

AGENDA ITEM TYPE	
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CITY OF ELK GROVE

ELK GROVE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM
July 26, 2006

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

FROM: JIM ESTEP, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
PAM JOHNS, PLANNING DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: RURAL ROAD POLICY

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) Direct staff to proceed with the public participation process to create a roadway improvement policy unique to the rural Sheldon area.
- 2) Direct staff to move forward with the Capital Improvement Project for the widening of Bond Road from Bradshaw Road to Grant Line Road with curb, gutter, and sidewalk improvements on the south side and improvements with limited curbs and no sidewalks on the north side of Bond Road.

BACKGROUND

Upon incorporation, the City Council adopted the County of Sacramento Improvement Standards for building or widening all roadways in the City. These improvement standards apply to roadway features including widths of travel lanes, center median and shoulders, curb, gutter, sidewalks, drainage, lighting and landscaping.

The 2003 General Plan recognizes that the Sheldon area has a unique land use and lifestyle that should be protected and preserved. Residents of the rural Sheldon area continue to participate in the development of

General Plan implementation tools (e.g., Zoning Code, Design Guidelines) to ensure that new regulations and standards address and maintain the rural characteristics of the Sheldon area.

The current Capital Improvement Program calls for widening of several arterial roadways in the Sheldon area. Over the last 15 months, Public Works staff conducted more than a dozen stakeholder meetings with Sheldon area residents regarding the widening of Bond Road. At these meetings, many residents expressed concern with planned urban improvements being out of character with the rural Sheldon area and requested that the City develop rural road standards. Through this process, staff recognized the need to establish improvement standards unique to the rural Sheldon area as the existing City Improvement Standards are not consistent with the General Plan goal of maintaining a rural environment in the Sheldon area.

On May 10, 2006, Public Works staff presented to the Planning Commission background information about the public process, concerns expressed, and a proposed policy for arterial roadways in the rural area. Sheldon residents also presented suggestions for “context sensitive design” and requested involvement in a collaborative process to develop rural roadway policies. At that meeting, the Planning Commission supported staff’s approach to create a public process for development of a rural road policy.

Following the Planning Commission meeting, staff met with key representatives of the Sheldon associations and discussed bifurcating the process allowing the Bond Road widening project to move forward while continuing to work with the public on rural road standards. The purpose of this meeting is to present information and request direction to proceed with:

- Public participation process to develop a rural road policy including improvement standards for the Sheldon area; and
- Capital improvements for Bond Road from Bradshaw Road to Grant Line Road with curb, gutter, and sidewalk improvements on the south side and improvements with limited curb and no sidewalk on the north side of Bond Road.

PUBLIC PROCESS FOR RURAL ROAD POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Staff recommends an interactive public outreach and workshop process similar to that recently completed for the Zoning Code Update. Planning staff will facilitate a public process with the primary objective of understanding the issues and working collaboratively with the Sheldon community stakeholders to develop rural road standards that are consistent with the General Plan goal of maintaining the rural character of the Sheldon community. Unlike past workshop efforts, this process is not specifically related to any current capital improvement project.

The project area for development of rural road standards is shown in Attachment 1 and is consistent with the General Plan Land Use Map for areas designated Rural Residential (Figure LU-2). The rural Elk Grove area is generally bound by Calvine Road to the north, Bond Road to the south, Elk Grove Florin Road to the west, and the existing city limits to the east. Given SACOG's potential plans for analysis of Grant Line Road as part of the Regional Connector Road Corridor, staff does not intend to include Grant Line Road in the Rural Road Policy process. There will be separate, future opportunities for public participation related to the ultimate alignment and appearance of Grant Line Road.

Key components of the proposed process are as follows:

1. Outreach to Understand Issues, Values, and Preferences. Staff will facilitate public workshops with residents and businesses of the rural Sheldon area for the purpose of listening to concerns and community values regarding roadway design (general and site specific).
2. Incorporation of Context Sensitive Design. Context sensitive design is a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility. Context sensitive design is an approach that considers the total context within which a transportation improvement project will exist. While the physical context includes the rural Sheldon area, these future transportation facilities would also serve the needs of citizens throughout the City.

Using the input received in the initial outreach effort, staff will work with experts and residents to develop context sensitive solutions for

roadway design. Experts may include mobility professionals, transportation engineers, landscape designers, and/or others to help develop solutions that are consistent with community values. If desired by the residents, staff may work with a smaller group (advisory committee) of Sheldon area stakeholders to develop a range of solutions for consideration by the larger group.

3. Open and Ongoing Communication. Staff will work throughout the process to ensure open communication and access to information. At the outset, staff will develop a project website and mailing list for access to current information and notice of opportunities to participate. The website may also be used for visual preference surveying.
4. Focused and Efficient Process. Staff envisions a six to nine month process to develop the rural road policy that reflects the desires of the community. Assuming that workshops commence in August, staff has outlined a process to complete the rural road policies by the first quarter of 2007.

This public involvement effort will build upon past outreach efforts. Staff is focused on understanding community values and working with stakeholders and experts to develop design solutions for rural roads that reflect the desires of the community. The objective is to build consensus, then to collectively present the solutions to the policy makers for final decision.

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

As previously mentioned, Public Works staff have facilitated meetings with the community on the design of the capital improvements for Bond Road widening (from Bradshaw Road to Grant Line Road). The roadway design has been amended to reflect the desires of the rural residents as communicated through past outreach efforts.

This road segment borders the rural area, with rural residential uses to the north and the Triangle SPA to the south characterized by more urban improvements. Correspondingly, the Bond Road section would have rural features on the north side such as open ditches and no sidewalks/pathways of any kind. On the south side, more urban features

would include gutters, landscaping and sidewalks. See Attachment 2 for a roadway cross section.

Because the Bond Road widening has been identified as a priority improvement in the City and there is consensus on planned improvements, staff is requesting direction to proceed with capital improvements for this road section. The decision to proceed with this road section does not inhibit the City's ability to vary from said improvements with subsequent rural roadway standards.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS TO CITY

The costs associated with developing the rural road policy involves planning and public works staff time, which is budgeted and funded through the General Fund.

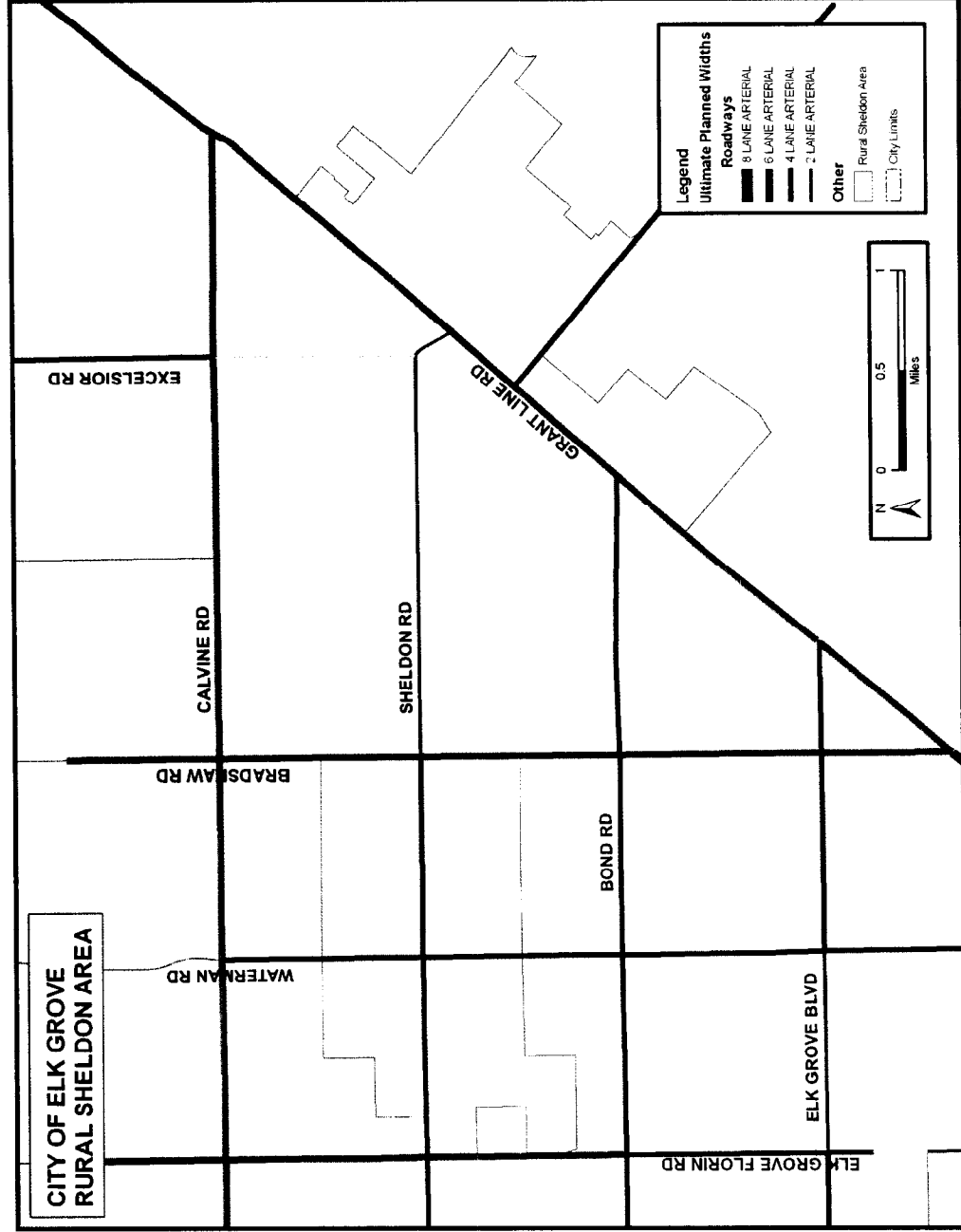
ATTACHMENTS:

1. Rural Road Standard Project Area
2. Bond Road Cross Section

Attachment 1
Rural Road Policy Project Area

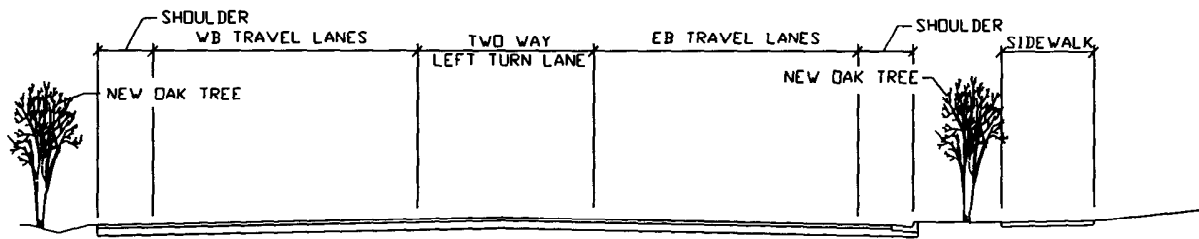


Rural Sheldon Area

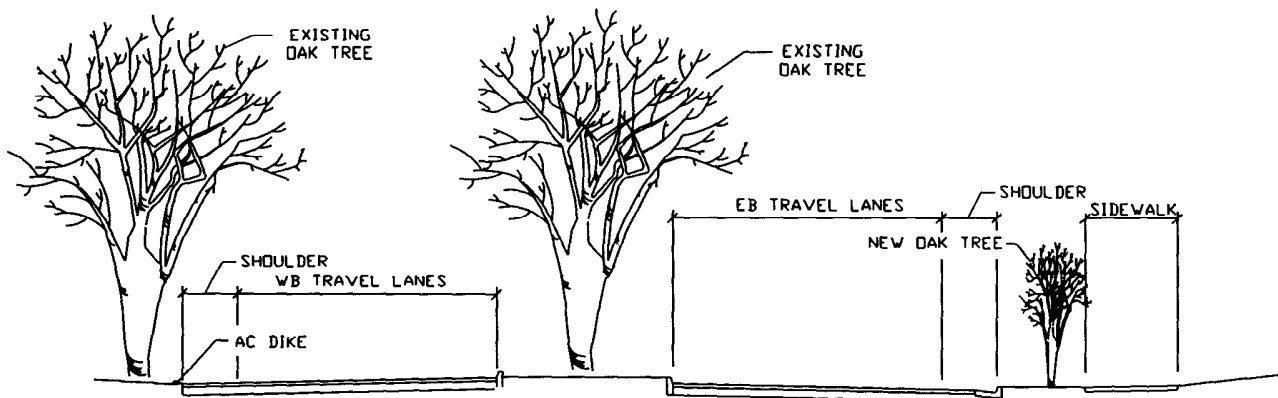


Attachment 2

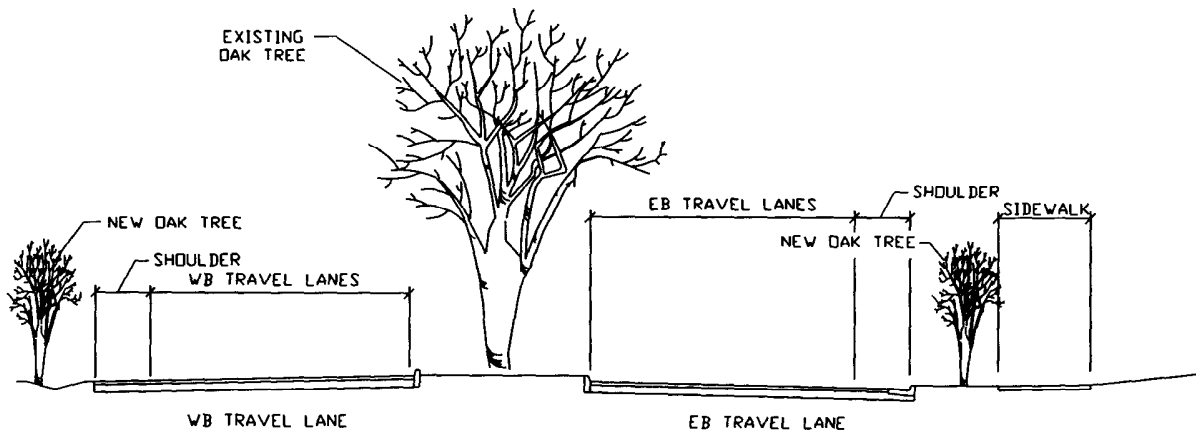
Bond Road, Bradshaw Road to Grant Line Road
Cross Section



TYPICAL SECTION LOOKING EAST
BRADSHAW ROAD TO BADER ROAD



TYPICAL SECTION LOOKING EAST
BADER TO VAN RUITEN



TYPICAL SECTION LOOKING EAST
VAN RUITEN TO GRANTLINE ROAD

TYPICAL SECTIONS
BOND ROAD