

# City of Santa Fe, New Mexico

# memo

**DATE:** January 13, 2026

**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, *GM*

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

---

**2025-011700-HDRB and 2025-011701-HDRB, 123 and 125 Camino Santiago, Downtown & Eastside Historic District, non-contributing, John Padilla, agent for Plaza del Monte LLC, requests a status review with primary façade designation, if applicable.**

**REFERENCE ATTACHMENTS (Sequentially):**

**CITY SUBMITTALS**

District Standards & yard wall  
& fence standards.

Historic Inventory Form

Zoning Review Sheet

Other: [Plaza del Monte Documents]

**APPLICANT SUBMITTALS**

Proposal Letter

Site Plan/Floor Plan

Elevations

Photographs

Other:

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the historic status of the residential structure be upgraded to contributing with the east facade (R1, R2, R3, R4, and R5) designated as the primary façade including the portal, excluding the non-historic materials, and the north property line retaining wall be designated as non-contributing per 14-5.2(C) Designation of Significant, Contributing or Noncontributing Status Within Historic Districts.

### **Sample motions:**

Up to two motions will be required in this case.

- a. In case 2025-011700-HDRB and 2025-011701-HDRB, for 123 and 125 Camino Santiago, retain/upgrade the main residence as non-contributing/contributing and designate facades (numbers from façade diagram) excluding/including portals, non-historic materials, etc., as primary façade(s).
- b. In case 2025-011700-HDRB and 2025-011701-HDRB, for 123 and 125 Camino Santiago, designate the north yard wall as non-contributing/contributing.

The property lies within the Historic Downtown Archaeological Review District. See Chapter 14, SFCC, Article 14-3.13(B)(1). There may be archaeological concerns associated with this project, and archaeological clearance may be required.

### **BACKGROUND & SUMMARY:**

#### **Streetscape:**

Plaza del Monte, formerly the Plaza del Monte Retirement Center, is an approximately six-acre subdivision that is “L” shaped and is bounded by Bishops Lodge Road on the east and Old Taos Highway on the west. The development has two roads, Camino Santiago and Camino Matias. While several structures predate the center, the communal living center was originally developed for retired members of the Presbyterian Church, starting in the late 1950s until 1977. The earliest plans by Clark and Register are for the buildings on the eastern portion of the development and were Spanish-Pueblo Revival in style. However, when Philippe Register took over the project in the 1960s, his designs evolved into a contemporary flat-roof structure with the use of canales, viga-roof portales, and carport elements. In the mid-1960s, Camino Santiago was extended, and development of the western end of the development began. This is when Register chose to eliminate several freestanding houses on the plans and replace them with quad apartments. Once fully developed, the compound consisted of 25 single-family residences and 3 quad apartment structures. The apartments include the structures at 105, 125, and 126 Camino Santiago.



Figure 1: Property Location 125 Camino Santiago

The Plaza del Monte landscape includes retaining walls, constructed of formed concrete or concrete and stone, built over several phases, dating generally between 1950 and 1973. The walls were constructed to retain earth or to separate building pads. Very few of them rise above grade. A few lots have above-ground property line walls. These are made of stucco-clad concrete masonry units. The retaining and property line walls appear to post-date the construction of their associated units.



Figure 2: East Elevation of 123 Camino Santiago

**Site Description:**

The quad apartments at 123 and 125 Camino Santiago were constructed as part of the Plaza del Monte compound in 1970 and are listed as non-contributing to the Downtown and Eastside Historic District. The structure is rectangular and designed with bilateral symmetry, having block massing at the north and south ends of the structure and a block mass in the center. The center block holds a large single square opening. The block massing bookends a portal on each of the south and the north ends of the elevation. The doors and windows on the east street-facing elevation are in a uniform pattern. The entry doors are wood with lite panels. The windows are standard multi-lite steel casements. The north and south elevations contain three aluminum casement windows. The west elevation holds four patios sheltered by shallow overhangs and sliding door entries. The structure is 3,563 sq. ft. and is divided into four apartments. A concrete and stone retaining wall separates the structure from the northern neighboring property.



Figure 3: North Retaining Wall

**PREVIOUS CASE SUMMARIES:****ARC:**

The property has received Archaeological clearance under case 2023-007030-ARC.

**HDRB:**

All structures in Plaza del Monte were assigned statuses under cases H-17-098A and H-19-019 in 2018 and 2019. Under case H-17-098A, the property at 123 and 125 Camino Santiago was designated as non-contributing due to its age. No yard walls were considered for status except for those located at 126 Camino Santiago, which were designated contributing.

**ADMINISTRATIVE:**

No administrative approval is on file for this property.

**APPLICANT'S REQUEST:**

The applicant requests:

- 1) Status review with primary façade designation, if applicable, for the duplex located at 123 and 125 Camino Santiago.

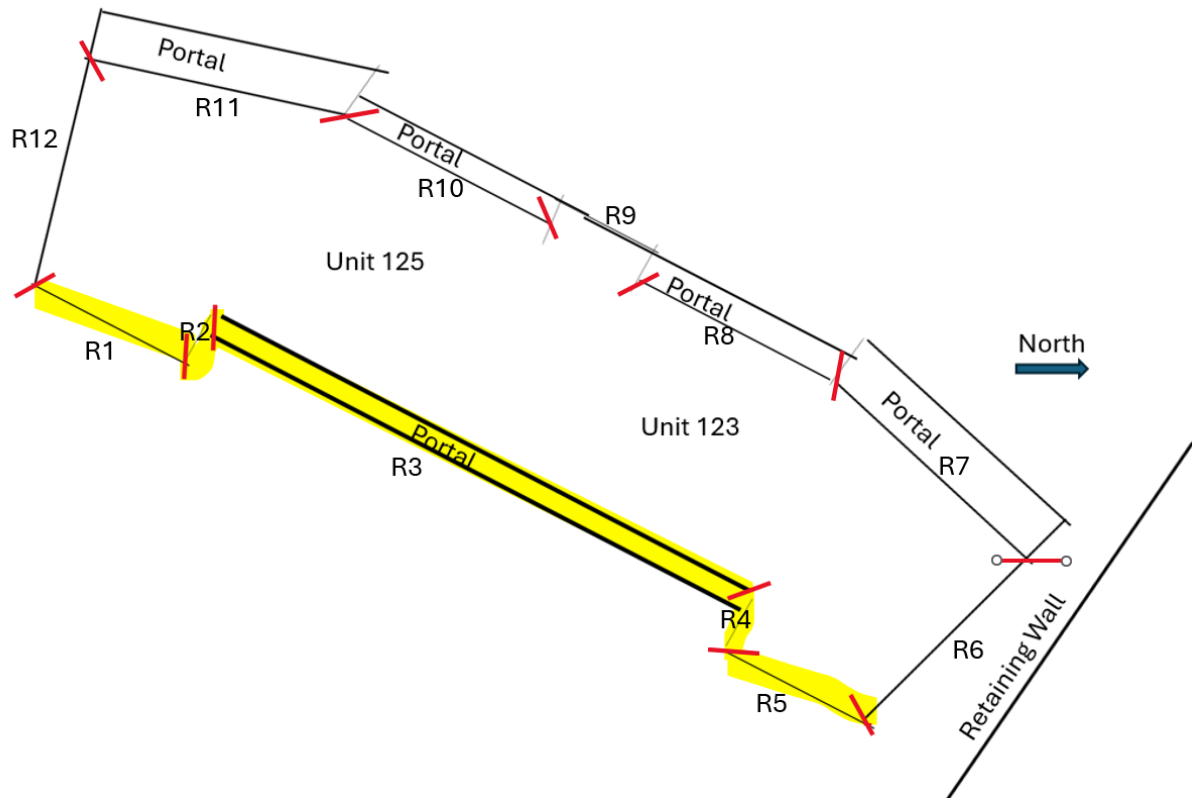


Figure 4: Façade Diagram

Staff finds the structure to be a contributing structure due to its association with Clark and Register’s master planned community and historic compound, Plaza del Monte, and the association with the Presbyterian Church. The structure is a good example of Mid-Century Modern Santa Fe Style. Character-defining features include the massing blocks at either end and the blocking mass in the center of the structure, and the portal on the east elevation.

## **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."

(c) 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.

14-12 Historic Compound

An identifiable grouping of historic resources, including buildings, structures, and landscaping elements, as described in Section 14-5.2(K)(2)(a). Historic compounds may be comprised of more than one lot.

**(E) Downtown and Eastside Design Standards**

The *governing body* recognizes that a style of architecture has evolved within the *city* from the year 1600 to the present characterized by construction with *adobe*, hereafter called "old Santa Fe style", and that another style has evolved, hereafter called "recent Santa Fe style", which is a *development* from, and an elaboration of the old Santa Fe style, with different materials and frequently with added decorations.

(1) Old Santa Fe Style

Old Santa Fe style, characterized by construction with *adobe*, is defined as including the so-called "pueblo" or "pueblo-Spanish" or "Spanish-Indian" and "territorial" styles and is more specifically described as follows:

- (a) With rare exception, *buildings* are of one *story*, few have three stories, and the characteristic effect is that the *buildings* are long and low. Roofs are flat with a slight *slope* and surrounded on at least three sides by a firewall of the same color and material as the *walls* or of brick. Roofs are never carried out beyond the line of the *walls* except to cover an enclosed *portal* or *porch* formed by setting back a portion of the *wall* or to form an exterior *portal*, the outer edge of the roof being supported by wooden columns. Two-story construction is more common in the territorial than in other sub-styles, and is preferably accompanied by a balcony at the level of the floor of the second *story*. Façades are flat, varied by inset *portales*, exterior *portales*, projecting vigas or roof beams, canales or water-spouts, flanking buttresses and wooden lintels, architraves and cornices, which, as well as doors, are frequently carved, and the carving may be picked out with bright colors. Arches are almost never used except for nonfunctional arches, often slightly ogive, over gateways in freestanding *walls*;
  - (b) All exterior *walls* of a *building* are painted alike. The colors range from a light earth color to a dark earth color. The exception to this rule is the protected space under *portales*, or in church-derived designs, inset panels in a *wall* under the roof, in which case the roof overhangs the panel. These spaces may be painted white or a contrasting color or have mural decorations.
  - (c) Solid *wall* space is always greater in any façade than window and door space combined. Single panes of glass larger than thirty (30) inches in any dimension are not permissible except as otherwise provided in this section;
  - (d) The rule as to flat roofs shall not be construed to prevent the construction of skylights or installation of air conditioning devices, or any other necessary roof *structures*, but such *structures* other than chimneys, flues, vents and aerials, shall be so placed as to be concealed by the firewall from the view of anyone standing in the *street* on which the *building* fronts;
  - (e) True old Santa Fe style *buildings* are made of *adobe* with mud plaster finish. Construction with masonry blocks, bricks, or other materials with which the *adobe* effect can be simulated is permissible, provided that the exterior *walls* are not less than eight (8) inches thick and that geometrically straight façade lines are avoided. Mud plaster or hard plaster simulating *adobe*, laid on smoothly, is required; and
  - (f) It is characteristic of old Santa Fe style commercial *buildings* to place a *portal* so that it covers the entire sidewalk, the columns being set at the curb line.
- (2) Recent Santa Fe Style

Recent Santa Fe style intends to achieve harmony with historic *buildings* by *retention* of a similarity of materials, color, proportion, and general detail. The dominating effect is to be that of *adobe* construction, prescribed as follows:

- (a) No *building* shall be over two stories in height in any façade unless the façade shall include projecting or recessed *portales*, *setbacks*, or other design elements.

- (b) The combined door and window area in any *publicly visible* façade shall not exceed forty percent of the total area of the façade except for doors or windows located under a *portal*. No door or window in a *publicly visible* façade shall be located nearer than three (3) feet from the corner of the façade;
- (c) No cantilevers shall be permitted except over projecting vigas, beams, or wood corbels, or as part of the roof *treatment* described below;
- (d) No less than eighty percent of the surface area of any *publicly visible* façade shall be *adobe* finish or stucco simulating *adobe* finish. The balance of the *publicly visible* façade, except as above, may be of natural stone, wood, brick, tile, terra cotta, or other material, subject to approval as hereinafter provided for *building permits*;
- (e) The *publicly visible* façade of any *building* and of any adjoining *walls* shall, except as otherwise provided, be of one color, which color shall simulate a light earth or dark earth color, matte or dull finish, and of relatively smooth texture. Façade surfaces under *portales* may be of contrasting or complementary colors. Windows, doors, and *portals* on *publicly visible* portions of the *building* and *walls* shall be of one of the old Santa Fe styles, except that *buildings* with *portals* may have larger plate glass areas for windows under *portals* only. Deep window recesses are characteristic, and
- (f) Flat roofs shall have not more than thirty (30) inches overhang.