

City of Santa Fe
Historic Districts Review Board
Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law

Case # 2025-10666-HDRB

Address – Shelby Street Footbridge (100 block East Alameda Street)

Agent’s Name – Wonderstone Consulting LLC

Owner/Applicant’s Name – City of Santa Fe

THIS MATTER came before the Historic Districts Review Board (“Board” or “HDRB”) for hearing on July 8, 2025.

BACKGROUND

The Shelby Street Footbridge is on the south side of East Alameda Street at the base of Shelby Street. The footbridge is 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 City developed this parkway for the visual enhancement of the nature of the site.

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 Santa Fe River State Park and Don Gaspar Street bridges are on the National Register of Historic Places, and the National Register registration form classifies the 1928 Delgado Street Bridge as contributing. All of the other bridges are considered non-contributing according to the National Register. The HDRB 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 other footbridge, the Brothers Lane Footbridge, came before the HDRB in 2003, subject to a City project which proposed to reconstruct the bridge and widen it by two feet. The HDRB required the Brothers Lane Bridge to be reconstructed of wood, consistently with the original bridge.

The Shelby Street Footbridge was built in 1968, most likely as a replacement for a timber bridge built in the 1930s as part of the Civilian Conservation Corps project. The 1968 bridge is built of concrete slabs with timber and stone abutments, concrete girders, 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 high flanking the approach to the 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 in the 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 status review. The bridges along the park establish and maintain the character of the park. The Applicant requests status designation of the Shelby Street Footbridge. Staff recommended contributing status for the Shelby Street Footbridge.

FINDINGS OF FACT

After conducting a public hearing and having heard from the Applicant and all interested persons, the Board hereby FINDS, as follows:

1. Historic Preservation Division City staff reviewed the application and related materials and information submitted by the Applicant for conformity with applicable Santa Fe City Code (“SFCC”) requirements and provided the Board with a written report of its findings, which evaluates the factors relevant to the application.
2. Historic Preservation Division Staff Recommendation: The Staff recommended the historic status of the footbridge structure be designated as contributing, per SFCC Section 14-5.2(C)(2), Designation of Significant, Contributing or Non-Contributing Status Within Historic Districts.
3. The project is subject to the requirements and general design standards set forth in SFCC Section 14-5.2(D), General Design Standards.
4. The project is subject to SFCC Section 14-5.2(C), Regulation of Significant and Contributing Structures.
5. The property is located in the Downtown and Eastside Historic District and is subject to the district design standards set forth in SFCC Section 14-5.2(E).
6. SFCC Section 14-5.2(C)(2)(a-c) gives the Board authority to review and approve “significant,” “contributing,” or “non-contributing” status designations and to designate primary façades of contributing structures.
7. Under SFCC Section 14-12.1, the definition of a “contributing structure” is “a structure, located in a Historic District, approximately 50 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.”
8. Under SFCC Section 14-12.1, the definition of a “primary façade” is one or more principal faces or elevations of a building with features that define the character of the building’s architecture.
9. Under SFCC Section 14-12.1, the definition of a “non-contributing structure” is a “structure, located in a Historic District, that is less than 50 years old or that does not exhibit sufficient historic integrity to establish and maintain the character of the Historic District.”
10. Based on the information set forth in the Staff Report and exhibits and the testimony and evidence presented at the hearing, the Board finds that the structure meets the definition of a “contributing structure,” as recommended by Staff. The Board finds the Santa Fe

River Park stone-lined channel still holds its historic character, remaining in its original condition along that block of East Alameda Street, and the bridges along the park establish and maintain the character of the park, which is designed for pedestrian use.

11. The information contained in the application and provided in testimony and evidence establishes that all applicable requirements for Board review have been met.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Under the circumstances and given the evidence and testimony submitted during the hearing, the Board acted upon the application as follows:

1. The Board has the authority to review and approve the application.
2. The Board grants the Applicant’s request to review historic status.
3. The Board designates the Shelby Street Footbridge as a contributing structure.

IT IS SO ORDERED ON THIS 12th DAY of MAY, 2026, BY THE HISTORIC DISTRICTS REVIEW BOARD OF THE CITY OF SANTA FE.

Cecilia Rios
Chair

Date

FILED:

Geralyn Cardenas
City Clerk

Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Frank Ruybalid
Assistant City Attorney

Date