

City of Santa Fe, New Mexico

memo

DATE: June 9, 2026

TO: Historic Districts Review Board Members

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

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

2026-012284-HDRB. 1062 Camino San Acacio, Downtown & Eastside Historic District, contributing, Gabriel Browne, agent/owner, proposes to replace windows and doors and install exterior insulation on the contributing structure. Construct a 3,440 sq. ft. freestanding residence to a height of 20'-9", where the maximum allowable is 16'-9". Construct a 733 sq. ft. guesthouse with a pitched roof and construct a 6'-0" high fence and a 4'-0" high yard wall. Additional height is requested due to slope per section 14-4.6(F)(2)(II)(f). Exceptions are requested to section 14-4.6(E)(4)(II) for placing a new architectural finish on a primary facade and for using material not in keeping with the district.

REFERENCE ATTACHMENTS (Sequentially):

CITY SUBMITTALS

- District Standards & yard wall & fence standards.
- Historic Inventory Form
- Zoning Review Sheet
- Other: [previous case documents, height calculation, Stucco Guidelines]

APPLICANT SUBMITTALS

- Proposal Letter
- Site Plan/Floor Plan
- Elevations
- Photographs
- Other: [exception criteria]

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The staff finds that the exception criteria to section 14-4.6 (E)(4)(II)(a) have not been met and recommends denial of the request for placing an exterior insulation on the primary façade of a contributing structure. The staff finds that the exception criteria to section 14-4.6(E)(4)(II)(b) have not been met and recommends denial for the use of metal for details on the portal, roof overhangs, and canales. The staff recommends approval of the other elements of the application as they comply with 14-4.6(E) General Design Standards for all Historic Districts and 14-4.6(G)(2) Downtown and Eastside Historic District Design Standards.

Sample motions:

- a) In case 2026-012284-HDRB, for 1062 Camino San Acacio, approve/deny the exception to section 14-4.6(E)(4)(II)(a) to place exterior insulation on the primary façade of a contributing structure, finding that the exception criteria have/have not been met
- b) In case 2026-012284-HDRB, for 1062 Camino San Acacio, approve/deny the exception to section 14-4.6(E)(4)(II)(b) to use metal for details on the portal, roof overhangs, and canales, finding that the exception criteria have/have not been met.
- c) In case 2026-012284-HDRB, for 1062 Camino San Acacio, approve/deny the elements of the project that do not require an exception.

Should the Board deny the exception request, the applicant shall return with an alternative proposal for review and approval by the HDRB before proceeding with a building permit.

The property lies within the Suburban Archaeological Review District. See Chapter 14, SFCC, Article 14-4.2(B). There will be archaeological concerns associated with this project, and archaeological clearance will be required.

BACKGROUND & SUMMARY:

Streetscape:

Camino San Acacio was once a rural neighborhood with family-built homes on the north side of the street. The family homes have evolved into family compounds with multiple buildings accommodating extended family members. Several properties have been subdivided so that each residence is on its own lot, though there is still a compound feel to the area. The southern part of the street was farmland that was subdivided and sold off for the construction of single-family residences. Because many of the homes were family-built, there is an eclectic mix of vernacular, Spanish Pueblo Revival, and Territorial Revival styles. There is a mix of flat and pitched roof homes, with some built up against the street and others set back. The street is lined with latilla and board fences, concrete masonry, and stone yard walls of various heights. The street is not paved and has no sidewalks or walking areas, but it is frequented by pedestrians.

Site Description:

The property at 1062 Camino San Acacio is in the Downtown and Eastside Historic District and has a contributing garage near the street, with the north elevations designated as primary. A small non-contributing workshop structure is set back towards the southern portion of the property and is approved for demolition. Both structures are basic L-shaped forms built partially into the hillside.

The southern or upper building was a 755 sq. ft. adobe non-contributing structure with a shed attachment on the east elevation. This structure was approved for demolition under case 2026-012133-HDRB on April 28, 2026.

PREVIOUS CASE SUMMARIES:

ARC:

No archaeological clearance has been issued for this property.

HDRB:

Case 2026-012133-HDRB was a request for demolition of the southern accessory structure. The Historic Districts Review Board approved the demolition.

Case 2023-007358-HDRB was a status review for the two accessory structures on the property. The northern garage structure was designated as contributing, with the north-facing facades (N3 and N1) as the primary. The southern accessory structure was designated as non-contributing.

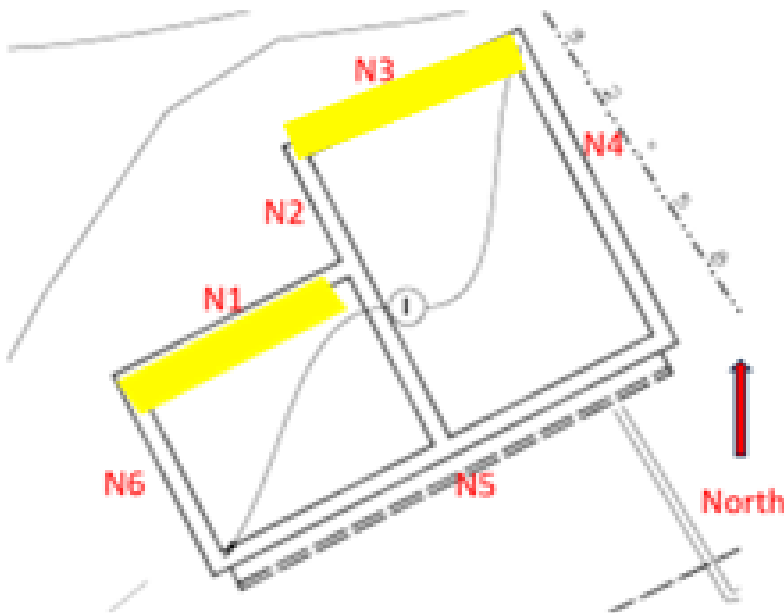


Figure 3: Primary Façade Diagram

ADMINISTRATIVE:

There are no previous administrative cases on file with the Historic Preservation Division.

APPLICANT'S REQUEST:

The applicant proposes the following exterior alterations:

Contributing Garage:

- 1) Replace non-historic windows.
- 2) Replace the non-historic entry door.
- 3) Add doors behind the swinging garage doors while retaining the swinging garage doors.
- 4) Paint the existing garage doors.

- 5) Add 4” insulation to the exterior of the structure.
- 6) Stucco retaining the texture with cement stucco.

New Construction Primary Residential structure:

- 7) Construct a 3,441 sq. ft. primary residence to a height of 20’-9” where the maximum allowable height is 16’-9”. The residence will consist of 2,213 sq. ft. of heated space and 1,228 sq. ft. of portals in a Recent Santa Fe Style. The site slopes 14’ from the lowest to the highest portion of the footprint. The applicant is requesting additional height due to slope per section 14-4.6(F)(2)(II)(f).
 - a. Windows are simulated divided-lite on the publicly visible sides of the structure and without divided-lites on the remaining non-publicly visible portions. Window and patio door exteriors will be metal in dark bronze anodized or paint of the same color. While there are corner windows on the rear of the building, the publicly visible windows all meet the three feet from the corner requirement per section 14-4.6(G)(2)(II)(b).
 - b. The roofs are flat except for the shed roof over the portal on the north elevation and a section on the rear, which will be allowed to rust to match the rusty pitched roofs across the street at 1051 Camino San Acacio. The pitched roof is allowed in this streetscape per section 14-4.6(F)(IV).



Figure 4: Roof at 1051 Camino San Acacio

- c. The garage door will be a metal door in dark bronze color. The garage door is not publicly visible on the south end of the west elevation.
- d. Stucco in a color similar to El Rey Cottonwood, or a custom darker, muted sage color. The muted sage color is not allowed in the Historic Districts, and Cottonwood is discouraged in the Downtown and Eastside Historic District because it is not considered to be in harmony with the streetscape.
- e. Details on the portal, roof overhangs, and canales will be made of steel and will rust over time to match the exposed roofs.

New Construction Accessory Dwelling Unit:

- 8) Construct a 733 sq. ft. accessory dwelling unit to a height of 13’-2”. The ADU will have a pitched roof. A pitched roof is allowed per section 14-4.6(F)(IV).
 - a. Windows are simulated as divided lites on the publicly visible sides of the structure and without divided lites on the remaining portions. Window and patio door exteriors will be metal in dark bronze anodized or painted in the same color.
 - b. Stucco in a color Cottonwood, or a custom darker, muted sage color. The muted sage color is not allowed in the Historic Districts, and Cottonwood is discouraged in the Downtown and Eastside Historic District because it is not considered to be in harmony with the streetscape.
 - c. Details on the portal, roof overhangs, and canales will be made of steel and will rust over time to match the exposed roofs.

Property Improvements:

- 9) Construct retaining walls to create a terraced lot. No retaining wall will be greater than 6'-0" as required under section 14-8.5(C) of the Land Use Code.
- 10) Install exterior stairs with railings for access from one terrace to the next.
- 11) Construct a 6'-0" high latilla fence at the driveway. The driveway shall comply with the site visibility triangle as required under section 14-3.5(G)(1).
- 12) Construct a 48" high fence along Camino San Acacio. The fence will have masonry pilasters with a stone finish, a metal frame, and 3" cedar latillas.
- 13) Install an 8' tall 36" wide steel trellis attached to the back of the yard wall pilasters.

Per the "Stucco Styles, Material, and Color Guidance in the Historic Districts", sage is not an approvable color, and though cottonwood is allowed at the discretion of the Board, "*Desert Rose, Dove Gray, and Cottonwood are not considered to be in harmony with the streetscape in the Downtown and Eastside Historic District.*" Therefore, staff would recommend that the Board deny the request for both cottonwood and sage colored stucco and recommend a color more in keeping with the streetscape, such as those listed in the guidelines under the allowed colors.

EXCEPTION CRITERIA AND RESPONSES:

Exception to 14-4.6(E)(4)(II)(a): The applicant requests an exception to "*Architectural features, finishes, and details other than doors and windows shall be repaired rather than replaced.*" The request is for placing exterior insulation on the primary façade of a contributing structure

(i) *Do not damage the character of the district*

Applicant Response: The addition of 4" of foam to these two facades will not damage the character of the district. This would be a very subtle change, not perceptible by the casual observer. Adding proper insulation enhances the utility and value of the structure and assures its longevity and thereby its contribution to the character of the district.

Staff Response: The staff finds that this criterion is not met. Placing exterior insulation on a building alters its appearance on the exterior. The insulation is a smooth surface with sharp corners. Adobe structures have soft corners and some irregularities on the surface of the building. To eliminate this feature for a smooth, even surface is to remove the unique character of the adobe building. This particular structure has a brick coping which is currently in line with the wall surface. Installing exterior foam will force the coping to no longer align with the building walls, affecting the appearance of the structure and therefore damaging the character of the district.

(ii) *Are required to prevent a hardship to the applicant or an injury to the public welfare*

Applicant Response: The additional foam on the exterior is the only reasonable solution that insulates the structure without hastening its eventual failure. Encapsulating the adobe and rubble foundations will lead to the eventual failure of the adobe & rubble foundations, which would be a hardship to the applicant and would injure the public welfare. An additional public good is served by preventing rodent intrusion into the structure, reducing nuisance and health harms from rodents.

Staff Response: The staff finds that this criterion is not met. The applicant addresses water and rodent intrusion as reasons for insulation. This would not be the purpose of insulation. It is the purpose behind the work done under permit 2019-5288-EXTR as mentioned in the background section of this report. Moreover, the use of foam on adobe structures has caused issues with moisture and the structural stability of the adobe.

(iii) *Strengthen the unique heterogeneous character of the City by providing a full range of design options to ensure that residents can continue to reside within the historic districts*

Applicant Response: The additional foam would strengthen the unique heterogeneous character of the city by allowing this little structure to gain a second useful life, part of a larger project to allow my family to reside in this beautiful corner of the historic district.

Staff Response: The staff finds that this criterion is met. The garage unit is 853 sq. ft. in an “L” shape, which limits the amount of square footage that can be used for the garage and the square footage that can be used for other purposes. The structure is in need of insulation to be used for the office space it is currently being converted to. Making the building usable will strengthen the character of the city; however, staff disagrees that exterior insulation is required in order to make the building to make it usable.

Exception to 14-4.6(E)(4)(II)(b): The applicant requests an exception to “*In the event replacement is necessary, the use of new material may be approved. The new material shall match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.*” The request is for the use of metal for details on the portal, roof overhangs, and canales.

(i) *Do not damage the character of the district*

Applicant Response: Exposed steel columns will not damage the character of the district. They will look more appropriate than a wood or wood-covered column supporting a steel beam. The difference between painted wood and steel is very subtle and would likely not be visible to a casual observer. Paints will fade and peel; wood will twist and crack. Leaving a gap at the bottom of wooden columns, as required by code, leaves a strange floating detail which is clearly not traditional. Failing to leave a gap, or filling the gap with another material, leaves end grain exposed to moisture, which rots the columns. Using and expressing steel for these elements will enhance the character of the district because the column can fully engage with the wall it sits on, and because the proposed columns will become more beautiful over time instead of less so. They will last generations. The character of the district is further enhanced by solutions which express their structural intent and materiality simply and honestly, as those are fundamental tenets of the New Mexico Vernacular.

Staff Response: The staff finds that this criterion is not met. Metal is not a historic architectural feature and is not allowed within the Downtown and Eastside Historic District. Portales are historically constructed with wood elements. Construction within the historic districts without consideration for historic materials does damage the character of the district.

(ii) *Are required to prevent a hardship to the applicant or an injury to the public welfare*

Applicant Response: As described above, covering the columns of this structure with wood would not improve the appearance of the building. It would add cost and unnecessary work. These are hardships for the applicant. The public good is not served by a material that will degrade over time and needs replacement when it rots away.

Staff Response: The staff finds that this criterion is not met. There is no actual hardship that requires metal over wood in this structure. The columns can be placed on top of a concrete build-up to keep the lower portion of the wood from sitting in water during wetter seasons. Maintaining a residence is the cost of homeownership.

(iii) *Strengthen the unique heterogeneous character of the City by providing a full range of design options to ensure that residents can continue to reside within the historic districts.*

Applicant Response: Allowing the steel columns to be exposed would strengthen the unique heterogeneous character of the city by allowing a unique heterogeneous solution to this problem.



(figure of the Palace of the Governor's offered by applicant)

It has been less than 10 years since the Palace of the Governor's portal remodel. The posts are already rotting out again.

Staff Response: The staff finds that this criterion is not met. The area at the Palace of the Governor is not consistent with that of Camino San Acacio, especially this property, given that it will be constructed on a steep slope. The Palace of the Governors' failure of the columns is in part due to the placement of canales that are not sufficiently deep to shield the columns from water runoff. The comparison is not relevant to the request for metal over wood. There are other options to help mitigate wood rot on wood columns, such as, but not limited to, a concrete or rock base for the column to stand on, so that the wood does not sit in water puddles and rain runs away from the wood. Also, constructing stucco columns is an option over wood, which would not use metal.

RELEVANT CODE CITATIONS:

14-4.6 HISTORIC DISTRICTS

A. General Provisions

Purpose

In order to promote the economic, cultural, and general welfare of the people of Santa Fe and to ensure the harmonious, orderly, and efficient growth and development of the City, the Governing Body deems it essential to preserve the qualities relating to the history and culture of Santa Fe, maintain a harmonious outward appearance to preserve property values, and attract residents and tourists alike. The specific purposes of this section are to preserve qualities relating to the history of Santa Fe, such as the following:

- I. Continue the existence and preservation of historic areas and buildings;
 - II. Continued construction of buildings in Santa Fe's historic styles; and
 - III. General harmony as to architectural style, form, color, height, proportion, texture, and material between buildings of historic design and those of more modern design.
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F. Height, Pitch, Scale, Massing, and Floor Stepbacks.

The height, pitch, scale, and massing of any structure in a historic district, as defined in this section, shall be limited as provided for in this section, unless further restricted elsewhere within this chapter.

I. Applicability

The following sections identify specific areas and specific projects subject to this section. The Planning and Land Use Director shall determine whether or not properties are included within this section.

I. Specific Areas

The height limitations in this subsection F apply:

a. Within the following historic districts:

1. Downtown and Eastside;
2. Don Gaspar Area;
3. Historic Transition; and
4. Westside-Guadalupe.

b. In the Historic Review district, as specified herein.

II. Streetscape Standards

III. Project Location

Planning and Land Use Department staff shall determine the applicability of this section to individual projects and the applicable streetscape

2. Height

I. Official Map of Building Heights in the Historic Districts - Procedures

II. Height Limitations

The HDRB shall limit the height of structures as set forth in this section.

Heights of existing structures shall be as set forth on the official map of building heights in the historic districts.

- a. If a proposed building has a parapet, the façade shall not exceed two feet of the average of the height of the façades in the streetscape.
- b. If the proposed building has a pitched roof, the ridge height of the proposed building shall not exceed two feet above the average of the ridge height of the pitched roofs in the streetscape.
- c. Yard walls and fences shall be limited to a height that does not exceed the average of the height of other yard walls and fences in the streetscape.
- d. The height of any other structure shall be limited to the allowable building height within the applicable streetscape, as defined in this section.
- e. The height and dimension of signage are as set forth in Section 14-7.61.

Sign Regulations in the Historic Districts.

- f. The HDRB may increase the allowable height for proposed buildings and additions located on a sloping site where the difference in the natural grade along the structure's foundation exceeds two feet. In no case shall the height of a façade exceed four feet above the allowable height of the applicable streetscape measured from natural or finished grade, whichever is more restrictive. This

increase in height shall be constructed only in the form of building setbacks from the street.

III. Height Measurement

- a. In historic districts, height shall be the vertical distance measured between the highest part of a structure and the existing grade or finished grade, whichever is more restrictive, at the midpoint of the street-facing facade, excluding rooftop appurtenances, the increased height of walls or fences over pedestrian and vehicular openings, and gates (either in open or closed position).
- b. For structures that do not have street frontage, height shall be determined by the facade that contains the tallest vertical distance measured between the highest part of a structure and the existing grade or finished grade, whichever is more restrictive. The height of walls and fences is measured from the street-facing side of the wall or fence.

IV. Pitch

If the determined streetscape includes over 50 percent of buildings with pitched roofs, the proposed building may have a pitched roof. A pitched roof is defined as a gable, shed, or hipped roof. The pitch of the roof shall match the predominant pitch extant in the streetscape.

V. Scale

The height of a proposed building or addition, its façade length, and its roof form and pitch shall appear to be in proportion to the height, façade length, and roof form and pitch of buildings in the applicable streetscape, or the building on which the addition is proposed.

VI. Massing and Floor Stepbacks

The HDRB may require that upper floor levels be stepped back, to carry out the intent of this section; provided that the HDRB in making such determinations shall take into account whether the height of the proposed building, yard wall, fence, or proposed step back of upper floor levels is in harmony with the massing of the applicable streetscape and preservation of the historic and characteristic visual qualities of the streetscape. The HDRB shall also require that the publicly visible facades of the structure be in conformance with Section 14-4.6G, *Additional District-Specific Design Standards*, and, in meeting those requirements, may require that different floor levels be stepped back.

E. Additional District-Specific Design Standards

2. Downtown and Eastside Historic District

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.

I. 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, a 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. Facades are flat, varied by inset portales, exterior portales, projecting vigas or roof beams, canales or water-sprouts, 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, open 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 rules 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 arials 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 a 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.

II. 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. Facade 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 no more than thirty (30) inches of overhang.