And building

City of Santa Fe, New Mexico

memo

DATE: October 13, 2026

TO: Historic Districts Review Board Members

VIA: Heather Lamboy, AICP, Planning & Land Use Dept Director HLL
Maggie Moore, Assistant Land Use Director *MRM*

FROM: Lauren A. Vagts, Senior Planner, Historic Preservation Division LAV

2026-013211-HDRB. 311 Old Santa Fe Trl. Downtown and Eastside Historic District. Non-statused. Daniel Lujan, agent for 311 Old Santa Fe Trail, LLC, owner, requests status review with primary façade(s) designation, if applicable, for one building.

REFERENCE ATTACHMENTS (Sequentially):

CITY SUBMITTALS

__x__ District Standards & yard wall & fence standards.

___ Historic Inventory Form

____ Zoning Review Sheet

__x__ Other: wall and building height calculations

APPLICANT SUBMITTALS

__x__ Proposal Letter

__x__ Site Plan/Floor Plan

__x__ Elevations

__x__ Photographs

__x__ Other: Abbreviated architectural history report

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the historic status of the structure be designated as Non-Contributing, per 14-4.6(C) Designation of Significant, Contributing or Noncontributing Status Within Historic Districts.

District Standards: 14-4.6(G)(2) Downtown and Eastside Historic District Design Standards.

Sample motions:
Up to two motions will be required for this case.

Status (for each structure):

a. In case 2025-013211-HDRB, for address, designate the building status as Non-Contributing as it does not meet the 50-year requirement for historic status designation, and is not associated with the historical development of the adjacent property.

BACKGROUND & SUMMARY:

Streetscape:
The subject building is located on the east side of Old Santa Fe Trail near the southeast corner of the lot (Figure 1) bound by East Alameda Street and Santa Fe River to the north, Paseo de Peralta to the east, and East De Vargas Street to the south. A concrete-paved alleyway flanked by stucco and stone walls separates the property lot from the neighboring building at 329 Old Santa Fe Trail. The streetscape is a mix of single-story historic Pueblo Revival style buildings clad in stucco with flat rooflines with either street-facing or adjacent portales, a single pitched-roof building with a portal at the south end of the street, two- and three-story buildings including the New Mexico State Land Office (c.1960) to the northwest and the Territorial-style Lamy Building (1878) to the south, the Spanish-Colonial style San Miguel Chapel (c.1610), and two large parking lots—one south of the State Land Office and another at the center of the mid-century El Sendero Inn. The sidewalk is largely clad in red and brick masonry pavers with occasional concrete sloped curbs to accommodate driveways and ADA compliance. On the west side of Old Santa Fe Trail, building facades begin at the sidewalk without walls or fencing apart from the State Land Use building which sits back from the street behind a shallow iron fence. The east side of the street has a mix of shallow yardwalls, coyote fencing (subject building only), and stone retaining walls to the south.

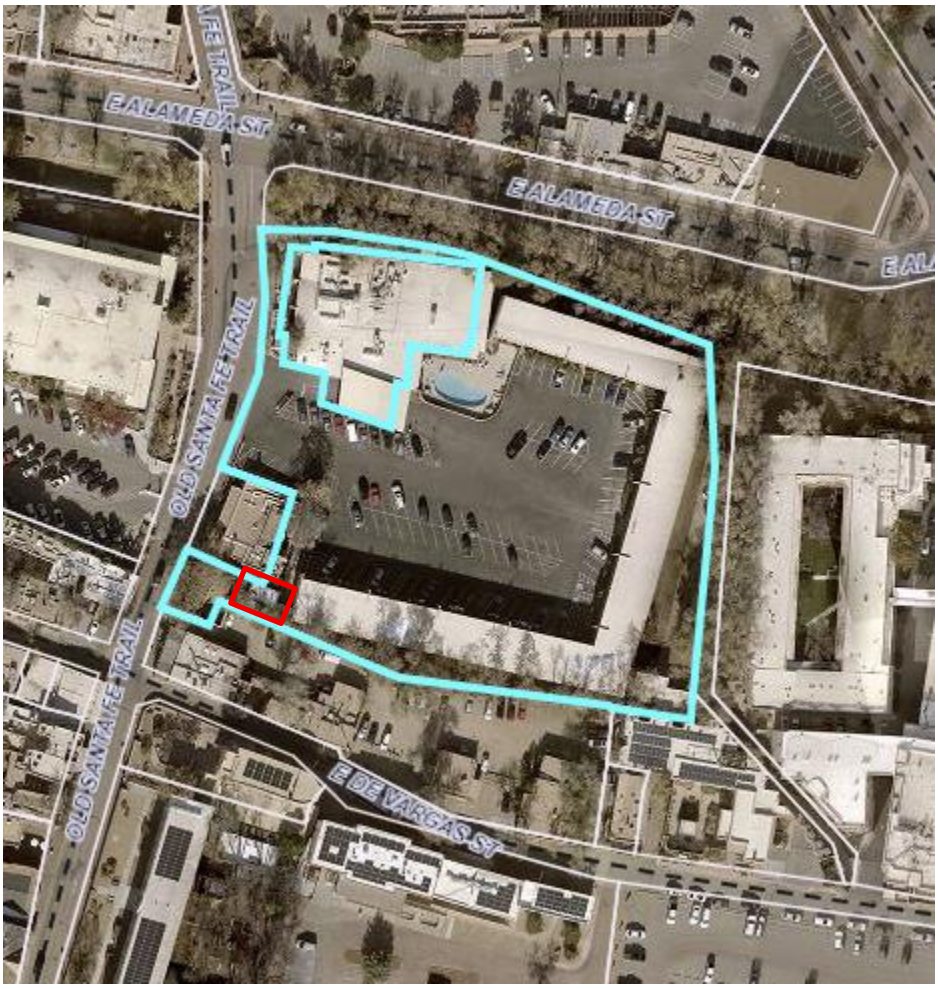
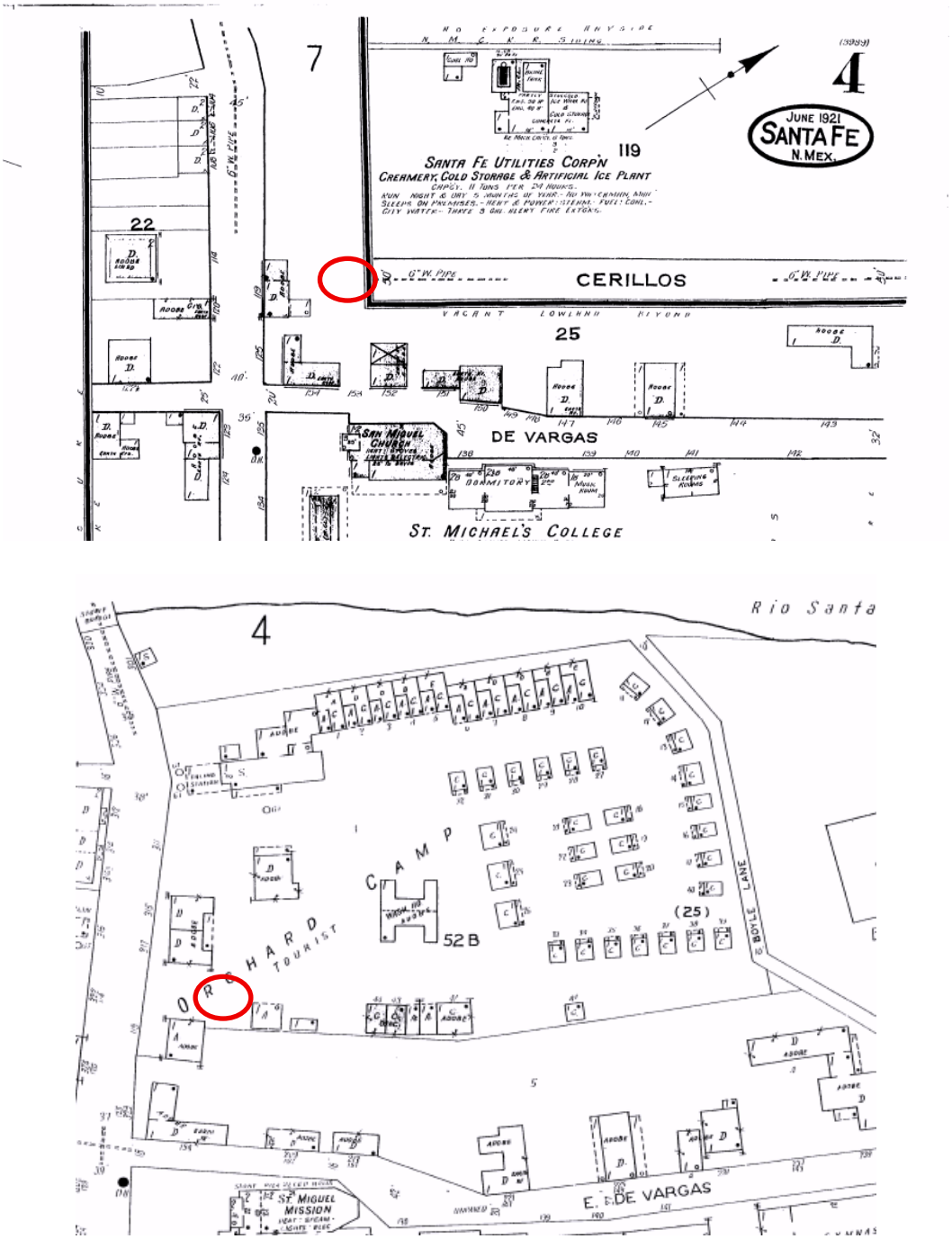


Figure 1. Aerial view of parcel location, 311 Old Santa Fe Trail with subject building circled in red. Source: Santa Fe County Tax Parcel Viewer, https://sfcomaps.santafecountynm.gov.

Site Description:

Established in 1923, 311 Old Santa Fe Trail was originally developed as an auto camp by John Catron for travelers who could not afford the expense of hotels. This development followed a nation-wide trend of municipalities and emerging entrepreneurs built on the expansion of automobile travelers and associated land development including filling stations, motorist camps, washhouses, and so forth.



Figures 2 and 3. 1921 (above) and 1930 (below) Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps showing Orchard Camp (below) and approximate location of subject building circled in red with yardwall present in 1930 map bordering an adobe building.

By the early 1940s, Orchard Camp further developed, adding a swimming pool, additional cabins, restrooms, and a rest stop and officially the first downtown motor court in Santa Fe (Figure 4). In October of 1957, Orchard Camp changed ownership to Clyde and Goldie Tyler, and the two-story Desert Inn officially opened following demolition of the entire site while preserving a single residence at the southeast corner of the property. The new motel took the name of the infamous motel on the Las Vegas Strip with design inspiration from the Desert Sands and Desert Inn motels in Albuquerque. In the mid-1970s, the motel changed hands again to the Garrett family and reopened as Garrett's Desert Inn with the current site maintaining much of its historic footprint.

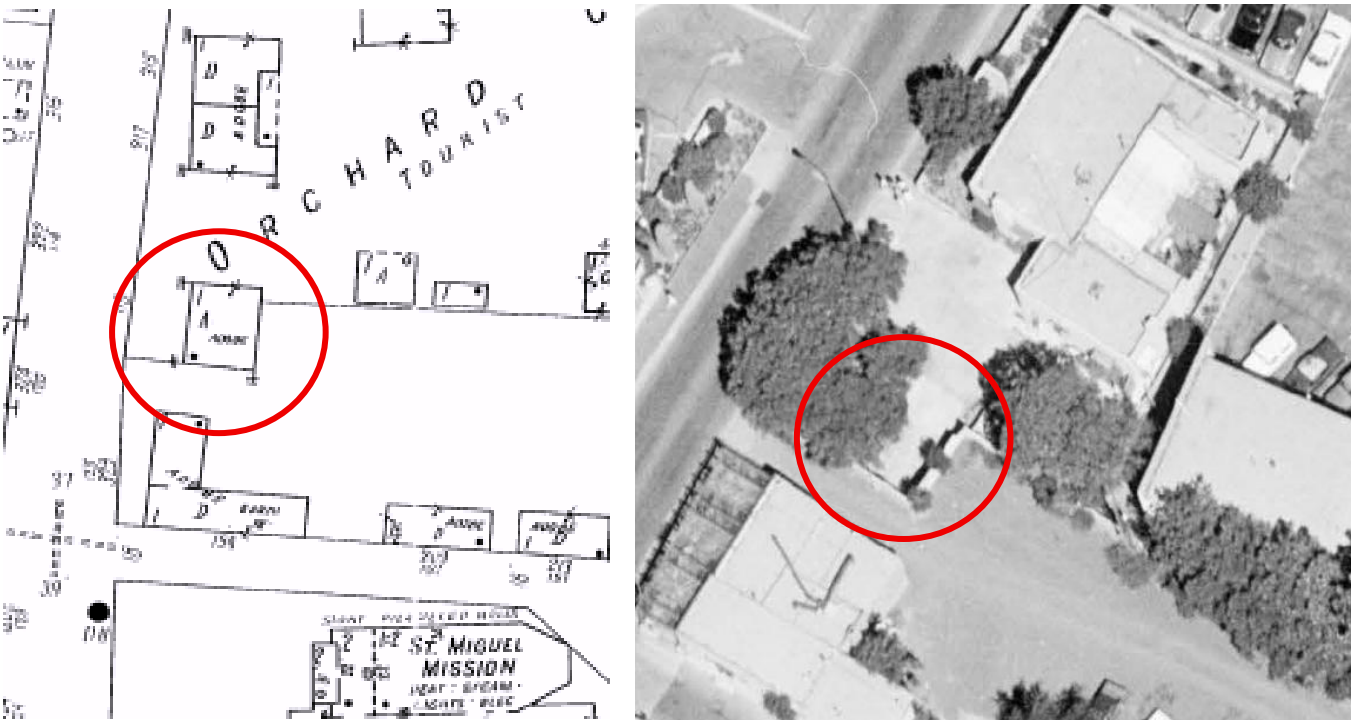


Figure 4. Traveler's brochure for Orchard Camp (n.d.). Source: https://www.abebooks.com/Orchard-Camp-Santa-Fe-New-Mexico/31441101987/bd.

According to historic aerials placing the subject property build date between 1990 and 1995 (Figures 5 and 6), the building does not show to exist or associate within the historical context of the adjacent motel and its development. However, both historic maps and aerials show the southwestern yardwall throughout the historic period of development (Figures 7 and 8).



Figures 5 and 6. Aerials of subject property location dating to May 11, 1990 (left) without building and July 6, 1995 (right) with building present. Source: New Mexico Department of Transportation.



Figures 7 and 8. 1930 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (left) and historic aerial from the New Mexico Department of Transportation (September 11, 1978) showing southeastern yardwall.

Building Description

The subject building at 311 Old Santa Fe Trail (Figure 9), once addressed as 317 Old Santa Fe Trail, is set back approximately 40 feet from the street behind a coyote fence, flanked by yardwalls clad in cementitious stucco currently designated as Non-Contributing in the Downtown and Eastside Historic District. The single-story building has a rectangular footprint in a simplified Pueblo Revival style clad in cementitious stucco and flat roof. The street-facing west elevation is two bays wide each with two large three-over-twelve vinyl sliding windows. The north half of the elevation has a slightly higher roofline with a wooden-framed portal above a cement slab and wooden entrance door to the far left. The north elevation is two bays wide, clad in stucco with no fenestration with a cement walkway separating the neighboring yardwall that connects to 315 Old Santa Fe Trail. The east elevation has a single wood panel door entrance slightly raised above a cement slab on the right with a mass at the southeast corner connecting to the neighboring motel to the east, and yardwall to the south. The south elevation has no fenestration with the bottom half below grade connecting to the retaining wall to the west and connecting to the adjacent motel to the east. The south elevation connects at the southwest corner with a stucco retaining wall that connects to a larger L-shaped yardwall that borders the southwest corner of the lot. While the lot shows in historic aerials and maps, the entire west elevation was approved for demolition in 2003.



Figure 9. West elevation of subject building at 311 Old Santa Fe Trail. Source: Abbreviated Historic report submitted by historian John C. Murphy or Architectural History Services, September 2, 2026. Note: address on wooden portal column depicts former address as 317 Old Santa Fe Trail.

Aerials date the building between 1990 and 1995 which is outside the 50-year period of significance. Therefore, staff recommends the building retain its Non-Contributing status. Additionally, the yardwall does meet the 50-year requirement, but due to partial demolition, the remaining material has been significantly altered and does not retain enough of its historic integrity to meet the requirements as a notable or contributing structure.

PREVIOUS CASE SUMMARIES:

ARC: n/a

HDRB:

- H-00-69 – residential building at the time with the proposal of murals on both sides of existing yardwalls-south and west elevations; denied by Board.
- H-03-112 – lowering of wall and construction of portal vendor stalls; approved with conditions to keep existing rounded style of adobe wall (door, woodwork, and roof material be submitted and approved by staff)
- H-04-168 window and door replacement (postponed); double-hung windows to be replaced with sliders (work completed without permit), add brick planters in front of building, widening of existing sidewalk from 30" to 4', and installation of portal; approved with conditions (brick sample presented and approved by staff)

ADMINISTRATIVE: n/a

APPLICANT'S REQUEST:

The applicant requests:

1) Status Review with primary façade designation, if applicable, for a residential structure.

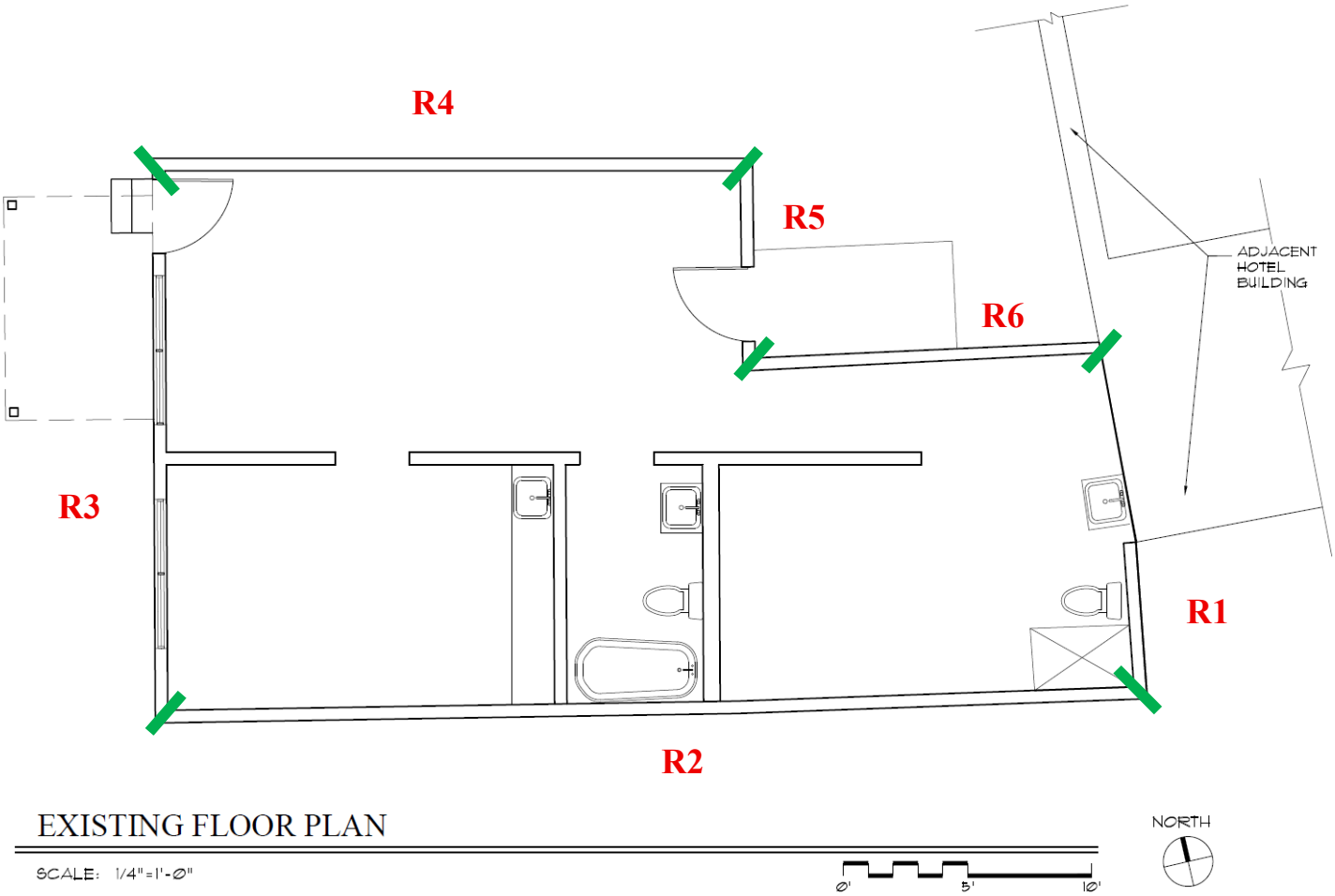


Figure 10. Site map with facade designation.

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 in order 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.

B. 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 to 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.

III. Initiation of Review of Status Designation

The Board may review the status designation in response to the following:

a. An application for construction or demolition as set forth in Section 14-5.2 as follows:

1. Prior to the application being placed on a board agenda or prior to issuance of a construction permit, if Board approval is not required, staff shall determine whether the board should review the status of the structure. Staff's determination shall be made within thirty days of submitting the application. If staff's determination is not completed within thirty days, the application shall be forwarded to the board. Review by the board as to the structure's status shall be made at the earliest practicable date. The board or staff (as applicable) may consider the application immediately following the determination of status. The application shall be reviewed based upon the status of the structure following the determination of status.
2. Prior to action by the board on the application, the board itself may decide to review the status of the structure. The board's determination as to the status shall be made within forty-five days of the decision of the board to review the status. The board or staff (as applicable) may consider the application immediately following the determination of the status. The application shall be reviewed based upon the status of the structure following the determination of status.

b. Request from the property owner;
c. A request initiated by the city. Staff shall notify the property owner prior to initiating the request.

IV. Notice of HDRB's Review of Status

a. Unless the review is requested by the property owner, staff shall mail notice to the property owner of the subject property no less than 15 days prior to the HDRB's review of a change in or designation of status.
b. In addition, staff shall send notice, by first class mail, to all property owners within one hundred (100) feet of the subject property no less than fifteen days prior to the board's review of a change in or designation of status if the review may result in the lowering of the structure's status. Staff shall retain an affidavit of mailing.
c. With the consent of the property owner, the city shall have posted on the property a poster obtained from the planning land use department. Otherwise, the city shall post the poster at the nearest place available to the city. Such poster shall be securely posted, prominently displayed, visible from a public street, at least fourteen days prior to the scheduled board hearing. The posting shall indicate the nature of the application, identification of the property affected, and the time, date, and place of the hearing. The poster shall be removed within thirty days of final action. Failure to do so may result in the city removing the sign at the applicant's expense. A civil fee of fifty dollars ($50.00) will be charged.

NONCONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE

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.

CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE

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.

SIGNIFICANT STRUCTURE

A structure located in a historic district that is approximately 50 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 for its association with events or persons that are important on a local, regional, national or global level; or 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.

PRIMARY FACADE

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

G. 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, 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-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 fa□ade 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 constructed 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 fa□ade 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 facade 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