



## HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

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MEETING DATE: May 13, 2026

TO: Town of Truckee Historic Preservation Advisory Commission

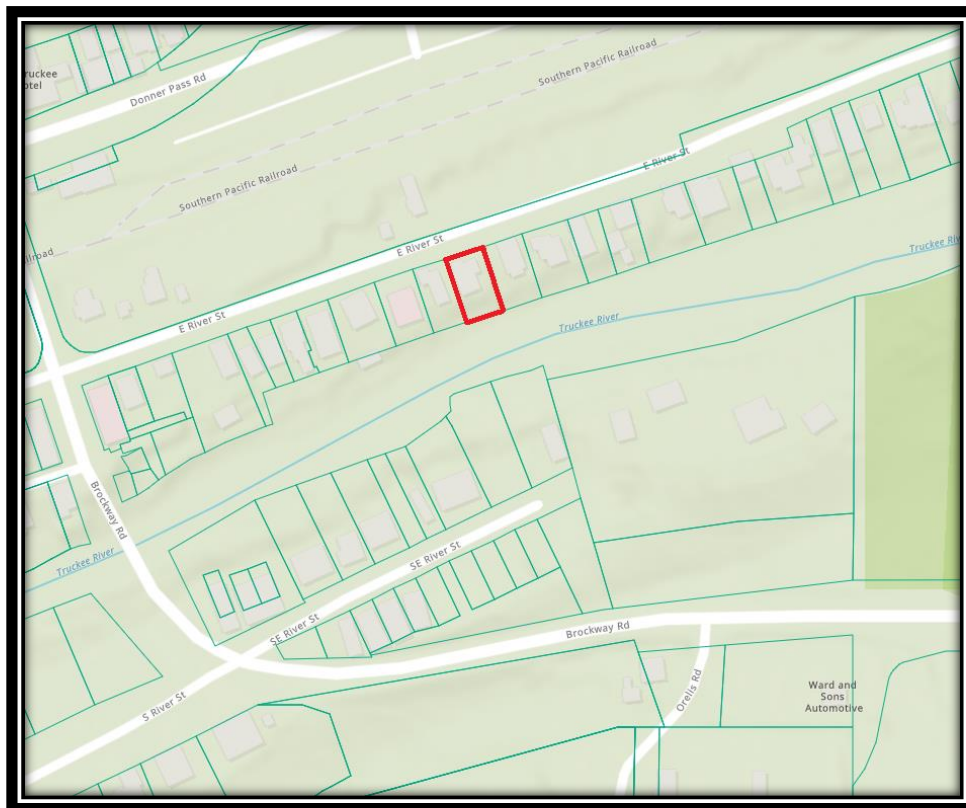
FROM: Lucas Kannall, Assistant Planner

PROJECT: Planning Application 2026-0000017/HDR; 10117 E River Street (APN 019-151-013-000); Owner: Daniel Firepine

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### **REQUESTED ACTION**

That the Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (HPAC) review a proposed addition to an existing Category B single-family residence for consistency with the Downtown Truckee Plan, including the Historic Design Guidelines, and Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and forward a recommendation to the Community Development Director.



**Figure 1: Project Location**

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant is requesting Historic Design Review to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for an addition to an existing single-family residence, including legalizing the addition of an accessory dwelling unit on the lower level of the residence and adding a story above the main living area. This building is located in the Downtown Medium Density Residential (DRM) zoning district.

## **DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS**

### ***River Character Area***

Historically, the River Character Area was developed with small single-family residences on narrow lots with small side setbacks, along with some commercial uses mixed in and a few multi-family units as well. Most residences in this character area, as with most historic residences in Truckee, were developed with small porches facing the street. Represented architecture in this area included Vernacular, Frontier Vernacular Commercial, Queen Anne, Folk Victorian, Italianate and Craftsman.

The River Character Area is comprised of four streets, each with its own clustering of architectural styles: West River Street, East River Street, South River Street and Riverside Drive. East River Street, on which the project parcel is located, became an area for more pronounced development of single-family residential homes. Additions to the rear of the houses became common as the area grew to provide more space within the homes.

Some key design characteristics of the River Character Area are as follows:

- Transitional residential neighborhood
- Mix of commercial, residential and industrial uses in neighborhoods
- Gable-front residential buildings
- One- and two-story buildings
- Wood lap siding is the dominant building material
- Newer construction incorporates landscaped front yards and off-street parking
- River Street widening removed some on-street parking
- Front porch
- Buildings on East and South River Streets have front yard setbacks that fall within a narrow range
- Buildings on East River Street have landscaped front yards
- Informal, native vegetation along river edge

Ideally the River Character Area will continue to develop with structures that relate in mass and scale to those historically constructed in this area. Some of the design goals to ensure this happens include:

- To maintain views of the Truckee River
- To continue the use of traditional building materials
- To maintain traditional building mass, scale and forms
- To maintain the general alignment of building fronts
- To encourage the use of residential building forms
- To encourage the use of front porches that face the street
- To encourage detached garages and outbuildings that are subordinate in character and

scale to the primary structure

The River Character Area is defined by its proximity to the Truckee River. The design guidelines for this character area are largely in place to maintain the feel of the river corridor as well as preserving its unique small community feel. Most historic buildings are relatively simple in design with many newer residences being added to the area since its historic development. Exterior wall materials traditionally were horizontal lap siding or stucco, for commercial and residential architecture alike, with stone generally being used for foundations.

Simple building forms are encouraged, such as modest rectangular forms, and larger masses should be achieved by combining two or more simple masses, in which case one of the masses would assume the dominant element of the structure. Gable, hip and shed roofs are appropriate in this area, although dormers should be simple and subordinate to the overall roof form. Alternative roof elements and shapes may be considered in order to preserve views or solar access. Lastly, porches are strongly encouraged as they appear traditionally on houses in this area. The porch floor and roof height should appear similar to those traditionally on the block and use similar building design elements and materials.

**Background**

The project residence is a single-story, front gable, early 20<sup>th</sup> century Vernacular cottage with some Craftsman and Traditional influence. It has a non-historic rubblestone appearing foundation, which is most likely a veneer over concrete. Areas of asbestos skirting also are present, particularly along the northern elevation.



**Figure 2:** THRI Photo of Residence

There is a part-daylight basement with access from the rear that was previously converted to an accessory dwelling unit without permits. That unpermitted conversion will be remedied as part of this application.

The building is wood framed with modern aluminum siding to simulate clapboard. A small area of older Insul-Brick cladding remains visible near the south end of the eastern elevation. The roof is a moderate pitch front-gable with ribbed sheet metal roofing. It has open eaves with Craftsman-style angle braces/ brackets in the gable ends. The roof eaves have exposed rafters and tails. A historic brick chimney is high on the north gable face near the ridge line and is offset to the south. The north (primary) elevation is dominated by an enclosed, front-gabled porch addition, occupying the western half of the façade. A small, narrow flight of wooden steps and wooden stoop with simple wood posts and wood rails, leads up to the entry door. There is an addition to the core historic mass on the eastern elevation. This addition is an attached, single-bay, one car, garage and has an extended shed roof from the eastern eave. Based on the appearance and design, this addition likely dates to the 1930's. The southern (rear) elevation has a historic enclosed porch as well as a modern, open, shed porch. The northern (primary) door is a historic wooden form with three vertical lights in the upper one-third over a recessed glass panel. Despite the door being a historic form, it is not original. The windows are a mixture of late historic one-over-one, double-hung forms (paired and single) and modern casement units in historic openings. The basement appears to have original hopper or awning type windows with vertical divided-lights in wood frames.



**Figure 3:** Existing Residence

### ***Restoration Opportunities***

The Truckee Historic Resources Inventory lists the following restoration opportunities for this site:

- Restore the original porch or stoop entry. The current enclosed front entry was likely added in the 1930's or 40's.
- Replace modern windows with historically appropriate forms.
- Remove modern aluminum siding and restore original wood cladding beneath if intact.

As shown below, this proposal does a good job of addressing these restoration opportunities and will appropriately restore some of the non-historic work that has been added to the residence.

### ***Project Details***

The project proposes the following exterior modifications:

- Addition of a setback second story with similar rooflines to the existing residence.
- Front door to be recessed and porch wall demolished to restore stoop. Existing guardrails are to be refurbished and new guardrail will be constructed to match the existing.
- Replacement of the garage door and minor garage expansion.
- Ribbed sheet metal roofing will be replaced with standing seam metal roofing throughout.
- Relocation of existing historic chimney to new second story roof.
- Existing siding to be restored or replaced, the addition proposes patinaed metal panel siding.
- New lighting sconces to be added to the exterior of the residence.
- Existing windows to be replaced with new energy efficient windows.
- Addition of wooden decks and railings to the rear of the residence.



**Figure 4:** Rendering of New Addition (North)

## **Project Analysis**

### ***Residential Addition***

The Historic Design Guidelines Chapter 9 (Design Guidelines for Additions) states that “additions to historic residences should be recognized as a product of its own time and yet it should be visually compatible with the original and the loss of the historic fabric should be minimized as well.” Additionally, the same chapter heavily suggests that additions should not obscure or damage the character defining features of the historic home. This proposal maintains the historic home in its original form, while adding a setback second story and mostly preserving the original residence. Some minor modifications to the existing building form will include recessing the front door to restore a previously enclosed stoop and extending the attached garage to the east while adding a covered walkway for the ADU entrance. The new addition is defined by being clad in panelized metal siding and the original residences will maintain the original siding if possible or be replaced in kind to differentiate the historic structure from the new addition.



**Figure 5:** Rendering of New Addition (East)

### ***Front Stoop***

Based on the Sanborn map (1907), the original entry for this residence was a small rectangular porch or stoop centered on the northern elevation. The proposed addition would include recessing the existing door to create a covered stoop on the eastern side of the front gable. The existing railings will be refurbished and reused, while the new area will have a railing built to match the existing railing. Despite the entrance being offset to the east within the front gable, the entrance will still be centered within the existing historic residence and offset to the west when considering the new addition. The River Character Area notes that historic residences that faced north towards the railyards, as this residence does, often included northern facing porches. The restoration of this porch, or stoop, would be consistent with historic homes in this area. The plan set is unclear if replacement of the front door is being proposed, but the THRI notes that although not original, the front door is a historic wooden form with three vertical lights in the upper one-third over a recessed panel. HPAC should discuss whether this front door should be retained.

### ***Garage***

The proposal includes raising the roof line over the garage and adding a new larger garage door to accommodate a modern vehicle. The new garage door will be a wooden carriage style garage door with a line of windows along the upper portion of the door. The garage door will be framed by two exterior lighting sconces on either side and will have a covered walkway along the eastern side of the garage to access the front door of the ADU. The existing garage door appears to be aluminum and not historic; the replacement of the door with a wooden door would be appropriate. The increase in garage door size is discouraged and considered inappropriate per the design

guidelines. Chapter 6 Section 5.B states that changing the position of historic openings should be avoided and creating additional openings or removing existing ones on facades that are visible from the street should be prevented. Staff recommends that this door remain the same size and be replaced with a wooden door as opposed to the existing aluminum door.

### ***Roofing***

The proposed roofing for the structure will be standing seam metal roofing in dark bronze. The Historic Design Guidelines Chapter 6 (Guidelines for Individual Building Components) allows for composite shingles or metal roofs to be considered as alternatives to wooden shingles. Due to fire concerns, wooden shingles are rarely proposed and metal roof alternatives are considered acceptable on historic resources. The proposed dark bronze color would be considered an earth tone and would not distract from the historic nature of the residence. The eave depth and roof slope will be maintained on the historic portion of the residence, with the exception of the garage, which will reduce the slope of the roof in order to achieve more overhead height and allow for the addition to the eastern side of the garage. Chapter 6 states that alteration of the angle of the roof should be avoided. It is noted in the Truckee Historic Resources Inventory that the garage is most likely a newer addition added in the 1930's, HPAC should discuss if alteration of this roofline is appropriate.

### ***Relocation of Historic Chimney***

Chimneys are considered an important exterior design element and were considered important to historic residences since they sometimes served as the only heat source. The proposed relocation of the historic chimney instead of removing or replacing it is considered appropriate and highly encouraged.

### ***Siding***

The proposal includes refurbishing and retaining existing siding on the residence or replacing in kind if necessary. The new addition will have metal panel siding to differentiate it from the original historic home. The Truckee Historic Resources Inventory (THRI) notes that the existing siding is aluminum horizontal panel siding intended to simulate clapboard siding. Staff would recommend that this siding be removed and if original siding is present underneath, that siding should be refurbished and retained. If no siding is present beneath the aluminum siding, an appropriate material should be proposed and reviewed. Additionally, the THRI for this property notes that areas of asbestos skirting are present on the residence. These should be removed by an appropriate professional and disposed of. New material will also be needed to replace this skirting.

The new addition to the residence is proposed to be clad in patinaed metal panels clearly delineating the addition from the existing historic residence. The Historic Design Guidelines state that materials for new additions should be those used historically and that newer materials may be considered if they appear similar in character and detailing to traditional building materials. HPAC should discuss whether the proposed steel siding would be appropriate for the addition.

### ***Lighting***

The lighting proposed for the addition will not meet the requirements of Development Code, Section 18.30.060 (Exterior Lighting and Night Sky) since it is not fully shielded and downward facing. The proposed Balhaus outdoor sconce is designed to provide an ambient light instead of meeting the definition of a fully shielded light. Outdoor fixtures are required to emit light in such a manner that light rays emitted by the fixture, either directly from the lamp, or indirectly from the fixture, are projected below a horizontal plane running through the lowest point on the fixture

where light is emitted. New fixtures will need to be proposed and can either be reviewed at a staff level, or can be brought back before HPAC for review.

### ***Windows***

The proposed new windows for the project are Sierra Pacific dark bronze metal clad wooden windows. These windows are appropriate as they are proposing divided light windows to mimic historic windows and they are not made from synthetic materials. The Truckee Historic Resources Inventory notes that some of the existing windows are historic one-over-one, double hung forms (paired and single) historic windows and the basement has original hopper or awning type windows, which should be preserved and not replaced. Staff would recommend that the applicant identify which of the historic windows have been replaced by modern casement windows and have those replaced with new Sierra Pacific windows and maintain all the historic windows within the residence. Staff would also recommend that a condition of approval be added to the project that all divided light windows be true and not simulated divided light windows.

### ***New Deck and Railings***

Two wooden decks are proposed to be added to the rear of the residence, with one providing access to the back yard and the other being located off of the second story without backyard access. Both decks will include wooden railings with wooden spindles and top rail. Staff believes these are appropriate additions to the rear of the residence per the historic guidelines.

### **Applicable Guidelines**

The following provides a list of major Town policies and guidelines that should be considered by the HPAC for the proposed modifications to the existing single-family residence. Please note that this list does not contain all policies, standards and guidelines applicable to this project:

#### **General Plan**

Downtown Truckee Plan 6.2 Guiding Policies HR-1	Prohibit alterations to historic buildings that are not compatible with the historic and architectural character in Downtown Truckee
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#### **Downtown Truckee Specific Plan, Historic Design Guidelines**

Chapter 5 - General Guidelines for New Buildings 5.A. 3	Maintain the existing range of exterior wall materials found throughout the Character Area. Reflective materials such as mirrored glass or polished metals are inappropriate.
Chapter 5 – General Guidelines for New Buildings 5. D	Newer, synthetic materials may be considered, if they appear similar in character and detailing to traditional building materials.
Chapter 6 – Design Guidelines for Individual Building Components 5.A & B	-Avoid removal of historic windows and sash -Avoid creating an additional opening or removing existing ones on facades that are visible from the street
Chapter 6 – Design Guidelines for Individual Building Components 5.C	Maintain original window and door proportions. Altering the original size and shape is inappropriate.
Chapter 6 – Design Guidelines for Individual	Avoid altering the angle of the roof

Building Components 6.A.1	
Chapter 6 – Design Guidelines for Individual Building Components 9. A. 1	A Chimney is an important exterior design element. The proper maintenance and repair of historic chimneys is therefor important.
Chapter 6 – Design Guidelines for Individual Building Components 5.E	Maintain the historic subdivision of windows lights. Replacing multiple panes with single pane or operable windows with fixed ones is inappropriate. Replacing true divided lights with snap-in muntins is also inappropriate.
Chapter 9 – Design Guidelines for Additions B.3	Set an addition back from the primary façade in order to allow the original proportions, form and overall character of the historic building to remain prominent.
Chapter 6 – Design Guidelines for Individual Building Components 6. E. 2	Composite shingles and metal may be considered as alternatives to wood shingles.
Chapter 7 – Guidelines for the River Character Area 7. B	The simple forms of gable, hip and shed roofs are appropriate.
Chapter 9 – Guidelines for Additions 2	The new work should be recognized as a product of its own time and yet it should be visually compatible with the original, and the loss of historic fabric should be minimized.
Chapter 9 – Guidelines for Additions 2. A. 3	An additions should not obscure or damage character-defining features (such as windows, doors, porches, brackets or roof lines).

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff finds that a majority of the proposal is consistent with the Town’s Historic Design Guidelines. The proposed addition is recessed behind the historic portion of the residence allowing the architectural features of the original house to be preserved. The roofline of the addition also mimics the historic residence allowing it to blend in while also being clearly delineated as the new portion of the residence. The nonhistorical casement windows within the residence are being replaced with metal-clad wooden windows which are more in line with the appropriate materials in the historic district, but any historic windows should remain and not be replaced. The items that are not consistent with the Historic Design Guidelines include raising of the roofline over the garage, the expansion of the opening on the primary facade for the new garage door and the replacement of the historic windows. Staff recommends that HPAC support approval of the portions of the proposal that meet the requirements of the design guidelines and explore options to modify the remaining items to be in alignment with the design guidelines.

### **HPAC’S ROLE**

HPAC’s role is to consider whether the materials and design of the proposed modifications are consistent with the overall intent of the Downtown Specific Plan Historic Design Guidelines.

*Key Issues for HPAC to Consider:*

- 1) Is the proposed residential addition appropriate for the River Character Area, and

consistent with the overall intent of the Downtown Truckee Plan Historic Design Guidelines?

- 2) Should the project retain the historic front door, or allow it to be replaced?
- 3) Does the HPAC support the proposed alteration of the garage roofline to allow it to be expanded to the east?
- 4) Is it appropriate to expand the opening for the garage door on the primary façade?
- 5) Should the new proposed lighting sconces and skirting be approved at a staff level or brought back before HPAC for review?
- 6) Is the use of patinaed steel siding panels appropriate for the new addition?

As part of the discussion of the key issues, HPAC may wish to identify any major issues and questions that will need to be addressed in further discussions and actions on the proposed project. These comments will be forwarded to the Community Development Director for consideration.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Site Plan and Elevations

Attachment 2 – Applicant Justification Letter

Attachment 3 – THRI-184