

City of Santa Fe, New Mexico

memo

DATE: September 8, 2026

TO: Historic Districts Review Board Members

VIA: Heather Lamboy, AICP, Planning & Land Use Department Director
Maggie Moore, Assistant Land Use Director *MM*

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

2026-012977-HDRB. 527-A Agua Fria St., Westside-Guadalupe Historic District. Contributing. Osage Design Studio, agent for Neirika, LLC, owner, proposes to relocate the garage door opening. An exception is requested to 14-4.6(E)(4)(II)(c) for recreating a missing feature without replication.

REFERENCE ATTACHMENTS (Sequentially):

CITY SUBMITTALS

☐ District Standards & yard wall
& fence standards.

☒ Historic Inventory Form

☒ Zoning Review Sheet

☒ Other: previous case files

APPLICANT SUBMITTALS

☒ Proposal Letter

☒ Site Plan/Floor Plan

☒ Elevations

☒ Photographs

☒ Other: exception criteria

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff finds that the exception criteria to 14-4.6(E)(4)(II)(c) for recreating a missing feature without replication have not been met, and recommends denial of the exception request. Otherwise, staff recommends approval of the application as it complies with 14-4.6(E) General Design Standards for all Historic Districts, and 14-4.6(G)(5) Westside-Guadalupe Historic District Design Standards.

Sample motions:

- a. In case 2026-012977-HDRB, for 527 Agua Fria Street, approve/deny the exception to 14-4.6(E)(4)(II)(c) for the recreation of an opening without replication on a contributing structure, finding that the exception criteria have/have not been met
- b. In case 2026-012977-HDRB, for 527 Agua Fria Street, 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 before proceeding to a building permit.



Figure 1: Site Location

BACKGROUND & SUMMARY:

Background:

In case 2026-011230-HDRB on January 13, 2026, the Historic Districts Review Board approved a remodel which included replacement of windows and doors, raising the lower roofs on the north, constructing a 36 sq. ft. addition, replacing chimneys, constructing fences and gates, exterior stairs, and stuccoing the residence and yard wall. An exception to 14-5.2(D)(5)(a) for replacing historic windows. The exception was approved. The garage door opening was on the north side of the residence, while the door itself was missing. As part of the remodel, the garage door opening on the north side was to be filled with French doors as part of making this section into a guest house.

Streetscape:

The streetscape for this property runs from just east of De Fouri Street to Romero Street. The street is lined with sidewalks, with properties having low stucco yard walls and a couple of rock yard walls. Some of the yard walls are topped with metal fencing. There is a single chain-link fence, and to the west of Closson Street, there are some

coyote fences. The yard walls and fences often feature wooden pedestrian gates. There are no vehicle gates. The average is forty-three inches in height, which is the maximum allowable height.

The properties tend to be narrow and long, with multiple buildings on most sites. The buildings vary in distance from the street, with some right up to the sidewalk and others set back twenty to thirty feet from the street. The buildings are a combination of residential and commercial spaces.

The buildings are a variety of Spanish Pueblo Revival, Territorial, and Vernacular style flat-roof homes, as well as a variety of pitched-roof homes. The homes are in lighter brown stucco with white, brown, and blue trim and natural wood elements. There are several properties with metal elements as well.

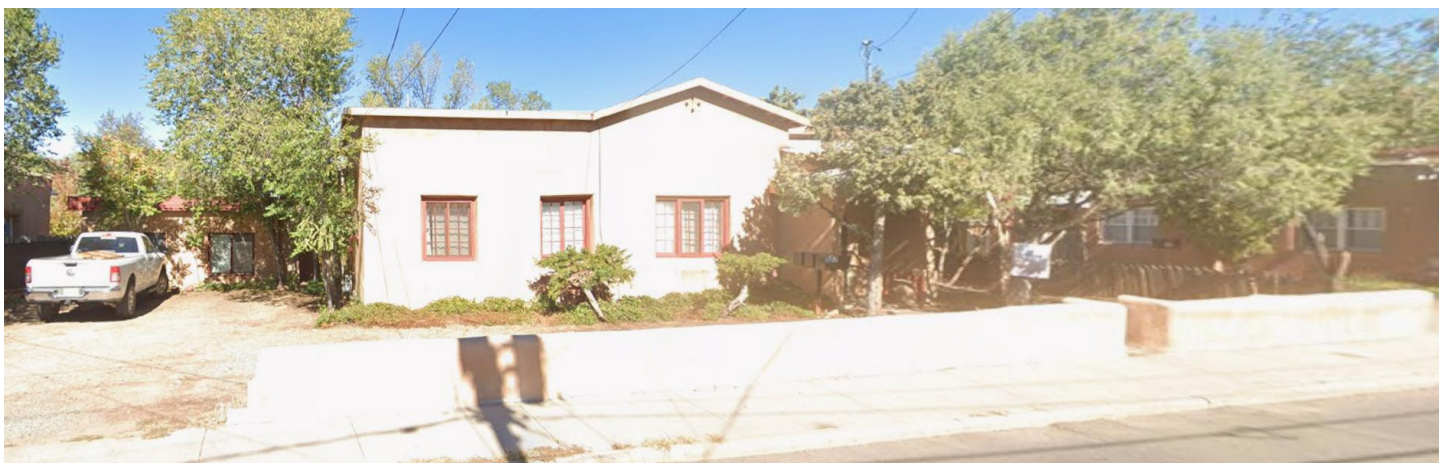


Figure 2: Street View of Residence

Site Description:

The 3,017 sq. ft. single-family residence sits on a 0.418-acre lot and was constructed in 1908 and is listed as contributing to the Westside-Guadalupe Historic District, with the south and east elevations designated as the primary facades.

The 1908 residence is constructed in vernacular-style architecture with thick, stucco-plastered walls, red-tiled roofs, and ornate archways, with large, symmetrical facades designed for warmth and indoor-outdoor living.

The roof is a red metal roof with gables of various heights, gable horns, and exposed rafters. The roof heights vary, with the lowest at 7'-10" and the highest at just under 20'-0". The walls are concrete and stucco in light tan; most windows are 8-lite wood casements in pairs and trios, and a few picture windows. The doors are wood, with the front south door being curved to match the curve in the portal. The south portal has a gable roof with a round arched opening. The southeast corner portal has a shed roof and stucco piers. The yard wall along the street is low stucco with a wood pedestrian gate, and the rear fencing is a 6'-0" high plank wood fence.

According to the 2025 HCPI, *"The original house was built sometime before 1908. An addition was constructed at the rear of the house (northeast side) sometime after 1908 and before 1913. A much larger addition was constructed on the west side of the house sometime after 1913 and before 1921. The new southwest corner of the house is constructed of adobe. A covered front porch was added at the southeast corner of the house. Another large addition was added to the back of the house, possibly an enclosed back porch with a lower roof. A separate garage was added to the west, and access to a cellar on the east side of the house was added sometime after 1921"*

and before 1930. It is estimated that the double gable roof was added after 1930, and a small restroom addition was added at the top of the cellar stair on the northeast corner of the house.” The roof was changed in 1920-1925. The diamond vents had glass installed behind them at an unknown time. The previous garage was connected to the main structure with an addition, which is understood to be the 1984 northeast addition under case H-84-343, though the file is no longer available for verification. However, it does show in the 1998 Sanborn map provided in the 2025 HCPI. The roof was approved to be replaced in 2024.

PREVIOUS CASE SUMMARIES:

ARC:

No Archaeological clearance has been issued for this property.

HDRB:

In case 2026-011230-HDRB on January 13, 2026, the Historic Districts Review Board approved a remodel which included replacement of windows and doors, raising the lower roofs on the north, constructing a 36 sq. ft. addition, replacing chimneys, constructing fences and gates, exterior stairs, and stuccoing the residence and yard wall. An exception to 14-5.2(D)(5)(a) for replacing historic windows. The exception was approved.

In case 2025-011549-HDRB, the Historic Districts Review Board reviewed the property for status. The Board designated the structure as contributing, with the south portion of the original residence and the east elevation as the primary facades.

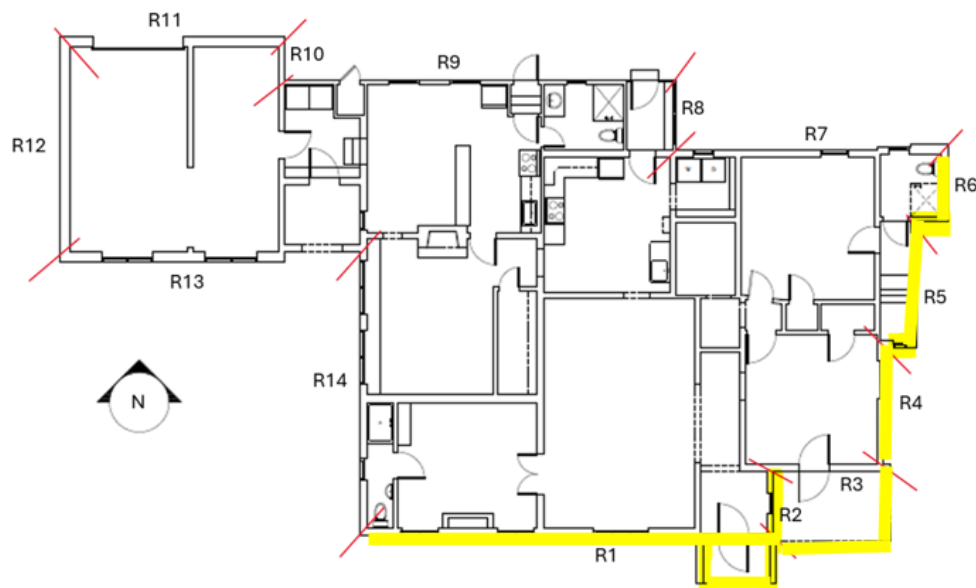


Figure 3: Primary Facades

In case H-84-343, the Historic Districts Review Board approved the construction of an addition on the northeast side of the structure. There are no documents on file in the Historic Preservation Division.

ADMINISTRATIVE:

In case 2024-009160-ADMIN, the residence was approved for a reroof.

APPLICANT'S REQUEST:

The applicant proposes to:

- 1) Create a single garage door on the non-primary south façade. The door will be a wood carriage door style.

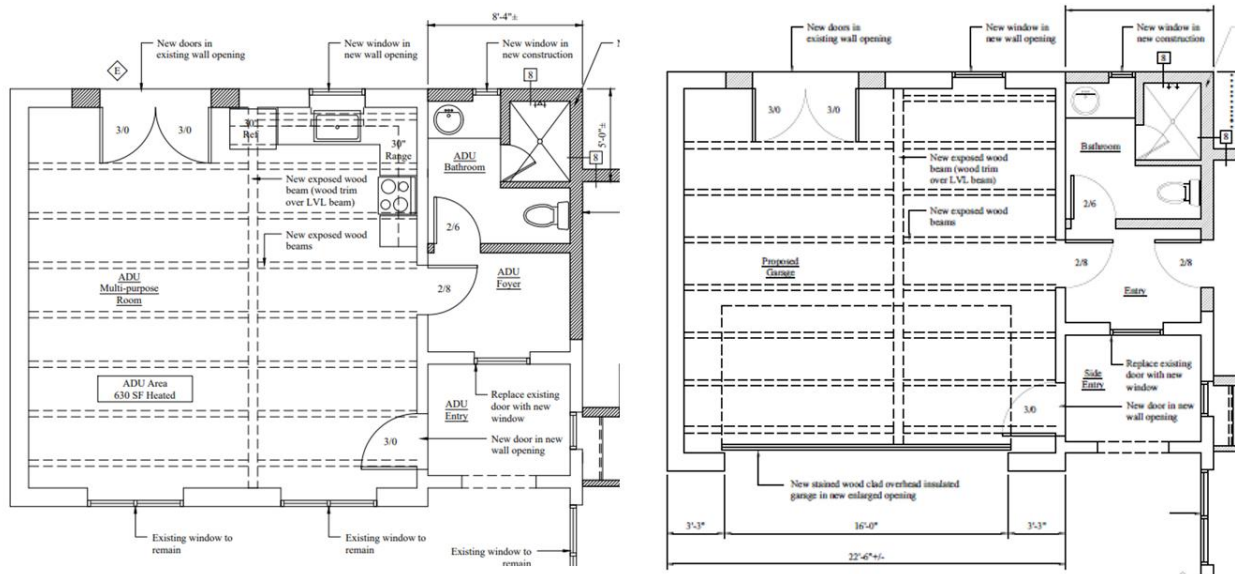


Figure 4: Previously Approved Floor Plan and the Proposed Floor Plan

This façade historically held two garage doors, which were replaced with windows.

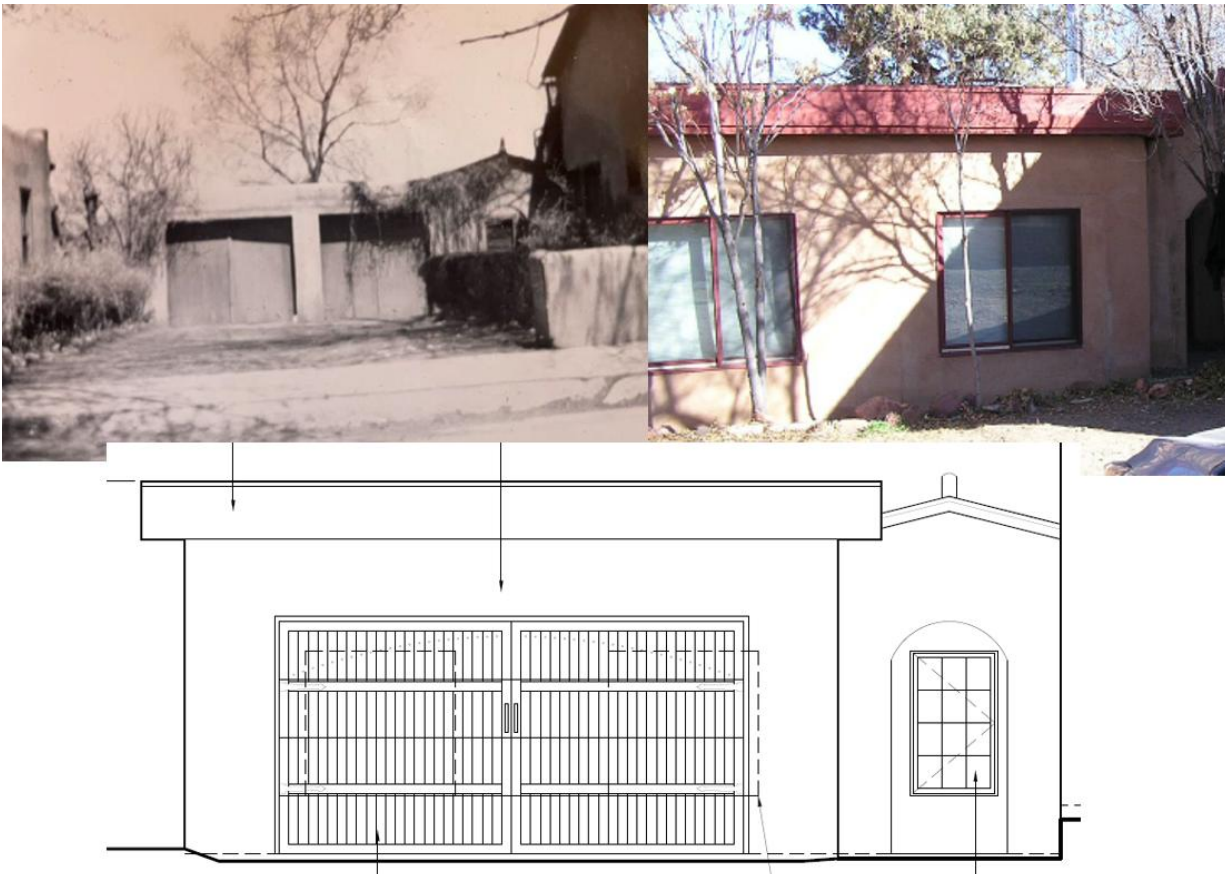


Figure 5: The Historic Openings, Current Openings, and Planned Opening

EXCEPTION CRITERIA AND RESPONSES:

Exception to 14-4.6(E)(4)(II)(c): The applicant requests an exception to recreate a missing feature without replication.

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

Applicant Response: The unique character of the City will be maintained, as the primary residence would be renovated in accordance with the HDRB's conditional approval. Approval of the proposed single garage door would reflect the use of the garage but updated for modern times. In addition, the structure as a whole indicates an evolution of use and renovation evident in the historic districts. For instance, the historic photo shows two garage doors in a garage structure with a rounded stucco parapet. This has changed to a stucco wall, painted wood fascia, street-facing windows, and a rear garage door. The applicant is merely continuing this evolution.

Staff Response: Staff finds that this criterion is met. The character of the City will not be damaged by placing a garage door where there was one previously. It is obvious from the setup of the lot that this was once a garage, and the applicant is returning the space to its original use.

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

Applicant Response: The Applicant considered two doors similar to the historic photo. For functionality, the Applicant would prefer a single door. Modern vehicles are often larger than historic vehicles. A wider single door would ease the maneuverability of a vehicle entering or exiting. Narrow double doors would create a hardship, as the future residents would not have free use of the garage.

Staff Response: Staff finds that this criterion is not met. There is a trade-off between parking flexibility and energy efficiency versus convenience and lower maintenance costs. Two single garage doors are more energy efficient; each door is independent, which results in higher costs for maintenance and installation. A single double garage door is usually 16-18 feet with no center post, making it easier to park large trucks, maneuver trailers, or swing car doors open. The cost of maintenance and installation is less since there is a single opening and door, but there is greater heat loss. Modern vehicles are larger and require more space for maneuvering than those that were initially parked in this garage. Therefore, the single door is the preference; however, staff does not find that this falls under a “hardship”.

(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: As noted above, a single wider door would be the most flexible option for a new garage door. This is the ideal design option for the Applicant and future residents. The Applicant has reasonable concerns that not providing a garage would limit what residents would consider residing in the residence. This was the primary reasoning for eliminating the ADU from the work scope and reconstructing the garage.

Staff Response: Staff finds that this criterion is met. The applicant worked with staff on other designs for the garage opening. There was discussion regarding the pros and cons of the two doors versus the single door. There is a trade-off, but the more practical design option is the single door for the modern vehicles and options for use of the garage space for the residents to continue to reside within the district.

RELEVANT CODE CITATIONS:

14-4.6 HISTORIC DISTRICTS

A. General Provisions

1. 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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C. Buildings with Significant or Contributing Historic Status

1. Purpose

Historic designation is intended to address the following:

- I. Recognizing each structure as a physical record of its time, place, and use.
 - II. Preventing changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as the addition of conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings;
 - III. Preserving and retaining changes to structures that have acquired historic importance in their own right, recognizing that most structures change over time;
 - IV. Preserving distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a structure; and
 - V. Avoiding making new additions and related or adjacent new construction 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
- I. Status Designation
Structures within historic districts may be designated a status of "significant," "contributing," or "noncontributing," as defined in Section 14-9.3, *General Definitions*. Staff shall maintain a record as to the current status of structures located in the historic districts.
 - II. HDRB Authority to Review Status Designation
 - a. The HDRB may change the status of a structure or designate a status for a structure that has no status designated.
 - b. 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. When the HDRB designates a structure as contributing, it shall also specify which facades of the structure are primary.
- V. 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.

3. Review by Historic Districts Review Board Required

- I. Except where this chapter provides for review by staff, the HDRB shall review all applications for new construction, alteration, or demolition in the historic districts and of landmark structures throughout the city, based on the standards set forth in this section.
- II. The historic board shall judge any proposed alteration or new structure for harmony with adjacent buildings, preservation of historical and characteristic qualities, and conformity to the standards for architectural style set forth in this section.

- III. The HDRB may approve, deny, approve with conditions, or, with the consent of the applicant, postpone an application.
 - a. For applications approved with conditions, no permit shall be issued until the HDRB conditions have been met.
 - b. An application that is postponed shall be heard at a date agreed upon by the HDRB and the applicant.
 - IV. No permit shall be issued until the time for appeal to the Governing Body has expired.
 - 4. Compliance with General and Specific Design Standards Required

All development located within the historic districts and subject to this section shall comply with all applicable general development standards set forth in Section 14-4.6E), *General Design Standards for All Historic Districts*, as well as any applicable specific development standards set forth in Section 14-4.6G), *Additional District-Specific Design Standards*.
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E. General Design Standards for All Historic Districts

These standards shall apply to all additions or alterations to existing structures in the Historic Districts. Contributing, significant, and landmark structures may be subject to specific additional restrictions and district-specific standards in Section 14-4.6(G).

- I. General
 - I. The historic status of a property with a historic status designation of significant, contributing, or landmark structure shall be retained and preserved. If a proposed alteration will cause a property to lose its significant, contributing, or landmark status, the application shall be denied. The removal of historic materials or alteration of architectural features and spaces that embody the status is prohibited.
 - II. If a proposed alteration or new construction will cause an adjacent property to lose its significant, contributing, or landmark status, the application may be denied.
 - III. For the regulations of this subsection, all facades of a significant structure are primary facades.
- 2. Building Additions
 - I. Design
 - a. Building additions that meet the standards of Section 14-4.6G2, *Downtown and Eastside Historic District*, shall continue to meet those standards, in addition to the standards set forth in this section.
 - b. Building additions shall have similar materials, architectural treatments and styles, features, and details as the existing structure, but shall be distinguishable from and not attempt to duplicate the existing structure.
 - II. Size and Location
 - a. Building additions are not permitted on primary facades.

- b. All building additions shall be set back a minimum of ten feet from the primary facade.
- c. Building additions shall not exceed 50 percent of the square footage of the building's historic footprint and shall not exceed 50 percent of the historic length in linear feet of the primary facade.
- d. To the extent architecturally practicable, new building additions shall be attached to any existing non-primary facade of a structure rather than attaching them to the primary facade of a structure.

III. Height

- a. The maximum height of building additions to significant and landmark structures shall be at least six inches lower than the parapet or equivalent roof feature of the existing adjacent connecting facade.
- b. Building additions to contributing structures shall be no more than one additional story higher than the existing structure. To the extent architecturally practicable, two-story additions shall be set to the rear or the side rear of the structure. When an additional story is to be placed upon an existing contributing structure, that footprint may be no greater than fifty percent of the footprint of the existing structure, subject to the provisions of Subsection A(1) above. For the purposes of this paragraph, an additional story shall not exceed twelve (12) feet from the existing rooftop to the highest point of that story.

IV. Remodeling to Increase Height

- a. For remodeling of an existing significant or landmark structure, no increase in height of the structure is permitted.
- b. For remodeling an existing contributing structure, a height increase may be permitted through approval of an exception, as described in Section 14-4.6D.

V. Rooftop Equipment

Rooftop equipment, including but not limited to solar collectors, clerestories, decks, or mechanical equipment, may only be installed on contributing and noncontributing structures and shall not be publicly visible, nor shall a parapet be raised to conceal such equipment.

3. Porches and Portals

Existing porches or portals on significant and landmark structures, and on primary facades of contributing structures, shall not be permanently enclosed.

4. Windows, Doors, and Other Architectural Features

- I. For all facades of significant and landmark structures and for the primary facades of contributing structures:
 - a. Historic windows shall be repaired or restored wherever possible. Historic windows that cannot be repaired or restored shall be duplicated in the size, style, and material of the original. Thermal double-pane glass may be used. No window opening shall be widened or narrowed.
 - b. Window depth and other characteristics of window and door fenestration shall

- be preserved.
- c. No new opening shall be made where one presently does not exist unless historic documentation supports its prior existence.
- d. No historic opening shall be closed.
- II. **For all facades of contributing, significant, and landmark structures:**
 - a. **Architectural features, finishes, and details other than doors and windows shall be repaired rather than replaced.**
 - b. **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.**
 - c. **Replacement or duplication of missing features shall be substantiated by documentation, physical, or pictorial evidence.**
- 5. Roofs

The existing historic roof styles and materials shall be maintained or replaced in kind if necessary. The addition of dormers or other roof features should only be considered when they are an existing historic feature of the structure.
- 6. Surface Cleaning

The surface cleaning of structures shall employ the gentlest means possible. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials are not permitted.
- 7. Archaeological Resources

Discovery of archaeological resources made during the development of a historic property shall be referred to the Archaeological Review Committee. See Section 14-2.1G.1.V.c, *Unexpected Discoveries*.
- 8. Signs
- 9. Murals
- 10. Pedestrian-Oriented Areas

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 above 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 dimensions 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 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.

G. Additional District-Specific Design Standards

2. Westside-Guadalupe Historic District

I. District Standards

Compliance with the following structural standards shall occur whenever those exterior features of buildings and other structures subject to public view from any public street, way, or other public place are erected, altered, or demolished.

- a. Slump block, stucco, brick, or stone shall be used as exterior wall materials. Wood and other materials may be used for details. Aluminum siding, metal, panels, mirrored glass, and unstuccoed concrete block or unstuccoed concrete shall not be used as exterior wall materials;
- b. The color of stuccoed buildings shall predominantly be in browns, tans, local earth tones, and soft pastels. Surfaces of stone or brick shall be in the natural color. Entryways and portales or porches may be emphasized by the use of white or other colors. Painting of buildings with a color that causes arresting or spectacular effects, or with bold repetitive patterns, or using buildings as signs is prohibited. Murals, however, are permitted and may be referred to the city arts board for an advisory recommendation.

- c. Roof form, slope, and shape. It is intended that the buildings be designed to be "wall-dominated". "Wall-dominated" means that the building's geometry is more defined by walls than by roofs. Buildings with flat, gabled, shed, or hipped roofs can be designed as "wall-dominated" solutions and are allowed. The height of the roof above the wall shall be no greater than the height of the wall. Folded plate, hyperbolic, or mansard roofs are not allowed;
- d. The use of solar and other energy-collecting and conserving strategies is encouraged. The use of large glazed areas on south-facing walls for trombe walls or other solar collectors, direct gain, or other energy-collecting purposes is allowed. When in view from any public street, way, or other public place, solar equipment shall be screened as follows:
 - 1. raising the parapet;
 - 2. setting back from the edge of the roof;
 - 3. Framing the collector with wood.
 - 4. In the case of pitched roofs, by integrating the collector into the pitch;
 - 5. In the case of ground solar collectors, by a wall or vegetation;
 - 6. In the case of wall collectors, by enclosing or other walls;
 - 7. Other means that screen the collector or integrate it into the overall structure. Non-glare materials shall be used in solar collectors.
- e. Mechanical, electrical, telephone equipment, microwave satellite receiving dishes, and other obstructive equipment shall be architecturally screened with opaque materials by raising the parapet, boxing in the equipment, or other appropriate means. The equipment shall be of a low profile to minimize the screening problems.
- f. Walls and fences shall be of brick, adobe, masonry, rock, wood, coyote fencing, or similar materials. Wrought iron fences and slump block walls are allowed. Walls of unstuccoed concrete block, unstuccoed concrete, chain-link, metal wire, or similar materials are prohibited, except where the wall or fence is not in the street frontage.
- g. Greenhouses;
 - h. Attached greenhouses that front on the street shall give the appearance of being integrated into the structure of the building or of being a substantive addition rather than having a lean-to effect. The use of corrugated fiberglass or rolled plastic for the external surface of attached or freestanding greenhouses that front on the street is prohibited. Greenhouses with slanting sides shall be bracketed at the ends, and greenhouses made from enclosed porches or portals shall maintain the shape of the porch or portal.
 - i. Porches and portales are encouraged;
 - j. When parking spaces are required for commercial or multi-family residential buildings, they shall be placed to the rear or side of the building.

II. Walls; Fences; Solar Collectors: Administration

Applications for the erection, alteration, or demolition of walls, fences, and solar collectors and required submittals shall be reviewed by the planning and land use department. Approval, disapproval, or referral shall be indicated by the division on the application for the building permit and on each of the required submittals, all of which shall be signed by the division staff assigned to the review. The division staff shall report approvals, disapprovals, and referrals to the board at its next regular meeting as an informational item. (Ord. No. 2007-45 § 30, Ord. No. 2020-22)