



**City of Santa Ana  
20 Civic Center Plaza, Santa Ana, CA 92701  
Historic Resources Commission Staff Report  
September 5, 2024**

---

**Topic:** HRCA No. 2024-07, HRC No. 2024-05, HPPA No. 2024-10 – Buckheim House (1113 W. Riviera Drive)

---

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

1. Adopt a resolution approving Historic Resources Commission Application No. 2024-07 and Historic Register Categorization No. 2024-05 (Exhibit 1).
2. Recommend that the City Council authorize the City Manager and Clerk of the Council to execute the attached Mills Act agreement with Charles A. and Molly H. Martin, subject to non-substantive changes approved by the City Manager and City Attorney (Exhibit 2).

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Charles and Molly Martin are requesting approval to designate an existing Ranch-style residence located at 1113 W. Riviera Drive to the Santa Ana Register of Historical Properties, as well as approval to execute a Mills Act agreement with the City of Santa Ana. The property qualifies for listing in the Santa Ana Register of Historical Properties under Criterion 1 as an intact example of Ranch-style house. It is worthy of "Contributive" categorization because a good example of the Ranch style, including its wood shake shingle roofing; exterior cladding consisting of board-and-batten, stucco, and fieldstone veneer, recessed porch, and wood casement windows, among other features.

**DISCUSSION**

**Project Location and Site Description**

The subject property is located on the north side of West Riviera Drive in the West Floral Park neighborhood in Santa Ana. The site contains a 2,560-square-foot, Ranch-style residence and detached garage, on a 16,100-square-foot residential lot (Exhibit 3).

## **Analysis of the Issues**

### *Historical Listing*

In March 1999, the City Council approved Ordinance No. NS-2363 establishing the Historic Resources Commission and the Santa Ana Register of Historical Properties. The Historic Resources Commission may, by resolution and at a noticed public hearing, designate as a historical property any building or part thereof, object, structure, or site having importance to the history or architecture of the city in accordance with the criteria set forth in Section 30-2 of the Santa Ana Municipal Code (SAMC). This project entails applying the selection criteria established in Chapter 30 of the Santa Ana Municipal Code (Places of Historical and Architectural Significance) to determine if this structure is eligible for historic designation to the Santa Ana Register of Historical Properties. The first criterion for selection requires that the structures be 50 or more years old.

The structure identified meets the selection criteria for inclusion on the Santa Ana Register of Historical Properties pursuant to criteria contained in Section 30-2 of the Santa Ana Municipal Code, as the structure is 68 years old and is a sound example of period architecture. No known code violations exist on record for this property.

The Buckheim House is architecturally significant as an intact example of a Ranch-style house in Santa Ana. The original building permit is dated May 26, 1956, and indicates it was built as a single-family residence and garage for owner Robert F. Buckheim for \$25,000. The contractor was Hugh M. Neighbors, Jr. Although available sources do not confirm the property's designer, it is possible Neighbors, a builder since 1946, designed the property as he was known to have included the design of custom houses as part of his building practice between the late 1940s and early 1960s (Santa Ana Register August 21, 1946, December 11, 1948, The Register July 4, 1954, August 30, 1959, December 16, 1962). A review of City of Santa Ana property ownership data shows that Buckheim family, including Robert and Marion K. Buckheim, owned the property until 2009, when it was acquired by Charles and Molly Martin, the property's current owners.

The Buckheim House is a highly intact example of a one-story, Ranch-style, single-family residence with a detached garage. Constructed on a generally rectangular plan, the residence is capped with a cross-hipped roof with wood shake shingles and moderate to broad eaves. Cladding on the front-facing south façade is principally board-and-batten but also includes fieldstone-veneer wainscoting and within the full height of the recessed porch. Use of such fieldstone cladding is repeated in the exposed internal chimney, an integrated planter on the south façade, and a short blade wall extending toward the driveway. Secondary-façade cladding alternates between stucco and board-and-batten. The front recessed front entrance includes a door with molded paneling and a fanlight, flanked by similar partially glazed panels, all of which appear non-original per visual observation. Windows are wood casements throughout, and have been replaced in-kind at the rear of the house. Also at the rear of the residence, a wood-framed sliding glass

door opens north toward a landscaped backyard featuring a below-ground swimming pool. The residence is adjoined to the detached garage by a covered walkway with a gable-roof structure. The walkway is separated from the adjacent backyard by a breeze-block partition.

The detached garage, located northeast of the residence, has an appearance and materials generally consistent with those of the residence. Specifically, the rectangular-plan building culminates in a pyramidal roof with shake shingles and is clad entirely in stucco. The glazed, paneled garage door at its primary (south) façade fronts a long, paved driveway leading to West Riviera Street. There are additionally three standard-size wood doors, two on the east façade, and one on the north. A single steel casement window is present on the east façade.

Character-defining features of the Buckheim House include, but may not be limited to: generally rectangular plan; asymmetrical primary façade at the south; moderate-pitch hipped roof with wood shake shingles; broad roof overhang; board-and-batten, stucco, and fieldstone veneer exterior cladding; fieldstone-veneer-clad chimney, integrated planter, and blade wall; wood casement windows; recessed front (south) entrance with fieldstone veneer and board-and-batten cladding; detached garage; covered walkway linking residence and garage and featuring a gable roof shelter with exposed trusswork; front yard lawn with landscaping including mature trees and shrubs, and backyard with landscaping, breeze-block partition, and swimming pool. The Buckheim House qualifies for listing in the Santa Ana Register of Historical Properties under Criterion 1 as an intact example of Ranch-style home in Santa Ana. Located in West Floral Park, the house cost \$25,000 to build in 1956. The recommended categorization is “Contributive” because it is a good example of the Ranch style and contributes to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

### *Mills Act Agreement*

Ordinance No. NS-2382 authorized the Historic Resources Commission to execute Historic Property Preservation Agreements (HPPA), commonly known as Mills Act agreements for eligible properties (Exhibit 2). To be eligible for the Mills Act, the property must be listed on the Santa Ana Register of Historical Properties. The Historic Resources Commission Application and Historic Register Categorization actions proposed for this site authorize the listing of the property on the local register. The agreement provides monetary incentives to the property owner in the form of a property tax reduction in exchange for the owner’s voluntary commitment to maintain the property in a good state of repair as necessary to maintain its character and appearance. Once recorded, the agreement generates a different valuation method in determining the property’s assessed value, resulting in tax savings for the owner. Aside from the tax savings, the benefits include:

- Long term preservation of the property and visual improvement to the neighborhood
- A mechanism to provide for property rehabilitation
- Incentives for potential buyers to purchase historic structures
- Discouraging inappropriate alterations to the property

The property has no identified unauthorized modifications. Upon consideration of the application, it is recommended that the City enter into a Historic Property Preservation Agreement subject to a completion of future improvements as described in an attached Work Plan.

Overall, future improvements (Work Plan) proposed by the homeowner during the initial ten years of the Mills Act Agreement include the following: trim and maintain landscaping to preserve the view of the primary (south) façade from the public right-of-way, repaint as part of regular maintenance, and replace the wood shake shingles on the roofs of the residence, detached garage, and walkway shelter. Staff will ensure that the proposed work will be done sensitively and will maintain the property's character-defining features as part of the Mills Act Agreement for this property.

As part of the Mills Act approval process, staff will work with the applicant to ensure that a bronze plaque is installed honoring and recognizing the structure. The plaque will include the historic name, address, year built, and local historic register designation. Lastly, the site will be subject to general maintenance and upkeep requirements including, but not limited to, replacement or restoration of damaged character-defining features, landscaping upkeep, painting, etc. Upon consideration of the application, it is recommended that the City enter into a Historic Property Preservation Agreement to enable the Mills Act.

### **Public Notification**

The subject site is located within the West Floral Park Neighborhood Association. The president of this Neighborhood Association was notified by mail 10 days prior to this public hearing. In addition, the project site was posted with a notice advertising this public hearing, a notice was published in the Orange County Reporter and mailed notices were sent to all property owners within 500 feet of the project site. At the time of this printing, no correspondence, either written or electronic, has been received from any members of the public.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines, the project is exempt from further review pursuant to Section 15331 of the CEQA Guidelines (Class 31 – Historical Resource Restoration/Rehabilitation) as these actions

are designed to preserve historic resources. Based on this analysis, a Notice of Exemption, Environmental Review No. 2024-69 will be filed for this project.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The Historic Property Preservation Agreement will reduce the Property Tax revenue account 01102002-50011 to the City by an estimated \$ \$1,103.98 annually, for a period of not less than ten years.

### **EXHIBIT(S)**

1. Resolution
2. Mills Act Agreement
3. 500-Foot Radius Map
4. Copy of Public Notice

Submitted By: James Williams, Contract Planner

Approved By: Minh Thai, Executive Director of Planning and Building Agency