

California Register of Historical Resources
Willow Glen Trestle, San Jose, Santa Clara County
California State Historical Resources Commission
Supplemental Findings
May 8, 2019

On May 10, 2017, at its regular quarterly meeting of the State Historical Resources Commission in Pasadena, Los Angeles County, California, the State Historical Resources Commission listed the Willow Glen Trestle in the California Register of Historical Resources. On May 8, 2019, at its regularly quarterly meeting in Palm Springs, CA, the Commission reviewed the supplemental staff report supporting this listing and considered public comment regarding the same.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 5024.1(f)(3), and California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 11.5, Section 4855 (b)(2), (and to the extent applicable, Title 14, Chapter 11.5, Section 4855 (c)(3), requiring the Commission's written findings to support its determinations) when there is an objection by the local government, the findings of the Commission shall identify the historical or cultural significance of the resource and explain why the resource was listed in the California Register over the objections of the local government.

Willow Glen Trestle is eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 1 for its association with the industrial development of San Jose. Until the arrival of Western Pacific Railroad, San Jose and its surrounding agricultural communities had only one choice for railroad access to their community, Southern Pacific, whose near monopoly on freight traffic allowed them to dictate high rates to shippers. By encouraging Western Pacific to enter the San Jose area, the two railroads were placed in competition, and Western Pacific gained access to a major regional shipper of agricultural produce.

Willow Glen Trestle is also eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 1 for its association with the residential development of Willow Glen. The decision to locate Western Pacific's branch via the Willow Glen Trestle facilitated industrial access while reducing the effects of industry on the residential community of Willow Glen.

The property retains most aspects of historic integrity, with some loss of integrity of design, materials and feeling due to removal of rails and tie plates, and the addition of a deck and safety rail, but the property retains sufficient overall historic integrity to remain eligible for the California Register, with all timber elements of the superstructure still extant.

In light of the information summarized in the May 2017 staff report and supplemented by the May 2019 supplemental staff report (hereby incorporated by reference), the Commission is not persuaded by the objections raised by the City

of San Jose that the Trestle does not qualify for listing on the California Register. The Commission has considered the City's criteria-based arguments and finds as follows:

(1) City Objection 1: To list a railroad trestle under Criterion 1 alone would be precedent-setting because the Trestle is not significant under Criterion 3.

Finding: The Commission is not aware of any requirement that a resource meet both Criterion 1 and 3 in order to be listed on the California Register; thus, the Commission finds no merit in the City's Objection No. 1.

(2) City Objection 2: The Trestle is not significant under Criterion 1 because the Trestle is not associated with the commercial or industrial development of West San Jose in any important way, and is a modest isolated railroad structure.

Finding: The Commission finds that the Trestle's significant association with the breaking up of the monopoly of the Southern Pacific Railroad and the correlated growth in the fruit processing industry support the decision to list the Trestle and outweigh the City's Objection No. 2.

(3) City Objection 3: The Trestle is not significant under Criterion 1 because the Trestle's association with residential development is weak.

Finding: The Commission finds that the Willow Glen Community's related negotiations with Western Pacific regarding its development of the railroad spur into Willow Glen and the location of the Trestle so as to keep Willow Glen mostly residential further supports the Trestle's association with events that significantly contributed to the residential development of Willow Glen, and contributes to the Trestle's eligibility under Criterion 1, contrary to the City's Objection No. 3.

(4) City Objection 4: The Commission should consider the findings of the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places in rendering its decision about whether the Trestle meets the criteria for the California Register.


Finding: The criteria for listing on the California Register are broader than the National Register, particularly as to standards regarding historic integrity. Determinations by the Keeper of the National Register do not bind this Commission as they are not based on identical criteria. The Commission thus finds the City's Objection No. 4 unpersuasive.

(5) City Objection 5: The Trestle lacks sufficient historic integrity to qualify for listing on the California Register.

Finding: The Commission finds that modifications to the Trestle did not compromise its historic integrity so as to render the Trestle ineligible for listing. Thus, there does not appear to be any validity to the City's Objection No. 5.

In sum, the Commission finds that the Trestle meets the criteria for listing on the California Register under Criterion 1, and further finds the record demonstrates the overriding historical and cultural significance of the Trestle, justifying its listing over the objection of the City.

With this signature, it is hereby certified that the State Historical Resources Commission adopted these findings pursuant to Public Resources Code section 5024.1, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 11.5, Section 4855 (b)(2) and 4855 (c)(3) on the 8th day of May 2019.



Adam Sriro, SHRC Chairperson



Date