



The Aliso Street Adobe is a Mills Act property.

Mills Act ORDINANCE NO. 800

The Mills Act Ordinance was adopted by the Ojai City Council on July 8, 2008. The ordinance and contract is designed to give city council-designated historic landmarks property tax incentives to foster preservation of privately owned residential and commercial historic properties.

For Additional Mills Act Information

Online at www.ojaicity.org/historic-preservation-commission/

(For a Mills Act application packet click on Historic Preservation Applications at bottom of web page)

Call or drop by the Community Development Department Monday through Friday, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM

The California State Historic Preservation Office (www.ohp.parks.ca.gov) is a good source for Mills Act information and other preservation incentives.

For More About Historic Preservation:

National Register of Historic Places
www.nps.gov/nr/

Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties
www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm

City of Ojai
Community Development Department
401 South Ventura Street
Ojai, CA 93023



MILLS ACT
Tax Incentives for
Preserving & Rehabilitating
City of Ojai Designated
Historic Landmark
Properties



**City of Ojai
Community Development
Department**

401 South Ventura Street
Ojai, CA 93023
(805) 646-5581

By adopting the Mills Act the City of Ojai recognizes the economic benefits of conserving historical resources, as well as the important role historic preservation plays in revitalizing a city, building civic pride, retaining a sense of place and continuity with a community's past, and enhancing cultural tourism.



The Lavender Inn on Matilija Street is a Mills Act property.

This brochure explains the Mills Act process and how it may affect you and your property.

What is the Mills Act?

The Mills Act is a California State economic incentive program that allows cities to enter into contracts with owners of designated historic landmark properties. The contract provides a method of reducing county assessed property taxes in exchange for the continued preservation of an historic property. Participants can realize a substantial property tax savings.

How it Works...

The Mills Act enables the City of Ojai to enter into a 10-year contract with owners of City designated historic landmark properties, in which the owners agree to maintain and restore their historic structures according to specific historic preservation standards. The contract transfers to new owner(s) when a Mills Act property is sold.

Once the initial 10-year Mills Act term is complete, the contract automatically renews itself annually, unless there is a notice of non-renewal from either party. The effect of non-renewal is to terminate the agreement at the end of the 10-year term. The owner may also petition the City to cancel the Mills Act Agreement during the 10-year term and a penalty equal to 12.5% of the assessed value will be imposed.

The Mills Act Agreement

The Mills Act Property Agreement sets forth the following requirements:

1. The term of the agreement is 10 years;
2. The agreement obligates the owner to preserve, rehabilitate, or restore specific and agreed upon historic features included in the preservation timeline in accordance with the rules and regulations of the State Office of Historic Preservation and the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties;
3. City regulatory representatives reserve the right for annual examinations of the interior and exterior of the qualified landmark properties during the duration of the agreement.
4. The Mills Act Agreement is binding upon all successors of interest of the owner;
5. An extension to the term of the agreement by one year is automatically added to the initial 10-year term on the anniversary date of the 10-year agreement or another annual date unless a notice of non-renewal is given;
6. The City may cancel the agreement or pursue whatever legal or equitable remedies it deems necessary or desirable for enforcement of the agreement when the City Council finds that the owner has breached the terms of the agreement; and
7. The property owner's indemnification of the City and holding the City harmless from any and all claims arising from any use of the historic property is required.

Submittal Requirements

The following information is required for processing of a Mills Act contract:

- Mills Act application signed by property owner.
- The property is a City of Ojai designated historic landmark.
- A legal description of the property.
- A title report or other evidence of sufficiency of the applicant's legal or equitable interest in the property.
- The nature/cost of any rehabilitation, restoration or preservation work to be conducted on property.
- A plan for continued maintenance of the property.
- Filing fee of \$1,690.00 (Fee \$90, Deposit \$1,600).
- Interior & exterior photographs of the historic structure(s).
- Preservation, restoration and or rehabilitation timeline

Review Process

The processing of a Mills Act Agreement requires a review by the Historic Preservation Commission and final action by the City Council.

- ◇ *Pre-application:* The applicant meets with City staff to become familiar with the application requirements.
- ◇ *Submittal:* The applicant submits a complete application package to the Planning Division.
- ◇ *Staff Review:* Staff confirms landmark status and conducts a field inspection to verify condition of the property. Staff prepares the draft contract.
- ◇ *Historic Preservation Commission:* Historic Preservation Commission reviews the property condition, draft contract, and historic status and forwards a recommendation to the City Council.
- ◇ *City Council:* The City Council takes final action to enter into the contractual Mills Act Agreement.
- ◇ *Recordation:* The applicant pays recording fees and the City Clerk arranges for recording the contract with the County Recorder.

Property tax savings for local Mills Act recipients far outweighs the expenses.

City of Ojai Historic Preservation Program
www.ojaicity.org/historic-preservation-commission/

The filing fee covers staff time and resources.