

HISTORIC TREE NOMINATION FORM – City of Dallas

Please review the Historic Tree Nomination Instructions form prior to submitting the application.

Tree Information

Date: October 24, 2022

Tree Species: Pecan, *Carya illinoensis*

Number of trees: 1

Tree Address: On the southeast corner of N Beckley Avenue and W Commerce Street, Dallas, Texas

Tree is located (public/private property): Public

Tree Size

Height (approximate): 65'

Crown (in square feet): 45'

Diameter (DBH): 41 1/2"

Approximate age: Estimated to be between 175 to 200 years old

How determined: Based on the ring counting of exposed 28 inch branch cut, 10 feet above surface.

Tree also appears in a 1930 photo of the levee construction, in which it is already a mature tree.

Physical condition: Medium to Poor

Historical and cultural summary: The Survivor Pecan has served for over 175 years as the gateway to West Dallas, sitting today at the west end of the Commerce Street bridge across the Trinity River channel from downtown Dallas. Located on the south side of the intersection with Beckley Avenue, the tree has progressed from seeing the last of the bison herds and their hunters, to stagecoaches and wagons, to buggies and carriages, and currently, to today's extensive motor vehicle traffic.

Prior to the arrival of the Bryans, Beesons, Cockrells, and other early Dallas settlers, a low-water crossing of the Trinity River was located just east of present day Commerce Street and Riverside Drive in downtown Dallas. As a sapling, the Survivor Pecan sat adjacent to one of the many trails that converged in this area that were used by the bison herds and their native American hunters.

From the construction of the first Commerce Street bridge in 1855 to the early 1900s, the Survivor Pecan sat near the junction of the Eagle Ford Road and the Fort Worth Pike. Travelers went north at this junction on the Eagle Ford Road to La Reunion, Eagle Ford, and the Trinity River West Branch

crossing into present-day Irving. Heading west from the junction was the Fort Worth Pike, the main road between Dallas and Fort Worth during this time period. The tree sat in the Trinity River floodplain at this time, experiencing major floods in 1866, 1871, 1890, and 1908.

Following the massive 1908 flood, West Dallasite C. W. Heppner spearheaded many efforts to adopt plans for channeling the Trinity River and building levees to protect both downtown and West Dallas. Heppner lived on the Fort Worth Pike, a few hundred feet west of the Survivor Pecan. His continued writing and lobbying eventually led to construction of the levees in 1930 and some now refer to him as the father of West Dallas. Luckily, the Survivor Pecan sat just to the west of Beckley at the time since all the trees between downtown and Beckley were removed during the construction. However, the tree moved from inside the floodplain to outside, dramatically reducing the amount of moisture and nutrients it received. The tree started on a steady decline in growth rate and health.

Heading west from downtown Dallas today, the Survivor Pecan is the first big tree encountered. Commerce turns into Fort Worth Avenue which is undergoing a major rebirth along with the rest of West Dallas. Along with this development comes more development and traffic. The tree has lost three major limbs and experienced multiple impacts from passing vehicles. With a little help, maybe the Survivor Tree can live to see West Dallas flourish again.

Nominator

Name: TxHTC Board of Trustees

Organization: Texas Historic Tree Coalition

Address: 16 Steel Road, Wylie, Texas 75098

Phone: 972-442-1524, ext 236 (Ask for RuthAnn Jackson)

Email: shouser@arborillogical.com or rajackson@arborillogical.com

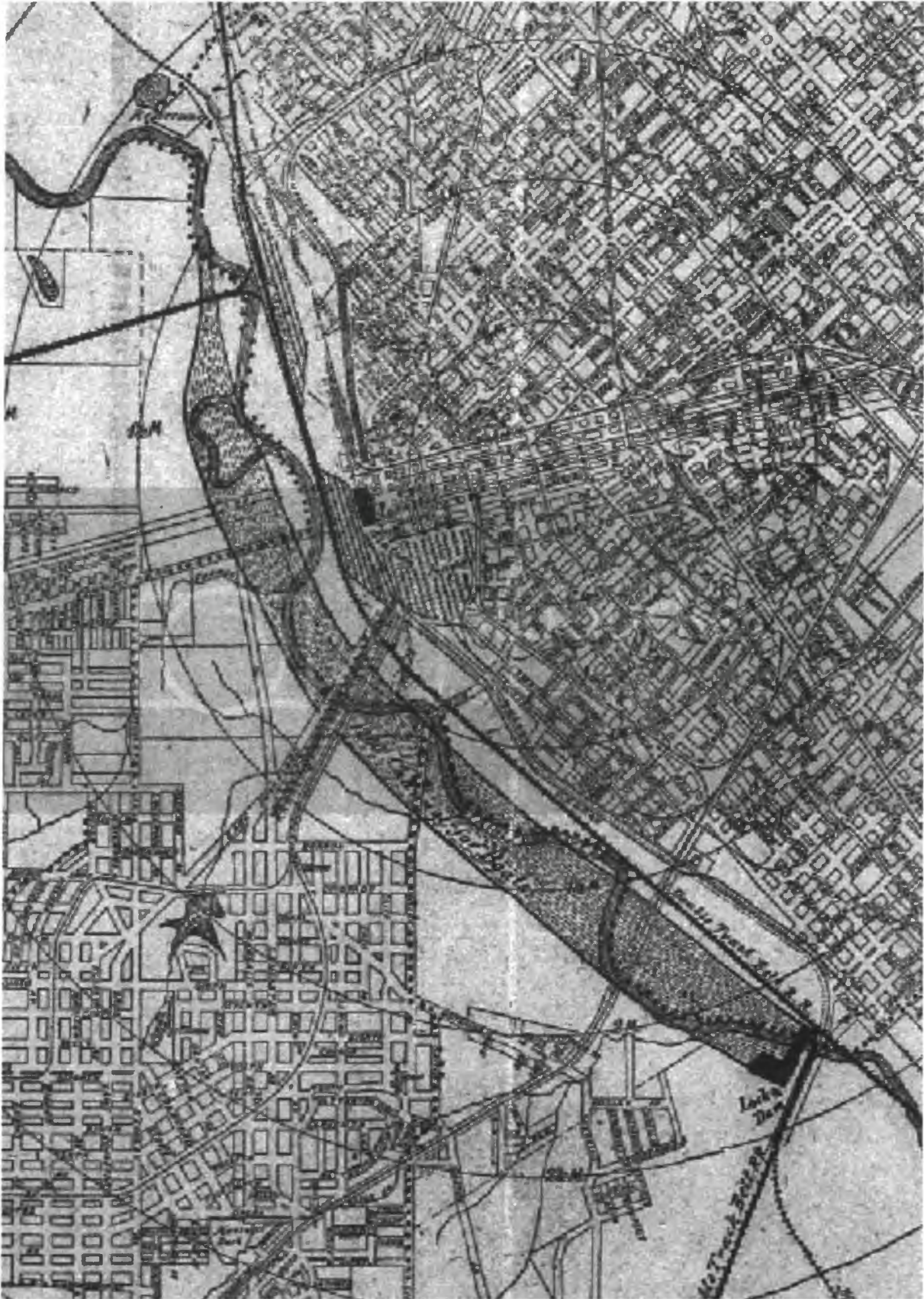
Consulting / certified arborist (if applicable)

Name Steve Houser

Cert. # (if applicable) #TX 0107

All contact information including address, phone and email are the same as the nominator

Additional Information (add up to 5 photographs, relevant historical information of the tree and the property, assessment of the tree if available, or importance to community, as applicable.):







Application # 22-0007

**Texas Historic Tree Coalition
Historic Tree Proclamation**

West Dallas Gateway Pecan

WHEREAS, the West Dallas Gateway Pecan has served as an important waypoint marking the trail from central Dallas across the Trinity River to points south and west for over 175 years;

AND WHEREAS, the West Dallas Gateway Pecan sits where many trails converged near a low-water crossing of the Trinity River that was used by both the bison herds and their hunters prior to the settlement of Dallas and cattle drives on the Shawnee Trail in the early years of Dallas;

AND WHEREAS, the West Dallas Gateway Pecan saw the construction of the first Commerce Street bridge in 1855 and sits at the junction of the old Eagle Ford Road and the old Fort Worth Pike taking early settlers and traders to all points west of Dallas;

AND WHEREAS, the West Dallas Gateway Pecan sat in the Trinity River floodplain prior to construction of levees and served as a rescue point for people on the west side of the Trinity during major floods in 1868, 1871, 1898, and 1908;

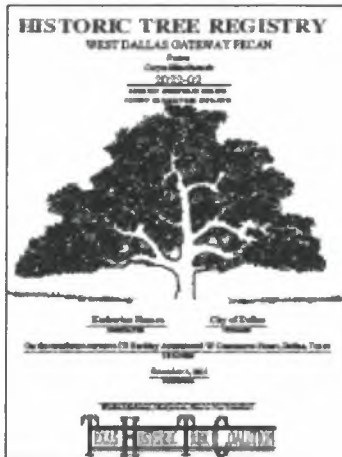
AND WHEREAS, West Dallasite C. W. Happeur lived adjacent to the West Dallas Gateway Pecan in a three-story house with a pier on the side used for rescue boats during the floods and helped organize the Trinity River Levee and Drainage Club to adopt plans for channeling the Trinity River and building levees to protect both downtown and West Dallas;

AND WHEREAS, the West Dallas Gateway Pecan served as a shady gathering place for vendors to sell food and goods to the people of West Dallas and has survived the construction of the levee, construction of roads, and multiple impacts from passing vehicles;

NOW THEREFORE, the Texas Historic Tree Coalition does hereby proclaim the West Dallas Gateway Pecan to be an official Historic Tree, which will be listed in our Historic Tree Registry as a living legend and testament to our history as a state.

ON THIS DAY, November 4th, 2022.

Marion Lineberry
Chairperson, Historic Tree Committee
Texas Historic Tree Coalition



For Office Use

City Staff Recommendation:

YES ☒ NO ☐

Chief Arborist, Administrator of review

Submit applications to the Chief Arborist, 320 E Jefferson Blvd., Room 105, Dallas, TX 75203