RECOMMENDATION

1. Agendize a closed session item at the June 27th council meeting to discuss the current status of litigation over the Willow Glen Trestle.

2. Agendize an open session item at a council meeting in August that would give the Council the opportunity, if it so chooses, to discuss the policy question of whether San Jose should continue efforts to replace the trestle. Under this item, staff is directed to present the Council with any and all options for moving forward with a bridge project at the Trestle location.

BACKGROUND

Back in 2013, the City Council made a decision to demolish the Willow Glen Trestle over the objection of a group of residents who wanted to see the Trestle preserved. Since that time, we’ve been in litigation with those same residents over whether the demolition can take place. Given that we’ve devoted significant resources to this legal struggle over the past four years without making any real progress on the project, I think it’s time for us to again consider whether demolishing the Trestle is the right course.

For those who weren’t here in 2013, the Willow Glen Trestle is a railroad bridge over the Los Gatos Creek that was built in 1922. San Jose acquired the old railroad right of way on which the Trestle sits and is planning to build a trail along it. The trail will need to cross the Los Gatos Creek, just as the railroad once did. In 2012 the City commissioned a feasibility study from CH2M Hill to determine whether it would be feasible to retrofit the Trestle and use it as a bridge for the trail. The study concluded that it would be feasible to retrofit the structure with extensive repairs, bracing and replacement of the decking.

The report also compared the estimated cost of retrofitting the Trestle to the cost of demolishing the Trestle and installing a new bridge. The report predicted that the cost of retrofitting the Trestle would actually be several hundred thousand dollars less than building a new bridge, but that the
maintenance costs for the trestle would be higher over time than a new bridge. Cost estimates are listed below. The entire feasibility report can be found at the following address: http://www.sanJoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/11898

Table 15: Cost Estimate for Alternatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Option</th>
<th>Design Cost</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
<th>-20% Market Variance</th>
<th>+40% Market Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trestle Rehab with IPE Decking</td>
<td>$161,111</td>
<td>$1,090,000</td>
<td>$872,000</td>
<td>$1,526,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trestle Rehab with Concrete Decking</td>
<td>$161,111</td>
<td>$959,000</td>
<td>$767,200</td>
<td>$1,342,600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Replacement with Pre-fabricated Truss</td>
<td>$194,444</td>
<td>$1,637,323</td>
<td>$1,309,858</td>
<td>$2,292,252</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These estimates include 30% contingency, 5% storm water/erosion control, 10% mobilization, and 10% construction engineering. For details on all assumptions see Appendix G.

Staff recommended that the Council choose to demolish the Trestle and construct a new bridge in its place. Despite the lower initial cost of preserving the Trestle, staff was concerned about the ongoing maintenance obligations. Staff also pointed out that retrofitting the Trestle would likely take more time than replacing it. They were worried that an extended project timeline could endanger the State grant being used to fund the project. The Council ended up approving the staff recommendation.

As it turned out, replacing the Trestle was not a quicker option. We’ve devoted the past four years not to building a bridge, but to fighting a court battle. Just recently the State Historic Resources Commission agreed that the Trestle is worthy of preservation and decided to place it on the California Register of Historic Resources. Given the enduring commitment of many residents to this issue and the recent State action, I think it’s time to discuss whether we should continue to devote resources to pursuing demolition of the Trestle. With this memo, I recommend agendizing Council discussion of this issue in both open and closed session. I believe it’s important we discuss the issue in open session given the strong feelings of our residents. We need to be able to hear their perspective as we deliberate on this issue.