

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING VILLAGE

Page 1

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING VILLAGE

Other Name/Site Number: HIGHLAND PARK VILLAGE

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: Preston Road at Mockingbird

Not for publication: N/A

City/Town: Highland Park

Vicinity: N/A

State: Texas County: Dallas Code: 113

Zip Code: 75205

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property
Private: X
Public-Local:
Public-State:
Public-Federal:

Category of Property
Building(s): X
District:
Site:
Structure:
Object:

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing
7

Noncontributing
1 buildings
sites
structures
objects
1 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 7

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

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NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING VILLAGE

Page 2

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

- \_\_\_ Entered in the National Register
\_\_\_ Determined eligible for the National Register
\_\_\_ Determined not eligible for the National Register
\_\_\_ Removed from the National Register
\_\_\_ Other (explain):

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING VILLAGE

Page 3

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

Historic: Commerce/Trade

Sub: Specialty Store  
Department Store

Current: Commerce/Trade

Sub: Specialty Store  
Department Store

**7. DESCRIPTION**

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

MATERIALS:

- Foundation: Concrete
- Walls: Stucco
- Roof: Terra Cotta
- Other: Glass
- Ceramic Tile
- Concrete

# NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

## HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING VILLAGE

Page 4

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

### Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

Highland Park Shopping Village consists of seven units (A-G) designed in 1928-29 and constructed by unit principally from 1931 to 1941 with a 1953 addition to Unit E. Units A, B, C, D, and E are each largely composed of a single building, Unit F was originally four buildings and is now two buildings, and Unit G, originally two buildings, is now one. All units, except the replacement for Unit G, are outstanding examples of the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style using elements of both Plateresque and Churigueresque ornamentation. Varied 1- and 2-story commercial buildings with irregular roof patterns and setbacks provide diversity and suggest a randomness of construction typical of a Spanish village. White stucco walls and red terra cotta tile roofs contribute to a unified architecture that is linked by accents of cast stone, wrought iron balconies and light fixtures, and exposed redwood eaves. The Village commercial blocks align the four principal streets and enclose two wide internal streets and large spaces for vehicular parking, mostly set in several rows at 60-degree angles. The 3-story tower of the Village Theater at the northwest corner of the complex is the focal point and strongest visual element in the center. Highland Park Shopping Center encompasses approximately ten acres in Highland Park, Dallas County, one of the most prestigious residential suburbs in the state. It is bounded by two major arterials, Preston Road on the east and Mockingbird Lane on the north, and two local streets, Livingston Avenue on the south and Douglass Avenue on the west. The complex is immediately adjacent to 1- and 2-story residential buildings in the original Highland Park West subdivision on the south and the 2-story John Sherman Bradfield Elementary School (1925) on the northwest. Across Preston Road to the east, Dallas Country Club (1912) occupies 120 acres of rolling and lushly landscaped land. North, across Mockingbird Lane, is the subdivision of Loma Linda on the border of University Park and Highland Park. The residential buildings once facing south on Mockingbird Lane on the northwestern corner of Mockingbird and Preston are now replaced with a parking lot for Highland Park Shopping Village. This parking area was not originally part of the designed shopping center and is not included in this nomination.

The original plan of the Village includes two wide streets, Avenue A on the south and Avenue B on the north, both accessing the major arterials and/or local streets (see site plan). Each avenue, originally divided by a raised median, ended on the west at Theater Court and on the east at Preston Court. A secondary entrance divided the northern and southern commercial blocks at a mid point making Mockingbird Court and Livingston Court on the north and south respectively. Angled 60-degree parking is provided along the two avenues and within the Theater and Preston Courts. Underground parking was added to Unit E in 1953. A few large deciduous trees and shrubbery are located at entrances and where the setback of buildings creates sufficient public space. Ample landscaping constitutes a buffer between a large 12-foot stucco wall (hiding the service areas) and the southern commercial blocks along Livingston Avenue. An additional public space between the buildings of Unit F is landscaped with hanging pots and terraced features. In recent years, the current owners added a small fountain at the top of a set of original concrete stairs that descend to the north and south.

The perimeter of the center is by 1- and 2-story commercial blocks that are highly varied and immediately create a feeling of a detached and separate urban space. The white stucco walls and

# NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

## HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING VILLAGE

Page 5

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

red terra cotta tile roofs and towers unite the complex for the pedestrian or motor vehicle operator. Consistent decorative street lights and wrought iron light fixtures add evening illumination that further creates atmosphere. The tallest building, the Village Theater, is placed at the northwestern corner away from the lower density commercial buildings and at the farthest point from the housing along Livingston Avenue. This arrangement steps the complex down as it approaches the lower density thereby making its massing and setback more residential in character.

The following are discussions of each of the seven units that are referenced on the attached site plans:

### Unit A (1931-32)

Unit A is a large 1-story rectangular block, the second to be completed in the village, facing north along the eastern edge of the complex along Preston Road. The block is noted by a 1-1/2-story pyramidal tile roof tower set approximately 50 feet from the eastern facade which marks a deeper setback for the end store and provides a visual break along the storefront. The deeper setback allows for 90-degree head-in parking from Preston Road and at the rear and front of the end store. The storefronts along this block are flush with the upper facades which are smooth stucco surfaces broken by occasional cast stone ornamentation and arcuated cornices. A high stucco wall runs along Livingston to screen the rear service yard of Unit A. The service area is accessed near the Preston Road and Livingston Avenue intersection and terminates in the narrow street between Units A and B. Lush vegetation shields the wall along Livingston Avenue.

The occupants of Unit A have changed little over the years with the easternmost space being a drug store and the large westernmost space (approximately 8,000 square feet) being a supermarket. The middle spaces historically housed clothing retailers. These tenants are more typical of the smaller neighborhood shopping center than a community one.

### Unit B (1931)

Unit B was the first full commercial block face initiated and completed in the complex. Anchoring the southwest corner, the 1-story unit faces north with its northwestern corner angled to follow the site plan and allow access from Douglass Street. A large flat roof covers the unit though the roof parapets terminate in side-gabled tiled roofs that vary in height. Set on a concrete foundation, the walls are smooth stucco in light cream tone with a staggered set back fronting the sidewalk and street. Truncated square towers with low-pitched pyramidal roofs mark the northeast, southeast, and southwest corners of the unit. A 1-1/2-story hexagonal tower rises at the point of angle on the northwest corner. The street facade is highly textured and diverse with a mixture of quatrefoils, balconets, groups of oculi with iron *rejas*, *portales* supported by broad arches or post-and-lintel columns with bracketed capitals, tiered cast stone ornamentation, and arcuated cornices. Wrought iron balcony details and light fixtures randomly balance the facade. Almost all of the original tile and wooden framed storefronts are replaced with full height glass display areas and single or double glass doors. A high stucco wall runs along Livingston Avenue to screen the rear service yard of Unit B. The separate service yard is

# NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

## HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING VILLAGE

Page 6

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

accessed from the east along the narrow street between Units A and B, entered from Livingston Avenue, which then curves down to return to Livingston before reaching the western end of the development.

The original tenants of Unit B included Hunt Grocery Company, a prestigious grocery that mainly delivered groceries to wealthy customers owned by James A. Flemister, an A&P Grocery (known as the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company Store) and a variety of small retail businesses. A similar mix exists today including an upper-end restaurant, bookstore, and camera and apparel shops.

### Unit C (Phase I, 1935)

Phase I of Unit C consists of the Village Theater completed November 1935. The L-shaped building lies at the northwestern corner of the complex. The smaller 2-story tile hipped roof lobby faces onto the interior parking area, and the larger sloping flat roof, with stepped tile parapet, auditorium forms the rear ell along Douglas Avenue. The 3-story stucco tower is the architectural tie between the lobby and auditorium. The tower is one of the most important elements of the complex as it is the tallest and most ornate. It is easily the focal point for the complex and the vertical element that draws customers into the shopping center. The square-shaped base of the tower is set on the rear lobby and rises first to an observation deck highlighted by balconets on each side, then in an octagonal shaft with four arched windows connected by a stringcourse continues until terminating in a pointed ring, and then is stepped back and rises to a sharply sloping decorative metal dome. Originally, light beams were projected from the dome. The lobby entrance is identified by a flat marquee over a broad glass entryway. Above the marquee, three sets of steel casement windows denote the second floor with cast stone ornamentation that culminates in pinnacles and shields almost full-width of the upper facade. Large illuminated letters for the "Village Theatre" are at the base of the tower above the lobby roof.

The Village Theater originally included two large murals of "early Texas history" painted by native artist, James Buchanan Winn, Jr., better known as Buck Winn, on either side of the lobby. Otherwise, the theater showed the design influences of the 1930s streamline moderne movement with rounded walls, modernistic lounges, and contour seating. The theater and lobby were remodeled in the 1980s.

Flanking the theater lobby, 2-story buildings with tiled side-gabled roofs extended north/south. The first floor of the southern building included a large arched storefront with three separate steel casement windows on the second floor. The northern building, setback deeper on the lot, included a larger gable roof that extended over a second floor balcony and large arched storefront similar to that on the southern building. The storefronts of both buildings were changed in later phases of development, but the buildings still retain their basic side-gabled roof form and setback.

# NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

## HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING VILLAGE

Page 7

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Phase I of Unit C was designed as a model suburban theater with the assistance of the local theater company, Interstate Circuit, Inc. Karl Hoblitzelle, Dallas resident and president of Interstate Circuit, supervised much of the design and donated the Winn murals.<sup>1</sup>

### Unit C (Phase II, 1939)

The second phase of Unit C consists of three detached buildings that changed the street facades of the shopping center dramatically. Constructed immediately southeast of the theater lobby, the first is a 2-story stucco building facing east and covered by a large side-gabled tile roof that extends down over a cantilevered balcony. The balcony and roof shield a series of multi-light steel casement windows that open to offices. Five large arched storefronts define the first floor, each highlighted with cast stone. The storefronts are now modern glass following the original arch form.

The second building follows a vague U shape that partially encloses a courtyard. The longer sections consist of large tile side-gabled roofs connected by a hyphen on the western end. Immediately south of the theater auditorium, is a 2-story stucco with an arched arcade on the first floor supporting a second story walkway. Under the arcade and walkway are irregularly placed single wooden windows and doors. Square wooden posts support the roof over the second floor walkway and are connected by a criss-crossed balustrade. An open stucco-faced staircase provides access to the second floor on the east facade. Wrought iron light fixtures illuminate the courtyard area.

The third building is north of the theater occupying the triangular shaped lot bounded by Douglass Avenue, Mockingbird Lane, and the angled entrance to the center. This 1-story stucco building is in an L-shape with a 1-1/2-story tower at the intersection of the tile gabled roofs. A number of single wooden windows and doors punctuate the facade. A second 1-1/2-story tower was constructed at the point of angle along Avenue B in the summer and fall of 1998.

All connected now, these buildings, which together constitute Unit C, contribute to the village atmosphere and setting by breaking the site pattern and building massing. Their angled siting, courtyards, and balconies create interest among the more shallow and flat block fronts.

### Unit D (1941)

Unit D is a large 2-story commercial block facing south at the northwest corner of the complex constructed in 1941. The stucco building is one of the most ornate in the center with its extensive Plateresque detailing along the cornice of the center block. This rather flat facade is broken by a long series of multi-light steel casement windows. Much of this facade is divided by stylized stucco pilasters that enhances the storefronts and creates a rhythm broken only by a pyramidal roofed tower. The storefront turns in a northerly direction to follow the outline of the commercial block. The turn of the building is noted by a curved roof over a cantilevered wooden balcony that originally continued around to Mockingbird Lane and created a row of 90-degree head-in parking for the end commercial space. Unit D retains its integrity with the exception of

<sup>1</sup> Noted in advertisement for the theater in the *Dallas Morning News*, November 15, 1935, II-2.

# NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

## HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING VILLAGE

Page 8

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

some storefront alterations and a tower addition (c. 1985) at the northern corner now used for retail.

Some of the businesses operating in Unit D since its construction include Tote'm, one of the Southland Ice Company's convenience stores, a post office, and the first full suburban department store for Sanger Brothers (1950). During World War II, a basement under the Sanger's store was prepared as a bomb shelter for students at the nearby Bradfield School. This is believed to still be intact.<sup>2</sup> The current occupants are mostly clothing and accessory stores.

### **Unit E (1939, 1953)**

Unit E consists of two principal divisions: the 1939 eastern section and 1953 western section. The 1-story eastern section consists of a large rectangular shaped building with a storefront facing east onto Preston Road, allowing 90-degree head-in parking, and a second storefront facing south into the center. The latter section includes a pyramidal roofed tower as the central facade element. The 2-story western section, left as surface parking for many years, became underground parking and additional commercial space after World War II. This section is treated as an addition to the former spaces and is therefore not separated because of age.

Early businesses in Unit E included Highland Park State Bank, its first branch bank and drive-in facilities accessed from Mockingbird, and Volks Village Shop, its second location in the center.

### **Unit F (1931, 1931-32, 1939, 1940)**

Unit F consists of four 1-story arcaded buildings connected at the extreme western and eastern ends. Although constructed over a number of years, Unit F is quite consistent architecturally with large side-gabled roofs culminating in four 2-story gable elements set perpendicular to the larger element. The four 2-story features form a courtyard accented with overhanging wooden balconies and decorative wrought iron light fixtures. A flight of concrete stairs that peaks at the centerpoint of the courtyard add some whimsy to the otherwise utilitarian and decorative setting. Some of the stores at the northeastern corner burned (c. 1985) but were rebuilt as the original. The first building constructed in the center in 1931, the rental leasing office, was located at the eastern end of the unit facing Preston Court. This was demolished to construct the last of the four buildings.

Some of the early tenants in Unit F include the original Volks Brothers children's shoe store, Sammy's Restaurant at the far western end (the owner was Sam Lobello, a legendary restaurateur in Dallas), and many of the small service shops sustaining the center.

### **Unit G (1931, 1932, demolished 1966, new building 1966)**

Unit G consisted of two filling stations and auto repair facilities. The 1-story south station was first constructed with intersecting gable roofs over large arched garage and window spaces. Decorative wrought iron lighting highlighted doorways and corners. The north station was

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<sup>2</sup> Telephone interview with Mrs. James Cheek, June 1997.

# NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

## HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING VILLAGE

Page 9

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

identical to the south one except that it was turned in the opposite direction. Both stations faced east onto Preston Road and drew most of their customers from that arterial route.

Filling stations were elements often added to early shopping centers in the pre-World War II era and for some years following the war. They were almost always essential parts of neighborhood shopping centers at the same time and in some cases continue to be included. These two were leased to different oil companies for most of their existence. By the 1960s the need for additional leasable space and the intense corporate competition in the oil industry made the two buildings obsolete. In 1966, George B. Dahl designed a large replacement that added commercial space on the first floor and new banking facilities on the second and third floors. This building is noted as a Noncontributing element in this nomination.

Highland Park Village is also in an excellent state of preservation, far more so than the great majority of retail facilities of that or later periods. Among multi-building shopping centers of the pre-World War II decades, the Country Club Plaza in Kansas City is essentially in tact, but has sustained much more incremental modification over the years. Westwood Village in Los Angeles has mostly survived, but suffers from the demolition of some major portions and the unsympathetic remodeling of others. Shaker Square in Cleveland remains essentially in tact. So does Suburban Square in Ardmore, Pennsylvania, but recently it has been remodeled. The major prototype, Market Square in Lake Forest, Illinois, is the only other prewar complex in a state comparable to that of Highland Park Village (although Market Square was targeted to, and has primarily served, a much more localized audience than the others)<sup>3</sup>.

Alterations to many of the storefronts in Highland Park Village and the removal of the filling stations do not detract from the overall expression and architectural intent of the center. As a set of commercial block buildings continuously operating in a dynamic and rapidly changing retail industry, Highland Park Shopping Village is a remarkably constant and enduring architectural statement.

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<sup>3</sup> Personal correspondence from Dr. Richard Longstreth to Ms. Carol Shull, Chief, National Historic Landmarks Survey, National Park Service, April 29, 1999.

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING VILLAGE

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
Nationally: X Statewide: \_ Locally: \_

Applicable National Register Criteria: A x B \_ C x D \_

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A \_ B \_ C \_ D \_ E \_ F \_ G \_

NHL Criteria: 1 and 4

NHL Criteria Exclusions: N/A

NHL Theme(s): III. Expressing Cultural Values
5. architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design
V. Developing the American Economy
2. distribution and consumption

Areas of Significance: Commerce
Architecture
Community Planning and Development

Period(s) of Significance: 1931-1953

Significant Dates: 1931, 1932, 1935, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1953

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Cheek, James B.; Fooshee, Marion F. (Fooshee and Cheek Architects
Byrne, James (contractor)

Historic Contexts: VII. Business
D. Trade
3. Retail
XVI. Architecture
W. Regional and Urban Planning
2. Suburban Areas
XXX. American Ways of Life
G. Consumer Society of the 20th Century

# NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

## HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING VILLAGE

Page 11

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

### State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

Highland Park Shopping Village, Highland Park, Dallas County, Texas, is a complex of seven detached commercial units focused on a central pedestrian and automobile parking plaza. In plan, the Village is noted for its enclosed parking areas within architecturally cohesive commercial blocks. The complex represents a pivotal point in the evolution of the shopping center as a distinctive building type in twentieth century architecture in the United States. The Village is a hybrid of the community and regional shopping centers as defined by the real estate industry. As such, it houses today, as it did historically, a combination of grocery, drug, and related retail/service businesses typical of a community shopping center as well as department stores, restaurants, and a theater more typical of a regional shopping center. This unusual combination located in a high income community made the center an important proving ground for many of the first suburban department and chain stores in Dallas including Hunt Grocery Company (1931), Skillern & Sons drug store (1932), Volk Brothers (1935), and Sanger Brothers (1950). Thus, the complex provides an excellent representation of the role of the shopping center in facilitating the decentralization of the downtown commercial core of cities across the United States. In this particular case, the Highland Park Shopping Village contributed to the decentralization of downtown Dallas and the northern expansion of commercial and residential development that continued into the late twentieth century in Dallas. Highland Park Shopping Village was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1997 under Criterion A in the area of Commerce at the local level of significance and Criterion C in the areas of Architecture and Community Planning and Development at the national level of significance.

Highland Park Shopping Village is the result of several urban developments occurring over the course of the twentieth century in Dallas as it did in most major urban areas of the United States. First, the city's development pattern in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries centralized most retail, banking, and commercial services in a central business district, then gradually dispersed these functions as economic trends changed. Second, national shifts in transportation and residential land use patterns created demand for different commercial centers that are embodied in the complex. Finally, the Village reflects the establishment and promotion by real estate developers and architects during the twentieth century of the shopping center as a new building type.

The shopping center ranks among the most important new forms of architecture to emerge during the twentieth century. As much as any type, it has had an immense impact on the shape of metropolitan development and on the nature of daily routines for many decades....Highland Park Village was pioneering in its complete integration of offstreet parking with other aspects of the site plan....The complex was one of a very small number (six) of examples operating before World War II that demonstrated the efficacy of developing the shopping center on a sufficiently large scale that it would attract consumers from well beyond the immediate neighborhoods, extending in some cases to the greater metropolitan area.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Personal correspondence from Dr. Richard Longstreth to Ms. Carol Shull, Chief, National Historic Landmarks Survey, National Park Service, April 29, 1999.

# NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

## HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING VILLAGE

Page 12

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

As such, Highland Park Village is eligible for designation as a National Historic Landmark under Criteria 1 and 4 as a building type that evolved to meet the changing needs of a consumer society that was becoming increasingly dependent on the use of the automobile as the primary mode of transportation.

### **Centralized Dallas: First Step in Urbanization**

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, Dallas' business elite concentrated commercial, governmental, and financial operations in a central business district along Elm, Main, and Commerce streets. Running approximately 15 blocks on an east-west axis and 3-4 blocks on a north-south, the central business district included the city's most stable businesses and monumental buildings. On the west, the Trinity River abutted the business district as a fleeting but promising avenue of transportation while the entire growing downtown fell squarely within a ring of railroad tracks owned by competing railway companies. Dallas County government buildings anchored the western end; municipal buildings did so on the eastern end. Industrial and manufacturing businesses mostly congregated in an area referred to as the "West End" (NR 1978), just north of the county government buildings along the Trinity River and railroad tracks. Some industrial and manufacturing activities, however, chose other sites along the encircling rail lines, most notably Ford Motor Company (locally known as Adam's Hat Building), Continental Gin Company (NR 1983), John E. Mitchell Company (NR 1991), and Interstate Forwarding Company (NR 1992), just east of downtown along Commerce, and Stanard-Tilton Mill (NR 1997), and Sears, Roebuck, and Company warehouse facilities, just south of the central business district. Although most of the city's important industries located close to the downtown, a few industries selected sites in Oak Cliff, west across the Trinity River, and more detached sites north, south, and east. Despite the geographic spread of some economic functions, the city's first steps toward urbanization overwhelming moved principal economic activities toward the central business district, i.e., the downtown.

Dallas' strong and vibrant downtown developed in roughly three phases: 1890-1900, 1900-1915, and 1920-1930. Between 1890-1900, business developers established zones of use in the central business district. Hotels fell on the south and mostly west end, insurance occupied the center sections, finance largely moved into the north and east end, and the separate government entities flanked the core. Retail businesses also mostly congregated in the western quadrant, though they were small operations in comparison with later stores. In this decade, Dallas developed its regional economic dominance, especially in agricultural support manufacturing, insurance, and finance. The city remained completely dependent on rail transportation and established important financial links with St. Louis, Kansas City, and Philadelphia. Dallas' morphology at the end of the period may best be described as a vague "T shape" following a typical gridiron pattern that spread out from a curve on the Trinity River toward the east.

In the second phase, between 1900-1915, the center city attracted more substantial construction with the result being some of the city's major landmarks. This pre-World War I building boom yielded the Wilson Building (NR 1979), Busch-Kirby Building (NR 1980, expansion 1996), and the Adolphus Hotel (NR 1983). The most significant business concentration occurred among retailers. During this period, retail businesses collected along Elm and Main thereby establishing

**NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION**

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

**HIGHLAND PARK SHOPPING VILLAGE**

**Page 33**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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