



CITY OF LAS CRUCES

TO: Historic Preservation Committee

FROM: Caitlin Beesley, MHP, Historic Preservation Specialist

DATE: August 12, 2026

SUBJECT: Case 26RB2004618 and 26OC1504639

Case 26RB2004618 and 26OC1504639: A request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the rehabilitation of a property at 425 E. Mountain Avenue. The subject property is zoned R-3; property owner is seeking approval for the replacement of all windows, outright removal of two windows, rear addition to the property including three new windows, and the installation of metal standing seam on the roof. The replacement windows and rear addition were constructed outside the City's permitting process; the roof was approved without consultation by the Historic Preservation Program; all are presented for retroactive approval to the Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) by way of acquiring a permit. The building was constructed between 1940 and 1950 and captured within the State Register Historic District listing for the Mesquite Street-Original Townsite but is not contributing to the State Register Historic District listing; it is within the South Mesquite Overlay (SMO). An application for a retroactive permit for construction has been submitted by the property owner, Carlos Almaraz, with retroactive drawings developed by staff at Cadworks.

BACKGROUND

The building at 425 E. Mountain Avenue was constructed sometime between 1940 and 1950; Doña Ana County records date the building to 1942, while the state register records the date as 1950; original Steel casement windows date the building to the first half of the 20th century. As part of the 1980 State Register of Cultural Properties listing, the building was documented as an intrusive structure, which has been corrected as noncontributing during a later update.

Current owner Carlos Almaraz purchased the property earlier this year from Annabelle Quintana with the windows in their current state and the rear addition mid-way through construction; permits had not been solicited for either project. Almaraz did pull a permit earlier this year for the new metal roof, which was not reviewed by Preservation Staff due to Preservation Staff oversight. Windows, rear addition, and new metal roof are presented to HPC for retroactive approval as all projects would theoretically have gone through the design review process prior to permits being granted to receive a Certificate of Appropriateness.

The various rehabilitation projects undertaken outside of proper permitting channels or without proper approval through the Certificate of Appropriateness process present several unusual issues which will be discussed below. City Staff have chosen to



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retroactively recommend approval for all changes in large part because the property is not contributing to the historic district; similarly, the current property owner was not responsible for the unpermitted aspects of this COA case, which were undertaken prior to his purchase of the property; these justifications, however, do not explicitly follow the intention of design review in the historic district and would not necessarily have to be accepted by HPC.

Window replacement in Las Cruces requires permitting regardless of the property's location; if located in the SMO, window replacement must go through the HPC. The original windows at 425 E. Mountain were a variety of steel casements, specifically large picture windows to the front with progressively smaller windows to the rear more private rooms. The replacement windows neither fit the dimensions of the original windows, nor is the window operability the same, with all operable replacement windows functioning as sliders rather than casements. On a contributing property, both these issues would result in an immediate loss of contributing status, stemming from the loss of historic integrity. Additionally, the earlier owner removed a side entrance to the driveway and replaced it with a window, which would also be disqualifying for a contributing property. However, the property at 425 E. Mountain is not contributing, which softens the impact of these changes. The National Park Service's Preservation Brief No. 13 provides directions on repairing and upgrading historic steel windows.¹ For historic properties with steel windows from the late-1800s/early-1900s, steel windows have been maintained and survived the lifespan of the building – for the property at 425 E. Mountain, this is between 70 and 80 years; by comparison, vinyl replacement windows will deteriorate and fail around 20 years, depending on frequency of use and the climate. Modern windows are often touted as being more environmentally friendly than older ones, with window companies promising property owners lower energy bills. A simple understanding of a manufacturing cycle, taken with the lifespan of the replacement windows, shows this is not the case. Manufacturing new windows out of new products, whether that's oil-based or natural resource-driven, places additional strain on the environment; the fact that these windows cannot be repaired means that more windows will have to be manufactured in the future. The cost of window replacements is similarly inefficient: the amount saved in energy bills compared to the cost of the window itself often means the replacement window would have to outlive its lifespan to actually save the property owner money – this is when we posit that a vinyl window never ceases to be effectively efficient, which is not borne out by evidence. For more information, please follow the link below.²

The rear addition introduces a utility closet for washer and dryer with additional storage space. The addition is approximately 11' x 9'8" with three new windows, a slider on the west façade and clerestory windows on the north and east sides of the addition. The

¹ Sharon C. Park, "Preservation Briefs No. 13 The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows," National Park Service Heritage Preservation Services. <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-13-steel-windows.pdf>

² Scott Sidler, "The Replacement Window Myth," The Craftsman Blog, online resource. <https://thecraftsmanblog.com/the-replacement-window-myth/>



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construction of the addition included the removal of the side door that accessed the driveway; a door was installed on the north side of the addition. Additions to historic buildings are generally to be constructed without a shared roof line, providing some visual evidence that the addition is distinguished from the original construction.

The roof asphalt shingles were replaced with white metal standing seam sheeting. Metal roofing was used historically in the Mesquite neighborhood, always corrugated metal which has a decidedly different profile and was readily available because of its multitude of uses; the preference would have been for corrugated metal sheeting to be used instead of standing seam which is a decidedly modern material, however metal standing seam has been used as a roofing material since the Industrial Revolution. Also, the roof depth was extended with a new fascia board that is significantly deeper than the fascia on the roof between 2008 and 2022 (from Google Streetview) – however, it appears that the original fascia board was removed from the gable roofline prior to 2008, meaning we have no visual evidence of what the original fascia was. This change has resulted in a look that is similar to the property next door at 600 N. San Pedro.

DECISION CRITERIA

To ensure quality property development and renovation and to protect the historic character of the South Mesquite neighborhood, HPC shall evaluate and determine the exterior design appropriateness of proposals for new construction, additions, exterior alterations, and rehabilitation of properties within the historic district.

Applicable development must ultimately utilize architectural styles, methods, and materials that are visually compatible with surrounding structures (especially where new construction is proposed), and the overall character of the historic district. This should not be interpreted as a requirement to mimic existing styles or construction materials, but as a means for these types of projects to result in a visually compatible transition between old and new structures within the general neighborhood and/or on a single parcel of land. In addition to the standards stated in the 2025 Realize Las Cruces Development Code, as amended, and the Historic Preservation Ordinance projects shall be reviewed based upon *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitation, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings*, and *The New Mexico Historic Building Inventory Manual*, 1980.³

Violations of the City's Building Code are subject to a penalty for violation as outlined in Section 30-141 and Section 1-10 of the City's Municipal Code; a violation refers to the failure "to perform an act that is required to be performed by ordinance or by rule or regulation authorized by ordinance." Individuals who violate code are guilty of a petty misdemeanor and may be subject to a fine not exceeding \$500.00 and/or imprisonment

³ National Park Service, "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation," <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/taxincentives/secretarys-standards-rehabilitation.htm>



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for a term not exceeding 90 days. For violations of the Building Code that are continuous with respect to time, each day the violation continues is a separate offense.⁴ Violations of the City's Development Code are subject to the penalties and enforcement outlined in Sec. 34-1.H. Violations and Enforcement. Individuals who violate the Development Code may be subject to the revocation of permits or the issuance of a stop-work order; other penalties are provided for dependent on a case-by-case basis.⁵

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff has reviewed this request and recommends **APPROVAL** for the project based on the following finding:

1. Typically, requirements for replacement windows would be a facsimile of the original design, however this property was constructed too late to contribute to the historic district; the loss of integrity will therefore not impact the designation of the historic district. The loss of the original windows would only impact the property's status were the district to be updated or re-designated to extend the Period of Significance to include the property.
2. The addition of the rear utility room meets the minimum required by the Secretary of the Interior Standards in that it was constructed to the rear of the property and is less visible from the street-view.
3. The installation of a metal roof without approval by HPC or the Preservation Program was a mistake caused by the Historic Preservation Specialist, who feels it is unfair to force the property owner to correct for a staff mistake. City Staff also note that metal roofs were historically present in the district and are not out of place, even if the manufactured material is different from what would have been used historically (standing seam versus corrugated).
4. The windows, rear addition, and roof have already been installed or constructed. This retroactive Certificate of Appropriateness process is an opportunity to publicly reiterate the need for construction projects in the South Mesquite Overlay to properly permit, in addition to participating in the Design Review process.

NOTE: Recommendations by the Committee must be based on "findings." Findings for *DENIAL* of the nomination should be articulated by the Committee and may be based on policies found in the City of Las Cruces Development Code, and/or other City plans and policies. Findings may also be based on information presented at the public hearing or information obtained through a site inspection.

⁴ City of Las Cruces, "General penalty for violations; injunctive relief authorized," Las Cruces Municipal Code Sec. 1-10 (Code 1988 § 1-10), April 27, 2026.

⁵ City of Las Cruces, "Violations and Enforcement," 2025 Development Code Sec. 34-1 (H), February 18, 2025, 3.



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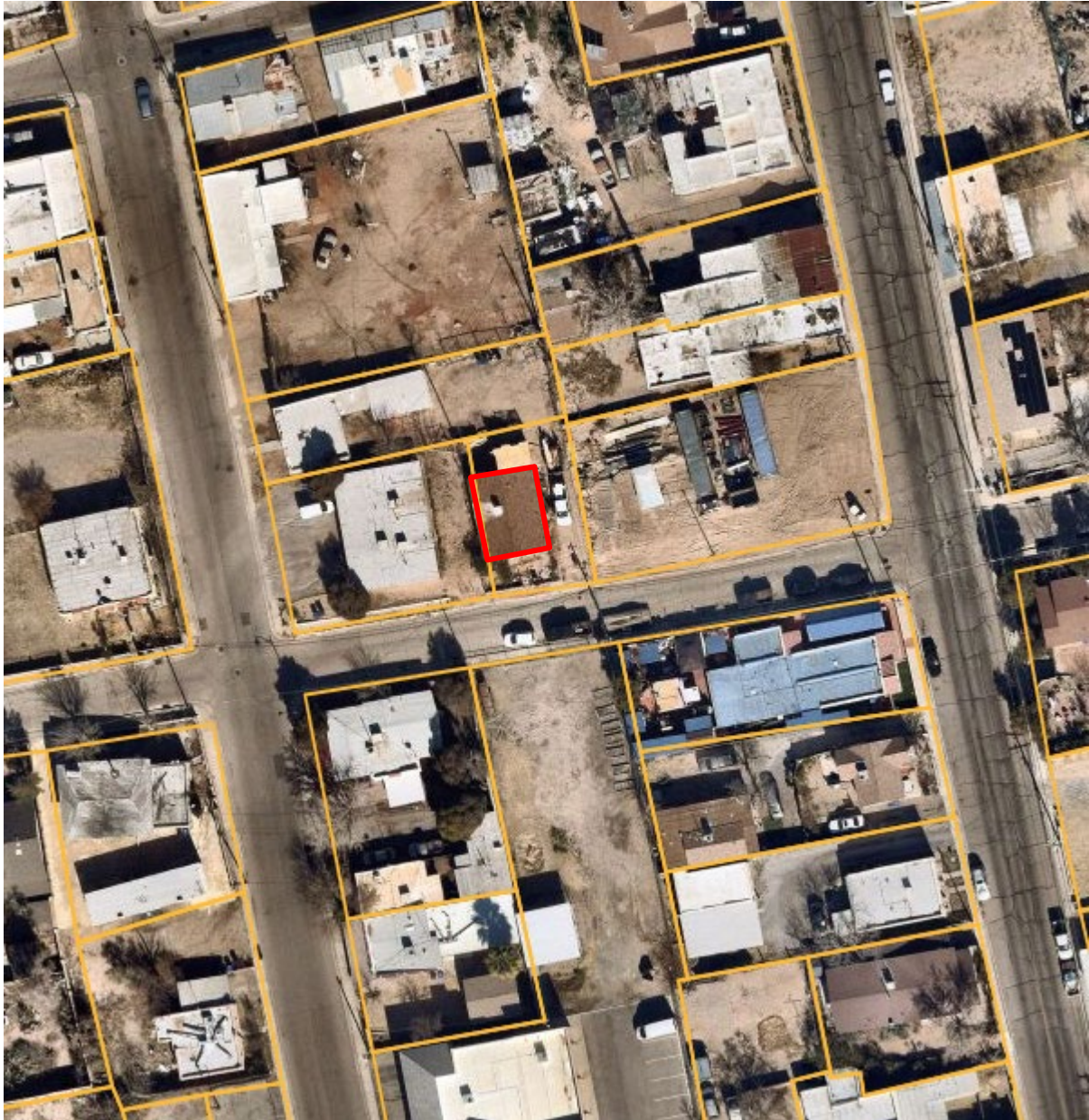


Figure 1: The property at 425 E. Mountain, aerial image captured January 18, 2026.



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Figure 2: Google Streetview screenshot of house, circa 2011, showing original metal casement windows and doors.



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Figure 3: Google Streetview screenshot of house, 2011, showing front windows.



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Figure 4: Google Streetview screenshot of house. 2011, showing windows on the west façade.



Figure 5: Property at 425 from Sidewalk along Mountain Avenue, showing new windows and addition to the rear.



Figure 6: Front façade, south-facing, of house at 425 E. Mountain.



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Figure 7: Replacement window on front façade, to the left of the front door.



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Figure 8: Replacement window on front façade, to the right of the front door.



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Figure 9: East façade of property, showing new windows, including removal of side doorway and addition to the rear.



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Figure 10: Window closest to front of building on east façade, formerly a steel casement window.



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Figure 11: Former location of steel casement window with transom, now a fixed inoperable window.



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Figure 12: Former location of side door, now small slider.



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Figure 13: Clerestory window on addition.



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Figure 14: Clerestory window on north façade of addition.



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Figure 15: New slider on west façade of addition.



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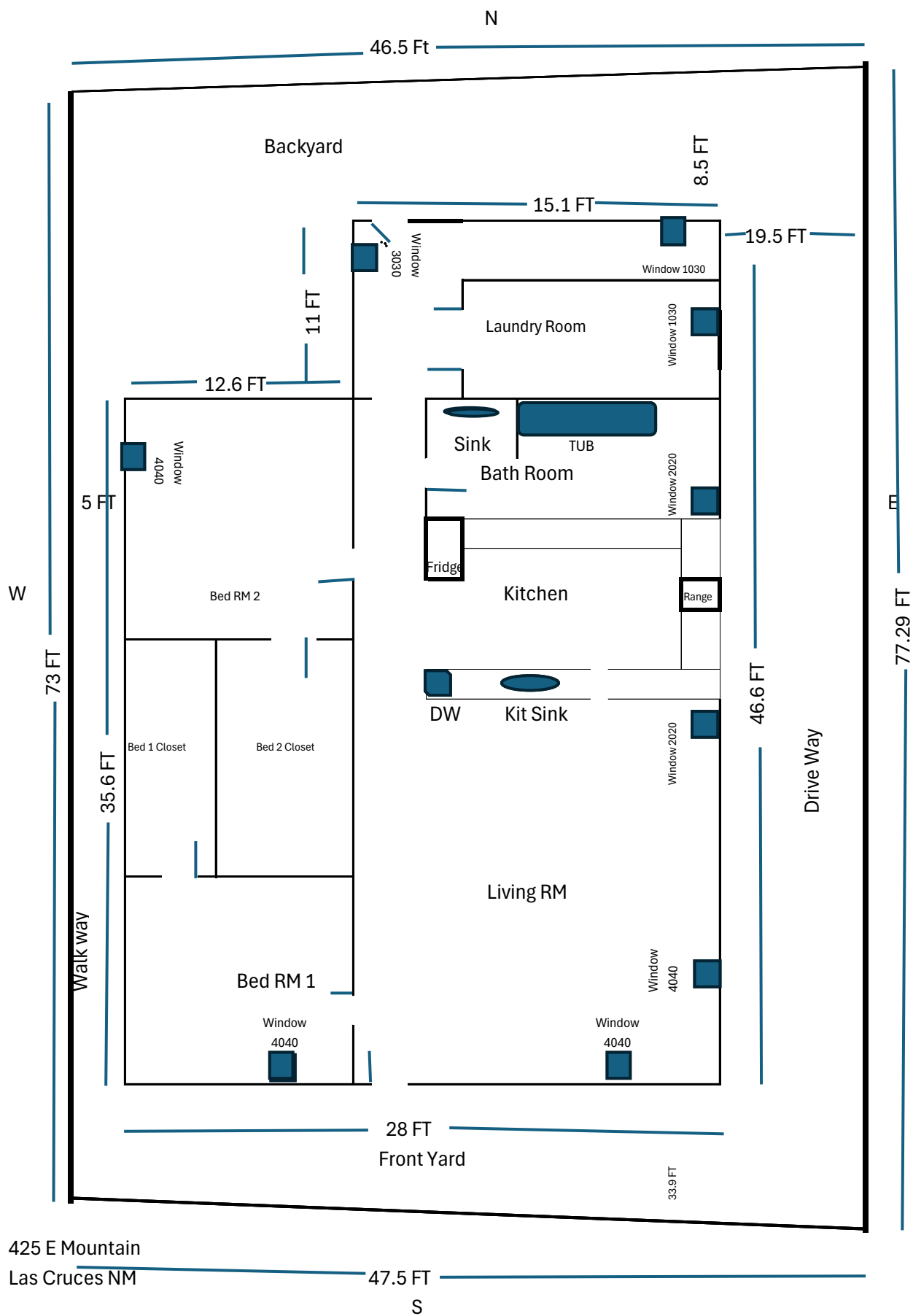
Figure 16: Slider on north side of west façade; two windows have been removed.



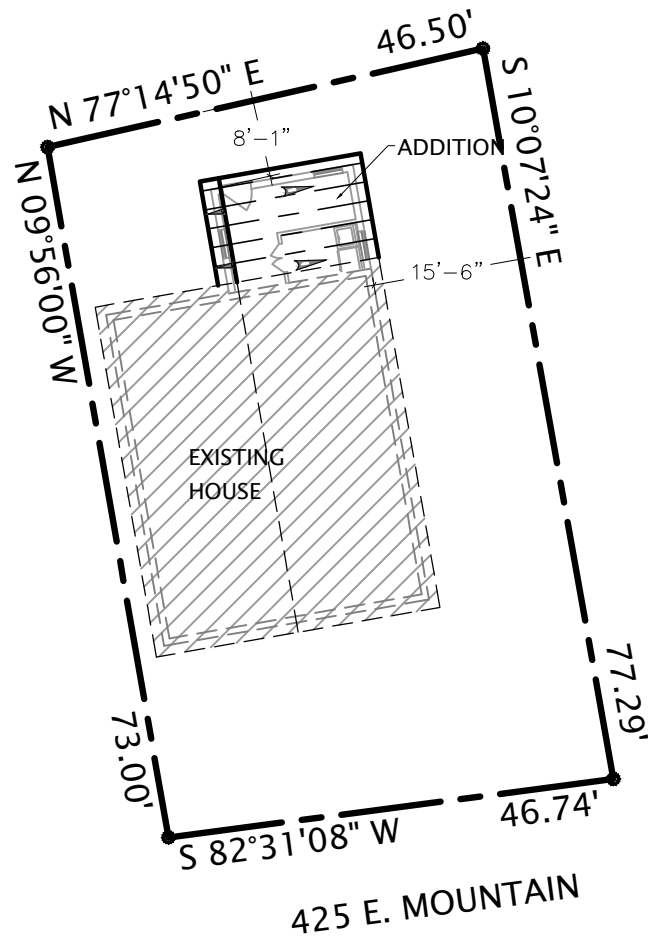
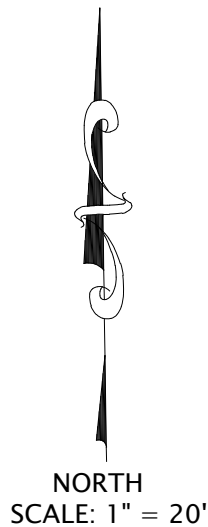
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Figure 17: New window on west façade.



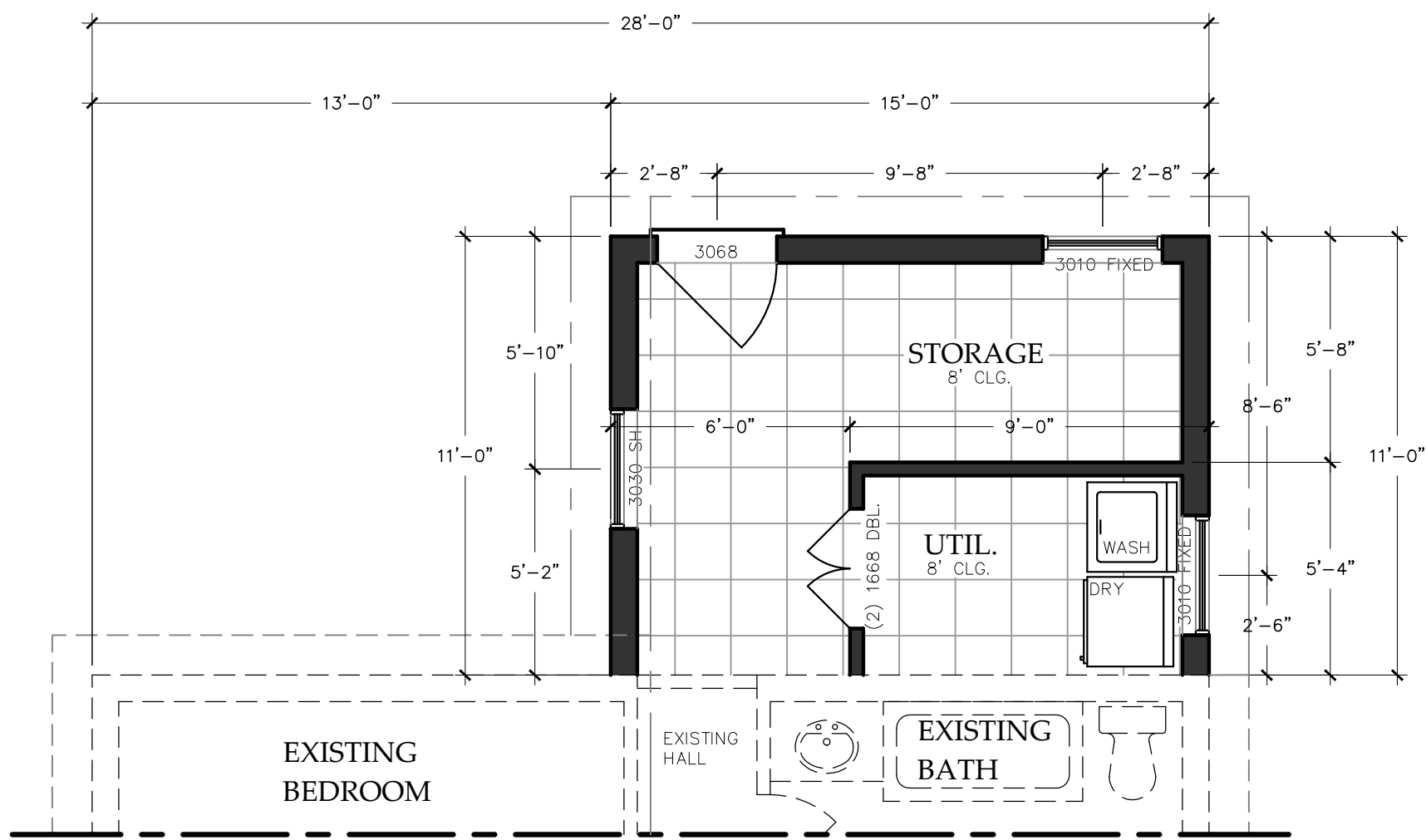
Window sizes, for permit prior to purchasing property



SITE PLAN

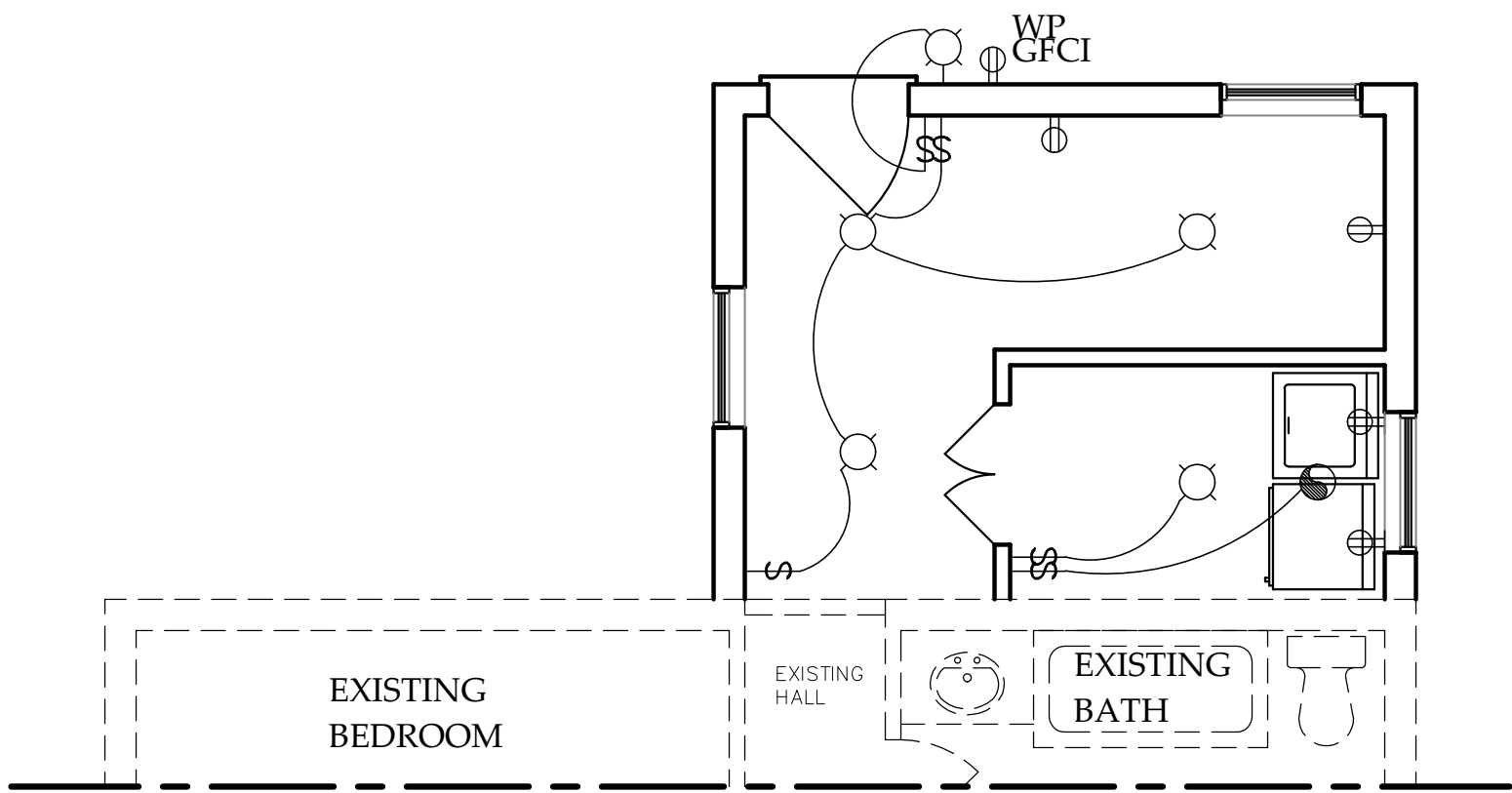
BEING PART OF BLOCK 63, ORIGINAL TOWNSITE
OF LAS CRUCES, IN BOOK 6, PAGE 1 OF THE
DONA ANA COUNTY RECORDS

 Cadworks DRAGGING & DESIGN P.O. Box 1872 Las Cruces, NM 88004 Office: (505) 525-7720 Cadworksllc@yahoo.com	DATE		PROJECT NAME:	SHEET TITLE
	7/17/2026		425 E. MOUNTAIN	SITE PLAN
	DRAWN BY			SHEET NO.
	UMPHRESS	DISCLAIMER ALL MEASUREMENTS, DIMENSIONS, & SPECIFICATIONS, INCLUDING ALL BLDG. MATERIALS ARE TO BE CHECKED BY OWNER & CONTRACTOR & ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE OWNER & CONTRACTOR. THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF THIS PROJECT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CONTRACTOR AND OWNER. THIS DRAWING IS AN INSTRUMENT OF OWNER, AND CONTRACTOR. THIS DRAWING MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR REPRODUCTIONS HEREOF USED WITHOUT THEIR WRITTEN PERMISSION.		2 OF 2
	FILE NAME	CA-712S26		



FLOOR PLAN: ADDITION

1/4"=1'-0"



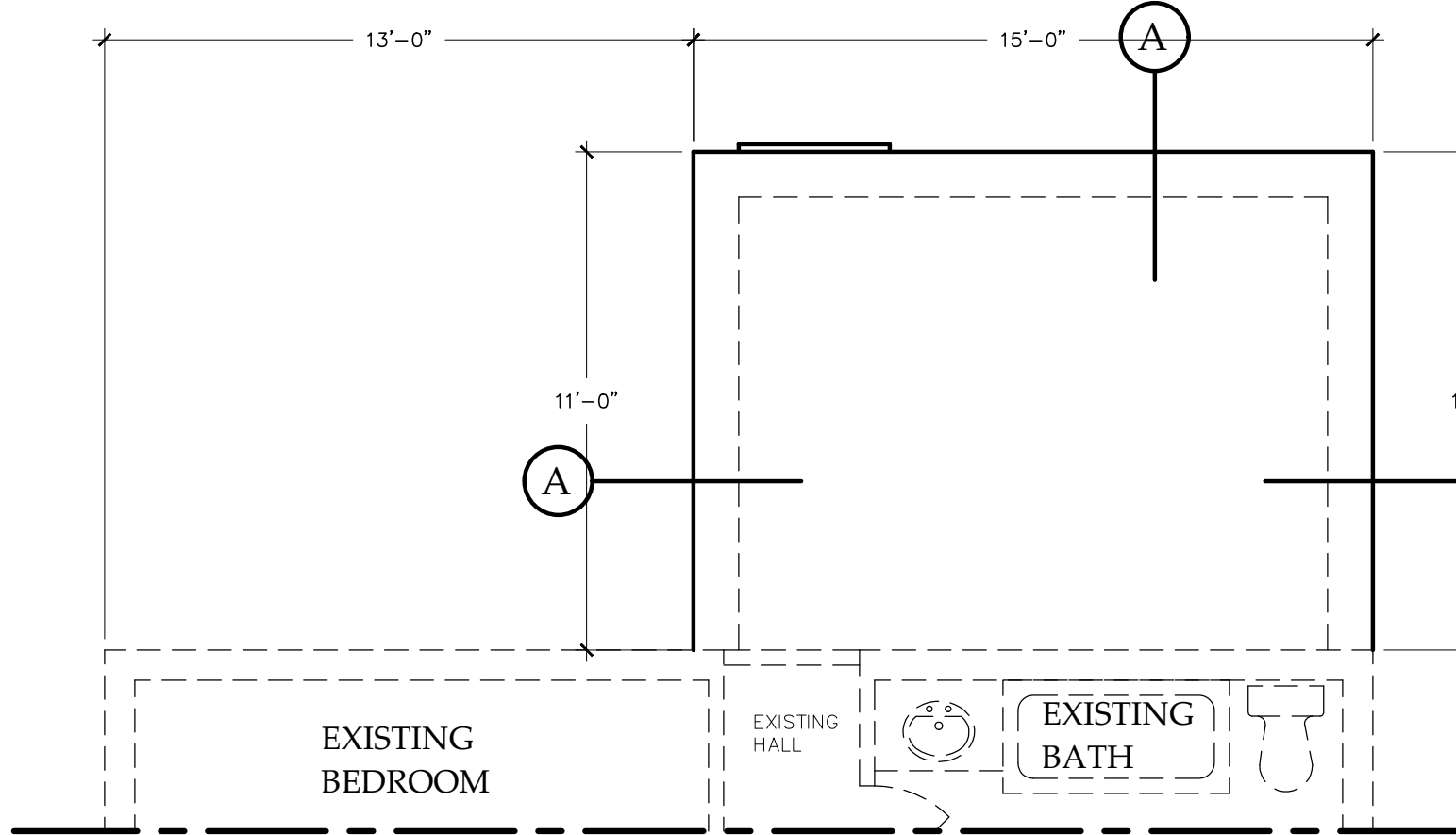
ELECTRICAL PLAN

1/4"=1'-0"

ELECTRICAL NOTES:

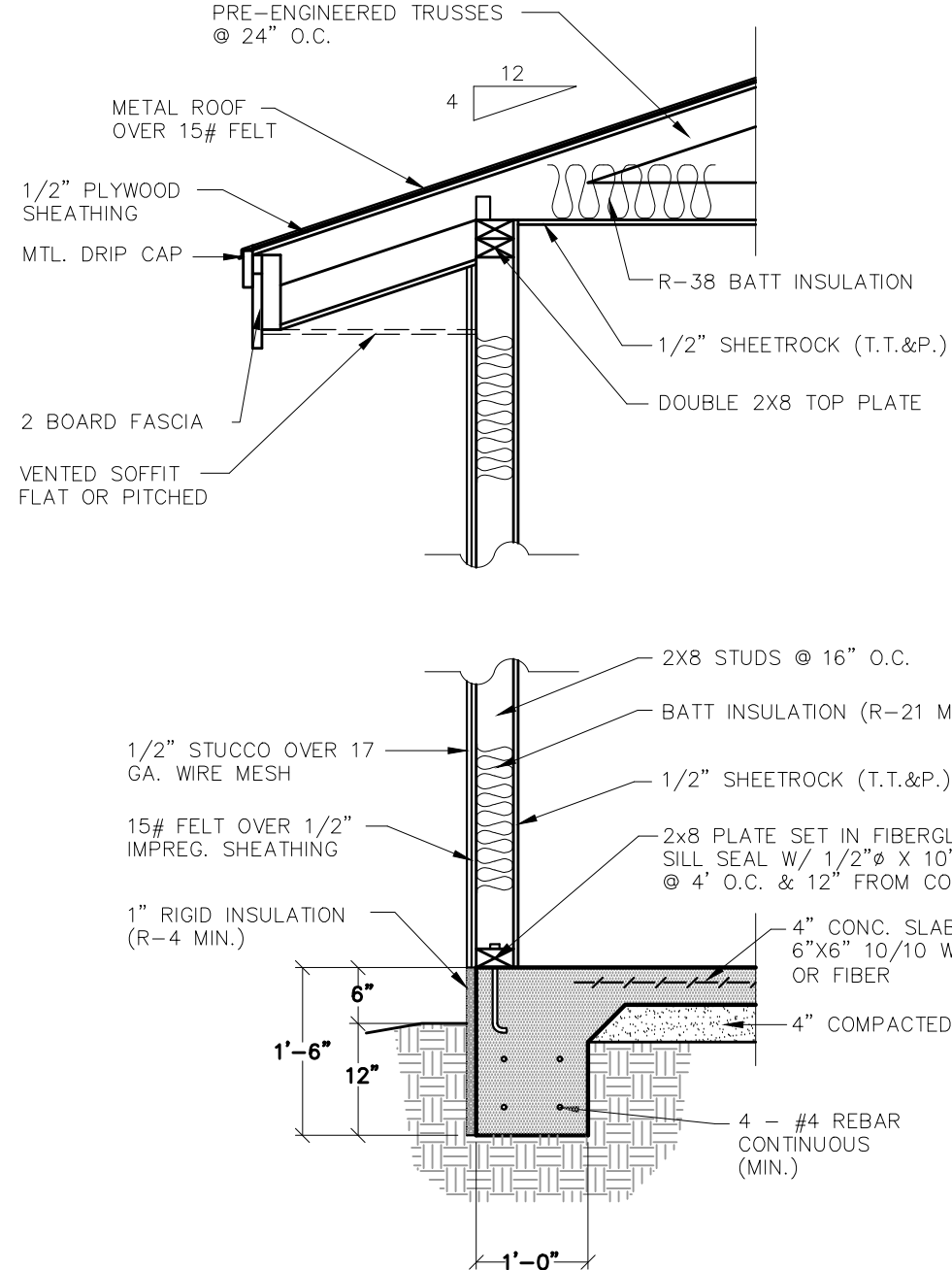
1. ALL OUTLETS AT VANITIES AND COUNTERS TO BE AT 42"
2. ALL EXTERIOR LIGHT FIXTURES AND OUTLETS TO BE WEATHERPROOF
3. ELECTRICIAN TO SIZE AND LOCATE PANEL AND SERVICE
4. ELECTRICIAN TO PROVIDE POWER TO COOLER(S)

SYM.	ELECTRIC SYMBOLS
	SWITCH OUTLET
	DUPLEX OUTLET
	LIGHT FIXTURE OUTLET
	EXHAUST FAN



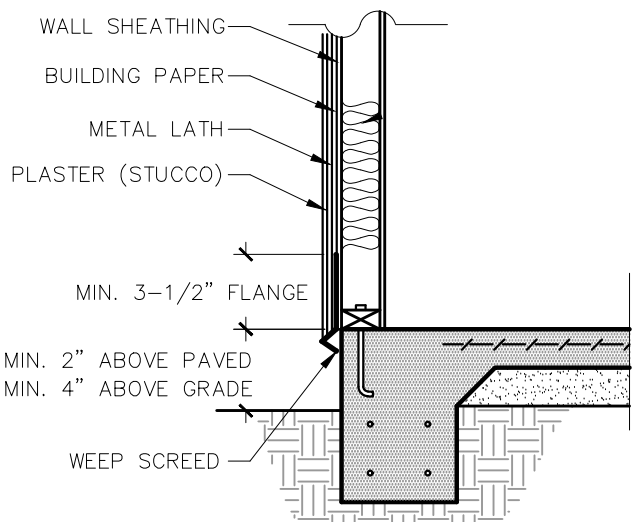
FOUNDATION PLAN

1/4"=1'-0"



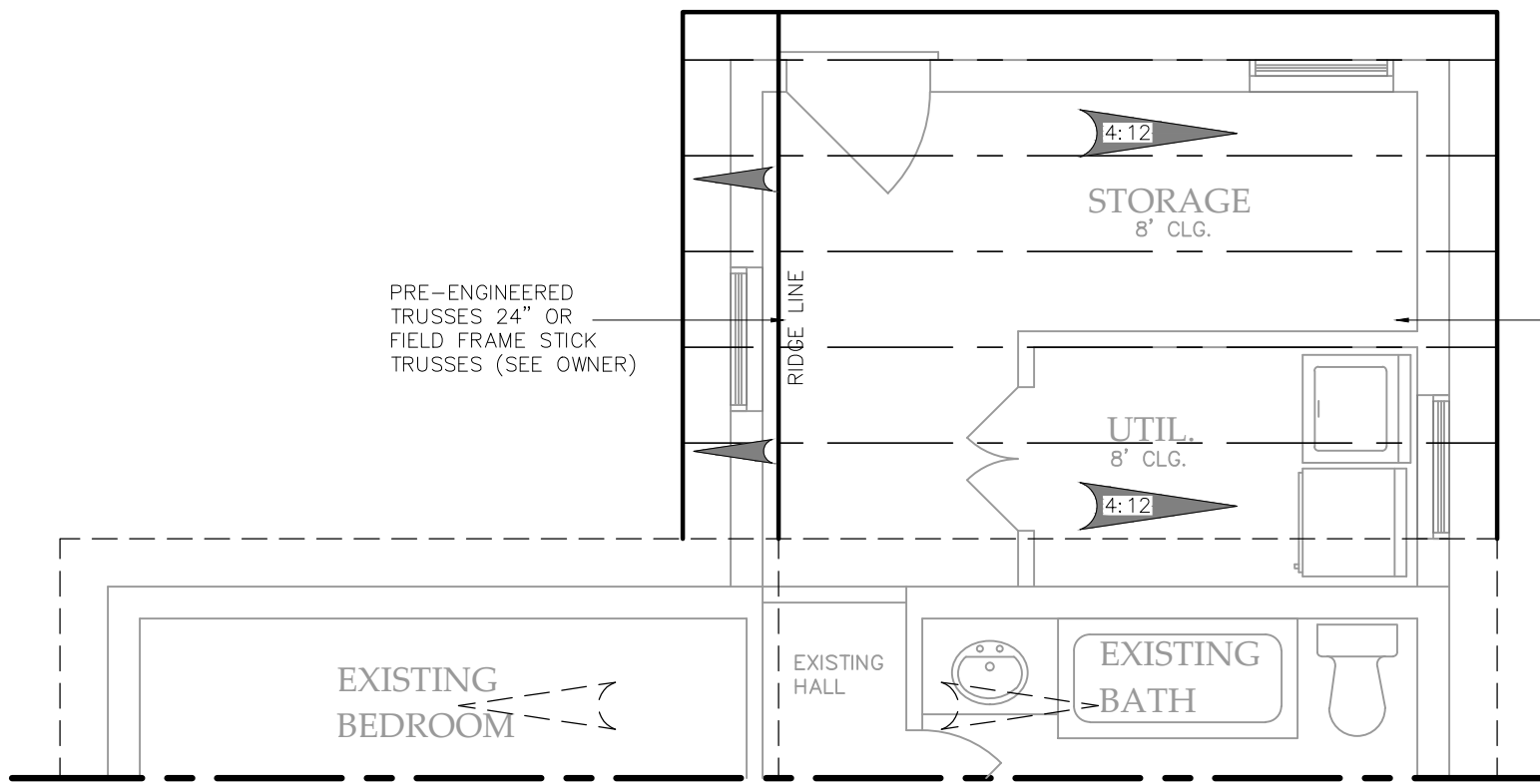
TYPICAL WALL SECTION

NTS



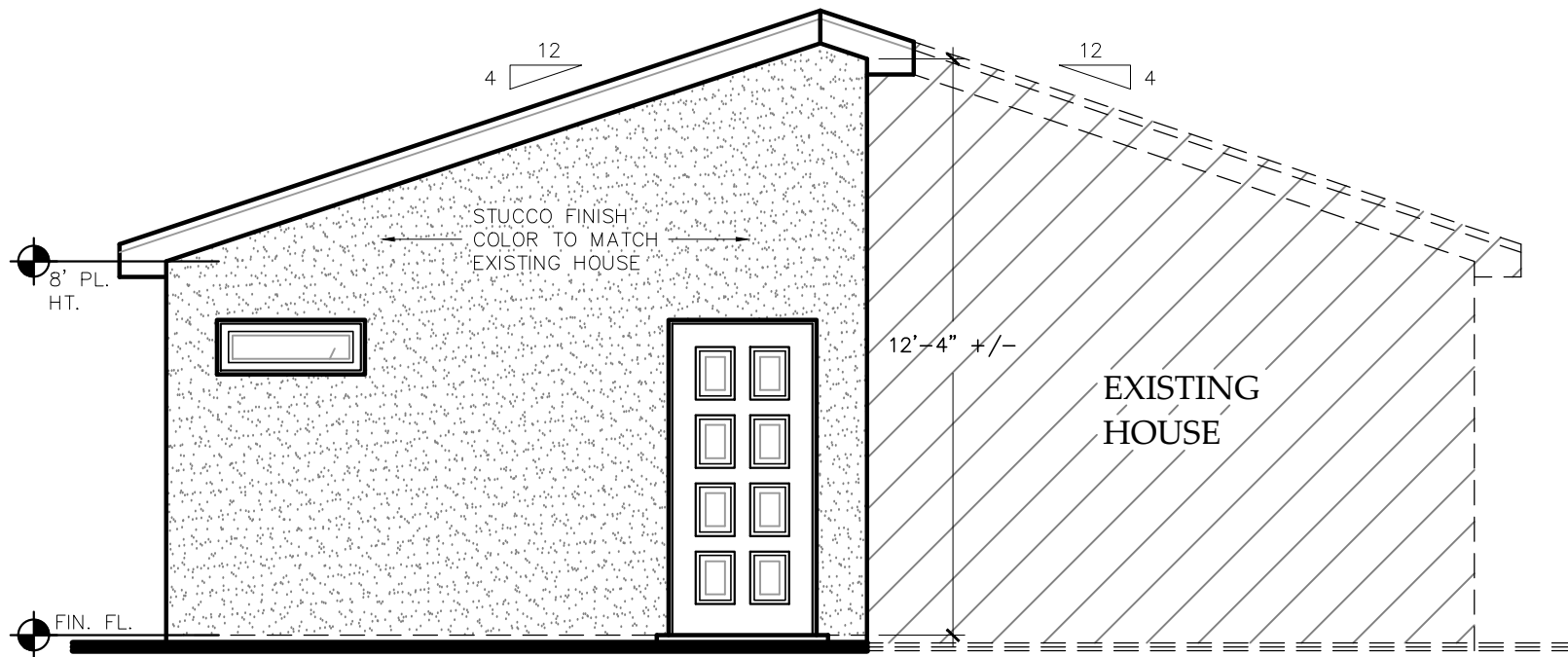
WEEP SCREED DETAIL

NTS



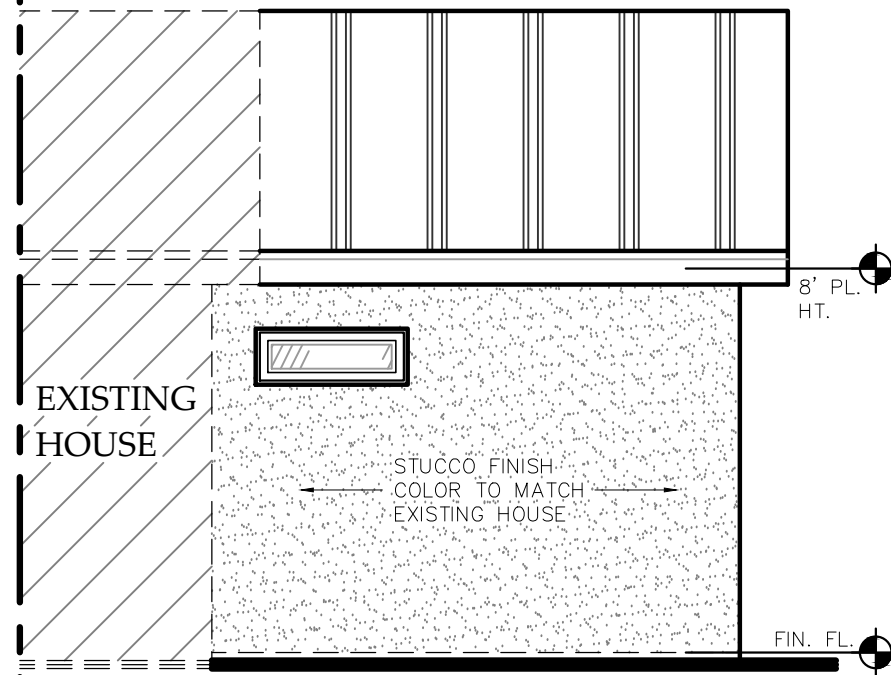
FOUNDATION PLAN

1/4"=1'-0"



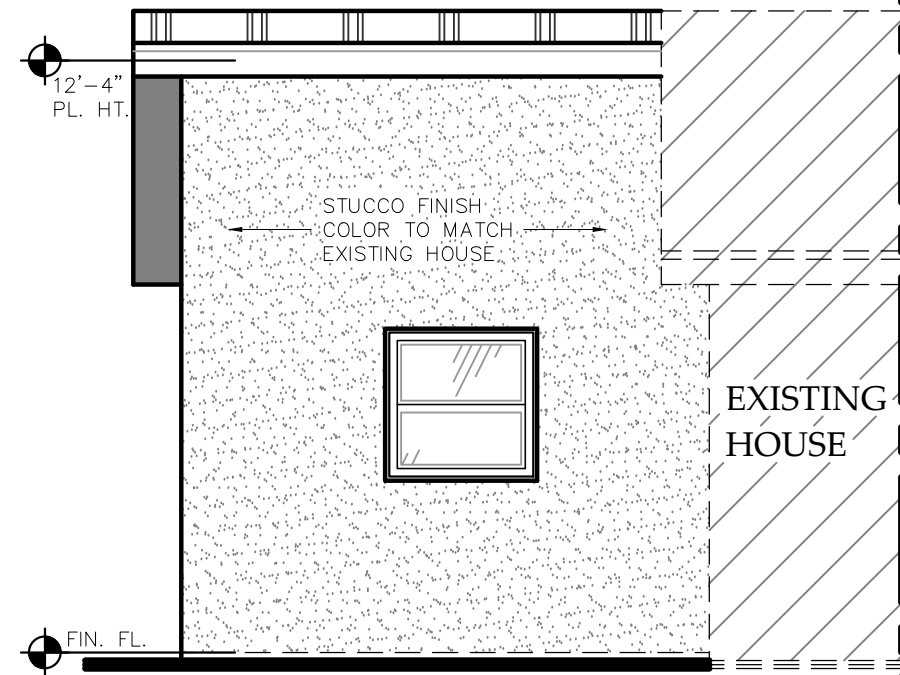
REAR ELEVATION

1/4"=1'-0"



RIGHT SIDE ELEVATION

1/4"=1'-0"



LEFT SIDE ELEVATION

1/4"=1'-0"

CODE DATA:

2021 INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL CODE
2021 INTERNATIONAL EXISTING BUILDING CODE
2020 NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CODE
2021 UNIFORM BUILDING CODE
2021 INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE
2018 INTERNATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION & NMAC TITLE 14-HOUSING & CONSTRUCTION
2021 NEW MEXICO RESIDENTIAL BUILDING CODE 14.7.3
2021 NEW MEXICO EXISTING BUILDING CODE 14.7.7
2021 NEW MEXICO RESIDENTIAL ENERGY CONSERVATION CODE 14.7.6
2021 NEW MEXICO PLUMBING CODE 14.8.2
2021 NEW MEXICO MECHANICAL CODE 14.9.2
2020 NEW MEXICO ELECTRICAL CODE 14.10.4

2021 IRC REFERENCE TABLES

TABLE	DESCRIPTION
R602.1	SAWN LUMBER
R602.1.1	END-JOINTED LUMBER
R602.1.2	STRUCTURAL GLUED-LAMINATED TIMBERS
R602.1.3	STRUCTURAL LOG MEMBERS
R602.1.4	STRUCTURAL COMPOSITE LUMBER
R602.1.5	CROSS-LAMINATED LUMBER
R602.1.6	ENGINEERED WOOD RIM BOARD
R602.1.7	WOOD STRUCTURAL PANELS
R602.1.8	PARTICLEBOARD
R602.1.9	FIBERBOARD
R602.1.10	STRUCTURAL INSULATED PANELS
R602.1.11	GRADE
R602.2	DESIGN CONSTRUCTION

GENERAL NOTES:

1. EXTERIOR WALLS TO BE 2X8 STUDS @ 16" O.C.
2. INTERIOR NON-BEARING WALLS TO BE 2X4 STUDS @ 16" O.C.
3. INTERIOR BEARING WALLS TO BE 2X4 STUDS @ 16" O.C.
4. ALL HEADERS SPANNING MORE THAN 3' SHALL BE 2X12
5. ALL FIXTURES & APPLIANCES TO BE CHOSEN BY OWNER
6. USE FIRE STOPS PER U.F.C., U.B.C. OR LOCAL CODE REQUIREMENTS
7. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO BE CHECKED AND CONFIRMED BY CONTRACTOR PRIOR TO POURING OF CONCRETE
8. INSULATE WALLS R-21 MIN., CEILINGS R-38, PERIMETER R-4 MIN.
9. INTERIOR TO BE SHEETROCKED, TAPED, TEXTURED, AND PAINTED
10. EXTERIOR TO BE STUCCO - COLOR BY OWNER/CONTRACTOR

TABLE R602.3(1)
FASTENING SCHEDULE

DESCRIPTION OF BUILDING ELEMENTS	NUMBER AND TYPE OF FASTENER ^{a, b, c}	SPACING AND LOCATION
Roof		
Blocking between ceiling joists, rafters or trusses to top plate or other framing below	4-8d box (2 1/2" x 0.113"); or 3-8d common (2 1/2" x 0.131"); or 3-10d box (3" x 0.128"); or 3-3" x 0.131" nails	Toe nail
Blocking between rafters or truss not at the wall top plates, to rafter or truss	2-8d common (2 1/2" x 0.131"); or 2-3" x 0.131" nails	Each end toe nail
Flat blocking to truss and web filler	2-16d common (3 1/2" x 0.162"); or 3-3" x 0.131" nails	End nail
Ceiling joists to top plate	16d common (3 1/2" x 0.162"); or 3" x 0.131" nails	6" o.c. face nail
Ceiling joist not attached to parallel rafter, laps over partitions [see Section R802.5.2 and Table R802.5.2(1)]	4-8d box (2 1/2" x 0.113"); or 3-8d common (2 1/2" x 0.131"); or 3-10d box (3" x 0.128"); or 3-3" x 0.131" nails	Per joist, toe nail
Ceiling joist attached to parallel rafter (heel joint) [see Section R802.5.2 and Table R802.5.2(1)]	4-10d box (3" x 0.128"); or 3-16d common (3 1/2" x 0.162"); or 4-3" x 0.131" nails	Face nail
Color tie to rafter, face nail	4-10d box (3" x 0.128"); or 3-10d common (3" x 0.148"); or 4-3" x 0.131" nails	Face nail each rafter
Rafter or roof truss to plate	3-16d box (3 1/2" x 0.135"); or 3-10d common (3" x 0.148"); or 4-10d box (3" x 0.128"); or 4-3" x 0.131" nails	2 toe nails on one side and 1 toe nail on opposite side of each rafter or truss

For Slt: 1 inch = 25.4 mm, 1 foot = 304.8 mm, 1 mile per hour = 0.447 m/s; 1 ksi = 6.895

^{MPS} a. Nails are smooth-common, box or deformed shanks except where otherwise stated. Nails used for framing and sheathing connections are carbon steel and shall have minimum average bending yield strengths as shown: 80 ksi for shank diameter of 0.192 inch (20d common nail), 90 ksi for shank diameters larger than 0.142 inch but not larger than 0.177 inch, and 100 ksi for shank diameters of 0.142 inch or less. Connections using nails and staples of other materials, such as stainless steel, shall be designed by accepted engineering practice or approved under Section R104.11. b. RRS-01 is a Roof Sheathing Ring Shank nail meeting the specifications in ASTM F1667. c. Nails shall be spaced at not more than 6 inches on center at all supports where spans are 48 inches or greater. d. Four-foot by 8-foot or 4-foot by 9-foot panels shall be applied vertically. e. Spacing of fasteners not included in this table shall be based on Table R602.3(2). f. For wood structural panel roof sheathing attached to gable end roof framing and to intermediate supports within 48 inches of roof edges and ridges, nails shall be spaced at 4 inches on center where the ultimate design wind speed is greater than 130 mph in Exposure B or greater than 110 mph in Exposure C. g. Gypsum sheathing shall conform to ASTM C1396 and shall be installed in accordance with ASTM C1280 or GA 253. Fiberboard sheathing shall conform to ASTM C208. h. Spacing of fasteners on floor sheathing panel edges applies to panel edges supported by framing members and required blocking and at floor perimeters only. Spacing of fasteners on roof sheathing panel edges applies to panel edges supported by framing members and required blocking. Blocking of roof or floor sheathing panel edges perpendicular to the framing members need not be provided except as required by other provisions of this code. Floor perimeter shall be supported by framing members or solid blocking. i. Where a rafter is fastened to an adjacent parallel ceiling joist in accordance with this schedule, provide two toe nails on one side of the rafter and toe nails from the ceiling joist to top plate in accordance with this schedule. The toe nail on the opposite side of the rafter shall not be required.

TABLE R602.7.5

MINIMUM NUMBER OF FULL-HEIGHT STUDS AT EACH END OF HEADERS IN EXTERIOR WALLS ^a		
MAXIMUM HEADER SPAN (feet)	ULTIMATE DESIGN WIND SPEED AND EXPOSURE CATEGORY	
	< 140 mph, Exposure B or < 130 mph, Exposure C	115 mph, Exposure Bb
4	1	1
6	2	1
8	2	1
10	3	2
12	3	2
14	3	2
16	4	2
18	4	2

For Slt: 1 foot = 304.8 mm, 1 mile per hour = 0.447 m/s.

a. For header spans between those given, use the minimum number of full-height studs associated with the larger header span. b. The tabulated minimum number of full-height studs is applicable where jack studs are provided to support the header at each end in accordance with Table R602.7(1). Where a framing member is used to support the header in lieu of a jack stud in accordance with Note d of Table R602.7(1), the minimum number of full-height studs at each end of a header shall be in accordance with requirements for wind speed < 140 mph, Exposure B.

DATE	7/15/2026
DRAWN BY	UMPHRESS
FILE NAME	CA-712F26
DISCLAIMER	ALL MEASUREMENTS, DIMENSIONS, & SPECIFICATIONS, INCLUDING ALL BLDG. MATERIALS ARE TO BE CHECKED BY OWNER & CONTRACTOR & ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE OWNER & CONTRACTOR. THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF THIS PROJECT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CONTRACTOR AND OWNER. THIS DRAWING IS AN INSTRUMENT OF OWNER, AND CONTRACTOR. THIS DRAWING MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED OR REPRODUCTIONS HEREOF USED WITHOUT THEIR WRITTEN PERMISSION.
PROJECT NAME	425 E. MOUNTAIN ST. LAS CRUCES, NM
AREA: TOTAL	NEW ADDITION 165 SQ. FT.
TOTAL	165 SQ. FT.
PROFESSIONAL SEAL	
SHEET TITLE	RESIDENTIAL ADDITION
SHEET NO.	1 OF 2