

# City of Santa Fe, New Mexico

# memo

**DATE:** July 8, 2025

**TO:** Historic Districts Review Board Members

**VIA:** Heather Lamboy, Planning & Land Use Department Director *HL*  
Maggie Moore, Assistant Land Use Director *MM*  
Gary Moquino, Historic Preservation Division Manager

**FROM:** Lani McCulley, Senior Planner, Historic Preservation Division *LGM*

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2025-010666-HDRB, Shelby St. Foot Bridge, Downtown & Eastside Historic District, no status, Wonderstone Consulting LLC, agent for City of Santa Fe, owner, requests a historic status review for the pedestrian bridge.

**REFERENCE ATTACHMENTS (Sequentially):**

**CITY SUBMITTALS**

District Standards & yard wall  
& fence standards.

Historic Inventory Form

Zoning Review Sheet

Other:

**APPLICANT SUBMITTALS**

Proposal Letter

Site Plan/Floor Plan

Elevations

Photographs

Other: [2025 HCPI]

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the historic status of the footbridge structure be designated as contributing, per section 14-5.2(C)(2) Designation of Significant, Contributing or Noncontributing Status Within Historic Districts.

**Sample motions:**

- a. In case 2025-010666-HDRB, for Shelby Street Footbridge, designate the footbridge structure as significant/contributing/non-contributing.

## **BACKGROUND & SUMMARY:**

The Shelby Street Footbridge is located on the south side of Alameda Street at the base of Shelby Street. The footbridge is located in the Downtown and Eastside Historic District but has no designated status. It is located above the stone-lined channel constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. The area is part of the Santa Fe River Park, which is a passive recreational area with landscaping, picnic tables, and a walking path. The park is restricted to parcel sections from twenty to one hundred feet wide, bounded on one side by the ten-foot drop to the riverbed and on the other side by Alameda Street. This parkway was developed for the visual enhancement of the nature of the site.



Figure 1: Location of Shelby Street Footbridge.

The Shelby Street Footbridge is one of two footbridges that cross the Santa Fe River within the park. Eight public vehicular bridges and several private vehicular bridges also cross the park. The street bridges include Defouri Street Bridge, Delgado Street Bridge, Grant Avenue Bridge, Don Gaspar Street Bridge, Galisteo Street Bridge, Old Santa Fe Trail Bridge, Camino Cabra Bridge, Palace Avenue Bridge, and Paseo de Peralta Bridge. The Santa Fe River State Park and Don Gaspar Street Bridge are on the National Register, and the National Register of Historic Places registration form classifies the 1928 Delgado Street Bridge as contributing. All of the other bridges are considered non-contributing according to the National Register of Historic Places registration

form. However, the Historic Districts Review Board designated statuses for the Defouri Street Bridge in 2013 (contributing), the Delgado Street Bridge (significant), the Grant Avenue Bridge (significant), and the Don Gaspar Street Bridge (significant) in 2014. The Galisteo Street, Old Santa Fe Trail, Camino Cabra, Palace Avenue, and Paseo de Peralta Bridges remain without status. The other footbridge, the Brothers Lane Footbridge, came before the HDRB in 2003. While no status was designated because the bridge was under 50 years old, the bridge was subject to a city project which proposed to reconstruct the bridge and widen it by 2'0". However, the Brothers Lane Bridge was required to be reconstructed of wood in keeping with the original bridge.



Figure 2: Side view of Shelby Street Footbridge

The Shelby Street Footbridge was constructed in 1968, most likely as a replacement for a timber bridge that was constructed in the 1930s as part of the Civilian Conservation Corps project. The 1968 bridge is constructed of concrete slabs with timber and stone abutments and concrete girders (see figure 4 for parts of a bridge), and a steel pipe railing. An additional concrete beam was placed between the girders for added support at an unknown date. The exterior of the girders is embedded with sandstone blocks set into a concrete bed, which gives the footbridge an appearance of rock construction in an arch. The entrance to the bridge is bordered on each side by low sandstone parapets about 12" in height, and the metal railing is embedded in square masonry end posts at about 18" in height. The entrance on the north of the bridge has curved stone walls up to four feet in height flanking the approach to the bridge. These walls connect to the masonry end posts. The south entrance has had stones removed to accommodate the widening of the pedestrian path.



Figure 3: North and South Entrances to Shelby Street Footbridge.

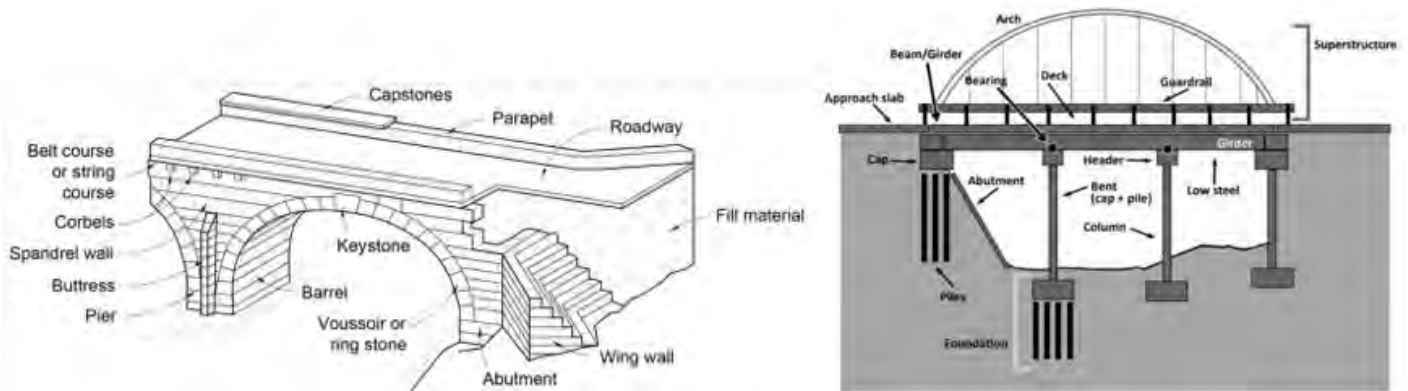


Figure 4: Parts of a Bridge

The National Register of Historic Places Registration form from 2008 shows the footbridge as non-contributing to the area because it was outside of the period of significance for the nomination of the Santa Fe River Channel (1940s). The footbridge also did not stylistically fit with the design aesthetic of the era. In 2008, the footbridge would have been 40 years old, so it would not have qualified for contributing status due to age. The footbridge is now 56 years old and qualifies for review for status. The Santa Fe River Park channel still holds its historic character. The bridges along the park establish and maintain the character of the park. There are only two footbridges, and they do contribute to the overall feeling of the park's character. Therefore, staff recommend contributing status for the Shelby Street Footbridge.

**APPLICANT'S REQUEST:**

The applicant requests:

- 1) Status designation of the Shelby Street Footbridge.

**RELEVANT CODE CITATIONS:**

## 14-5.2 HISTORIC DISTRICTS

### (A) General Provisions

#### (1) General Purpose

In order to promote the economic, cultural, and general welfare of the people of the *city* and to ensure the harmonious, orderly and efficient growth and *development* of the *city*, it is deemed essential by the *governing body* that the qualities relating to the history of Santa Fe, and a harmonious outward appearance, which preserve *property* values and attract tourists and residents alike, be preserved, some of these qualities being:

- (a) The continued existence and *preservation* of historical areas and *buildings*;
- (b) The continued construction of *buildings* in the historic styles; and
- (c) A general harmony as to style, form, color, height, proportion, texture, and material between *buildings* of historic design and those of more modern design.

### (C) Regulation of Significant and Contributing Structures in the Historic Districts

(Ord. No. 2004-26)

#### (1) Purpose and Intent

It is intended that:

- (a) Each *structure* to be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical *development*, such as the addition of conjectural features or architectural elements from other *buildings*, shall not be undertaken.
- (b) Changes to *structures* that have acquired historic *significance* in their own right shall be retained and preserved, recognizing that most *structures* change over time;
- (c) Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a *structure* be preserved; and
- (d) New additions and related or adjacent new construction be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the original form and integrity of the historic *property* and its environment would be unimpaired.

#### (2) Designation of Significant, Contributing, or Noncontributing Status within Historic Districts

##### (a) Status Designation

*Structures* within historic districts may be designated a status of "significant," "contributing," or "noncontributing" based upon the definitions of these terms in Article 14-12. Staff shall maintain a record as to the current status of *structures* located in the Historic Districts.

##### (b) Board Authority to Review Status Designation

- (i) The Board is authorized to change the status of a *structure* or to designate a status for a *structure* with no status designated.

(ii) A change in status or the designation of a status shall be based upon an evaluation of data provided through survey or other relevant sources of information and the definitions of "significant," "contributing," or "noncontributing."

(e) Appeals (Ord. No. 2009-42 § 16)

Decisions made by the Historic Districts Review Board may be appealed to the *governing body* as set forth in Section 14-3.17.

(f) Restoration of Status

If a *property owner* makes changes to a *structure* without the proper *city* approvals, which result in the lowering of the *structure's* status, staff or the board may require the *property owner* to restore the *structure* such that its former status is restored.

#### 14-12 Significant Structure:

A structure located in a historic district that is approximately fifty years old or older, and that embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. For a structure to be designated as significant, it must retain a high level of historic integrity. A structure may be designated as significant:

(A) for its association with events or persons that are important on a local, regional, national, or global level; or

(B) if it is listed on or is eligible to be listed on the State Register of Cultural Properties or the National Register of Historic Places.

#### 14-12 Contributing Structure:

A structure, located in a historic district, approximately fifty years old or older, that helps to establish and maintain the character of that historic district. Although a contributing structure is not unique in itself, it adds to the historic associations or historic architectural design qualities that are significant for a district. The contributing structure may have had minor alterations, but its integrity remains.

#### 14-12 Noncontributing Structure:

A structure, located in an H district, that is less than fifty years old or that does not exhibit sufficient historic integrity to establish and maintain the character of the H District.

#### 14-12 Primary Façade:

One or more principal faces or elevations of a building with features that define the character of the building's architecture.