

Office of Historic Preservation
attn: William Burg, State Historian II
1725 - 23rd Street, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95816

re: Application to nominate the Willow Glen Trestle for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources with a Local Level of Significance

Dear Mr. Burg,

The Friends of the Willow Glen Trestle ("Friends") hereby nominate the Willow Glen Trestle ("Trestle") for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources with a Local Level of Significance. This is a "third party" nomination by the Friends, an ad hoc non-profit group of local residents who wish to help preserve some of our local history. The Trestle is owned by the City of San José ("City").

Enclosed please find the nomination forms, both in printed format and as Microsoft Word documents on a CDR. Photos of the nominated structure are part of Form L, and are also included individually as .TIF files in a subdirectory following the national naming and formatting standards.

As per the rules for application for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, we "[n]otif[ied] the clerk of the local government in whose jurisdiction the resource is located by certified mail that an application will be filed with OHP [California Office of Historic Preservation] and request that the local government provide written comments. The notification ... include[d] a copy of the application." The Willow Glen Trestle is within San José city limits. Included herein are copies of the cover letter to the City Clerk, the receipt from the post office, and a record of its delivery.

"Upon receiving written comments from the local government or ninety (90) days after sending notification to the local government (whichever is sooner), the applicant forwards the completed application and any comments to OHP." The City received the nomination on Nov. 30, 2016, and the 90-day comment period ended March 1st. The City emailed their comments on Feb. 27th directly to State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) Julie Polanco and to us. As the City's submission exceeded the 8 MB file-size limit common to email servers, their first attempt to email it failed and the City's response was not received until March 2nd. We include a printout of the files herein, and have added the files to the CDR. We address specific points in the appendix below. Note: the Friends regularly apprised the San José Historic Landmarks Commission on the status of our application and invited them to give comment, but the City's Historic Preservation Officer, Susan Walsh, stated that the City was not going to engage the Commission in the writing of the City's response.

There is a need for urgency in our application for Historic Listing as the Trestle is in imminent danger of demolition: the City has already approved plans and the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Trestle's demolition and has purchased a replacement catalog-order prefab steel bridge. The City is currently restrained from demolishing the Trestle by Court order, pending final resolution of the legal issues. The Friends and trail advocates alike have been suggesting alternate sites for the prefab bridge.

Additional information:

- The Friends filed to list the Trestle on the National Register of Historic Places last year. The nomination application was heard at the Quarterly Meeting of the State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC) in San Francisco on April 18, 2016. The SHRC voted unanimously to accept

the nomination as presented. (The official minutes of the meeting are online at http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1067/files/shrcminutes_2016-04-18.pdf . The official audio of the hearing is online at http://www.wgtrestle.org/SHRC_MM_201604_24.mp3 , and an unofficial transcription is available at http://www.wgtrestle.org/SHRC_hearing_transcript.pdf .) The nomination was then forwarded to the Keeper of the National Historic Register, who returned it with the request for additional information. The Friends have tried to resolve issues raised by the Keeper but we have not heard from the National office since the Inauguration, and also a resolution of the issues is not certain. Accordingly, we are now applying again, this time for listing with a Local Level of Significance on the *California* Register of Historical Resources.

- The lawsuit brought by the Friends to have the City do an EIR was heard on remand by Santa Clara County Superior Court on February 3, 2017. Judge Helen Williams has requested follow-up information from the two parties and then will make a ruling sometime this spring or summer.
- The City of San José is in the process of awarding contracts for the construction of The Three Creeks Trail. This trail will go right up to the trestle and will connect to it if the trestle is preserved and restored – or will connect to a prefab steel bridge if we are not successful in preserving the trestle. The Friends are supporting the City in their work on the trail.
- The preservation efforts have spanned a number of years. As of January, we now have a new City Councilmember in our District, as well as a number of other new Councilmembers. Since the beginning of this effort, we also have a new Director of the Parks Department, a new City Manager, and a new Mayor. We are optimistic and look forward to working with the City to raise the appreciation of this historic structure and to adapt it as part of the trail network.
- The Trestle is in Willow Glen; Willow Glen is part of San José; San José is in Santa Clara County. Santa Clara County is in the process of applying to the National Park Service for official recognition as a “National Heritage Area” to honor the area’s transformation from “The Valley of Heart’s Delight” into “Silicon Valley” and beyond. The history of the Railroad Robber Barons, the breaking of their monopoly, and the survival of The Great Depression by small farmers will all likely be part of the narrative in the County’s application.
- And the San José area has received an extraordinary amount of rainfall lately. The nearby Coyote Creek made national news by flooding central San José on February 21st, but the water levels at the Willow Glen Trestle were actually higher a month earlier when rains instead predominantly hit the Santa Cruz Mountains and the watershed of the Los Gatos Creek. The accompanying photo shows the Trestle over the Los Gatos during the peak flow. The Trestle continues to remain unaffected by the recent floods.

We look forward to addressing any questions or comments you may have.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dr. Lawrence Lowell Ames
Friends of the Willow Glen Trestle
Larry@WGTrestle.org
March 3, 2017.