



the Willow Glen Trestle

Larry Ames

Friends of the Willow Glen Trestle

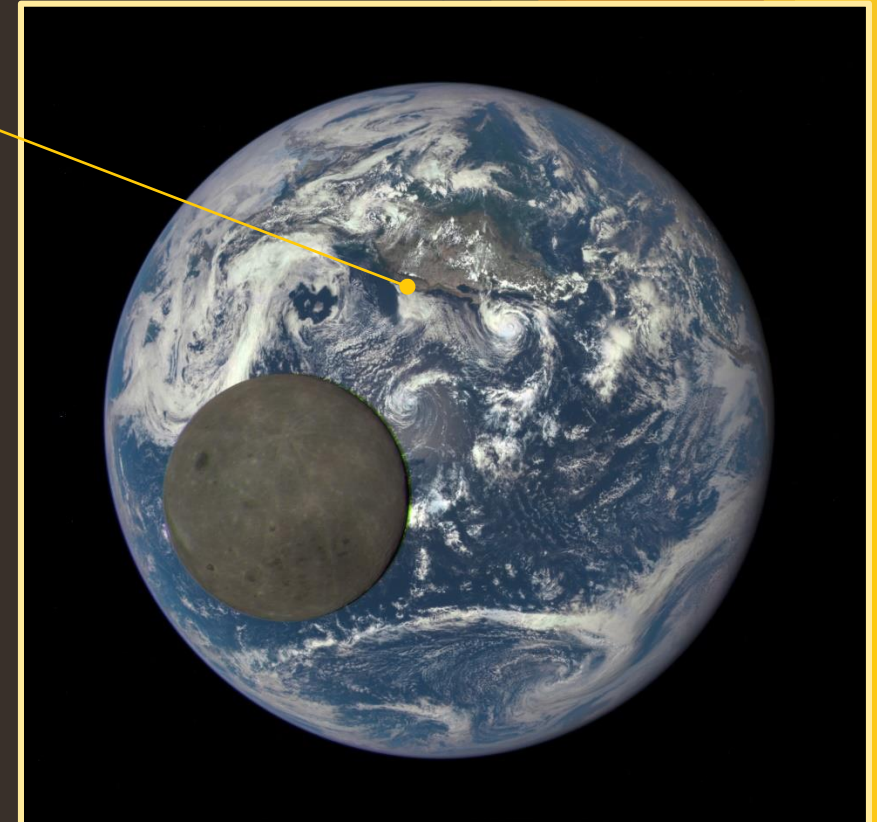
April 18, 2016

Third-Party Nomination

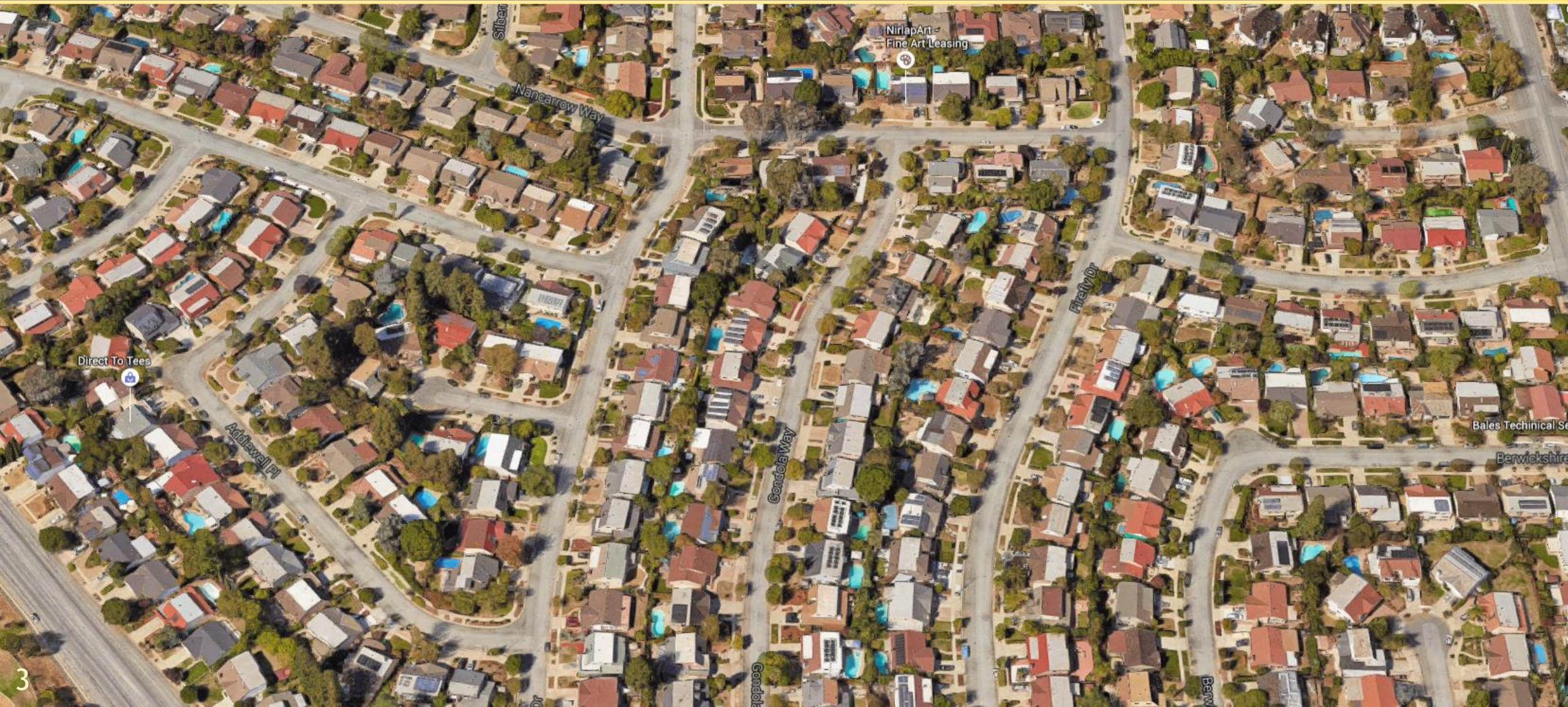
- ▶ Friends of the Willow Glen Trestle
 - ▶ Jean Dresden — educational therapist
 - ▶ Martha Heinrichs — legal aide
 - ▶ Scott, Helen, Dan, Severn, Jim, Deborah, Richard, ...
 - ▶ Brian Grayson & Gayle Frank (PAC★SJ)
 - ▶ Larry Ames — physicist, aerospace engineer
- ▶ Eclectic mix of backgrounds, with a common theme: We're all interested in the area in which we live, and in preserving some of our unique local history
- ▶ This is a citizen-led effort at “Place Making”

(view of earth and moon from 1 million miles away by DSCOVR — one of the satellites on which I worked)

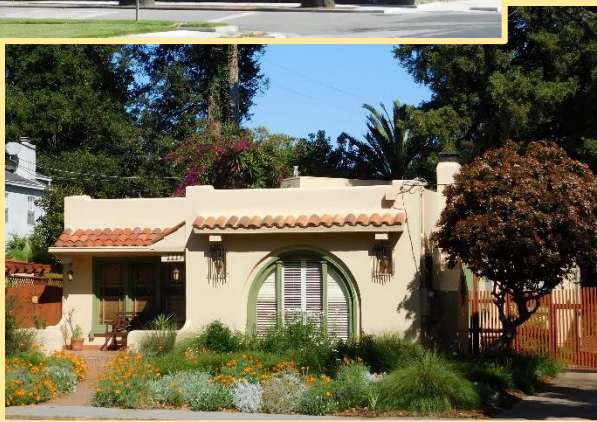
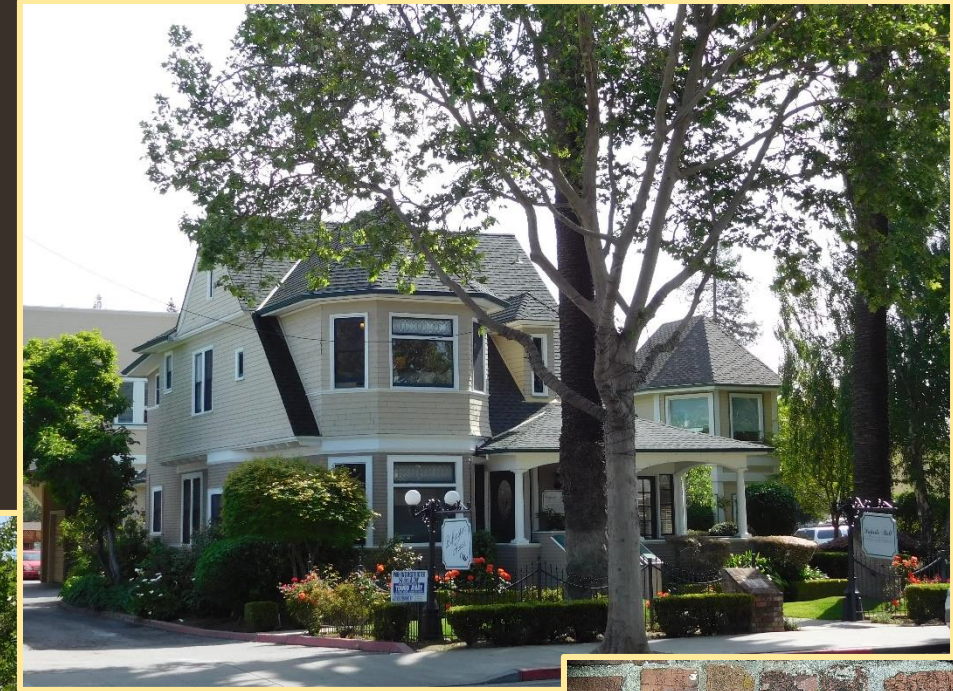
site
location



San José is more than just a sea of suburbia ...



... SJ also has older villages such as Willow Glen



and SJ has Trails

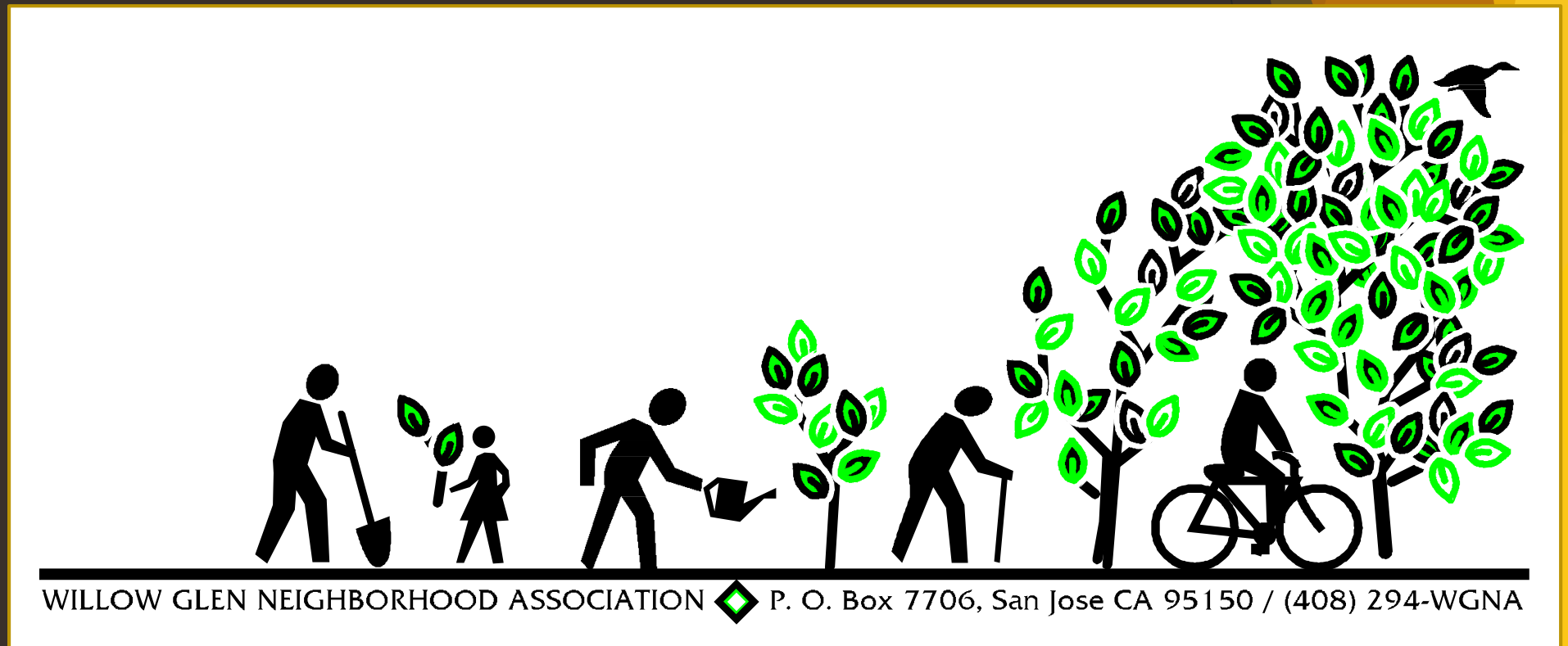
- ▶ Los Gatos Creek Streamside Park Committee ~1982 - 2000 (& on-going)
 - ▶ Los Gatos Crk Trail Master Plan, 1985
- ▶ Coyote Crk Long-range Plan, 1990
- ▶ Guadalupe River Task Force, 2004
- ▶ Three Creeks Trail, 2001 - present
- ▶ For a quarter century, we've been working with SJ Planners to fold the trestle into the trail network
- ▶ We have led other community efforts as well, such as our project that created a linear park on the LG Crk:



The Los Gatos Creek Urban Stream Restoration Project, 1993-96

funded by a \$66,500 grant from the Calif. Dept. of Water Resources

(see www.WGBackfence.net/arcata.htm)

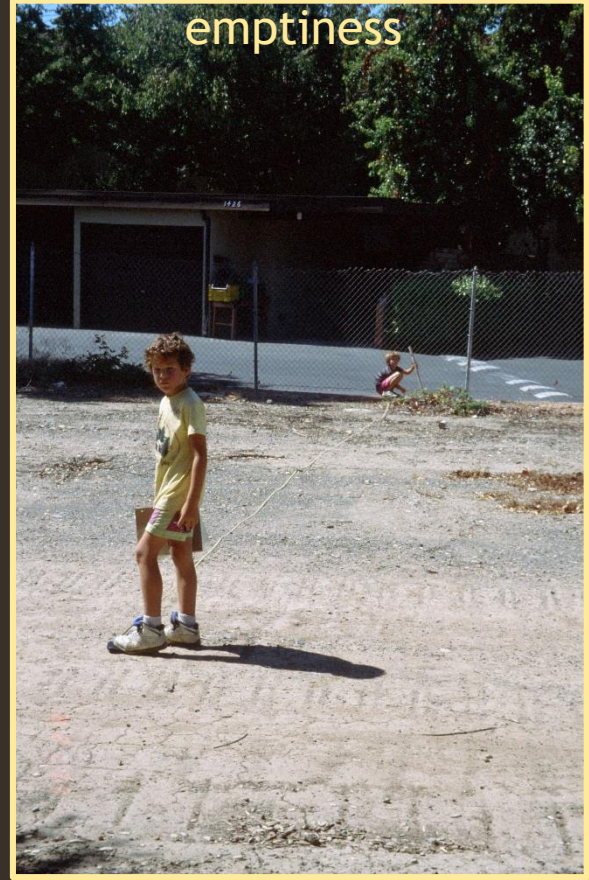




barren landscape 12/30/92

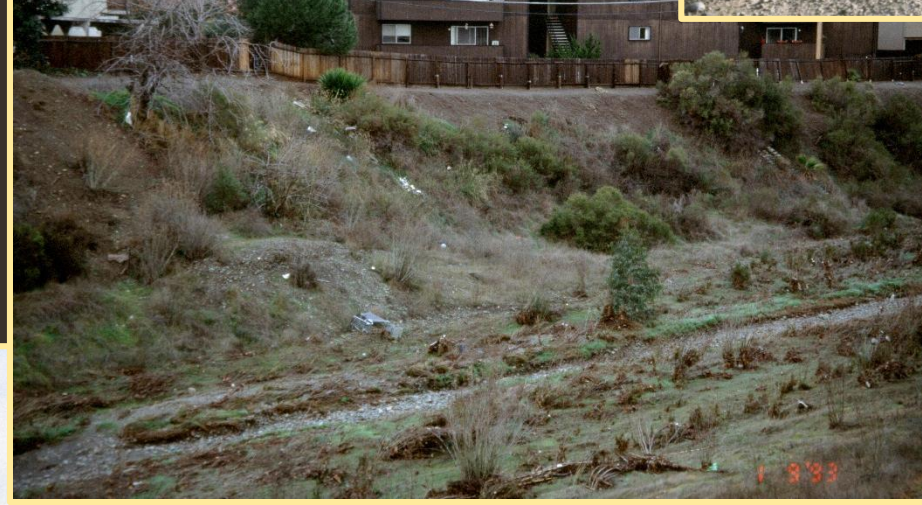


erosion



emptiness

“Before”



piles of gravel



trash





irrigation pipe



the "Muddy Hands" Club

"Planting"



Jim Sugai



“After”



Urban Stream Restoration Project - Epilogue

- ▶ Changed the State's environmental policy by setting a Statewide precedence for "Advanced Mitigation"
- ▶ Energized and involved an entire Community; made everyone more aware of the Los Gatos Creek and riparian ("streamside") habitat
- ▶ Inspired the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) to update its Charter to include "Land Stewardship" in addition to "flood control" and "water supply"

Urban Stream Restoration Project - Epilogue



Bank of America
“Neighborhood Excellence
Local Hero” award, 2010

Santa Clara County
League of Conservation Voters
“Environmentalist of the Year” award, 2011

- ▶ ... and it got me awards — and appointed to do more work
 - ▶ Santa Clara Co. Parks & Rec Cmsn
 - ▶ SCVWD Envir'mtl Adv'sry Cmte
 - ▶ San José Neighborhoods Cmsn

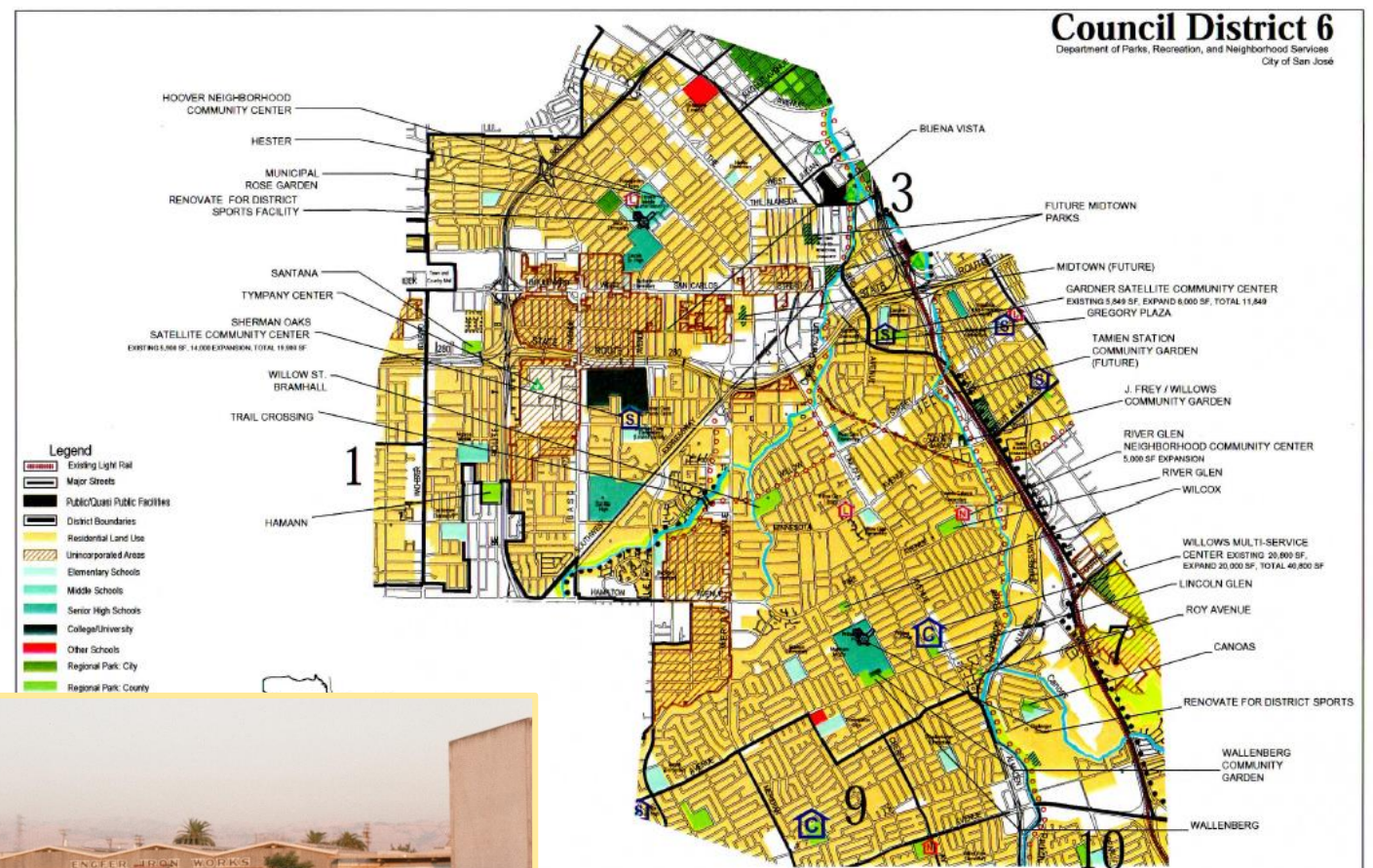


The Western Pacific RR & the Willow Glen Trestle



1984

tomatoes at a
cannery near WG
1979



2000: the “GreenPrint” —
SJ’s Parks Strategic Plan

The Trestle
was once used
for freight
trains that
served the
nearby
canneries.

The City’s
“GreenPrint”
of 2000
recognized
that trains
would soon
cease, and it
recommended
acquiring the
Right-of-Way
for a trail.

Community pushed for City to acquire WPRR ROW

The Three-Creeks Trail

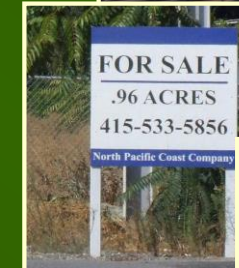
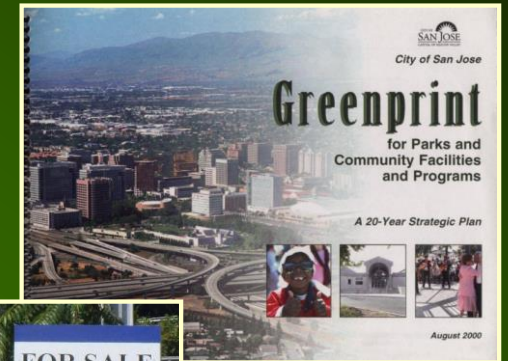
a presentation for the
Santa Clara County
Open Space Authority

L. Ames, May 27, 2010

A decade-long process.
City finally bought the western half of
the Western Pacific ROW in Dec, 2011

Trail's History

- 1920's: Western Pacific built the spur rail line from Niles across San José to service the canneries in Willow Glen
- 2000: San José Park Strategic Plan, "the Greenprint", identifies rail ROW as trail corridor if/ when rail service is abandoned
- 2001: Rail service discontinued; SJ did not exercise "right to buy"; Union Pacific offers ROW for sale
- 2002: community presses for trail; Councilmember Yeager & Council add trail to General Plan and begin pursuit of purchase
- 2007: SJ has not purchased ROW; some parcels sold for housing or industrial uses; community presses again for trail; SJ sets up "WG Spur Trail Focus Group"
- 2008/ 09: "Citizens for a Livable San José" and "Save Our Trails" work for Trail; Guadalupe River P&G establishes Conservancy
- 2010: Three Creeks Trail added by Envision 2040 to General Plan Update



Community helped the City win 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

from our presentation to
State Senator Jim Beall

a “Historic Trail”

Connects the History Park...



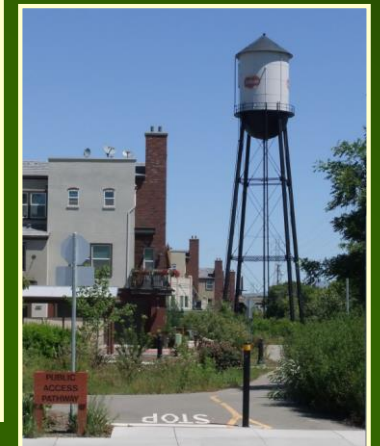
... at Kelley Park ...



... by means of a historic train trestle ...



... to the historic cannery district in WG.



March 26, 2013: City abruptly changed plans



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

MARCH 26, 2013

AMENDED AGENDA

PETE CONSTANT DISTRICT 1
ASH KALRA DISTRICT 2
SAM LICCARDIO DISTRICT 3
KANSSEN CHU DISTRICT 4
XAVIER E. CAMPOS DISTRICT 5

PIERLUIGI OLIVERIO DISTRICT 6
MADISON NGUYEN, VICE MAYOR DISTRICT 7
ROSE HERRERA DISTRICT 8
DONALD ROCHA DISTRICT 9
JOHNNY KHAMES DISTRICT 10

CHUCK REED MAYOR

4. COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

4.6 Report on a Nexus Study for Determining the Feasibility of a Housing Impact Fee, Land Conversion Fee or Other Mechanism. (Cont'd.)

* Recommendation:

- (c) Direct the Housing Department to return to the City Council upon completion of the Nexus Study to present:
 - (1) Key findings/recommendations of the nexus study;
 - (2) A recommended work plan for implementing an affordable rental housing impact fee, if applicable; and
 - (3) Other potential mechanisms to fund affordable housing.

CEQA: Not a Project, File No. PP10-069(a), Staff report. (Housing)

* RECOMMEND DEFERRAL TO 4/9/13 PER ADMINISTRATION

5. NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

5.1 Grant Applications to the State of California for the Three Creeks Trail Pedestrian Bridge Development.

* Recommendation:

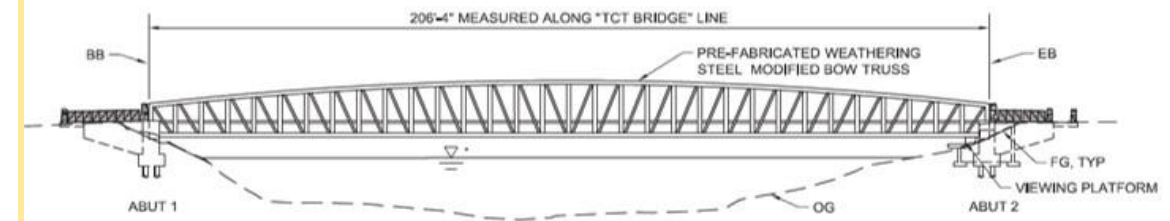
- (a) Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager or designee to:
 - (1) Submit two grant applications to the State of California – Natural Resources Agency for an amount up to \$1,230,000 as part of the Roberti-Z'berg-Harris (Prop 40) grant program for the Three Creeks Trail Pedestrian Bridge development project with no local match required;
 - (2) Make the required assurances to comply with the project applications, deadlines to complete the project, grant program requirements, and other assurances required by the State of California as explained in the staff memorandum; and
 - (3) Accept any grants award(s) and negotiate and execute any documents to effectuate the grant(s), including documents that increase the amount of the grant(s) awarded or increase the local match of funds required from the City for the project, subject to the appropriation of funds.
- (b) Adopt the following Appropriation Ordinance Amendments in the Subdivision Park Trust Fund (Fund 375):
 - (1) Increase the Trail: Three Creeks Interim Improvements & Trestle Bridge appropriation to the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department in the amount of \$1,188,000;
 - (2) Decrease the Reserve: Future PDO/PIO Projects appropriation in the amount of \$503,000; and
 - (3) Decrease the Reserve: Trail: Three Creeks appropriation in the amount of \$685,000.

CEQA: Resolution No. 65459, File No. PP03-05-175. Council District 6. (Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services/City Manager's Office)

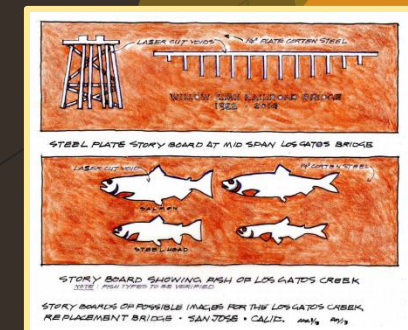
- 11 -

CC 03/26/13

- ▶ 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



SJ Merc. News Editorials

op.ed., 5/8/13

Don't let San Jose demolish historic train trestle

By Larry Ames and Helen Chapman

Have you ever seen the historic train trestle in Willow Glen?

Few have. For 90 years, it's been hiding just blocks from

public review or comment, the city abruptly decided to demolish the trestle and replace it with a catalog-order steel bridge. And it quickly voted to hire an engineer-

And that's without considering the cost of mitigation for removing the trestle to make way for a new bridge. Removal would involve heavy equipment in the

nearly a hundred timbers. The impact to this habitat fre-

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sion about one of San Jose's last remaining trestles.

The Santa Clara Valley Water

District, Santa Clara Parks and Open Spa-

all gave the city gran-

upon a restored trest-

element in the trail. I

cur that the money c-

instead to demolish t

We are pleased th

moving forward on t

and Three Creeks Th

before committing t

lions of dollars need-

needs to put demolit

collect all the facts a

oughly evaluate opti-

should engage the e

historic, trail and oth

communities that we

or were told removir

was the only practi-

The trestle does r

but it is sturdy. It is no more a fire hazard than the telephone poles that line our streets. A new

Historic value of train trestle deserves City Council respect

By Larry Ames and Brian Grayson

For many years, community advocates have worked with the city of San Jose and its parks department to extend and connect

off-street bike paths such as the Los Gatos Creek and the Three Creeks Trails. The plan was al-

ways to connect these two trails using the historic railroad trestle in Willow Glen — a sturdy city-

owned 93-year-old wood-timber bridge over Los Gatos Creek.

Last year, the city abruptly decided it would instead demol-

ish and replace the classic trestle with a more costly, prefabricated

City Council

an environ-

ment (EIR) to

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the trestle



COURTESY OF LARRY AMES

The train trestle on a trail in San Jose's Willow Glen neighborhood was saved temporarily when a judge ruled that the City Council violated state law when it approved its demolition without doing an environmental impact report on its historic value.

played in the development of Willow Glen and all of San Jose. ■ Analyze the feasibility of rehabilitation, considering among other things the engineering report the city commissioned that shows that restoration and adaptation of the trestle for trail use is safe, environmentally responsible, straightforward and cost-effective. ■ Provide a public process with opportunity to review and comment on design concepts and the EIR's analyses.

Hopefully, the city's decision-makers will listen and understand the importance of preserving vital local history. Importantly, if the EIR finds the trestle to be historic and that its reuse is feasible, the city cannot approve demolition. The Friends already are working to seek grants to fund trestle rehabilitation and maintenance. And, while the focus of the lawsuit was the trestle, the ruling affects far more than just this one bridge. The Superior Court ruled that the city cannot unilaterally declare a threat-

ened resource "not historic." When presented with credible evidence of historic qualities, an EIR is mandated to analyze a structure's historic authenticity and to evaluate alternatives to its demolition.

Huber's ruling gives us all a chance to preserve history. Let's work together in an open public process benefited by the expertise of the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Historic Landmarks Commission. We can incorporate the Willow Glen Trestle into the trail network to connect the Los Gatos and the Three Creeks Trails. As an important piece of local history, the evocative trestle will be a unique and educational attraction and community asset on a popular trail. The trestle will provide an iconic gateway to Willow Glen.

Larry Ames is the founder of Friends of the Willow Glen Trestle. Brian Grayson is executive director of the Preservation Action Council of San Jose. Write to him for his

opped, 10/19/14

A14 BAY AREA NEWS GROUP 111

Opinion

www.mercurynews.com/opinion

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Editorial

Rail trestle deserves a closer look

San Jose should take a timeout on its plan to tear down the 90-year-old wooden railroad trestle on the Three Creeks Trail in Willow Glen. The decision made in haste by the City Council in March with no real public debate fell short of standards for a city that prides itself on community involvement.

On this page Wednesday (and linked to this editorial at www.mercurynews.com/opinion, along with photos), community activists Larry Ames and Helen Chapman made a stirring argument for preserving the trestle. That had been the

www.WGTrestle.org for details.

Cano also said the Willow Glen Neighborhood Association supported the plan, but board member Scott Knies says the association has not taken a position. The plan was discussed at a city-sponsored meeting on the trail master plan March 19 but, again, was couched as a done deal, and activists who would have known

enough to question this were absent. Even the City Council's March 26 agenda item was all grant-jargon gobbledegook, obscuring the fact that whacking the

the trestle. Scott Lane is leading a public tour at 10 a.m. Saturday. Check

actual bridge on the Three Creeks Trail in San Jose.

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For this reason if no other, the council should re-hear the proposal, including the financial details. Even if the decision stands, people will know the facts were aired.

The Three Creeks Trail is supposed to connect the Los Gatos Creek Trail, near the trestle, with the Coyote Creek Trail at Kelley Park. Some question San Jose's commitment to completing the link from Highway 87 to the park — and no wonder, with trust at such a low ebb — but the vision is powerful. The third connection is the Guadalupe River Park.

Fortunately, Councilman Sam Liccardo is at least asking for more information, and Santa Clara County Supervisor Dave Cortese has stepped up to get the county involved. Its park fund is making a significant investment in the regional trail network, and the Three Creeks Trail is a linchpin. Let's try to make it an architecturally interesting one.

Better speak up fast on Three Creeks bridge

When last we took up the cause of the old wooden trestle that crosses Los Gatos Creek on what's now the Three Creeks Trail, it was clear that San Jose's outreach on the demolition plan had been — oh, let's just say it: rigged. City staff members had discussed it in public or semi-public settings without civic activists realizing that ripping out the structurally sound trestle was a done deal. Advocates made a heroic attempt to salvage it in the spring, but it was too late. Mayor Chuck Reed and the City Council rules committee refused to reconsider demolition.

The project continues at record speed, and Wednesday night is your second-to-last chance to have a say in what replaces the historic trestle. At a Willow Glen Neighborhood Association meeting, an architect and city staff will repeat a presentation made to Save our Trails earlier this month. Both those

organizations officially support demolition, and at the Trails meeting, the public was told to limit comments to the three (depressingly similar) designs presented. We hope city staff makes sure Wednesday's session more open, since it's to as public outreach.

The trestle probably is done for, but historic preservationists know while a thing still stands hope endures. REGARD if you care about the Three Creeks Trail, which connects the Los Gatos, Coyote creeks and Guadalupe River trails, you should come to the meeting, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Willow Glen Community Center, 2175 Lincoln Ave. or to the final presentation at a trail planning workshop 6:30 p.m. June 24 at the same location of the proposed replacement designs are truly pedestrian, and we do just mean walkable. If you want something better, you'll have to fight for

ONLINE EXTRA

For a link to the city's presentation of design options, go to www.mercurynews.com and click on this editorial.

7/17/13

5/19/15

5/10/13

the Public was interested, so we gave trestle tours



"hidden in plain sight"



SC Co. Sup. SJ MN Editor
Dave Cortese Barbara Marshman

... 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

PAC★SJ



PRESERVATION ACTION COUNCIL OF SAN JOSE

Dedicated to Preserving San Jose's Architectural Heritage



Semi-finalist:
“Troubled Bridge Over Water”
by Larry Ames

PAC★SJ & SJ HLC 2015 Photo Contest

PAC★SJ



PRESERVATION ACTION COUNCIL OF SAN JOSE

Dedicated to Preserving San Jose's Architectural Heritage

<http://www.preservation.org/events/visualsanjose/VisualSanJose2015.html>



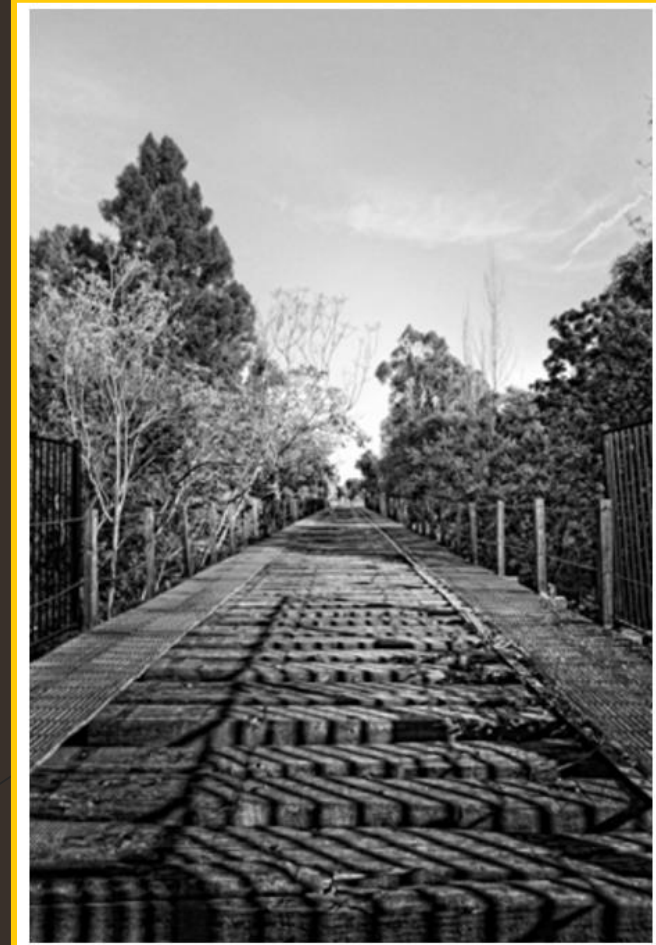
“Bridge over Troubled Red Chair”
by Kymberli Brady
3rd place in professional category



“Willow Glen Trestle (1921-1922)” by James Watkins
2nd place in professional category

Public became aware of the WG Trestle:
3 of the 7 semi-finalists photographed it

“Historic Willow Glen Trestle” by Lee Viray Cahili
2nd place in non-professional category



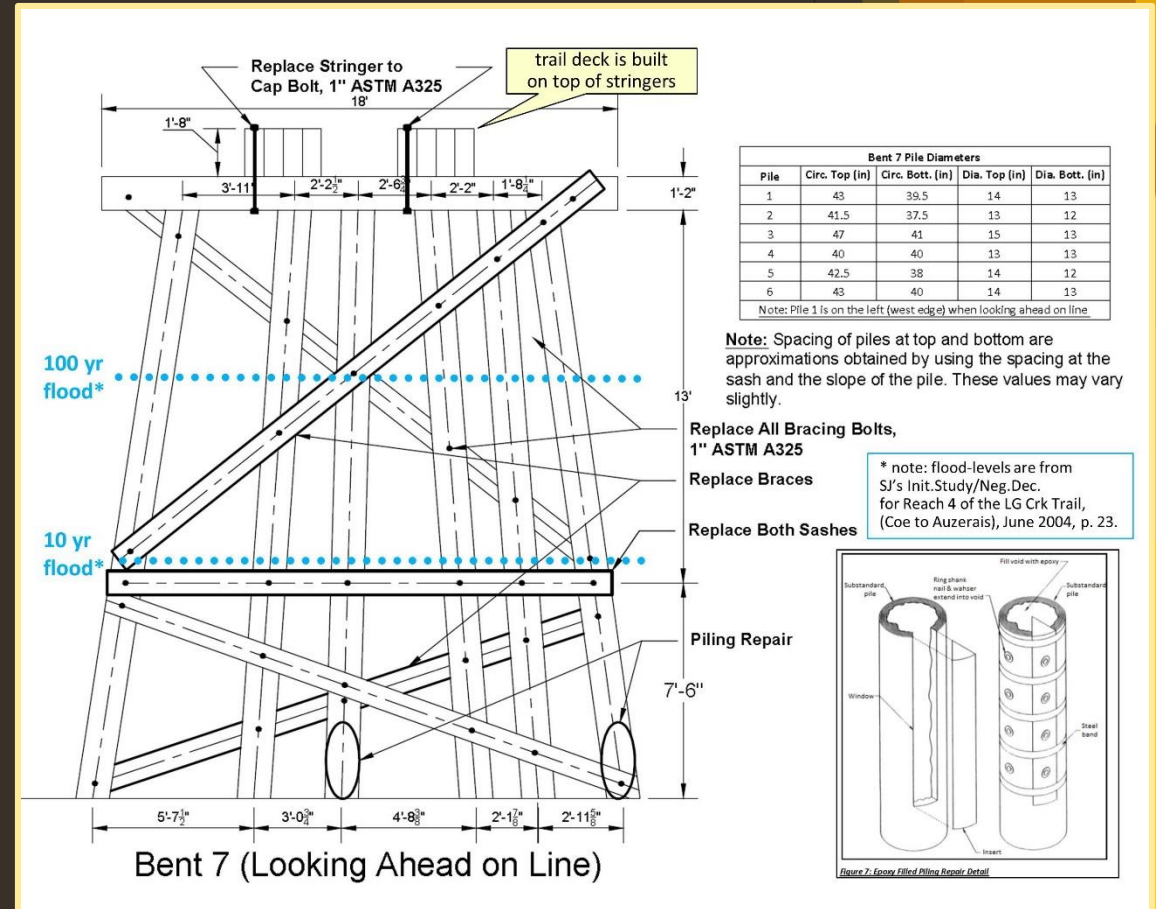
Willow Glen Resident Year in Review

... Lots of public support,
but we still had to sue
to get the City to follow
CEQA & do the required EIR



From the EIR

- ▶ Trestle is sturdy and can readily be restored and adapted for trail use
- ▶ Doesn't impede creek flow or create flooding hazard
- ▶ Contamination: best if pilings left undisturbed and in place



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. The EIR is still pending...

Mayor honors my work “to save the historic Willow Glen Trestle”

SJ Parks Foundation Soiree
awards event, 6/25/15



SJ Mayor Sam Liccardo



CITY OF SAN JOSE

Commendation

WHEREAS: Larry Ames and the qualities he exhibits are a rarity this day and age, few people are willing to stick with a cause that they believe in to such an extent; and

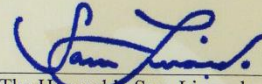
WHEREAS: Through two years of perseverance, fundraising, document reading, and filing motions to save the historic Willow Glen Trestle, Larry has proved his dedication for his community; and

WHEREAS: This unrelenting ability to stay on course and fight for what is right in the City of San José has not gone unnoticed;

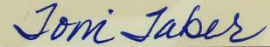
NOW, THEREFORE, I, Sam Liccardo, Mayor of the City of San José, along with my colleagues on the city council, on this 25th day of June 2015, do hereby recognize and commend

LARRY AMES

for his resilience and tireless work ethic in saving the historic integrity of the City of San José.


The Honorable Sam Liccardo
MAYOR

Attested by:


Toni Taber, City Clerk

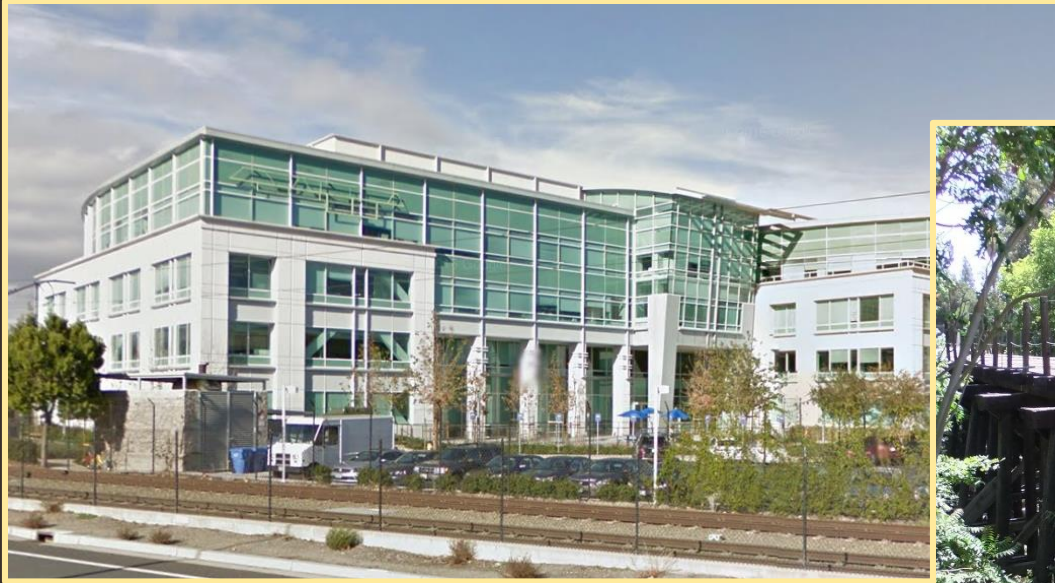


This past year

- ▶ The replacement plans are on hold pending the City's appeal
- ▶ The EIR is in limbo
- ▶ We used the time to further research the history of the trestle
- ▶ The trestle is still standing tall



Preserve the Connection between “Silicon Valley” and “The Valley of Heart’s Delight”



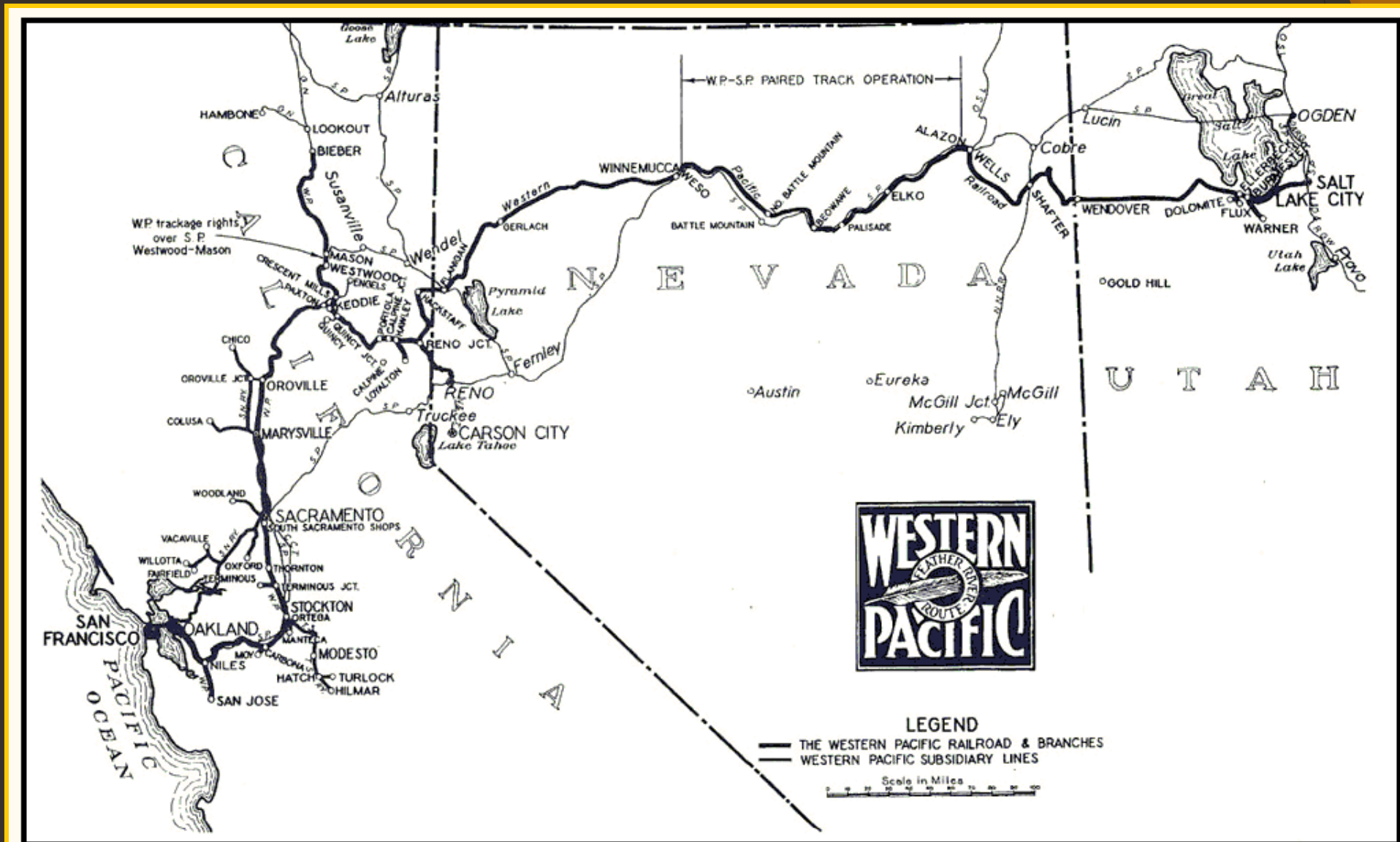
The Willow Glen Trestle
is still standing — it can still be saved!
Thank you!



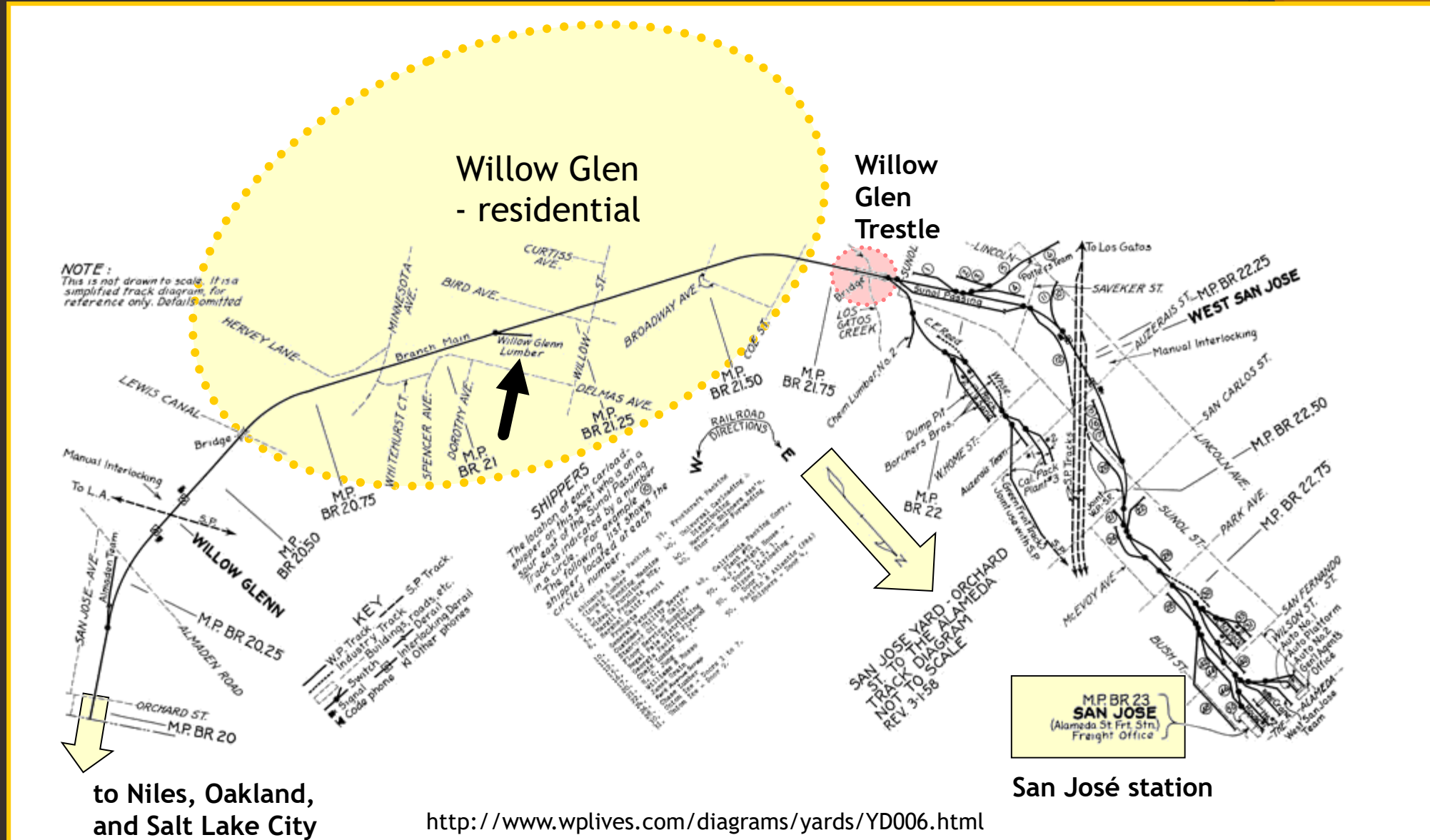
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santa_Clara_Valley#/media/File:Prune_Orchard_near_Santa_Clara,_California_\(3655751446\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santa_Clara_Valley#/media/File:Prune_Orchard_near_Santa_Clara,_California_(3655751446).jpg)

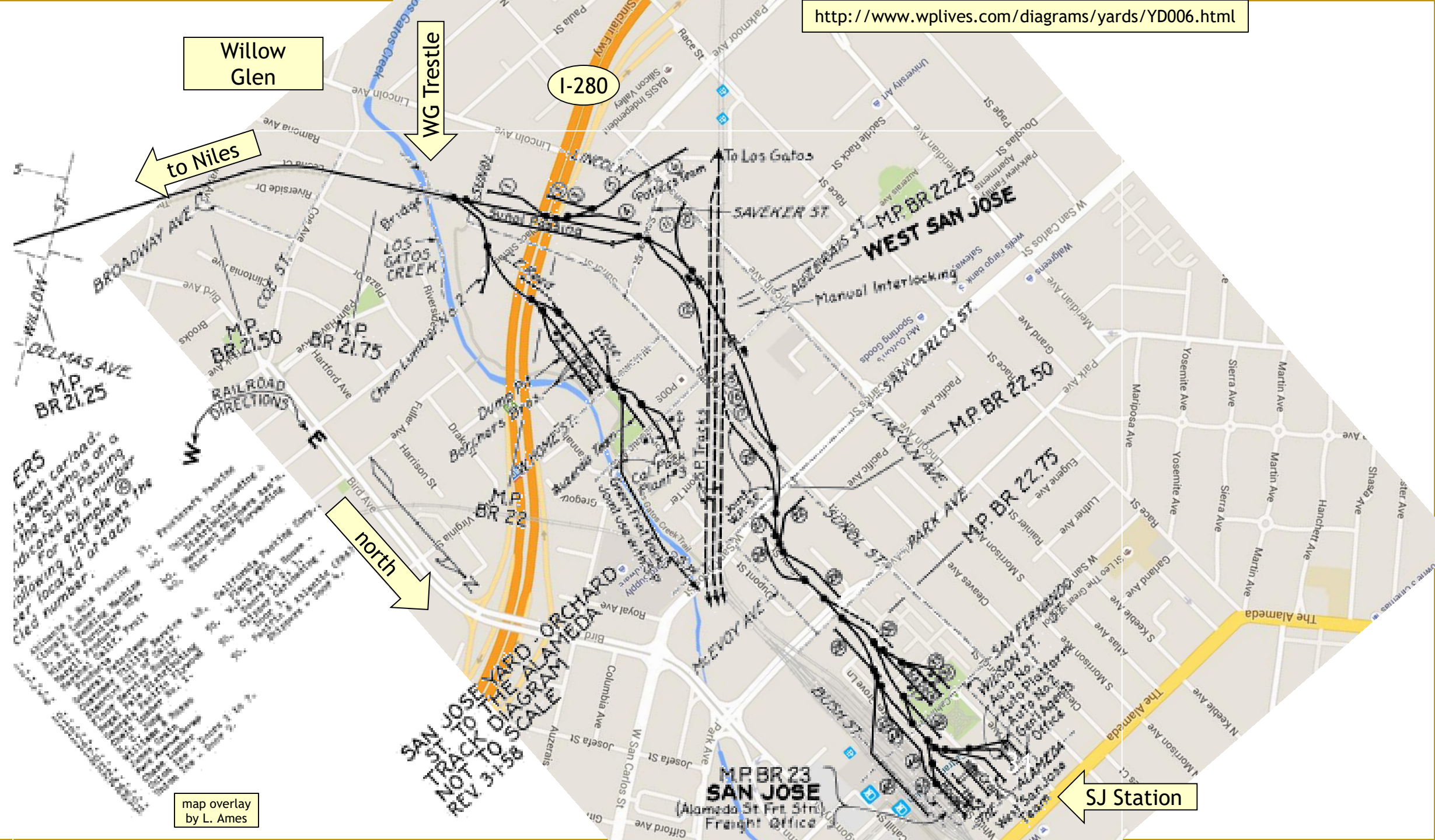
Seth Bergstein: Willow Glen Trestle History

Not a spur on Oakland route, but the Main SJ line!



WP RR thru Willow Glen & to the San Jose Depot





Willow
Glen

WG Trestle

I-280

to Niles

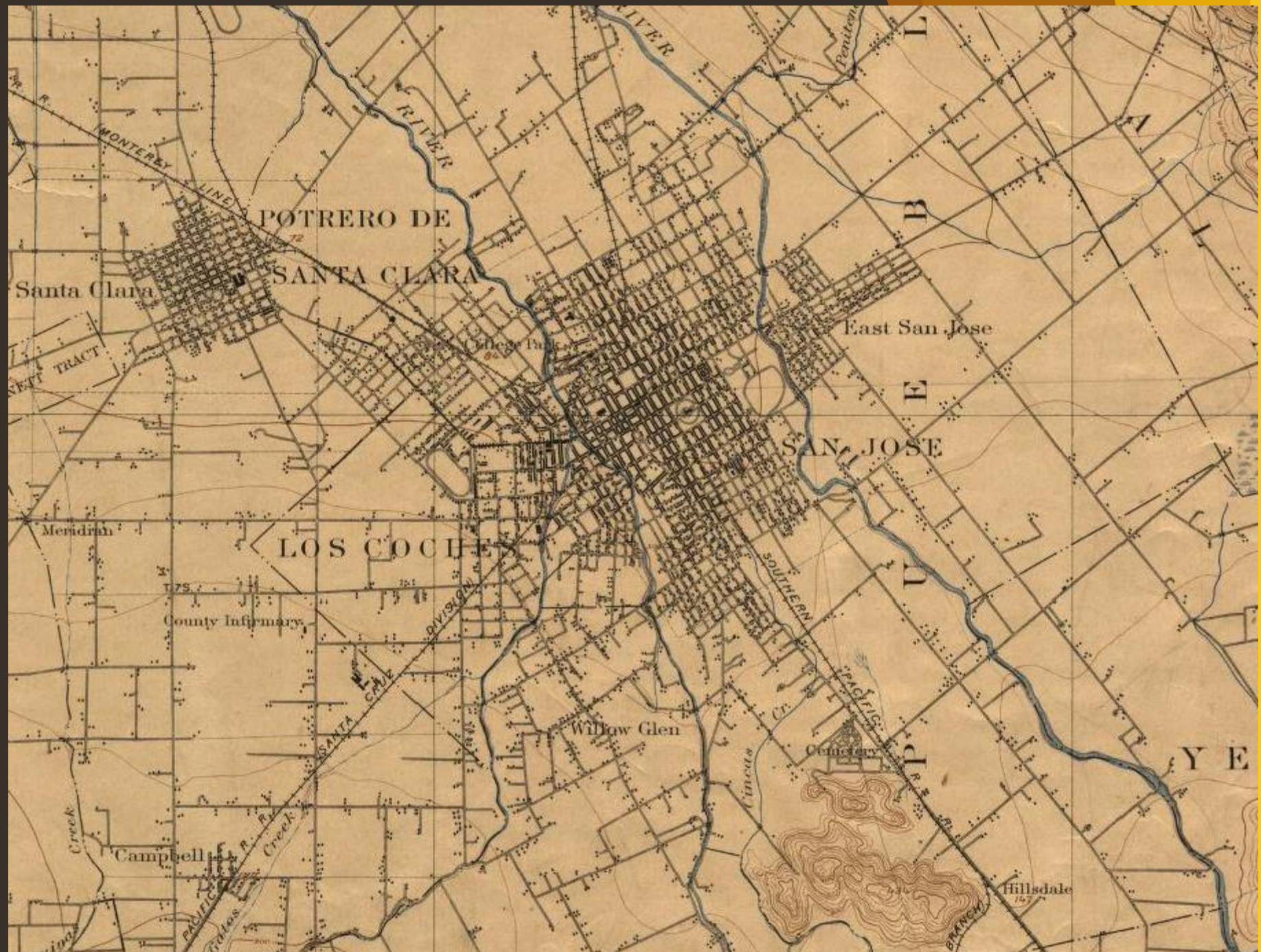
north

SJ Station

map overlay
by L. Ames

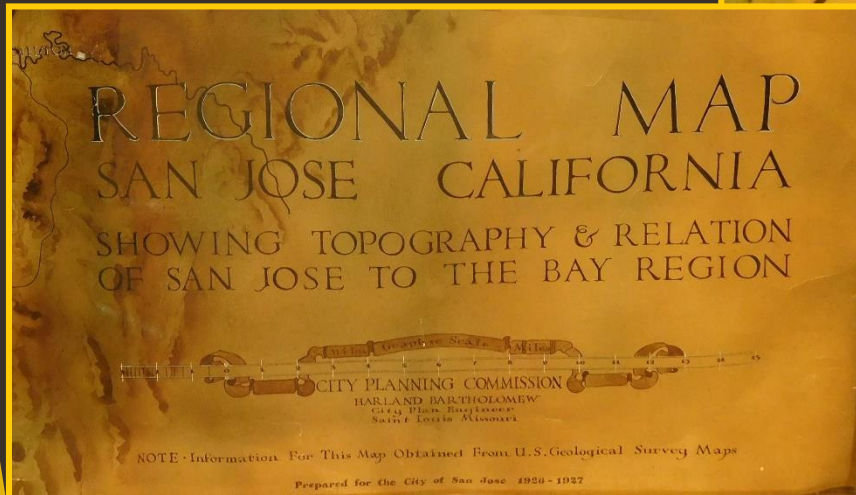
1899 USGS

- ▶ SP RR
unchallenged, and
thru heart of SJ,
at-grade on 4th St



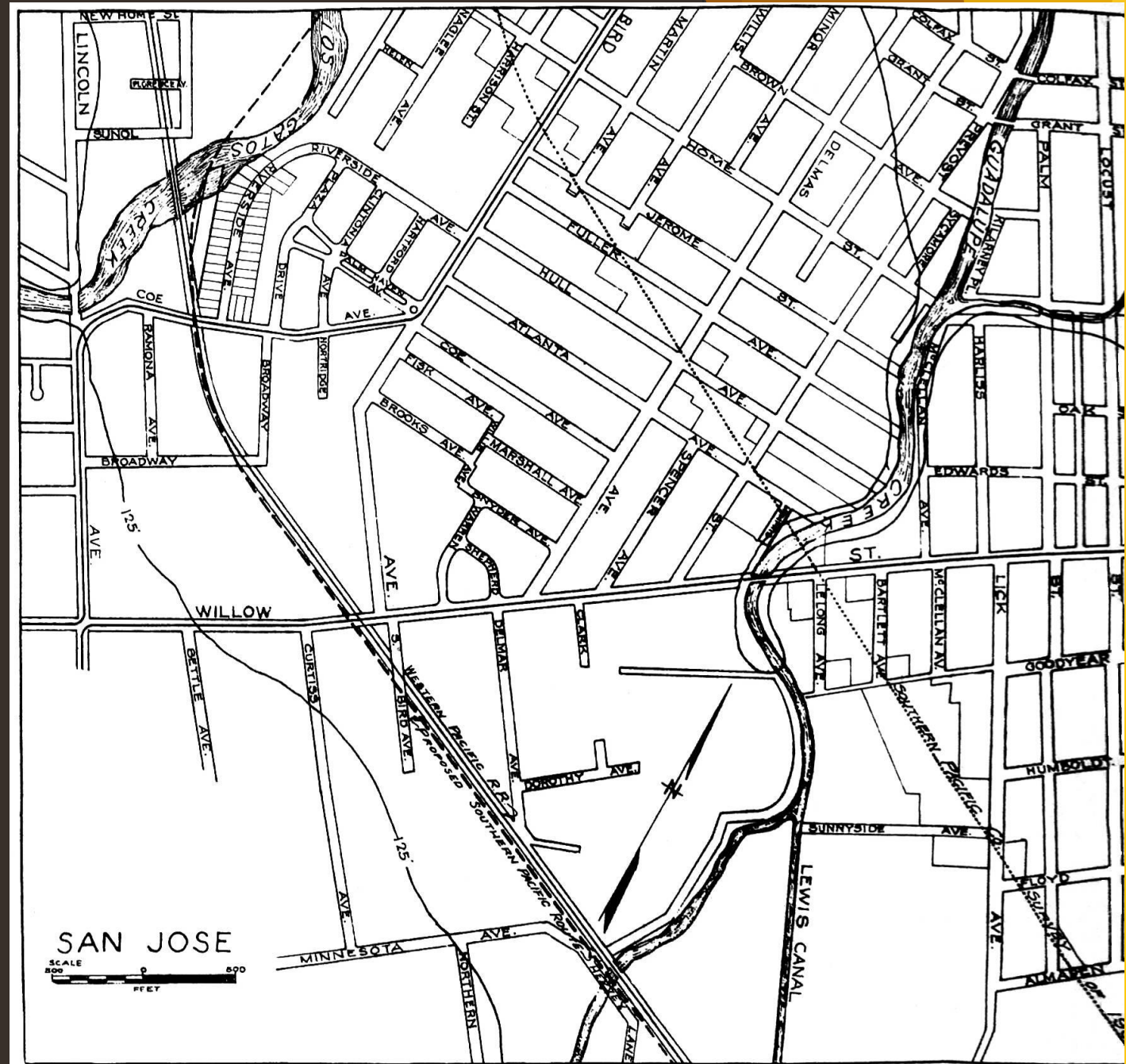
1927 Map at City Hall

- ▶ WP arrives in SJ
- ▶ Belt-line J-hook loops around SJ, avoiding residential areas
- ▶ Breaks SP's monopoly



Alternative SP Alignments

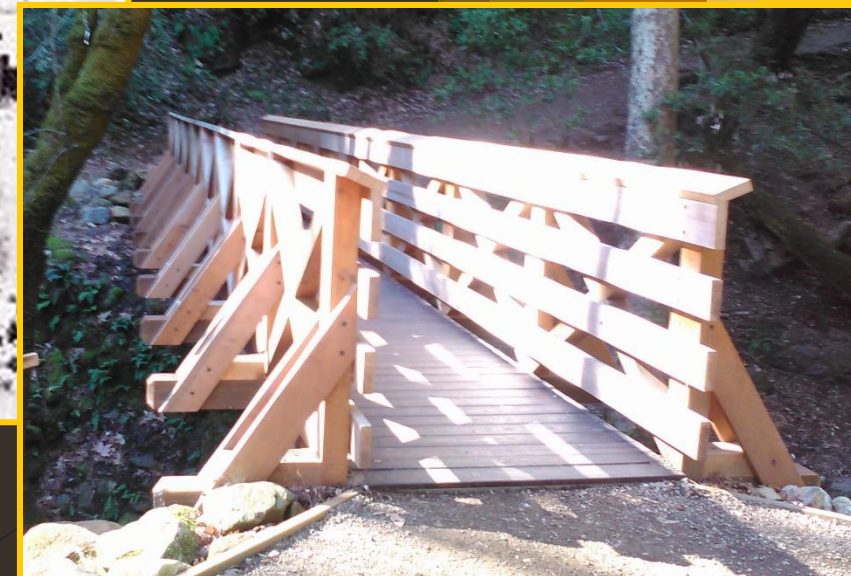
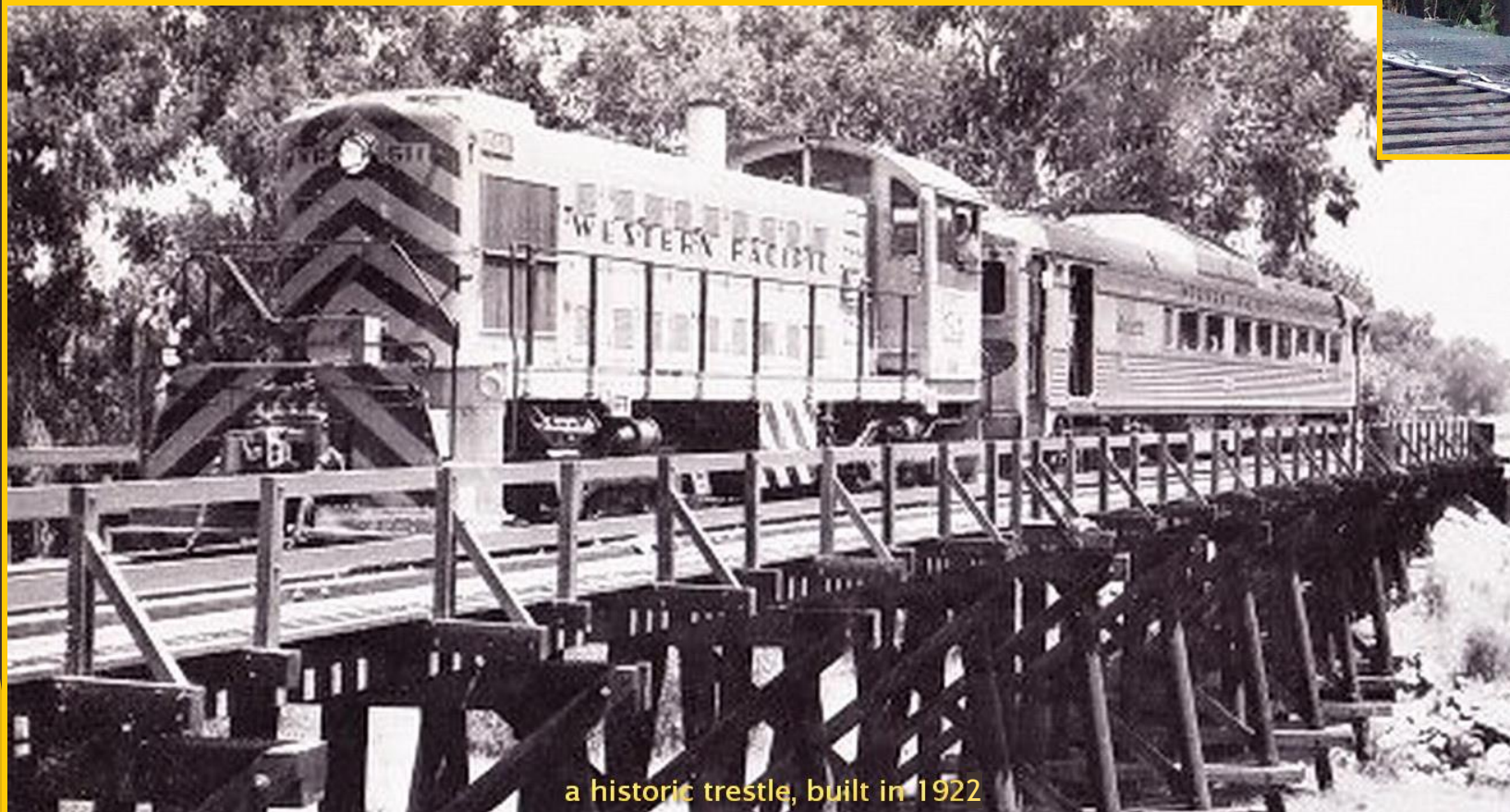
- ▶ City of San José traded SP off against WP and Willow Glen in the future around-town alignment.
- ▶ Willow Glen fought for grade-separation at major arterials; SP realigned their route to avoid crossings w/in WG town limits; WG fought for separations anyhow, denying SP the franchise unless they complied. (Issue went to courts, and up to Supreme Court.)



Railing

present condition:
non-historic
and inadequate

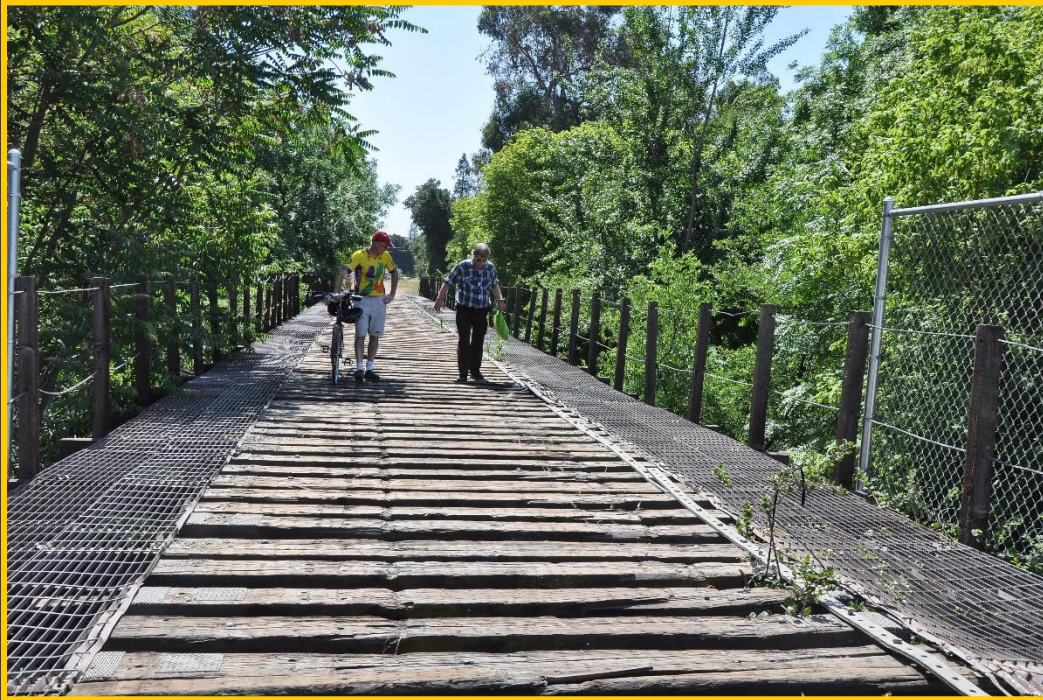
Trestle in 1955



perhaps could be like the trail
recently built in Uvas Canyon Co. Park

The Willow Glen Trestle

at the junction of the
Los Gatos Creek Trail
and the Three Creeks Trail



“The historical character of the
trestle structure is difficult to
appreciate when on the structure” ...

... but there’s a great view
from the trail from downtown

