety Improvements

Summary:

On June 4, 2013 the City Council certified the Espola Road Improvement Project Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR), however the City Council did not support the construction of the project identified by the 30-percent preliminary design in the Final EIR.

This item includes a Resolution confirming that the City Council does not intend to construct the project as identified in the Espola Road Improvement Project Final EIR, and includes a Workshop to provide direction to staff on potential pedestrian improvements for Espola Road.

Recommended Action:

It is recommended that the City Council:

- 1) Adopt the Resolution (Attachment A) confirming that the City Council does not intend to widen Espola Road in accordance with the Espola Road Improvement Project Final EIR; and
- 2) Provide direction to staff on pedestrian improvements for Espola Road.

Background:

Since the City's incorporation, significant attention has been directed by the City to Espola Road. Over the years, several improvements have been implemented by the City along Espola Road. A program to widen the road was first actively pursued by the City in the late 1990s, but lapsed due to funding issues and opposition from nearby property owners.

In 2002 the City pursued bringing the roadway into compliance with the City's General Plan, at the time a Four-lane Secondary Arterial. In response to public concerns over the widening to a four-lane roadway, alternative design options were evaluated in more detail and resulted in further review and redesign of the project.

Resolution and Workshop Regarding Espola Road Improvements

October 1, 2013

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In 2008, staff provided the City Council with a new proposed roadway configuration based on updated traffic modeling, consisting of a three-lane roadway (one travel lane in each direction and a continuous center left-turn lane) with wider bike lanes that could facilitate right-turning traffic. The three-lane roadway configuration for Espola Road was accepted by the City Council. In 2010, an amendment to the General Plan Transportation Master Element was approved that changed the designation of this segment of Espola Road from a Four-lane Secondary Arterial to a Two-lane Special Arterial. In 2013 the City completed the preparation of preliminary plans and an EIR for this configuration.

The Final EIR was based upon a preliminary project design at a "30-percent" completion level. This preliminary project design (Project) was based upon the following objectives:

- Relieving traffic congestion
- Increasing capacity and operations of the existing roadway
- Improving safety (vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle)

The Project limits extended from approximately 500 feet south of the intersection of Espola Road and Twin Peaks Road (where Espola Road crosses Rattlesnake Creek) continuing north to approximately 1,000 feet south of the intersection of Espola Road and Titan Way (just north of Willow Ranch Road).

The proposed features of the Project included the following:

- Three-Lane Configuration
- Pedestrian/Bikeway Improvements
- Traffic Signalization
- Utility Relocation/Undergrounding
- Landscaping
- Sound Walls/Retaining Walls
- Lighting
- Drainage Improvements

The City Council certified the Espola Road Improvement Project Final EIR and adopted California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations on June 4, 2013. The City Council certified the Final EIR, however, the City Council did not support the construction of all of the elements contained in the preliminary project design. The Project was intended to increase capacity of the roadway to relieve traffic congestion, however, it was generally accepted that congestion on this section of roadway is not significant with the exception of traffic peaks related to morning and afternoon school traffic which could still occur even after completion of the road widening.

At the June 4 meeting, the City Council discussed ways to prevent a future widening of Espola Road, including a possible amendment to the General Plan (GP). The City Council directed staff to pursue an amendment to the GP that would keep Espola Road

in its current two-lane configuration and preclude widening in the future. As a first step the amendment to the GP would require a new EIR to be prepared and processed. Staff is suggesting that the attached Resolution will memorialize the desire of the City Council that the overall project as identified in the Final EIR will not be constructed, in lieu of the costly and time consuming EIR. The City Council generally expressed interest in sidewalks or trails to accommodate pedestrian use. The City Council directed staff to study various design options for pedestrian improvements and return to Council for a Workshop to discuss the options.

Findings:

Four options to the 30-percent preliminary project design that would address pedestrian use were evaluated. Two components of the project design in the Final EIR, utility relocation and lighting, can be evaluated independent of the four proposed options, and are discussed separately below.

The following conditions are common to all four of the options:

- No street or roadway pavement widening is proposed, therefore sound walls are not necessary.
- Because a decomposed granite (DG) path requires installation of headers and proper compaction it is virtually the same cost to construct as pouring a concrete sidewalk, therefore DG path and sidewalk can be considered interchangeable in each of the options, although DG paths would require ongoing costs for periodic maintenance.
- No publicly installed or maintained landscape is proposed with any of the options.
- In each option the proposed sidewalk would be located on the west side only, and would begin where the existing sidewalk ends just south of Mountain Road and would end at the existing sidewalk just south of Willow Ranch Road, a total length of 4,300 linear feet.
- ADA transitions will be required at all public road, private road, and private driveway crossings.
- No drainage improvements are proposed.

Project Options:

Option 1: Sidewalk or DG path on West Side Adjacent to Existing Curb/Berm

- Sidewalk or DG path at existing edge of pavement.
- No parkway areas are provided.
- Some retaining walls necessary.
- Minor right-of-way acquisition from three parcels.
- Estimated total cost \$1,150,000.

The typical section for this option is included as Attachment B.

Option 2: Sidewalk or DG path on West Side with Parkway Strips Where Possible within Existing Right-of-Way

- Sidewalk or DG path at existing edge of pavement except where existing right-of-way is wide enough to allow the sidewalk to be moved away from the street creating an unlandscaped parkway area between the sidewalk and existing edge of pavement.
- Approximately 800 linear feet of sidewalk separated from the edge of pavement by parkway strip.
- Some retaining walls necessary.
- Minor right-of-way acquisition from three parcels.
- Estimated total cost \$1,180,000.

The typical section for this option is included as Attachment C.

Option 3: Sidewalk or DG Path and Parkway Strip on West Side Only Adjacent to Existing Edge of Pavement (Generally Per 30% Design)

- Sidewalk or DG path with an unlandscaped parkway strip adjacent to the existing edge of pavement, generally per the 30-percent design.
- Approximately 3,000 linear feet of sidewalk is separated from the edge of pavement by parkway strip.
- Retaining walls will be necessary.
- Right-of-way acquisition from fifteen parcels, ranging from about 5 feet to 10 feet in width along the roadway.
- Estimated total cost \$1,650,000.

The typical section for this option is included as Attachment D.

Option 4: Sidewalk and Trail on West Side

- Sidewalk and DG trail at existing edge of pavement. Sidewalk is adjacent to existing edge of pavement with the trail behind the sidewalk, separated by a wood pole fence.
- No parkway areas are provided.
- Retaining walls will be necessary.
- Right-of-way acquisition from twenty-one parcels, ranging from about 6 feet to 10 feet in width along the roadway.
- Estimated total cost \$2,990,000.

Connections to the existing trails located to the east and west of Espola Road are not included, and may be pursued in the future. The typical section for this option is included as Attachment E.

Utility Relocation

Electric, telephone and cable lines are currently located on overhead poles within the project boundary with the exception of the west side of Espola Road between Twin

Peaks Road and Mountain Road which was previously undergrounded in conjunction with the development of a private subdivision.

Each of the options would require either the relocation of existing utility poles or the removal of existing poles through the undergrounding of existing overhead electric, cable, and telephone lines in order to eliminate conflicts with the proposed sidewalk or trail.

The relocation of the existing utility poles would be done at the expense of the utility companies, based upon the sidewalk/trail project final plans, and the utility lines would remain overhead.

In order to underground the utility lines, an Undergrounding District would need to be established. For preliminary study purposes the proposed boundary of the Undergrounding District was assumed based upon the proposed project limits. Funding for undergrounding is available from SDG&E through 20A funds. The 20A program is an undergrounding program through the California Public Utilities Commission funded through allocations from SDG&E to the City's 20A account. The funds for the allocations are collected from SDG&E ratepayers and there are regulations associated with the use of such funds.

Undergrounding of existing overhead utility lines along Espola Road would be an eligible use and 20A funds can also be used to underground overhead service to individual homes located up to approximately 50 feet from the road. Sixteen homes meet this criterion within the proposed Undergrounding District. Homes fronting Espola Road but located farther than 50 feet from the road could be converted but the City would have to fund the conversion. Twenty additional homes are located generally between 50 feet and 100 feet from the road.

If undergrounding is pursued, staff recommends that the undergrounding be accomplished first as a separate project, followed by pedestrian improvements after the undergrounding is complete.

There are three locations where existing overhead east-west distribution lines cross Espola Road: north of El Topo Road, just north of High Valley/Del Poniente Roads, and approximately 250 feet south of Willow Ranch Road. The High Valley/Del Poniente Road crossing would remain due to topographic constraints, although the actual lines crossing Espola Road would likely be reduced to thin guy wires only. The other two crossings could be eliminated with the acquisition of right-of-way to allow new poles to be installed offset from either side of Espola Road.

The undergrounding project may be financially unfeasible. Based upon the proposed Undergrounding District, and field investigation, SDG&E has provided a preliminary cost estimate of \$5,500,000 for the undergrounding, including two of the three east-west crossings. The City currently has approximately \$1,250,000 of 20A funding available,

and has the ability to borrow up to five years of future fund allocations providing approximately \$670,000 for a total of approximately \$1,920,000. Because the estimated cost of undergrounding exceeds the available 20A funds, the design of the proposed undergrounding could be phased or the proposed Undergrounding District could be reduced in size. Staff is still in dialogue with SDG&E regarding the extent of undergrounding given the funding constraints.

Lighting

The Project proposed the installation of concrete poles supporting 180-watt low-pressure sodium lamps spaced 250 to 300 feet apart on both sides of Espola Road at a cost of approximately \$294,000. As an alternative, lights could be installed at intersections only, at a cost of approximately \$63,000.

Summary and Recommendations

1. Staff considers Option 3 with concrete sidewalk to be the preferred option for providing a continuous sidewalk with a substantial length separated from the edge of pavement. Although right-of-way acquisition and retaining wall construction is required, this option provides the safest pedestrian route since most of the sidewalk will be separated from the road by a parkway strip.
2. Based upon the preliminary cost estimates for utility undergrounding and the limited 20A funds available staff proposes that utility relocation be pursued as opposed to utility undergrounding. Many of the existing utility poles are located in the proposed parkway area and would not require relocation, and could actually serve as additional buffer to pedestrians using the sidewalk. If discussions with SDG&E show that phasing of the undergrounding is feasible, staff will return to City Council with a proposal for forming an Undergrounding District.
3. Staff proposes the installation of concrete poles supporting 180-watt low-pressure sodium lamps at intersections only.

There is no identified funding for the construction of the project at this time. Potential funding sources include the general fund, distributions the City received from the Redevelopment Property Tax Trust (also known as one-time monies), and Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Transnet funds. Grants will be pursued including Safe Routes to School.

Environmental Review:

All of the individual options presented in this report are consistent with the certified Espola Road Improvement Project Final EIR and no further environmental review is anticipated.

Fiscal Impact:

None with this action.

Public Notification:

A public notice was mailed to interested parties as well as property owners located within 500 feet of the Project site. A total of 574 notices were mailed out. The public notice was also added to the City's website.

Attachments:

- A. Resolution
- B. Typical Section Option 1
- C. Typical Section Option 2
- D. Typical Section Option 3
- E. Typical Section Option 4

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RESOLUTION NO. 13-

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF POWAY, CALIFORNIA,
CONFIRMING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL AND CITY STAFF WILL NOT
PURSUE WIDENING ESPOLA ROAD AS SHOWN IN THE ESPOLA ROAD
IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

WHEREAS, in 2010 the General Plan Transportation Master Element was amended to change the designation of Espola Road from Twin Peaks Road to just north of Willow Ranch Road from a four-lane Secondary Arterial to a two-lane Special Arterial (three lanes); and

WHEREAS, a preliminary 30% design for the widening of Espola Road to the three lane configuration was completed by the City's consultant; and

WHEREAS, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared based upon this preliminary design pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and

WHEREAS, the Final EIR for the Espola Road Improvement Project was certified by the City Council on June 4, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the City Council did not support the widening of Espola Road as shown in the Final EIR because traffic congestion on this section of roadway is related to morning and afternoon school traffic and could still occur after completion of the widening; and recommended that staff and future City Councils be informed that Espola Road should not be widened in the future.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Poway as follows:

The City Council and City staff will not pursue widening Espola Road as shown in the Espola Road Improvement Project Final EIR.

PASSED, ADOPTED AND APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Poway at a regular meeting this 1st day of October 2013.

Don Higginson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sheila R. Cobian, CMC, City Clerk

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
) SS
COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO)

I, Sheila R. Cobian, City Clerk, of the City of Poway, do hereby certify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing Resolution No. 13- was duly adopted by the City Council at a meeting of said City Council held on the 1st day of October 2013, and that it was so adopted by the following vote:

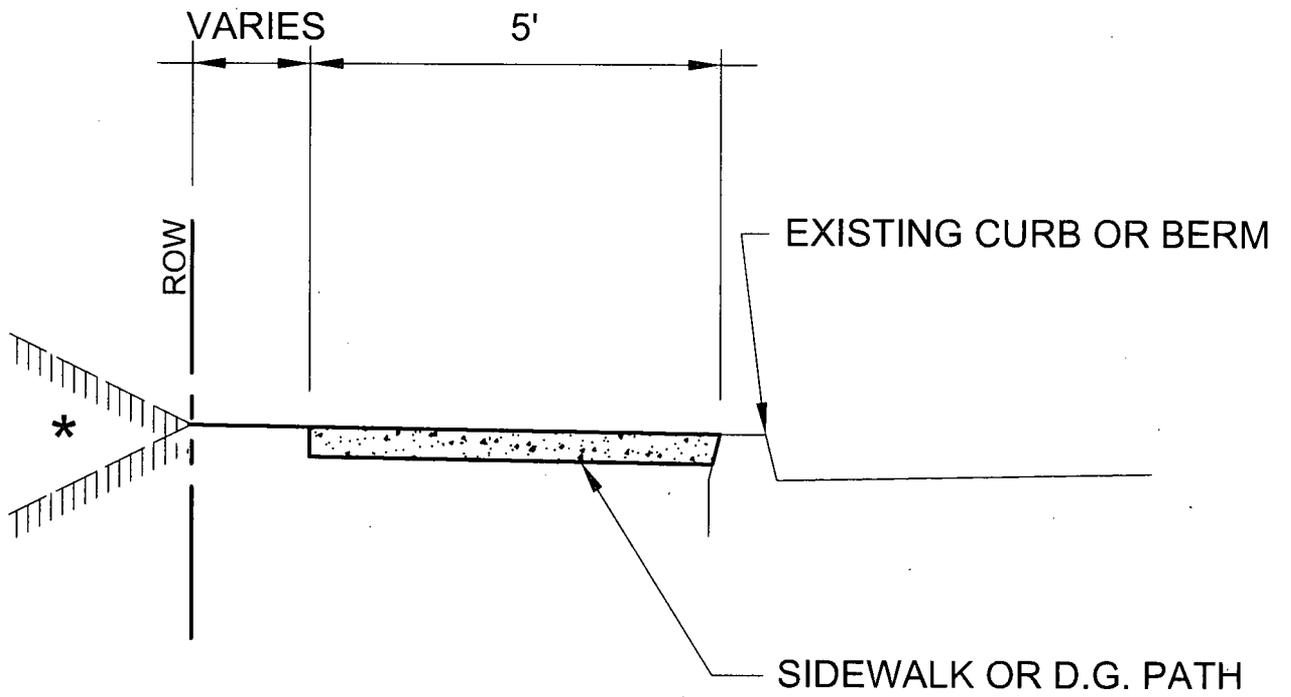
AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

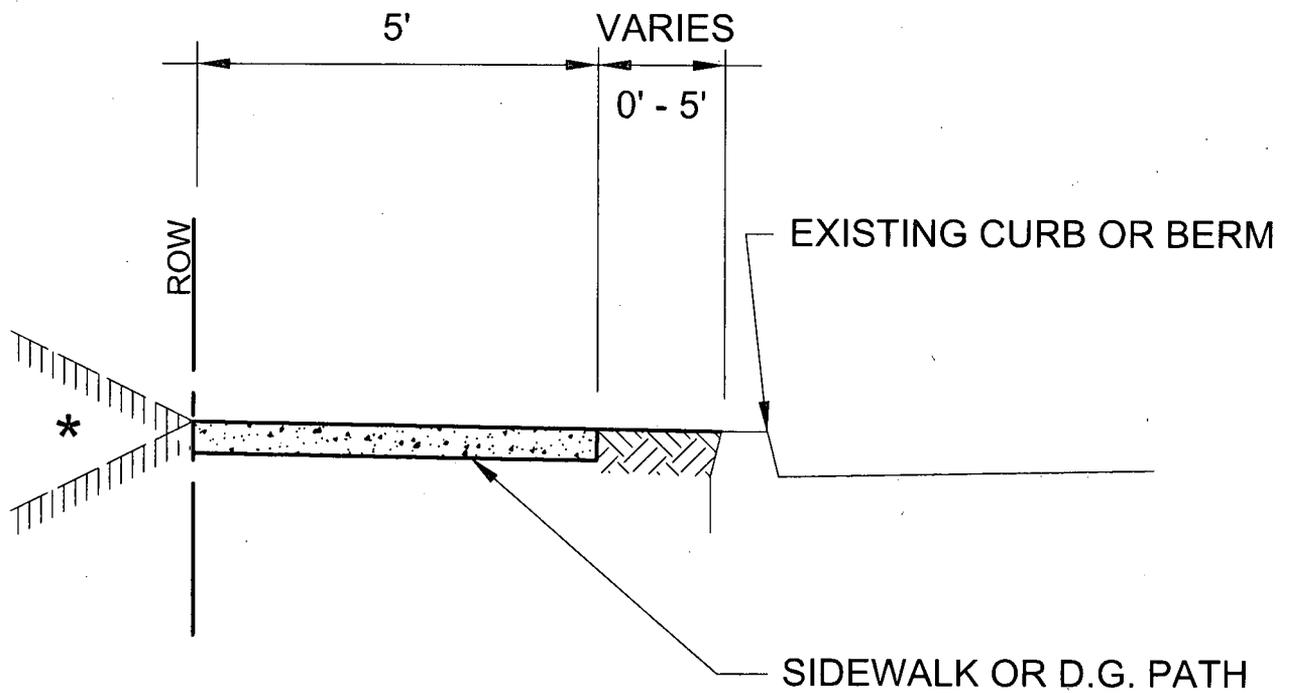
DISQUALIFIED:

Sheila R. Cobian, CMC, City Clerk
City of Poway



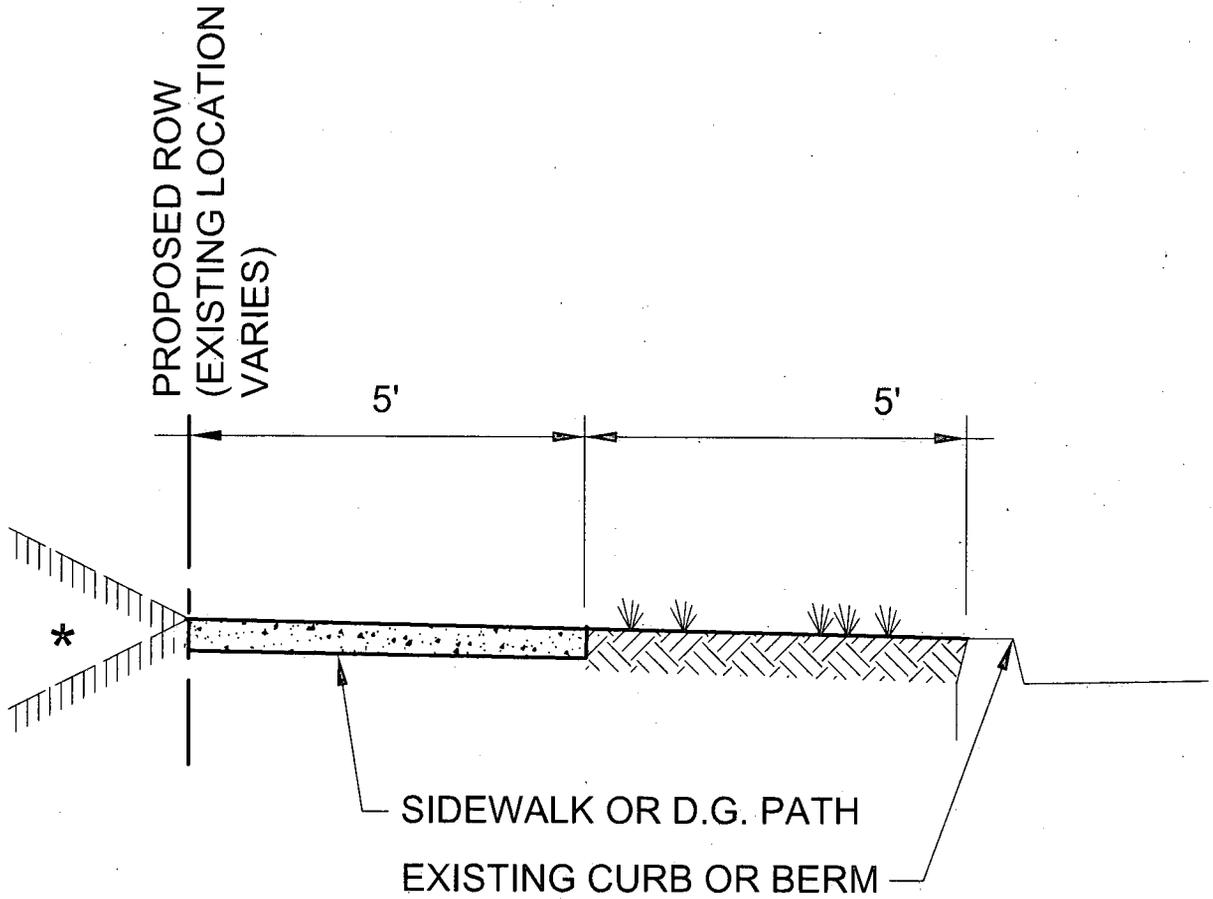
* SLOPE OR RETAINING WALL
MAY BE NECESSARY

**TYPICAL SECTION
OPTION 1**



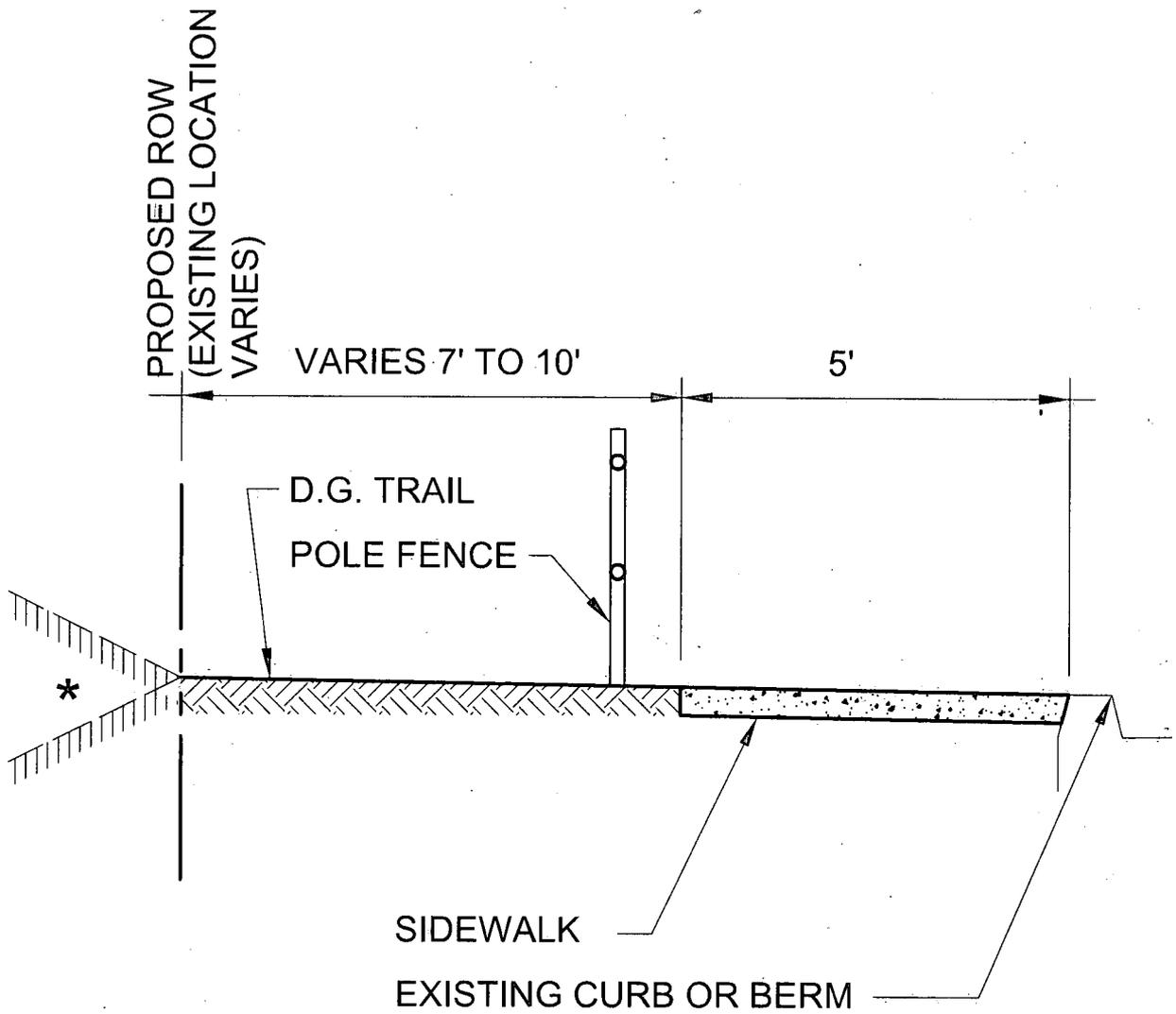
* SLOPE OR RETAINING WALL
MAY BE NECESSARY

**TYPICAL SECTION
OPTION 2**



* SLOPE OR RETAINING WALL
MAY BE NECESSARY

**TYPICAL SECTION
OPTION 3**



* SLOPE OR RETAINING WALL
 MAY BE NECESSARY

**TYPICAL SECTION
 OPTION 4**