

2017 Governor's Historic Preservation Awards

City of Anaheim Mills Act Video Series



In the summer of 2015, City of Anaheim staff embarked on a project to highlight and market the City's successful Mills Act program in an engaging, creative and approachable way. The result was a Mills Act video series.

The City of Anaheim's zoning code does not include any requirements for preserving historic properties, nor does the City have an ordinance, historic preservation commission or an official design review process. The Mills Act, therefore, serves as a vital tool for encouraging and ensuring the preservation and restoration of the City's historic built environment. Currently, Anaheim has 341 Mills Act Contracts, mostly on residential properties in the Downtown Historic Districts.

The Mills Act videos range from approximately 4-7 minutes in length and provide an explanation of the program and the City's application process. They also highlight each Mills Act "class" with a video featuring each year's new Mills Act properties. The Mills Act video series features the City's Historic Preservation Planner as narrator and was created entirely in-house. Staff wrote the scripts, recorded the videos and edited the film using city-owned computer software. The videos represent an innovative approach to historic preservation by making preservation more relatable and manageable for both the public and City staff.

The local Historic Preservation Committee, a volunteer group of historic district residents, have shared the videos with their neighbors to help spread the word about the program. Local realtors have also been able to watch the videos and share them with their clients to help them make an educated decision about purchasing a historic home. One surprising success of the videos is the way they have highlighted the strength of Anaheim's historic preservation program to other jurisdictions. Surrounding cities trying to structure their own Mills Act programs have contacted Anaheim staff to inquire about the program. The videos present a format for preservation promotion and marketing that could be easily replicated by other localities to fit their specific needs and programs.

For decision-makers and the public, the video series serves as an engaging and informative reminder of the positive impacts of the program on the community's historic neighborhoods, and the beauty, character, and culture of Anaheim's treasured heritage.

Learn more about [Anaheim's Mills Act Program](#) and videos.