

# RESIDENTIAL DESIGN CATEGORY

## Crest Apartments

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### THE SUBURBAN UNIT

Located in the tough mixed use urban context and the heat of the San Fernando Valley, Crest Apartments represents a paradigm shift for multi-unit courtyard housing. The two adjacent buildings, both multi-unit housing, illustrates site planning methods that leaves very little green space for its residents.

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### AN URBAN OASIS FOR LIVING

Crest Apartments consists of 64 housing units for homeless veterans. Despite being located on a busy street, the landscape dominates the ground plane as a lush green oasis amidst the hot dry valley climate and invites the community in with its low water native meadow and visible ground floor and streetfront.

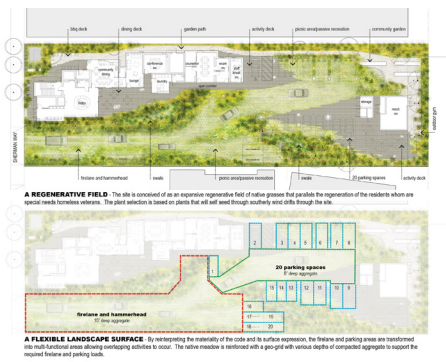
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### REINTERPRETING THE CODE

The 28' wide firelane, parking drive, and parking areas are reconceived of as a native grass meadow allowing areas that are typically dedicated to satisfy code requirements and treated impervious to become places for passive recreation for residents, therefore increasing the ratio of green space per person allowing for a significant amount of open space. Given that the firelane and parking areas would require over 2/3rds of the site, the possibility of reconceiving these areas as passive recreation as well as porous, creates a much higher efficient value and use of a modest lot size of 100' wide by 300' deep.

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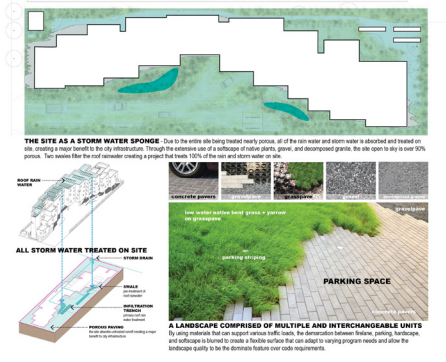
### A REGENERATIVE FIELD

The site is conceived of as an expansive regenerative field of native grasses that parallels the regeneration of the residents whom are special needs homeless veterans. The plant selection is based on plants that will self seed through wind drifts of southerly winds through the site.

### A FLEXIBLE LANDSCAPE SURFACE

By reinterpreting the materiality of the code and its surface expression, the firelane and parking areas are transformed into multi-functional areas allowing overlapping activities to occur. The native meadow is reinforced with a geo-grid with various depths of compacted aggregate to support the required firelane and parking loads.

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### THE SITE AS A STORM WATER SPONGE

Due to the entire site being treated nearly porous, all of the rain water and storm water is absorbed and treated on site, creating a major benefit to the city infrastructure. Through the extensive use of a softscape of native plants, gravel, and decomposed granite, the site open to sky is over 90% pervious. Two swales filter the roof rainwater creating a project that treats 100% of its rain and storm water on site.

### A LANDSCAPE COMPRISED OF MULTIPLE AND INTERCHANGEABLE UNITS

By using materials that can support various traffic loads, the demarcation between firelane, parking, hardscape, and softscape is blurred to create a flexible surface that can adapt to varying program needs and allow the landscape quality to be the dominate feature over code requirements.

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### **Crest Apartments** 13604 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA 91405

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#### **OPEN CORRIDORS BLURRING INSIDE AND OUT**

An open exterior corridor is the main circulation path connecting various amenities for residents. The feathered paving edge creates a dynamic movement that engages the building's stepped form that accentuates the expansiveness of the landscape experience both beneath and beyond the building mass overhead.

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#### **PARKING AS COMMUNAL SPACE**

The open exterior corridor leads one to a paved deck and a gravel field which technically serves as the main parking area but instead is recrafted as activity decks and the main communal space underneath the shade of the building where one is cooled by the southerly winds. Given that the residents are formerly homeless, there will be few cars parked making the parking area highly underutilized unless repurposed.

A mixture of low water native grasses, concrete pavers, and gravel combine to create a dynamic space through the site that is universally accessible to all for activities, passive recreation, and communal gatherings underneath the shade of the building overhead.

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#### **A DYNAMIC PARKING LANDSCAPE**

Underneath the building, the feathered edges of the concrete pavers play off the building's stepped form and erode the appearance of parking spaces, expanding the sense of the native landscape of field grasses and shrubs.

Within the open landscape, the dominance of the landscape field is felt, transforming a tough urban site into a tranquil countryside. The building appears to be gently hovering above the native landscape.

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#### **COMMUNITY GARDENS**

The grass parking area transitions into a space for residents to gather under the canopy of large shade trees reached by an informal decomposed granite garden path. Three large garden planter boxes create the occasion for residents to celebrate and harvest together.

#### **AN EXPANSIVE LANDSCAPE BEYOND PROPERTY LINES**

A transparent fence, feathered concrete pavers, and meandering field grasses evoke a sense of a larger contextual field beyond property lines, making the landscape appear infinite and inclusive.

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#### **AN URBAN OASIS FOR LIVING**

Despite the tough urban context of asphalt roofs and parking lots of the adjacent buildings and the heat of the valley, an urban oasis is created that seamlessly blends in with the larger landscape context and celebrates the beauty of native plants that create a lush experience that is also low water and drought tolerant, and restores wildlife to an abandoned site.

This project is on target for LEED Platinum and has a projected irrigation demand that is 37% lower than the 2014 state MAWA.