Willow Glen Trestle
Larry Ames
July 11, 2016
Larry@WGTrestle.org
The Willow Glen Trestle

- crosses over the Los Gatos Creek in Willow Glen in central San Jose
- 210’ long
- 25’ tall
- built in 1922
“Hidden in Plain Sight”
The Los Gatos Creek Trail

The Los Gatos Creek Trail runs through the heart of the downtown San Jose area, connecting various parks and urban green spaces. Key locations along the trail include Willow Glen, Guad. Park & Gardens, Willow St. Park, and the Trestle in 1984.

The Urban Stream Restoration Project is a significant effort in preserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Los Gatos Creek. The trail provides a scenic route for outdoor activities, allowing residents and visitors to enjoy nature amidst the urban setting.

The Los Gatos Crk Trail runs through the dense urban landscape, offering a closer view of the creek and its surroundings. The Trestle in 1984 marks a historic point along the trail, illustrating the area's development and transformation over time.
From the SJ “GreenPrint”
Lobbying for Funding

The Three-Creeks Trail

an update for
Jim Beall
L. Ames, March 15, 2012

Save Our Trails!
Promoting trails in Santa Clara County for the benefit and enjoyment of all

Taisia McMahon, President
Bill Rankin, Vice President
Bruce Tichinin, Counsel

Connects the History Park…

… at Kelley Park …

… by means of a historic train trestle …

… to the historic cannery district in WG.

a “Historic Trail”
The Three Creeks Trail - a Historic Walk

- Willow St. Park
- Guadalupe River Trail
- Willow Glen
- Willow Park & Gardens
- Del Monte Cannery site
- Diridon
- Downtown SJ
- Coyote Crk Trail
- Guadalupe River Trail
- Three Creeks Trail
- Roberto-Suñol Adobe
- Five Wounds Trail
- Kelley Park
- History Park San Jose
- History Walk funded w/ grants from SCVWD, Open Space Authority, Santa Clara Co. Parks, & State of Calif. (Thnx!!)
- to Alviso
- to Milpitas
- to Alum Rock BART Station
- to Morgan Hill (!)
- 87 bike Trail
- to Almaden
- to Los Gatos
- Del Mar High School
- Los Gatos Crk Trail
- Urban Stream Restoration Project
- to Morgan Hill
- BART Station
- Five Wounds Trail
- to Down-town SJ
- SJSU
- to 87
- to 280
- to 680
City’s Engineering Report, 2012

a representative page: every board and bolt was evaluated.

Plans for restoration & adaptation for trail use, including fire protection alarms & sprinklers.
March 26, 2013: City abruptly changed plans

- To meet a grant deadline, Council approved a Trail Pedestrian Bridge project
  - Minimal public outreach
  - Hidden detail: would replace the trestle with a new steel prefab bridge
  - Would have a small plaque in remembrance of the trestle
Rail trestle deserves a closer look

Editorial

Don’t let San Jose demolish historic train trestle

Better speak up fast on Three Creeks bridge

S.J. should restore Willow Glen Trestle

Historic value of train trestle deserves City Council respect

op.ed., 5/8/13

op.ed., 5/10/13

op.ed., 7/17/13

op.ed., 5/19/15

op.ed., 10/19/14
the Public was interested, so we gave trestle tours
... and we gave public presentations

presentation by Larry Ames and the Friends of the WG Trestle, March 2, 2015
PAC★SJ & SJ HLC 2014 Photo Contest

Semi-finalist: “Troubled Bridge Over Water” by Larry Ames
... Lots of public support, but we still had to sue to get the City to follow CEQA & do the required EIR
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Trestle “Retrofit”</th>
<th>Prefab Steel Bridge “Project”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction cost</td>
<td>$959,000</td>
<td>$1,637,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Est. Maintenance</td>
<td>$4,000 / year</td>
<td>not budgeted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Est. Inspection</td>
<td>$2,000 / year</td>
<td>$500 / year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction time</td>
<td>5 months</td>
<td>7 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Life</td>
<td>30 - 50 years (more if well-maintained?)</td>
<td>75 years (w/o maintenance?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flooding</td>
<td>not a problem</td>
<td>not a problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creosote</td>
<td>not a problem if left alone</td>
<td>a concern if disturbed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>not a problem: fire-retardant coating; sprinklers, alarms and maintenance</td>
<td>no precautions are provided, and steel loses strength at brushfire temperatures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>HL15-001: “Historic Landmark Nomination of the Los Gatos Creek Rail Trestle for designation as a landmark of special historical, architectural, cultural, aesthetic, or engineering interest or value of a historic nature”</td>
<td>“While this does not salvage the trestle, aesthetics could be made pleasing. Staining the concrete deck to resemble the old track could be done. Also, railroad themed signs could be incorporated at the approaches.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SJ Historic Landmarks Commission, 5/6/15

SJ’s HLC unanimously recommended historic recognition ...
Daytime Council mtg. on Trail Bridge EIR, 5/19/15

... but the Council overruled the HLC, said trestle is not historic, and then voted 7-2-2 to approve the EIR to replace the trestle.
1900’s: SJ was a One-Railroad Town

SP RR was unchallenged, and ran thru heart of SJ at-grade on 4th St.
Bring in Competition: Western Pacific

[Map of Western Pacific including key cities such as Reno, Carson City, and San Francisco.]

http://cluster3.lib.berkeley.edu/EART/maps/wpacific.jpg
1927 (from a Map at City Hall)

- Western Pacific arrives in SJ
- Belt-line J-hook loops around SJ, avoiding residential areas
- Breaks SP’s monopoly
Willow Glen - residential

Willow Glen Trestle

San José station

to Niles, Oakland, and Salt Lake City

http://www.wplives.com/diagrams/yards/YD006.html

T.S. Montgomery promised to keep WG Residential
http://www.wplives.com/diagrams/yards/YD006.html
Alternative SP Alignments

- City of San José traded SP off against WP and Willow Glen in the future around-town alignment.

- Willow Glen fought for grade-separation at major arterials; SP realigned their route to avoid crossings w/in WG town limits; WG fought for separations anyhow, denying SP the franchise unless they complied. (Issue went to courts, and up to Supreme Court.)
WG Trestle ruled eligible for National Historic Listing

at the statewide quarterly commission meeting, April 18, 2016

The State Historical Resources Commission

at the Golden Gate Club in the Presidio in San Francisco

The State Historical Resources Commission Meeting

Cmsnr Moss Council SHPO Chair Polanco Brandes

Cmsnr Cmsnr Cmsnr Cmsnr Cmsnr

McKay Harris Praetzellis Bertoli

Seth Bergstein, historian for Friends of the Willow Glen Trestle


principal speaker in opposition: Councilmember Pierluigi Oliverio, San Jose Dist. 6
For now...

- The replacement plans are on hold pending the Appellate Court’s ruling on the City’s appeal
- The EIR is in limbo
- The trestle is still standing tall
Preserve the Connection between “Silicon Valley” and “The Valley of Heart’s Delight”

The Willow Glen Trestle is still standing — it can still be saved!

For more info: www.WGTrestle.org