



Mills Act Program

The Mills Act is a voluntary historic preservation program enabled by the State of California that allows local governments the authority to grant property tax relief to owners of qualified historic properties.

- In June of 1997, the Tustin City Council authorized the implementation of the Mills Act Program and established a policy specifying which properties would be eligible for the program.
- Under the Mills Act Program, a historic property is reevaluated by the Orange County Assessor's Office to determine the "Historical Property Value". The Historical Property Value is based on the property's income producing potential and is used to determine property taxes under the contract.
- Mills Act participants receive a property tax savings of approximately 30% to 60% each year in exchange for maintaining the property in accordance with State historic standards.

Eligibility

Pursuant to City Council's direction, the Mills Act Program is made available to the owners of residential properties within the 2021 Tustin Historical Resources Survey. Only residential properties that are significant contributors are eligible for the Mills Act Program. The City's 2021 Historic Resources Survey is available at: <https://www.tustinca.org/1038/Tustin-Historic-Resources-Survey-Update>

Review Process

- Before submitting an application to the City, a pre-application inspection of the exterior of the property is conducted by Planning and Building Division Staff. The purpose of the inspection is to evaluate the condition of the property and discuss any items that require remediation prior to the application submittal and identify items to be addressed within the terms of the ten (10) year contract.
- When the pre-application inspections are completed and approved by staff, applications for the Mills Act contract may be submitted in person or via mail with a \$500 check made payable to the “City of Tustin”. Complete applications must be received no later than May 31st of each year.
- After the contracts are approved by the City Council and recorded with the County of Orange, the property owner is required to submit annual progress reports to the Planning Staff regarding improvements made to the property. City Staff may conduct property inspections at any time to ensure that proposed work has been completed, per contract agreement, and meets all applicable City standards. Please see the complete application for the Mills Act Program on the City website.

Checklist

- Pre-Application Inspection
- Mills Act Program Application
- Mills Act Program Ten-Year Rehabilitation Plan
- Copy of Grant Deed with Legal Description of Property
- IMPORTANT:** All parties listed on the grant deed will need to sign the contract
- Copy of Current Property Tax Statement
- Cost Estimate for Each Improvement Listed in the Ten (10) Year Rehabilitation Plan
- Estimated Rental Value of the Home Completed by a Licensed Realtor
- Any Available Historic Photographs and Information
- Exterior Photographs of Property (Upon Contract Approval)

For more information, please contact:

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A cancellation fee of twelve and one-half percent (12-1/2%) of the current fair market value of the property must be paid, as determined by the county assessor, in the event of breach of contract.