MILLS ACT CONTRACT PROCESS: Below is the typical processing of a Mills Act contract, requiring a review by the City’s Cultural Heritage Commission and final action by the City Council. Processing time may vary between 6 to 8 weeks.

PRE-APPLICATION: The applicant meets with staff to become familiar with the application requirements.

SUBMITTAL: The applicant submits a complete application package to the Planning Department.

STAFF REVIEW: Staff reviews the status of the property’s historic designation and conducts a field inspection to verify condition of the property. Staff prepares the draft contract.

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION: The Cultural Heritage 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 Mills Act Contract.

RECORDATION: The applicant pays recording fees and the City Clerk arranges for recording the contract with the County Recorder.

Ask Us First? Contact the City’s Community Development Department at (949) 443-6331 if you have any questions about the Mills Act Contract process!
A Mills Act Contract for use with Historic Landmark properties within the City, contains the following provisions:

- Creates a ten (10) year contract term.
- Establishes provisions for automatic annual renewal.
- Includes minimum property maintenance standards and incorporates the “Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for treatment of Historic Properties.”
- Requires owners to furnish information to determine agreement compliance.
- Grants the City authority to cancel the agreement.
- Establishes provisions for enforcing the agreement for cause.
- Binds the property owner and successors in interest to the agreement.
- Provides for notice.
- Indemnifies and holds the City harmless from all claims.
- Requires the agreement to be recorded with the County Recorder.

In order for the City to process a Mills Act application request, the property owner must submit the following:

- Existing site/plot plan showing all existing improvements.
- A “building condition assessment,” for structures which are presently in a state of disrepair, which includes specific recommendations for improvements consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s standards for treatment of Historic Properties.
- Tax valuation/assessment information for the most recent tax year.
- Any other information deemed necessary by the Planning Director to conduct a compete review of the request.
- Recording of fees as determined by the County of Orange Recorder’s Office (following a City Council action, the applicant must contact the City Clerk’s Office to determine the necessary fee).