

Dear New Homeowner,

**On behalf of the Crestwood Hills Association (CHA), we are thrilled to welcome you to our community.**

We hope the enclosed materials provide an engaging look into our neighborhood's unique history and offer valuable information.

The CHA is committed to preserving the character and quality of life in Crestwood Hills. Despite being a small neighborhood tucked into the hills, we have made a significant impact over our 75-year history, including:

- Preventing roads from connecting Mulholland Dr to Kenter Ave.
- Stopping the construction of a county dump in a nearby canyon.
- Establishing FireSafe Brentwood in partnership with the Brentwood Homeowners Association (BHA), a recognized California Fire Safe Council.

Our current focus is on burying the neighborhood's power lines, an initiative unanimously approved by the LA City Council in November 2024. The plan is now undergoing a feasibility review by the LADWP to assess costs, logistics, and potential impacts. Once this review is complete, the community will have the opportunity to discuss and vote on the proposal.

Additionally, we are working with local leaders to uphold responsible zoning policies that prioritize fire safety and neighborhood integrity. This includes opposing state legislation that could increase density in high-risk areas, such as Senate Bill 677.

**Your support is vital. Your \$100 annual dues help us:**

- Uphold neighborhood Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions (CC&Rs) and assist our Architectural and Tree Committees.
- Publish the Crestwood Hills *Views* newsletter and maintain *crestwoodhills.com*.
- Offer preferential preschool enrollment at Crestwood Hills Preschool for CHA members' children.
- Organize annual brush clearance and tree trimming for nearly seven acres of CHA-owned wild land.
- Oversee Crestwood Hills' highly regarded Neighborhood Watch program.
- Represent our neighborhood interests with city and state officials and maintain a seat on the Brentwood Community Council (BCC).
- Host social events, including our neighborhood-wide block party in Crestwood Hills Park.
- Preserve the Crestwood Hills Archive—did you know Crestwood Hills won an American Institute of Architects award for its innovative community planning and is home to many California Historic-Cultural Monuments?

Crestwood Hills was built on a tradition of cooperation, which continues today. When you buy property here, you automatically become a member both legally and as part of the community. Our neighborhood thrives when everyone gets involved—whether by volunteering, attending events, or sharing ideas. Your voice matters, and together, we can keep Crestwood Hills a vibrant and special place to call home.

*Warm regards,*

CHA Board of Directors

Welcome to the neighborhood! **The Crestwood Hills Association volunteers delivering this packet will work to answer your questions and introduce you to our community. Crestwood Hills is not just another neighborhood in Los Angeles. It's so much more.**

Crestwood Hills is a dream realized. Conceived, planned, and built by our founding members—fondly referred to as the “Originals”—this unique community was born out of tremendous ingenuity and cooperation.

After World War II, Los Angeles faced a housing shortage. In 1946, four Army musicians had a vision: they would purchase an acre of land, build homes on its corners, and create a communal pool and playground in the center. What they couldn't afford individually, they could achieve together. That simple yet revolutionary idea grew into something much greater—Crestwood Hills.

What began with four friends quickly expanded to a dozen, then to more than 500. To bring their vision to life, they formed the Mutual Housing Association (MHA), a nonprofit corporation where members owned shares and would eventually obtain a home site. After surveying multiple locations, they purchased land in Kenter Canyon and assembled an architectural team to design modern homes that embraced the hillside terrain—no Colonials or Tudors here.

Three men—who would go on to achieve international renown—were chosen over

architectural legends like Frank Lloyd Wright, Richard Neutra, and John Lautner: A. Quincy Jones, Whitney R. Smith, and Edgardo Contini. Their visionary designs were so ahead of their time that the Federal Housing Administration initially refused to approve mortgages. A delegation was sent to Washington, D.C., to advocate for funding, and after much effort, the homes were finally built.

As Crestwood Hills took shape, the MHA transitioned into the Crestwood Hills Association. While the original plan called for collective ownership, members ultimately took individual title to their homes. Yet, the cooperative spirit never faded. The Crestwood Hills Originals did more than build houses—they created a community. They hired architects, secured financing, established a credit union, built a preschool, donated a park to the city, and laid the foundation for the neighborhood we enjoy today.

### **A Rich Architectural Legacy**

Crestwood Hills is deeply woven into Los Angeles' history, with many residents acting as dedicated historians of this remarkable community. Featured in numerous publications and books, the neighborhood has also received

prestigious awards for its architectural and urban planning achievements.

Of the 350 homes in Crestwood Hills, approximately 80 remain from the MHA era. Many others were designed by renowned Modernist architects such as Craig Ellwood, Ray Kappe, Rex Lotery, and Richard Neutra, alongside contemporary visionaries like Cory Buckner, Frank Dimster, Steven Ehrlich, Martin Gelber, Peter Grueneisen, and Michael Palladino—many of whom have also served as stewards of the community over the decades. Nearly one-quarter of the homes in Crestwood Hills are considered architecturally significant, with more than two dozen designated as California Historical-Cultural Monuments.

### Your Neighborhood Association

The Crestwood Hills Association (CHA) exists to preserve the character and well-being of our community. Run by neighbors who generously volunteer their time, CHA manages daily operations, advocates with officials, prioritizes safety, and keeps residents connected.

Annual dues are a modest \$100 per household—a small investment in maintaining the quality of life that makes this neighborhood so special.

### Your Architectural Committee

As you drive into Crestwood Hills, you'll notice signs reading: "An Architecturally Controlled Community." Don't be alarmed—this is a good thing. Our architectural guidelines preserve our heritage, safeguard our views and privacy, and promote harmony with our surroundings—qualities that likely drew you to the community in the first place.

For more information about the Crestwood Hills Architectural Committee (CHAC), check out the *Resources* and *Renovation* sections in this Welcome Kit.

### There's No Place Like Crestwood Hills

You've arrived in a truly unique and special place—one where neighbors know each other, where history is cherished, and where the future is shaped by a shared vision.

We're proud to call Crestwood Hills home. We hope you will be too.

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Visit [www.crestwoodhills.com/resources](http://www.crestwoodhills.com/resources) to register for the community newsletter and notices, find more information on architectural and tree guidelines; and learn about Association activities.

You can also pay your dues online by visiting [www.crestwoodhills.com/dues](http://www.crestwoodhills.com/dues).

## Mutual Housing Association, Los Angeles, 1946-1950

### Whitney R. Smith, A. Quincy Jones, architects, and Edgardo Contini, engineer

Excerpt from *A. Quincy Jones*, by Cory Buckner

The experimental forms of the Mutual Housing Association (MHA) set a standard for excellence in postwar tract-home development. The development's founders took a bold approach toward creating a cooperative community, resulting in houses that offered young families an opportunity to experience modern architecture within a modest budget.

After World War II, in 1946, four musicians formed the Cooperative Housing Group as a viable way to obtain inexpensive houses by pooling their resources. The housing shortage for returning servicemen and the excitement of creating a model community through cooperative methods were foremost in the minds of the original founders. By combining their resources, the four families could afford such luxuries as a swimming pool and an expansive garden. They mentioned their plan to a few friends and soon found they had twenty-five people interested in the idea. Articles ran in the *Hollywood Citizen-News* and other newspapers, creating an interest that boosted the group's membership to five hundred. The group purchased eight hundred acres in the Santa Monica Mountains

in an area of Brentwood now known as Crestwood Hills. The tract in the Santa Monica Mountains was designed to be in keeping with the communal spirit. Land was designated as both private and public, with acreage set aside for a park, nursery school, gas station, and grocery store.

Shortly after purchasing the land the founders interviewed architects, including Richard Neutra. The original contract draft was a joint venture between Jones, Whitney R. Smith, and Jones's former employer, Douglas Honnold. John Lautner, an associate of Honnold's, architect Francis Lockwood, engineer Edgardo Contini, and landscape architect Garrett Eckbo were also involved in the early stages of the project. Honnold turned over the project to Jones and Smith when personal problems made it impossible for him to continue. The final team for the project consisted of Jones, Smith, and Contini, with architects Jim Charlton and Wayne Williams working as draftsmen with design input. Williams, Jones, and Contini also became members of the Association.

The team drew up ten sets of plans but was sent back to the drawing board



Crestwood Hills groundbreaking with a plant nursery in the background.

after the Association deemed the plans too modern. They returned with fifteen additional plans for modestly priced houses designed with a simple exposed structure and materials. The architects presented a booklet, "Mutual Plans," consisting of twenty-eight house designs, to the Association in 1948. The Association then began a series of meetings to determine which houses it would select as models for the development. Eventually, eight of the plans were constructed.

With their own funds Jones and Smith purchased an inexpensive hillside lot in Mt. Washington, a section of Los Angeles adjacent to downtown, to build a pilot house for the project. The house, Model 102, made out of concrete-block

masonry and wood, was built in 1950 with a rectangular floor plan at a cost of \$16,700. A framework of structural ribs and posts extended across the entire floor plan, in-filled with panels of glass across the view wall. The main roof echoed the slope of the hillside and a secondary roof created a clerestory of operable plywood panels. The house gave the members of the Association an opportunity to experience firsthand the architect's sweeping design for the hillside home.

Similar to the pilot house, the first structure built by the cooperative was to be used as the site office for the architects. Adjacent to the architects' site office was the sales office, which later became the cooperative nursery

# Crestwood Hills

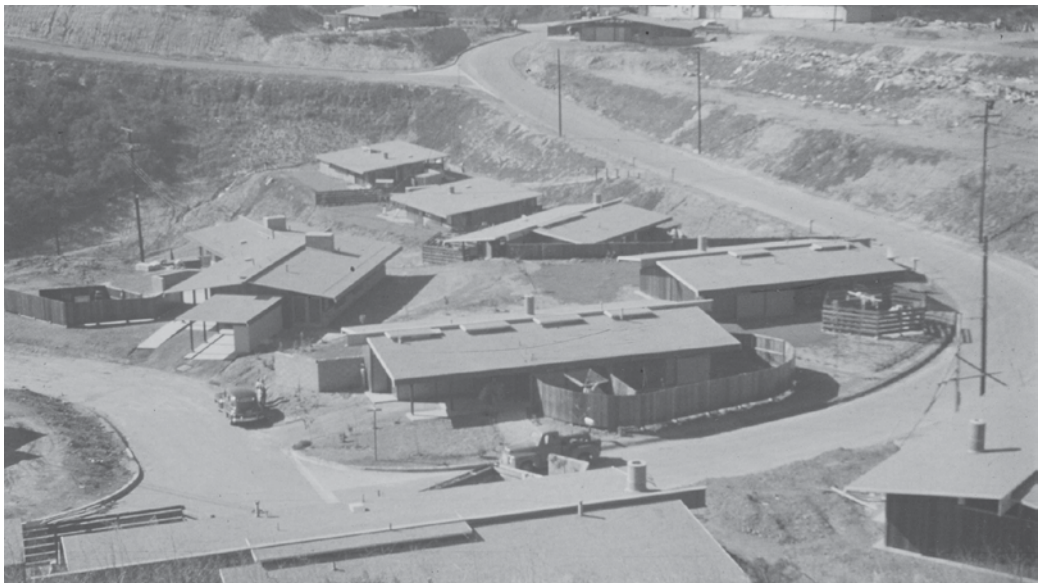
school. An early proposal also suggested the creation of a communal plant nursery, a doctor's office, and several other community services to be clustered together near the area designated for a park. The local Federal Housing Authority (FHA) reluctantly approved the plans for the cooperative services as an experimental effort only; the Authority feared that other communities would propose similar amenities. Once families settled into the neighborhood, however, the cooperative spirit ebbed, crowded out by the day-to-day tasks of raising a family and the financial burden of furnishing and landscaping their own homes. With the exception of the park and nursery school, the remaining communal facilities were

never completed. Nevertheless, MHA did prove to become the only successful housing cooperative in the state of California.

The site planning of the Mutual Housing Association was unique for its time. Houses were positioned at odd angles to the street instead of lined up in a row, the latter the typical arrangement of many postwar tract developments. Each house site was oriented to respect the privacy of the neighboring houses, and owners were encouraged to plant six-foot-high hedges at each side yard to provide additional privacy from house to house.

Out of the five hundred lots proposed, 160 houses were built accordingly to

Grouping of MHA houses on Rochedale Lane, part of the first thirty houses built in 1948.



MHA designs. The houses are finished with materials in their natural state: concrete block, redwood siding, exposed Douglas fir plywood and tongue-and-groove ceiling planks, with no applied plaster or paint. The glass walls give a sensation of free-flowing space, making a 1,200-square-foot house seem twice the size by extending the sight line to the property line. Eight-foot-wide sliding glass doors dissolve the boundary between house and garden. The exposed composite posts and built-up beams act as rhythmic ornament throughout the house. Beams march across the structure like a series of ribs, which, combined with a low-pitched roof, emphasize the horizontality of the houses. Despite the use of a module and standard sliding door sizes, constructing

each house proved to be time-consuming. Composite beams had to fit composite posts exactly, and odd-shaped clerestory window glass could only be ordered once framing had been completed, causing a delay in construction time. Two different contractors went bankrupt during construction of the houses, leaving many homeowners with plans but no way of constructing them in an efficient manner.

In 1952, the AIA gave the Award of Merit to 500 Home Community, Brentwood, California. The Bel Air fire of 1961 destroyed approximately sixty of the MHA houses. Over time, demolition and extensive remodeling have further destroyed all but thirty-one of the original houses.

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Learn more:

*Crestwood Hills:  
The Chronicle  
of a Modern Utopia*  
By Cory Buckner  
Published by Angel  
City Press, 2015

*A. Quincy Jones:  
Building for Better Living*  
By Brooke Hodges  
Published by The  
Hammer Museum  
in conjunction with an  
exhibition of the same  
name, 2013

*A. Quincy Jones*  
By Cory Buckner  
Published by  
Phaidon Press, 2002

**Crestwood Hills Association (CHA)**

986 Hanley Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90049  
[www.crestwoodhills.com](http://www.crestwoodhills.com)

The CHA represents 350 homes across the four tracts of Crestwood Hills: 15905, 14944, 14122, and 16210.

**Board of Directors**

Kate Blackman, *President*  
Kathy Morgan, *Vice President*  
Tony Salem, *Treasurer*  
Cory Buckner, *Secretary*  
Lauri Gaffin  
Peter Grueneisen  
John Haley  
Robert Plotkowski  
Greg Schultz  
James White  
Chris Wilcha

**Annual Dues**

Base dues are \$100 per year per household. To pay dues, visit [crestwoodhills.com/dues](http://crestwoodhills.com/dues)

**Mailing Lists**

We periodically send out emails and mailings to keep you informed. To fully experience everything our unique neighborhood has to offer, please sign up for our mailing lists. Rest assured, your contact information will only be used for community-related updates.

1. Visit [crestwoodhills.com/resources](http://crestwoodhills.com/resources) to sign up for neighborhood emails, including our newsletter and emergency communications.

2. For mailings and CHA Neighborhood Watch, send your household information, including your name(s), Crestwood Hills property address (and mailing address, if different), email address(es) and phone number(s)—to [membership@crestwoodhills.com](mailto:membership@crestwoodhills.com).

**Crestwood Hills Neighborhood Watch**

Neighborhood Watch is organized on most streets in Crestwood Hills. It is a valuable tool to ensure quick communication during emergencies, such as fires, smoke in the area, burglaries in progress, suspicious persons, power outages, landslides, blocked roads, earthquakes, daytime animal sightings that could pose a danger to pets and children, and neighbor crisis assistance.

To be introduced to your street's block captain, contact [neighborhoodwatch@crestwoodhills.com](mailto:neighborhoodwatch@crestwoodhills.com)

**Crestwood Hills Tree Committee**

Dedicated to preserving and protecting homeowners' views, the Tree Committee offers a voluntary process to address trees and vegetation

that may obstruct a homeowner's Protected (Primary) View.

Visit [crestwoodhills.com/resources](http://crestwoodhills.com/resources) for the Tree Guidelines & FAQ and Tree Committee Agreement Form.

**Need to reach us?**

**Archives:**  
[archive@crestwoodhills.com](mailto:archive@crestwoodhills.com)

**Board Meetings & Events:**  
[rsvp@crestwoodhills.com](mailto:rsvp@crestwoodhills.com)

**CC&Rs Questions:**  
[CCandRs@crestwoodhills.com](mailto:CCandRs@crestwoodhills.com)

**General Information, Escrow & Building Inquiries:**  
[hello@crestwoodhills.com](mailto:hello@crestwoodhills.com)

**Mailing List & Dues Assistance:**  
[membership@crestwoodhills.com](mailto:membership@crestwoodhills.com)

**Neighborhood Watch:**  
[neighborhoodwatch@crestwoodhills.com](mailto:neighborhoodwatch@crestwoodhills.com)

**Power Lines Undergrounding:**  
[underground@crestwoodhills.com](mailto:underground@crestwoodhills.com)

**Tree Committee:**  
[trees@crestwoodhills.com](mailto:trees@crestwoodhills.com)

**Welcome Kit Requests:**  
[welcome@crestwoodhills.com](mailto:welcome@crestwoodhills.com)

**Volunteer Opportunities:**  
[volunteer@crestwoodhills.com](mailto:volunteer@crestwoodhills.com)

**Crestwood Hills Architectural Committee (CHAC)**

Gregory Serrao, AIA  
*Chair*

Robert Hensley  
Toni Lewis, AIA, LEED AP, CASP

The CHAC is an independent entity working on behalf of the community. Unless you live in Tract 16210, plans for all exterior building and landscaping must be submitted for approval.

Visit [crestwoodhills.com/resources](http://crestwoodhills.com/resources) for the Crestwood Hills Architectural Guidelines and Submission Form.

*Send submissions to:*  
CHAC  
c/o Gregory Serrao, AIA  
1068 Hanley Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90049  
[gcserraoaia@yahoo.com](mailto:gcserraoaia@yahoo.com)  
(310) 471-7517

**Crestwood Hills Preschool**

986 Hanley Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90049  
(310) 472-1566  
[www.crestwoodhillsscoop.org](http://www.crestwoodhillsscoop.org)  
Joanna Port, *Director*

A private, cooperative preschool—one of Los Angeles' best—founded by Crestwood Hills homeowners in 1953 and still offering priority enrollment to Crestwood Hills members.

*(Continued on next page.)*



**Kenter Canyon  
Elementary School**

645 N Kenter Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90049

Crestwood Hills residents can take advantage of an easement (a sidewalk) connecting Hanley Ave with Leonard Rd, allowing children a safe shortcut on their walk to our local public school.

**Crestwood Hills Park**

1000 Hanley Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90049  
[crestwoodhills.recreationcenter@lacity.org](http://crestwoodhills.recreationcenter@lacity.org)  
(310) 472-5233

The beautiful park in our neighborhood was gifted to the City of Los Angeles by one of our founding members. It includes a clubhouse, an outdoor theater, dog walking areas, playground and picnic areas, a baseball diamond and basketball court. The park is also available for parties.

**Tumbleweed Camp**

*Located at the far end of the park at 1024 Hanley Avenue*  
P.O. Box 49291  
Los Angeles, CA 90049  
(310) 472-7474  
[www.tumbleweedcamp.com](http://www.tumbleweedcamp.com)

A private day camp, started by one of our founding members, offering a variety

of activities such as swimming, horseback riding, ropes courses, and more. The camp is also available for private parties.

**Nearest Post Office**

200 S Barrington Ave  
(2 blocks south of Sunset)

**Donald Bruce Kaufman  
Public Library**

11820 San Vicente Blvd  
Los Angeles, CA 90049  
(310) 575-8273

**Nearest Fire Station**

Fire Station 19  
12229 Sunset Blvd  
Los Angeles, CA 90049  
(310) 575-8519

**Kenter Canyon  
Security Patrol**

An independent group of homeowners has organized a private security patrol service for Kenter Canyon residents, including those living in Crestwood Hills. It offers armed patrols, rapid alarm response, direct phone access to a patrol car, home escort services, and package security.

Contact [patrol4kenter@gmail.com](mailto:patrol4kenter@gmail.com) for more information.

**Representation:****City Councilmember**

Traci Park  
11th District  
West LA District Office  
1645 Corith Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
(310) 575-8461  
[councilmember.park@lacity.org](mailto:councilmember.park@lacity.org)

**County Supervisor**

Lindsey P. Horvath (D)  
3rd District  
500 W Temple St  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 974-3333  
[ThirdDistrict@bos.lacounty.gov](mailto:ThirdDistrict@bos.lacounty.gov)

**State Assemblymember**

Jacqui Irwin (D)  
District 42  
223 E Thousand Oaks Blvd  
Suite 412  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360  
(805) 370-0542

**State Senator**

Senator Ben Allen (D)  
District 26  
2512 Artesia Blvd  
Suite 320  
Redondo Beach, CA 90278  
(310) 318-6994

**Brentwood Community  
Council (BCC)**

[www.bcc90049.org](http://www.bcc90049.org)

The BCC brings together local leaders representing a wide range of Brentwood constituents, including neighborhoods, businesses, and community groups. It

addresses key issues related to responsible development and improving the quality of life in Brentwood. The CHA maintains a seat on the BCC, ensuring Crestwood Hills has a voice in community discussions and decision-making.

**Brentwood Homeowners  
Association (BHA)**

P.O. Box 49427  
Los Angeles, CA 90049  
(424) 242-8765  
[brentwoodhomeowners.org](http://brentwoodhomeowners.org)

Like Crestwood Hills, the BHA was founded in 1946 as a volunteer organization representing single-family property owners. It serves the Brentwood area west of the 405, north of San Vicente, and east of Canyon View Dr. While the BHA does not operate directly within Crestwood Hills, it collaborates closely with the CHA to support responsible growth, sustainable building practices, environmental safety, and other shared priorities.

Like the CHA, the BHA also strives to provide its members with timely and informative updates on key local issues. Due to its strong partnership with the Association, many Crestwood Hills homeowners choose to support this valued organization with an annual contribution.

## Architectural Planning and Submissions: Your property is subject to Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions (CC&Rs) tied to its deed, placing it under the review and oversight of the Crestwood Hills Architectural Committee (CHAC).

The CC&Rs for Tracts 15905, 14944, and 14122 are legally binding and require CHAC approval for any exterior modifications to your home or landscape. Crestwood Hills' architectural philosophy emphasizes harmony with the natural hillside, preservation of views, and maintaining the neighborhood's distinctive modernist style.

To obtain approval, homeowners must submit their plans to the CHAC. A copy of the Crestwood Hills Architectural Guidelines is included in this Welcome Kit and is also available, along with the submission form, on the Crestwood Hills website. These guidelines

have evolved over time to reflect contemporary lifestyle needs while remaining true to the community's architectural vision, allowing for thoughtful updates that accommodate modern homeowners.

The CHAC operates independently from the CHA and is composed of dedicated volunteers committed to upholding these standards. Homeowners are encouraged to respect the review process, as the committee plays a vital role in preserving the architectural integrity of Crestwood Hills. Their continued efforts have benefited our community since its founding and ensure its legacy endures.

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Visit [www.crestwoodhills.com/cc-and-rs](http://www.crestwoodhills.com/cc-and-rs) and [www.crestwoodhills.com/resources](http://www.crestwoodhills.com/resources) to review the CC&Rs for your tract and to download the Crestwood Hills Architectural Guidelines and submission form.

You can refer to the map on the last page of this Welcome Kit for a general overview of neighborhood tracts and their corresponding streets. For the legal description of your property's location, please refer to your deed.

# Crestwood Hills

