



January 2022
President's Message

Significant Neighborhood Developments in 2021

It has been a busy year with several significant developments that impact Cheviot Hills. The Board of the Cheviot Hills Home Owners' Association (CHHOA) has been actively working to protect our community's interests through each of these developments.

Surge In Crime

(1) What's Happening

While the recent rash of "smash and grab" robberies are making headlines, the LAPD is presently investigating more than 133 follow home robberies (where criminals identify victims they believe are wealthy and follow them home to rob them). In West LA, such robberies are up more than 20%. So far, we are happy to report that we are unaware of any follow-home robberies in Cheviot Hills.

The CHHOA Board continues to work with LAPD, particularly the West LA Divisions and our Senior Lead Officers Chris Baker and Pete Ojeda, to obtain available police resources for our area. CHHOA Board Member Cindy Kane attends the LAPD Community Police Advisory Board meetings and reports developments to the Board for action.

Los Angeles Police Chief Michel Moore announced last month that he is creating a follow-home robbery task force of more than 20 detectives from elite investigative divisions, including Robbery-Homicide, Metropolitan and specialized gang narcotics units, to identify and stop those responsible for these crimes.

We urge everyone to be aware of your surroundings, what you are wearing, especially jewelry, and whether you are being followed. Additionally, please ensure your doors and windows are secure. If you feel you are being followed, stay calm and do not go home. Call 911 immediately, give them as much information about the person following you as possible, let them know your location, and follow their instructions. Additionally, stay in well-lit and heavily trafficked areas (not hard to do in LA) and call friends or family and let them know what is going on. Finally, you can drive to the closest police station, which is at 1663 Butler Avenue, Los Angeles.

(2) What We Can Do

One of the most important services the CHHOA provides is private security. CHHOA funds a 24/7 patrol car by APS Security Systems. In addition to having one car patrolling Cheviot Hills full-time, we share two other cars with the California Country Club Homes Association. In addition to patrol service, APS locks gates, checks homes, and provides vacation and after-hours property inspections for CHHOA members.

We would like to increase our security efforts; however, we need more members to do so. There are approximately 1450 homes in Cheviot Hills. Currently, only 427 homes are dues paying members. The

more members we have, the safer we can make our community, so please encourage your neighbors to join the Cheviot Hills Home Owners' Association.

Multi-Unit Housing In Areas Previously Zoned For Single Homes

California has a severe housing crisis and our state government is feeling the heat to do something, whether it makes sense or not. The CHHOA has been monitoring all proposed legislation and organizing public comment from our stakeholders so our voices can be heard as these laws are being considered. Even so, the Legislature and Governor Newsom have moved ahead with two bills that likely will change housing density in our area.

On September 16, 2021, Governor Newsom signed Senate Bills 9 and 10 into law which, among other things, allow an existing qualified single-family zoned parcel to be subdivided into two lots and developed with four units, without California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review. This includes single family neighborhoods like Cheviot Hills. Areas like Cheviot are the focus of these measures because we live in what politicians call a "transit rich area" meaning, proximity to public transportation - major MTA bus routes and the Expo Line.

SB 9, which is the more relevant bill to our neighborhood, does two things. First, it requires that most local governments approve applications for duplexes on lots zoned for single family homes. Second, it requires local governments to permit subdivision of single family lots into two parcels. This is critical because it allows for four units to be built on what is currently a single-family lot. However, in an effort to limit the obvious benefit to real estate developers, the Legislature included a number of "residency" requirements. For example, applications for lot splits must include a signed affidavit attesting that the applicant intends to occupy one of the housing units as a principal residence for a minimum of three years; a lot cannot be split more than once; short-term occupancy will be prohibited thereby eliminating the VRBO or Airbnb problem; and an ADU unit cannot be added to a split lot.

Sacramento has crafted these bills so local governments are unable to stop the duplexes or lot splits, but they do have two major powers under the bills: First, local governments can impose "objective design standards" that don't conflict with the law. And second, they can deny a project if it would create a "specific, adverse impact on health and safety".

As a result, it is up to all of us at the local level to ensure the restrictions associated with these laws are enforced. We urge you to keep an eye out for any new multi-family construction and make sure the owner inhabits the property, is not renting the property out on a short-term basis, and the development complies with the requirements of the law.

Redistricting Leads To Better Representation For Cheviot Hills

Gerrymandering and redistricting efforts to consolidate political power on the national and state levels are widely reported, but similar tug-of-wars also exist at the local level. One of the final maps for the LA City Council districts tried to dilute the Westside's voting power by splitting up the Westside Neighborhood Council ("WNC") into three different council districts. Cheviot Hills would have been cut off from Westwood and Brentwood, and placed in a district going south through Baldwin Hills and east all the way to Western. After countless hearings and vociferous input from the CHHOA, Cheviot Hills will remain part of District 5, grouped with our historically connected neighbors to the north and west.

CHHOA Board Member Margaret Gillespie was part of the WNC task force to make sure our stakeholders' interests were protected. As some of you may recall, the redistricting process in 1991 ended up with Cheviot Hills being split down the middle, with one side of Motor Avenue in a different council district from their neighbors across the street. We made sure this did not happen again.

The WNC task force submitted multiple documents and maps to the Los Angeles City Council Redistricting Commission to keep the WNC and Cheviot Hills whole within a single district. Margaret attended countless meetings and hearings, repeatedly testifying before the Redistricting Commission and the Los Angeles City Council, until the final map was adopted. The final City Council and LAUSD maps keep the WNC and Cheviot Hills whole within a single district.

For the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, the redistricting process is in the final stage and their map is due to be approved on December 15. As with the LA City Council process, special interests were pushing various maps that would have split up the WNC and grouped Cheviot Hills with neighborhoods to the south and east where we have no common interests.

The final Board of Supervisors map actually is an improvement over our current situation where the WNC is divided across two districts, with Pico Boulevard separating Cheviot Hills from our neighbors to the north. Under the new map, the WNC will be unified within County District 3, giving Cheviot Hills voters more of a voice in county government.

We Can't Do It Without You!

In closing, this has been a busy year. We hope to do more in the coming year, but we need your support. We especially need your support to maintain the security and private patrols in our neighborhood. Law enforcement resources are down, and response times are up. LAPD must police more areas with fewer resources. To ensure the safety of our community we need to be proactive. Please join (or renew) your CHHOA membership. The Association's efforts to maintain the residential nature and safety of Cheviot Hills are funded by voluntary annual dues of \$95 per household.

You can join on-line at <https://cheviothills.org/join/>

Similarly, we welcome each of you to join us at our monthly meeting to provide input as to how to further improve our community or voice any concerns you may have. During the pandemic meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month via Zoom. Information regarding participating in these meetings can be found at the CHHOA Website. When it is safe to do so, we will resume our meetings in person at the Griffin Club.

I, along with my other Board Members, wish you and your family a healthy and happy New Year. May 2022 be the best year yet!

Sincerely,
Robert Keehn, President
Cheviot Hills Home Owners' Association