

DATE: June 10, 2005

TO: Historic District Commission

FROM: Community Development Department

SUBJECT: **The nomination of the Orangevale Avenue Bridge at 6615 Orangevale Avenue to the Cultural Resource Inventory List**

BACKGROUND

On November 5, 1998, the Folsom City Council approved the 'Historic Preservation Master Plan'. This document established goals and objectives for historic preservation within the City of Folsom, identified a process for the listing of locally significant historic sites and structures, and authorized the Historic District Commission to determine the eligibility of sites nominated for listing. The master plan also specifies that properties that have been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources are automatically eligible for local listing.

In 2003, the City of Folsom Public Works Department in conjunction with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) proposed to replace the Orangevale Avenue Bridge with a larger bridge structure, designed to meet current traffic levels and structural requirements. As a part of the project, the Public Works Department considered the bridge as a locally significant historical resource even though the structure had not previously been determined eligible for local listing. Because the issue of eligibility by the State Office of Historic Preservation has been in question until recently, the proposed replacement project has not yet been presented to City Council.

The Community Development Department is currently processing an application for a residential subdivision (The Canyon) north of the historic bridge and east of Gold Creek. This application includes a 30-foot-wide access road from Orangevale Avenue immediately east of the historic bridge. No impact to the bridge structure is anticipated as a result of this project, but the historic setting of the bridge may be altered.

NOMINATION

The Community Development Department has received a request for the listing of the Orangevale Avenue Bridge at 6615 Orangevale Avenue as a locally significant historical structure. In addition, the bridge is nominated based on its connection to the first transcontinental highway (Lincoln Highway). The submitted registration form was prepared by the Heritage Preservation League of Folsom.

The Lincoln Highway Association recently nominated the Orangevale Avenue Bridge to the California Register of Historical Resources and the nomination has been recognized by the State Office of Historic Preservation. Based on the State's determination of eligibility (as documented in Attachment 3), staff has determined that the bridge is automatically eligible for listing with the City's Cultural Resource Inventory and a decision by the Historic District Commission regarding a local listing will not be required.

The City of Folsom owns the Orangevale Bridge structure, and also holds an easement for the alignment of Orangevale Avenue. The land below the roadway and bridge structure is privately owned. Staff has notified the two property owners about the current nomination. The City has not received any comments during the provided 90-day response period.

CRITERIA FOR LISTING

The Historic Preservation Master Plan specifies criteria for listing a resource in the City's Cultural Resources Inventory:

- 1) Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- 2) Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- 3) Property embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or construction method, or represent the work of a creative individual; or
- 4) Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in Folsom's prehistory or history.

In addition to being eligible for listing, the Orangevale Bridge meets all the criterions for listing as established by the Historic Preservation Master Plan. The bridge was designed by County Surveyor Drury Butler and was the first bridge of its type to be built in the area. A few years later Drury Butler designed the larger Rainbow Bridge with the same open-spandrel arches. The bridge is structurally sound but is in need of some repairs.

During 1927 the bridge became a part of 'Lincoln Highway' that at the time provided the best and fastest route between New York and San Francisco, and from 1915 to 1948 the bridge provided the main connection between Folsom and Orangevale. During this time the bridge connected the citrus groves, orchards and produce gardens of Orangevale, Fair Oaks and Carmichael with the processing and shipping businesses in Folsom.

DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY

The Orangevale Bridge is surrounded by open space and the Gold Creek ravine. Remains of gold mining operations are located along Gold Creek close to the bridge, connecting the area to the early days of the Town of Folsom. The steep slopes along the creek bed and the heavy vegetation along the open space area screens the view of the bridge structure from the surrounding roadways (Greenback Lane and American River Canyon Drive). Only minor repairs have been done to the original bridge structure, while Rainbow Bridge (with a similar design) has been modified over the years to accommodate the increasing demands of traffic.

LISTING

Based on the State determination for eligibility of listing, staff has included the Orangevale Bridge with the City's list of historical resources eligible for local listing. While the property owners have not objected to the listing, staff will also include the property with Folsom's Cultural Resource Inventory List. The Community Development Department maintains two sets of records regarding cultural resources listed by the City. If archeological resources are not identified at the bridge site, a complete set of the nomination package will be available at the public planning counter and also included with the information binder available to historical institutions and researchers.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Vicinity Map and Bridge Cross Section
2. The Nomination Package
3. Letter from the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION ACTION

No action is required by the Historic District Commission



ORANGEVALE AVE BRIDGE

1915