Unit 1

The first unit in the cluster defines the basis of the development’s architectural attitudes. This unit is the smallest of the five, being slightly over 650 square feet in area. It does, however, have many characteristics typical of the other units in the cluster. Materials are kept the same, finishes are similar, and outdoor space is generous. This unit, however, is not multilevel, it has no roof garden, does not have double volume spaces and does not have a fireplace. Only these attributes make this unit significantly different from the others. It is not a family sized dwelling, however, by its inclusion the opportunity for single and or elderly to live in the cluster is made.

The underside of this house is the parking structure for both Unit 1 and Unit 2. Additionally, there are two visitor parking spaces. The parking area is not enclosed, it is four feet below the average finished grade. By making the garage both open and semi-subterranean there will be no need for mechanical evacuation of car exhaust. The garage is thus ventilated by leaving a minimum of 50% of the perimeter open to the outside. There is no provision for storage in the garage. However, the space immediately adjacent to the staircase can be used for such purpose. This space is intended to be simple, clean, and utilitarian.

A resident or visitor would exit the parking garage by walking up the three steps adjacent to the major staircase, or up the garage ramp, and proceed to the main courtyard stair. This stair is not gated. By ascending one level of stairs the resident would arrive at the division landing between “Unit 1 North” and “Unit 1 South.” The procession continues by descending three steps to the “forecourt” of Unit 1. To the right is the wall of the breakfast patio of Unit 2, to the left are the kitchen windows of Unit 1. Directly ahead is the wood single light glass front door. If left uncovered you would be able to see through the unit to the garden promenade. (See renderings of entry view on page 46.)

Upon entering the unit, the entire space opens up to the resident and is immediately understood. All surfaces are left natural and untreated. No elements are hidden. Between the exposed architectural concrete frames to the right are built-in bookcases, to the left is the dining area and the living area. To the left is the view, open and unencumbered to the resident as soon as he/she enters the space.

Rendering study of Unit 1 showing lower garage and staircase courtyard entrance, Unit 2 is seen beyond.

Elevation study Unit 1 through roadway from lower level road to upper level road.
Housing...the Hillside Los Angeles

Terrace level

Entry level

Garage level
A study of the backyard garden.

If facing to the front of the unit, then immediately to the left of the public spaces are both the utilitarian and private spaces. This encompasses the kitchen, bathroom with both a public and private entrance and the bedroom. Fundamentally this is the language and organization with which all of the additional units are internally arranged.

Entrance to the private garden (backyard) is achieved by proceeding forward from the front door to the opposite wall. This is similar in all of the units. The garden is accessed through a single light wood framed glass door. This garden is formally arranged and based in unit dimension on the structural spacing of the concrete frames. The garden is multi-leveled to give the inhabitant the opportunity to experience the garden from several perspectives. The garden is composed of several distinct elements. Those are water, earth and plantings. The garden for this unit is slightly different from that of the others. Level changes are somewhat minimized (see plan on page 45), as well, the majority of the space is hardscape.
The central staircase approaching Unit 1.

Typical elevation of garage, and Unit 1.

The hardscape garden, as seen from the upper terrace.

A view of the interior, from the entry looking to the living space.