

Two parks and two cities became one Friday at the Gathering Place. Officials from Oklahoma City's new Scissortail Park dedicated to Tulsa's grand green space an American Elm grown from a seedling of the Survivor Tree, which withstood the April 1995 bombing that killed 168 people at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.

"The entire state of Oklahoma was impacted by that awful bombing in Oklahoma City," said Tony Moore, executive director of the Gathering Place. "To have a sign of resilience here that helps unify the city is so remarkable. It's a symbol of hope and resilience," Scissortail Park CEO Maureen Heffernan said. "That resonates with people everywhere in this state. That bombing was such a traumatic, searing event. This tree represents how you can survive those things. You can heal, and hopefully you get stronger. You can try to make something good out of evil." The first Survivor Tree planted in a community space in Tulsa, it stands on the north land bridge lawn between the ONEOK Boathouse and the River Parks trail. Earlier this year, the Gathering Place donated to Scissortail Park a cottonwood tree, a homage to Gathering Place's Reading Tree, the oldest and largest cottonwood tree in the park. "For us, the cottonwood tree represents education and reading and a little bit of our history at the Gathering Place," Moore said. The 66.5-acre first phase of the \$465 million Gathering Place opened in September 2018. The initial 36-acre phase of the \$132 million Scissortail Park opened in downtown Oklahoma City about a year later. "We're living in such an incredible time in this country — really the world," Heffernan said. "The importance of urban parks is on the minds of all city planners. Every great city needs great parks. This Tulsa park is one of the finest in the whole world. It's just extraordinary. It's a marvel." She said the green spaces were exemplary bookends. "It just makes Oklahoma very progressive and very much at the forefront of having these extremely amazing parks to raise the quality of life for people and the quality of life for the cities. It's a wonderful time to be

in Oklahoma.â€• FEATURED VIDEO Rhett Morgan 918-581-8395 rhett.morgan@tulsaworld.com Twitter: @RhettM

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