




CITY OF SANTA FE

# Planning and Land Use Department Planning Commission Staff Report

<p><b>Case No:</b> 2024-8027</p> <p><b>Hearing Date:</b> June 5, 2025</p> <p><b>Applicant:</b> Santa Fe Habitat for Humanity</p> <p><b>Agent:</b> Santa Fe Habitat for Humanity</p> <p><b>Request:</b> Development Plan</p> <p><b>Location:</b> 635 Alto St</p> <p><b>Case Mgr.:</b> Rebekah Clouser</p> <p><b>Zoning:</b> R-21</p> <p><b>Overlay:</b> Historic Downtown Archaeological Review District</p> <p><b>Pre-app. Mtg.:</b> June 23, 2024</p> <p><b>ENN Mtg.:</b> May 9, 2024</p> <p><b>Proposal:</b> Development Plan approval for two two-story residential buildings containing five dwelling units.</p>	
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**Case 2024-8027: 635 Alto Street Development Plan.** Brian Lawler, Agent, for Santa Fe Habitat for Humanity, owner and applicant (“Applicant”), requests review and approval of a Development Plan per § 14-3.8 of the Land Development Code, to construct two new two-story residential buildings containing five townhouse-style homes: four in one building and one unit (plus storage) in the other. The total proposed gross floor area for the parcel is 6,448 square feet. The subject 0.25-acre parcel is located at 635 Alto Street and is zoned R-21 (21 residential units per acre). (Rebekah Clouser, Case Manager, reclouser@santafenm.gov).

## I. RECOMMENDATION

The Land Use Department recommends **APPROVAL** with the conditions of approval as outlined in this report. One motion will be required in this case:

One motion is required for this case:

1. Approve or deny **Case 2024-8027: 635 Alto Street Development Plan**, subject to the conditions of approval and technical corrections recommended by staff.

## II. CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

The conditions of approval and technical corrections required by the Planning and Land Use Department and the City's Development Review Team (DRT) can be found in Attachment A: *Conditions of Approval and Technical Corrections* and Attachment B: *DRT Memos*.

## III. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Brian Lawler, Agent, for Santa Fe Habitat for Humanity, Owners, requests approval a development plan for a 5-unit townhome development at 635 Alto Street. The subject parcel is zoned R-21 (21 residential units per acre) and is located within the Historic Downtown Archaeological Review District. In order to develop at a density of 21 dwelling units per acre, Santa Fe City Code subsection 14-7.2(F) requires the applicant submit a development plan for approval by the Planning Commission. See Table 3 for a discussion of the factors that must be considered for approval.

The Applicant completed the requirements of Santa Fe City Code ("SFCC") Subsections 14-3.1(E) "*Pre-Application Conferences*," 14-3.1(F) "*Early Neighborhood Notification Procedures*," and 14-3.1(H) "*Notice Requirements*."

Staff's analysis finds that the Applicant satisfied Subsection 14-3.8 "*Development Plans*" (§ 14-3.8(D)(1) "*Approval Criteria and Conditions*") for the development plan request and recommends APPROVAL subject to the conditions identified in Attachment A: *Conditions of Approval and Technical Corrections*.

## IV. PROJECT ANALYSIS: DEVELOPMENT PLAN

### A. Property information

The city donated the subject parcel to Habitat for Humanity on October 18, 2022, through a Real Estate Donation Agreement ("Agreement"). The Agreement was updated with amendments on March 20, 2024, (See Attachment C "Applicant Submittals"). The city may donate land for the construction of affordable housing per NM Const. Art 9, Section 14 and NMSA 1978, Section 6-27-1, et seq. The Agreement requires the Applicant to obtain approval of a development plan for the subject property. The Applicant submitted the application for the proposed Development Plan on March 12, 2024.

The proposed Development Plan is located at 635 Alto Street (See Figure 1: "*Aerial Map*"). The parcel is located within the Historic Downtown Archaeological Review District (See Figure 2: "*Zoning Map*"). The Applicant proposes two new two-story residential building with five townhouse-style dwelling units totaling 6,448 square feet in gross floor area.

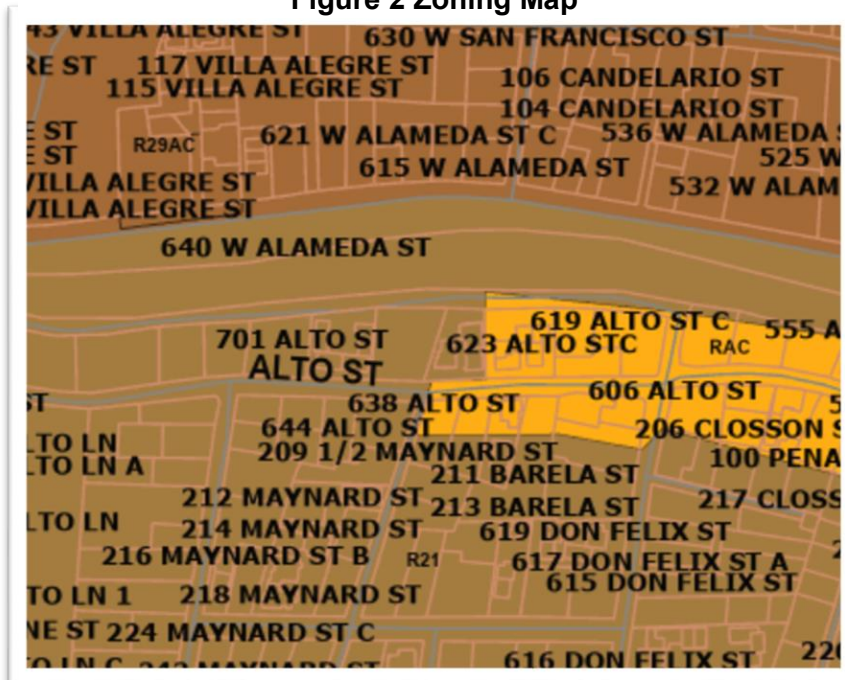
**Figure 1 Aerial Map**



**B. Project Zoning**

The parcel is zoned R-21 and is located within the Historic Downtown Archaeological Review District (See Figure 2: “Zoning Map”). The proposed residential use and development is allowed under the R-21 zoning per SFCC Table 14-6.1-1 and Subsection 14-7.2(F)(1). The proposed development is compatible with adjacent properties zoning and density, see Table 1 below.

**Figure 2 Zoning Map**



**Table 1: Adjacent Properties**

Direction	Address	Zoning District	Lot Size (acres)	Number of Dwelling Units and Corresponding Density per Acre
West	Compound Del Rio Condominiums	R-21	0.24	4 dwelling units 16 dwelling units /acre
East	Guadalupe Compound	R-21	0.20	3 dwelling units 15 dwelling units/acre
Southwest	636 Alto Street	R-21	0.16	1 dwelling unit 6 dwelling units/acre
Southeast	624 Alto Street	Residential Arts and Crafts (RAC)	0.13	1 dwelling unit 7 dwelling units per acre

The Property is also located within the Westside-Guadalupe Historic District, an overlay district that includes additional requirements for site and architectural design, as well as maximum building height. The proposed design was reviewed and approved by the Historic Districts Review Board (Case #2024-7826-HDRB) in February 2024.

The proposal meets all dimensional standards as shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Zoning Requirements**

Requirement	R-21	Proposed
Height	24 feet, or 36 feet with Development Plan	24 feet
Setbacks	Established by a development plan	Street: 7 feet Rear: 7 feet Side: 5 feet
Open Space	250 SF/unit = 21,000 SF	23,000 SF
Lot Coverage	40%, 55% maximum if private open space is provided	45% with 2,470 square feet of private open space
Density	10 units/acre, or 21 units/acre with Development Plan	20/acre

**C. Increase In Maximum Density**

The proposed five-dwelling-unit density equates to 20 dwelling units per acre. Per SFCC §14-7.2(F)(2) *Increase in Maximum Density in R-12, R21 and R-29 Districts*, adopted by Ord. No. 2013-16 § 4, the applicant must request approval of a Development Plan from the Planning Commission for a density above 10 dwelling units per acre as allowed in Table 14-7.2-1 *Table of Dimensional Standards for Residential Districts*.

**Table 3: 14-7.2(F) Increase in Maximum Density in R-12, R-21, and R-29 Districts**

In evaluating the proposed density, the following factors shall be considered:

**a) if the future land use designation shown on the general plan is high density residential;**

**Applicant Response:**

The applicant did not directly respond to 14-7.2(F).

**Staff Response:**

The Applicant did not provide a response to 14-7.2(F), nor acknowledge the mismatch between the R-21 zoning and the Future Use designation of medium density (7 to 9 dwelling units per acre). However, within the aggregate of the Applicant's material, the Applicant notes that the proposed density complies with the R-21 limits (21 du/ac on 0.25 acres) and that the project is a small-scale, infill development.

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates this parcel as Medium Density Residential, not High Density Residential. Therefore, the proposal does not strictly satisfy 14-7.2(F)(2)(a). However, the parcel is zoned R-21, and the development plan complies with the zone district standards. The zoning, not the FLUM, governs density entitlement under Chapter 14. Staff acknowledges the inconsistency but notes that the proposed density is not out of scale with surrounding uses or designated zoning, refer to Table 1: Adjacent Properties.

**b) the need for the increased density; however, financial gain or loss shall not be the sole determining factor;**

**Applicant Response:**

The applicant did not directly respond to 14-7.2(F).

**Staff Response:**

The applicant emphasizes the need to maximize affordable housing on a constrained infill lot and meet obligations under the Affordable housing RFQ issued 9-15-21.

Staff concurs that the need to produce multiple affordable units within limited urban space is a genuine planning goal. The five-unit proposal enables economies of scale in infrastructure and land use without relying solely on financial justification. This criterion is satisfactorily addressed.

**c) if the increased density is needed to make the proposed development more affordable, what level of affordability will be provided and how that affordability will be guaranteed long term;**

**Applicant Response:**

The applicant did not directly respond to 14-7.2(F).

**Staff Response:**

The project provides five affordable units for income-qualified families, aligning with the City's housing goals and Habitat's mission.

Staff agrees that the proposal aligns with the City's long-term affordability goals. Details about income thresholds and resale restrictions could be expanded upon, but Habitat for Humanity's model is consistent with long-term affordability practices. The units are guaranteed residential housing for households of low or moderate income until December 31, 2067. This criterion is addressed.

**d) densities of existing developments in the vicinity;**

<p><b>Applicant Response:</b> The applicant did not directly respond to 14-7.2(F).</p> <p><b>Staff Response:</b> The applicant refers to compatibility with surrounding land use and neighborhood character but does not provide direct density comparisons.</p> <p>Refer to Table 1: Adjacent Properties, staff finds that the two-story design, modest scale, and site layout are generally compatible with adjacent development. The 20 du/ac is compliant with the R-21 zoning district. The design is approved by the Historic District Review Board, fitting the character for the area. This criterion is sufficiently addressed.</p>
<p><b>e) impacts of the increased density on the neighborhood and the community so that the increased density does not significantly interfere with the enjoyment of other land in the vicinity and is consistent with the spirit of Chapter 14 and in the general public's interest.</b></p>
<p><b>Applicant Response:</b> The applicant did not directly respond to 14-7.2(F).</p> <p><b>Staff Response:</b> The applicant emphasizes that the project: Includes only five units, is architecturally consistent with the neighborhood, reviewed and approved by the Historic Districts Review Board and provides private open space and sustainable design features.</p> <p>Staff agrees that the small scale and thoughtful design mitigate impacts associated with increased density. The project's location on Alto Street and walkability to nearby services further support its compatibility with public interest. This criterion is met.</p>

Despite the inconsistency between the Future Land Use Map and the R-21 zoning, the applicant's proposal meets the intent of Section 14-7.2(F). The density remains within the R-21 limits, the development supports the City's affordable housing goals, and the proposed scale and design are compatible with surrounding development. Staff recommends the Planning Commission consider the request justified under 14-7.2(F) and acknowledges that neither a rezoning nor General Plan amendment are proposed or required.

**D. Architectural Design Review**

Proposed development is subject to the architectural standards for R-21 district, which requires structures to reach 180 points using Table 14-8.7-1: Point Requirements by Zoning District. Final architectural points shall be reviewed prior to building permit. All buildings are proposed in Spanish-Pueblo Revival style with earth tone stucco finishes approved by the Historic Districts Review Board on February 27, 2024 (See Attachment C: "Applicant Submittals").

**E. Historic Downtown Archeological Review District**

The subject parcels lie within the Historic Downtown Archeological Review District. Chapter 14, SFCC, Article 14-3.13(B)(1) "Historic Downtown Archeological Review District" states:

In this district, an archaeological clearance permit shall be required:

- (a) Prior to issuance of a building permit for projects with gross lot coverage of two thousand five hundred (2,500) square feet or more involving new construction, parking lots and/or alterations.

The subject property exceeds gross lot coverage of 2,500 square feet and therefore requires archaeological clearance. The City of Santa Fe's Archeological Review committee granted archaeological clearance for the subject parcels on January 25, 2024 (See Attachment C: "Applicant Materials").

**F. Traffic, Access, and Parking**

The City Traffic Division reviewed the proposed development plan and had no concerns. Traffic Comments can be found in Attachment A "Conditions of Approval and Technical Corrections" and Attachment B "DRT Memos". The development offers two access points, one from Alto Street and one from Alto Alley (See Figure 3: Parking).

The applicant provides a total of ten vehicular parking spaces. Eight of the parking spaces are along Lower Alto and two along Alto Street. Parking meets the requirements of Table 14-8.6-1 Parking and Loading Requirements of two parking spaces per unit. Bicycle parking is provided in between the two residential buildings and highlighted in Figure 3: Parking. A condition of approval requires three inverted 'U's for bicycle parking (See Attachment A: "Conditions of Approval and Technical Corrections").

**Figure 3 Parking**



**G. Santa Fe Homes Program**

100% of the units proposed in the development will be affordable housing units. The proposed development follows the Office of Affordable Housing Request for Qualifications (RFQ) under "635 Alto

LPDU” (See Attachment C “Applicant Submittals”). The development received approval from the Office of Affordable Housing for fee waivers and reductions on March 20, 2024.

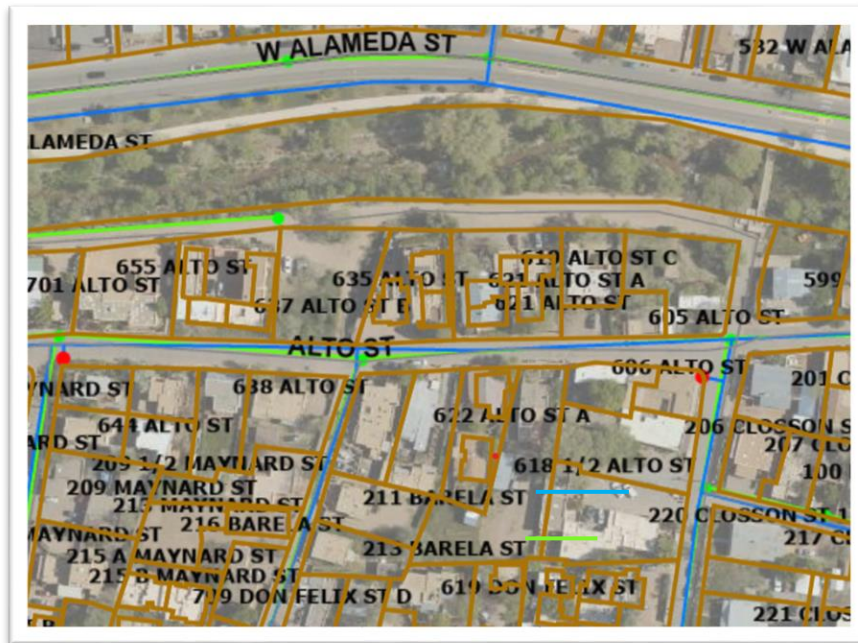
### H. Utilities

The proposed development plan will connect to City services for water and sewer.

The water budget was calculated using an estimation of the average water use per unit and landscaping. However, because the development is comprised of 100% Low Priced Dwelling Units (LPDU), no water demand offsets are required from this development as per SFCC 14-8.13(B)(5). A detailed Water Budget can be found in Attachment C.

The Public Works Water Division and Wastewater Division have included conditions of approval regarding the Applicant providing drawings on proposed wastewater connections, and other details that will be required at the time of development. They can be found in Attachment A: “*Conditions of Approval and Technical Corrections*,” and Attachment B: “*DRT Memos*.”

**Figure 4 City Utilities**



### I. Technical Review and Terrain Management

The Applicant is proposing landscaping throughout the development. However, Staff’s review has found that the landscape plan is incomplete and requires technical corrections (see Attachment A “*Conditions of Approval and Technical Corrections*”). The technical corrections must be addressed prior to the recordation of the Development Plan. All terrain management and technical review conditions of approval and technical corrections can be found in Attachment A “*Conditions of Approval and Technical Corrections*” and in Attachment B “*DRT Memos*.”

**Figure 5 Landscaping Plan**



**V. DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Section 14-3.8 governs the authority, procedures, and restrictions for development plans. To approve the development plan, the Planning Commission must make findings showing compliance with the Approval Criteria discussed in Table 4.

**Table 4: Approval Criteria §14-3.8(D)(1)**

<p><b>Criterion 1: that it is empowered to approve the plan under the section of Chapter 14 described in the application;</b></p>	<p><b>Criterion Met: (Yes/No) YES</b></p>
<p><b>Applicant’s Response:</b>  <i>“This development plan is required by the Code of Ordinances section 14-7.2(F)(1): “Residential density up to twelve dwelling units per acre in an R-12 district; up to twenty-one dwelling units per acre in an R-21 district; and up to twenty-nine dwelling units per acre in an R-29 district may be approved provided that the proposed density is part of a development plan or special use permit requiring approval by a land use board or the governing body.” The development plan shows 5 units built on 0.25 acres which would be a density of 20 units per acre and an increase from 10 units per acre allowed by Table 14-7.2-1.                      This development plan has been designed to comply with the requirements of Chapter 14 “Land Development” code in addition to being approved by the Historic District Review Board for the Westside-Guadalupe Neighborhood.”</i></p> <p><b>Staff Response:</b>                      Santa Fe City Code (SFCC) Subsection 14-2.3(C)(1) authorizes the Planning Commission to review and approve or disapprove development plans.</p>	

<p><b>Criterion 2: that approving the development plan will not adversely affect the public interest;</b></p>	<p><b>Criterion Met: (Yes/No) YES</b></p>
<p><b>Applicant’s Response:</b>  <i>“Approval of this development plan will not adversely affect the public interest. We at Santa Fe Habitat for Humanity believe that this development plan, which will bring 5 new affordable homes to downtown Santa Fe, will positively affect the public interest as there is a clear need for more affordable housing (as shown in the draft document publicly published by the City of Santa Fe Office of Affordable Housing entitled “City of Santa Fe Five Year Affordable Housing Strategic Plan” prepared by Root Policy Research, May 7<sup>th</sup> 2024).  In addition, the project will be developing a vacant lot in a style and density similar to the existing homes of the neighborhood and Alto Street. The compact design of the infill development aligns well with the city’s statement made in the published Land Use and Urban Design Plan.”</i></p> <p><b>Staff Response:</b>  The Governing Body has approved and implemented the General Plan and ordinances to establish standards for health, safety, and welfare that affect land use and development to project the public interest. Multifamily residential development plans are a permissible use under the R-21 zoning district. Subject to the recommended conditions of approval and technical corrections, the proposed development complies with Chapter 14. The project supports the City’s affordable housing goals, reflects the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood and advances coordinated infill development. Therefore, the proposed development plan meets the goals of the General Plan and is not adverse to the public interest.</p>	
<p><b>Criterion 3: that the use and any associated buildings are compatible with and adaptable to buildings, structures and uses of the abutting property and other properties in the vicinity of the premises under consideration.</b></p>	<p><b>Criterion Met: (Yes/No) YES</b></p>
<p><b>Applicant’s Response:</b>  <i>“The properties abutting and in the vicinity of the subject parcel are medium and high-density structures with small yards and historic character. This development plan proposes a residential development of 5 affordable houses at a similar density and character to the surrounding neighborhood. The design has been approved by the Historic Districts Review Board for the Westside-Guadalupe neighborhood.  Additionally, the design of the development plan is compatible and consistent with the stated purpose of the R-21 zoning designation, as laid out in 14-4.2(H): ‘ The purpose of the R-10, R-12, R-21 and R-29 districts is to make available a variety of dwelling unit types to serve a wide range of household needs at medium- and high- density levels.’”</i></p> <p><b>Staff Response:</b>  The proposed development use is compatible with the neighboring residential uses, buildings, and structures. Staff have reviewed and found the proposed buildings are architectural compatible with adjacent properties and the Westside-Guadalupe Historic District.</p>	

**VI. EARLY NEIGHBORHOOD NOTIFICATION**

The Applicant conducted an Early Neighborhood Notification (ENN) meeting virtually via Zoom Video Communications on May 9, 2024. The Applicant presented on the project plans and other relevant information. Attendees included the project team and City staff, and members of the public.

**VII. EXPIRATION**

Per SFCC Section 14-3.19(B)(4) “Approval of a final development plan, or any development plan for which no preliminary development plan was required, shall expire three years after final action approving it unless actual development of the site or offsite improvements has begun and is continued pursuant to Subsection 14-3.19(B)(6).”

**VIII. ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Conditions of Approval and Technical Corrections
- B. Development Review Team (DRT) Comments
  - a. Public Works / Traffic Engineering
  - b. Technical Review / Engineering
  - c. Fire Protection District
  - d. Public Works / Parks and Open Space/ River and Watershed
  - e. Public Utilities / Water Division
  - f. Technical Review / ADA
  - g. Technical Review / Landscaping
  - h. Public Utilities / Water Resources
  - i. Public Utilities / Wastewater
- C. Applicant Materials
  - a. Development Plan Application
  - b. Legal Lot of Record
  - c. Lot Survey
  - d. Narrative Letter
  - e. Response to Development Plan Approval Criteria
  - f. Real Estate Donation Agreement Item #22-0495
  - g. Real Estate Donation Agreement Item #24-0139
  - h. Archaeological Review Committee Letter
  - i. Historic Districts Review Board Action Letter
  - j. Water Budget Calculation
  - k. Irrigation System
  - l. Site Threshold Assessment
  - m. 635 Alto Street Plan Set

APPROVED AS TO FORM BY THE PLANNING AND LAND USE DEPARTMENT:

Title	Name	Initials
Department Director	Heather L. Lamboy, AICP	HLL
Assistant Department Director	Maggie Moore	MRM
Planning Manager	Daniel A. Esquibel	DAE
Senior Planner	Rebekah Clouser	RC