



## HERITAGE TREE PROGRAM

This Heritage Tree Program has been adopted by the City of West Hollywood for the purpose of identifying, promoting awareness, maintaining and protecting designated Heritage Trees located within the City. This Program acknowledges that Heritage Trees whether located on public or private property are distinct and unique living resources of the West Hollywood community. It is the intent of this Heritage Tree Program to increase public awareness of Heritage Trees located in the City as well as to provide reasonable assurance that West Hollywood's tree heritage will continue for future generations. The intent of this Program is not to be regulatory or punitive but rather to heighten public consciousness by informing and educating the public of the benefits that not only Heritage Trees but trees in general provide to the community. The Program is not intended to be a means to obstruct or stop the development of private or public property and the protection of a Heritage Tree shall not be a factor in preventing development on property that is contiguous to or near to the tree's location.

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## **HERITAGE TREE PROGRAM GOALS:**

The West Hollywood Heritage Tree Program has four major goals:

- To establish a process of designating Heritage Trees located on either public or private property.
- To encourage proper maintenance, care and protection of designated Heritage Trees.
- To inform and educate private property owners regarding the botanical resources they possess.
- To increase public awareness of the environmental benefit of Heritage Trees and trees in general.

## **TREE DEFINITION:**

A tree or shrub as defined below can be considered for Heritage Tree nomination:

1. Tree: Any perennial plant or grove of perennial plants growing on public or private property, having a self-supporting woody main stem or trunk usually characterized by the ability to grow to considerable height/size and the development of woody branches at some distance above the ground; and
2. Shrub: Any singular or group of perennial woody or herbaceous plants, including cactus growing on public or private property, distinguished from a tree by having a relative low height and several stems.

## **CRITERIA FOR HERITAGE TREE NOMINATION:**

Any tree or shrub as defined above growing on public or private property within the boundaries of the City of West Hollywood that meets the following criteria as described below can be considered for Heritage Tree nomination.

Any tree or shrub that is being considered for nomination as a Heritage Tree must meet the following three criteria:

1. Must be architecturally sound, true to its genetic form, and not topped or badly pruned.

2. Must have full potential to reach mature size and form, taking into consideration site constraints such as adjacent buildings, roadways, utilities, etc.
3. Must be visible from publicly accessible location(s).

Upon meeting the above three criteria, any tree or shrub being considered for nomination as a Heritage Tree then must meet a minimum of two of the following four numbered criteria:

1. Any tree or shrub that has historical significance, including but not limited to a specimen that is or was planted:
  - a. As a commemorative, memorial, or tribute; or
  - b. During an historical era significant to the Southern California Region, and recognized as characteristic of the landscaping of that era.
2. Any tree or shrub that has horticultural significance, including but not limited to a specimen that is:
  - a. Distinctive in size, beauty, structure, or age, as compared to other individuals of the same species in the City; or
  - b. An unusual species for the West Hollywood area and/or seldom found growing in southern California urban areas;  
or
  - c. Identified as playing a significant role in the landscape or architecture of a specific location.
3. Any tree from the “Southern California Native Tree List”<sup>1</sup> that has a diameter at standard height (DSH) of at least 8 inches, as measured at 4.5 feet above grade. Trees with multiple trunks will be measured below the lowest crotch (point where tree forks into two or more trunks), at the location giving the smallest diameter.
4. Any tree NOT on the Southern California Native Tree List” that is at least 24 inches in diameter at DSH. Trees with multiple trunks will be measured below the lowest crotch (point where tree forks into two or more trunks), at the location giving the smallest diameter.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix A

## **CATEGORIES OF HERITAGE TREE DESIGNATION:**

- **Designated Heritage Tree** – Private Property; and
- **Protected Heritage Tree.**

### **Designated Heritage Tree - Private Property**

The City shall provide the following incentives to encourage private property owners (Owner) to preserve and protect Designated Heritage Trees.

- The City will provide to the Owner recommendations regarding the proper care and maintenance of a Designated Heritage Tree.
- The City will provide an inspection of each Designated Heritage Tree every 4 years. The inspection shall be conducted by City staff and an International Society of Arboriculture Standards (ISA) certified arborist with findings provided to the Owner.
- A Designated Heritage Tree may be pruned by the Owner. The Owner is encouraged to trim a Designated Heritage Tree in accordance with ISA standards so that the pruning would not reduce the tree's height or crown diameter, alter the tree's general appearance, increase the tree's susceptibility to insects or disease or otherwise increase its risk of mortality. Upon request, the City will consult with the Owner regarding acceptable pruning methods and techniques.
- If considering removal or an action that would damage a Designated Heritage Tree, the City will, upon request consult with the Owner regarding possible alternatives to address the condition(s) necessitating removal or potential damage to the tree.

### **Protected Heritage Tree**

A Protected Heritage Tree is any Designated Heritage Tree located on public property or one located on private property where the property owner (Owner) has encumbered his/her property with an instrument provided by the City and recorded by the Owner with the County of Los Angeles. The purpose of the instrument is to inform future Owners that the property contains a Designated Heritage Tree. The recorded instrument shall reference the City of West Hollywood's Heritage Tree Program and include a statement that prior approval is required by the Owner from the City of West Hollywood for any act that may result in potential damage or removal of the Protected Heritage Tree. Such tree shall be classified as a Protected Heritage Tree. Said instrument can not be revoked without

consent of the West Hollywood City Council. In addition to providing, incentives of this Heritage Tree Program such as inspection, care and maintenance recommendations as described in the above *Designated Heritage Tree - Private Property* Section of this Program, the following additional incentive shall be provided for a Protected Heritage Tree:

- The City shall prune a Protected Heritage Tree every four years to ISA standards upon written authorization of the Owner.

Protected Heritage Tree Procedure:

Protected Heritage Tree differs from a Designated Heritage Tree as it requires specific approval for any act that may result in its damage or removal. A Protected Heritage Tree shall not be a factor in preventing development on property that is contiguous to or near to the tree's location.

- A. Any person proposing any act which may result in potential damage to or removal of a Protected Heritage Tree shall submit a written request to the Facilities and Landscape Division Manager (Division Manager). Causes for submitting a written request include but is not limited to poor health of tree, architectural structural soundness of the tree, threat to property including adjacent properties and improvements, damage to tree from other sources and/or for public benefit. The request shall identify the Protected Heritage Tree(s) affected, the need for the proposed action and description of the proposed action. The Division Manager shall then notify the Heritage Tree Committee (Committee) of the request. The Committee shall hold a public meeting to consider the request. Noticing of the meeting shall be as described in the Heritage Tree Nomination Section of the Program.
- B. After consideration of the written request and comment received at the public meeting, the Committee shall provide a decision regarding the request.
- C. All parties receiving notice of the public meeting and individuals attending the public meeting shall receive notice of the Committee's determination.
- D. Any appeal of the Committee's determination will be submitted in writing to the Director of Human Services. Upon receipt, the Director shall forward the appeal to the Public Facilities Commission (Commission) for consideration. The appeal will be considered at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission. In addition to the required Agenda posting and noticing of the Commission's meeting, the Committee's public meeting noticing process as previously described shall be followed including noticing to the appellant. The decision of the Commission shall be final.

- E. When a final decision is made approving an act that may result in damage or removal of a Protected Heritage Tree, the Division Manager will issue a permit authorizing the approved action. The permit may include any terms and/or conditions determined to be necessary to protect the tree.
- F. In the case where an emergency condition exists such as imminent threat, hazard or risk to life or property the Director, in consultation with the Division Manager and Chair of the Public Facilities Commission can issue a permit to allow the necessary action that would address the imminent condition including tree removal.

### **HERITAGE TREE NOMINATION:**

Nominations for Heritage Tree designation, for trees located on either public or private property may be made by any resident, property owner or business owner of West Hollywood (Applicant) and shall be filed with the Director of Human Services (Director).

#### Public Property Heritage Tree Nomination:

Nominations for trees located on public property such as street trees, park trees, median trees, etc shall be submitted by the Applicant in writing, accompanied by a statement that clearly and concisely includes the following:

1. Location of Nominated Tree(s)  
Street address (nearest to tree), location within a park.
2. Description of Nominated Tree(s)  
Include species, diameter; height, crown width, and age, as well as any additional characteristics on which the nomination is based.
3. Photograph(s) of the nominated tree(s)
4. Location Map  
Clearly identify property location of the nominated tree(s) and the specific location of the tree(s) within the property.
5. Justification  
Using Criteria for Heritage Tree Nomination listed above provide rationalization and justification specific to the tree being nominated for Heritage Tree Designation.

6. Contact Information

Provide the name, address and telephone number of the Applicant submitting the nomination.

Private Property Heritage Tree Nomination:

Nominations for trees located on private property shall be submitted by the Applicant in writing, accompanied by a statement that clearly and concisely includes the following:

1. Street Address of Nominated Tree(s)
2. Property Owner Consent – Private Property owner(s) must consent in writing to a tree nominated for Heritage Tree designation.

The privacy of the private property owner(s) shall be respected. Upon receipt of a Private Property Heritage Tree Nomination (Nomination), the City shall contact the property owner for their written consent of a Nomination. Unless the property owner is the Applicant, the Applicant shall not contact the property owner regarding consent to the Nomination. The consent shall include the name, address and telephone number of the private property owner(s) and a statement that they have reviewed the City's Heritage Tree Program. The consent must also grant authorization to the City or their agents to enter onto the subject property to view a tree submitted for nomination. Said consent shall be signed by the private property owner(s).

3. Description of Nominated Tree(s)  
Without trespassing onto private property, identify tree species and estimate diameter height, crown width, and age, as well as any additional characteristics on which the nomination is based.
4. Photograph(s) of the Nominated Tree(s)
5. Location Map  
Clearly identify property location of the nominated tree(s) and the specific location of the tree(s) within the property.
6. Justification  
Using Criteria for Heritage Tree Nomination listed above provide rationalization and justification specific to the tree being nominated for Heritage Tree Designation.

## 7. Contact Information

Provide the name, address and telephone number of the Applicant submitting the nomination.

Upon receipt of a nomination for a public property or private property Heritage Tree designation, the Manager of the Facilities and Landscape Division (Division Manager) shall review same for completeness. Those nominations being determined as complete shall be forwarded to the City's Heritage Tree Committee for consideration. Those nominations being determined as incomplete shall be returned to the Applicant with deficiencies noted. The Applicant can re-submit the nomination upon addressing the noted deficiencies.

### **CONSIDERATION OF A HERITAGE TREE NOMINATION:**

A Heritage Tree Committee (Committee) as described below shall meet twice annually to consider each Heritage Tree Nomination forwarded by the Division.

The Committee shall consist of:

- Chair of the Public Facilities Commission, who shall serve as Chair of the Committee;
- Two Public Facilities Commissioners as appointed by the Commission;
- Manager of the Facilities and Landscape Division;
- City's Landscape Maintenance Supervisor;
- City's Urban Designer; and
- One representative of the community preferably with familiarity in urban forestry as recommended by the Public Facilities Commission and approved by the City Council, for a term of one year.

As determined by the Committee, an ISA (International Society of Arboriculture) Certified Arborist may also assist the Committee in the review and consideration of nominated tree(s).

The Committee shall consider each Heritage Tree Nomination at a public meeting. A notice containing the date, time, location and purpose of the public meeting shall be posted with the City Clerk's Office, in a location clearly visible from the adjacent public right-of-way and on or immediately adjacent to the nominated tree. The Applicant, property owner(s) on which the tree is located and contiguous property owners/residents within 75 feet of the nominated tree shall receive a notice of the public meeting.

At the public meeting the Committee shall consider the Heritage Tree Nomination including the written nomination forwarded by the Facilities and Landscape Division Manager and related public comment. As a result of this consideration, the Committee shall make a determination:

A tree nomination as determined by the Committee to be complete and meeting the intent, purpose and spirit of the Heritage Tree Program shall receive a designation as a Heritage Tree. The Committee may, at its discretion include conditions of approval to the designation.

A tree nomination as determined by the Committee not to be complete or not meeting the intent, purpose and spirit of the Heritage Tree Program shall be rejected.

All parties receiving notice of the public meeting and individuals attending the public meeting shall receive notice of the Committee's determination.

Any appeal of the Committee's determination will be submitted in writing to the Director of Human Services. Upon receipt, the Director shall forward the appeal to the Public Facilities Commission (Commission) for consideration. The appeal will be considered at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission. In addition to the required Agenda posting and noticing of the Commission's meeting, the Committee's public meeting noticing process as previously described shall be followed including noticing to the appellant. The decision of the Commission shall be final.

## **PUBLIC AWARENESS**

A key goal of this Program is promoting awareness by informing and educating the public of the benefits that Heritage Trees and trees in general provide to the community. This goal will be achieved by:

- Development of an information brochure that provides an overview of the West Hollywood Heritage Tree Program as well as the importance and benefits that trees play in our environment, specifically a densely populated urban environment. The brochure shall be available to the public at City facilities including City Hall, Community Center, Library and at major City events and meetings.
- A Heritage Tree Nomination Form, for uniformity and consistency of application and consideration of nominated trees shall be developed. The Form will also be used as a tool in the historical record keeping of nominated as well as designated trees.
- Development of a Heritage Tree Plaque that would be placed at each designated Heritage Tree to promote public awareness. The Plaque would clearly identify the level of Heritage Tree designation (Designated Heritage Tree & Protected Heritage Tree), tree species, date of designation, reference number and other information as may be determined by the Committee.

- Members of the Committee and Public Facilities Commissioners will act as “Heritage Tree Ambassadors”, to inform the community including service organizations, Chamber and local schools of the Heritage Tree Program.
- Members of the Committee and Public Facilities Commission in concert with the City’s Public Information Office the Program will promote the Heritage Tree Program in City mailings, public service announcements, City’s web page, and cable channel as well as periodic news releases to regional medias.
- The City’s Human Services Department shall prepare and maintain an inventory of all designated Heritage Trees. The Heritage Tree Inventory shall include a location map, brief description, photograph(s) and other relevant information of each designated Heritage Tree. The inventory will be available to the public and forwarded to the Community Development Department and other City Departments as deemed appropriate by the Committee.
- The City’s Human Services Department and the City’s Urban Designer shall disseminate the Heritage Tree Program to appropriate City Departments.

## APPENDIX A

### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA NATIVE TREE LIST

<i>Acer macrophylla</i>	Big Leaf Maple
<i>Alnus rhombifolia</i>	White Alder
<i>Cercis occidentalis</i>	Western Red Bud
<i>Heteromeles arbutifolia</i>	California Holly
<i>Juglans californica</i>	Southern California Black Walnut
<i>Lyonothamnus sp.</i>	Catalina Ironwood
<i>Pinus monophylla</i>	Single Leaf Pinon Pine
<i>P. torreyana</i>	Torrey Pine
<i>Platanus racemosa</i>	California Sycamore
<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	Coastal Live Oak
<i>Q. berberidifolia</i>	Scrub Oak
<i>Q. chrysolepis</i>	Canyon Live Oak
<i>Q. engelmannii</i>	Mesa Oak
<i>Q. lobata</i>	Valley Oak, California White Oak
<i>Q. wizlizenii</i>	Interior Live Oak
<i>Umbellularia californica</i>	California Laurel

Excluded: willows (*Salix* sp.), cottonwoods (*Populus* sp.), elderberry (*Sambucus* sp.), boxelder (*Acer negundo*)

The Southern California Native Tree List can be modified upon recommendation of the Heritage Tree Committee and approval by the Public Facilities Commission.