

A Letter
from the
Bright Family



Dear Homeowner,

As the developer of Castle Hills, the Bright family wants to share with you the history of the property and reveal some of the thought that went into the planning and layout of your prospective home. This is our story.

Our family acquired the first piece of this property in 1952. My family—mother, father, two sisters, and one brother—spent a great deal of time on what we then called “the farm.” We learned to horseback ride, fish, hunt and camp in these hills. My brother and I both enjoyed our first unsupervised campouts on the farm, on the south bank of what we now call Lake Avalon. My Dad regaled us all with stories of the “Bare” foot tracks around the lake and the need to stay close at hand to our parents. In short, this piece of land is like an heirloom to us. It holds some of our fondest memories of childhood, and the painstaking planning that has gone into Castle Hills reflects its value to us.

Our memories of growing up in Texas were integral in the early discussions of developing the farm. We wanted to capture the spirit of what made this place so special to us.

We liked the idea of the old-style neighborhood, the sense of belonging to a community where kids could walk to a park and neighbors

swapped stories at little league games and school

functions. People grew up, moved away and then returned with their own kids. My children are the third generation of Brights to attend the same elementary school. Every stage of the Castle Hills development plan has been aimed at recreating these memories.



Clay Bright shows off his “catch of the day” to Dad, H.R. Bright.





Some of the Bright kids were more successful than others at "farm life." My brother broke his arm falling off a horse when he was five.

THE KEYSTONES OF THE CASTLE HILLS DEVELOPMENT PLAN ARE:

Safer Streets

We have lined streets with trees, shortened blocks to create more intersections, widened curb profiles to create an illusion of narrower streets, lowered speed limits from 30 mph to 25 mph and installed "Children at Play" signs to encourage slower driving.

Architectural Diversity

My brother once said, "We are trying to build homes, not houses." To create diversity without sacrificing quality, we allow a wide variety of exterior building materials, elevations and front yard setbacks.

In addition to stone and brick, for example, we allow the use of siding on homes. However, we require either a true wood product or masonry siding. No Masonite or vinyl siding materials may be used. We also allow stucco, but only the traditional process, not the artificial EIFS process. We also limit the number of times elevations and house plans can be repeated, as well as the proximity of similar elevations.



Front entry housing

You can't be a good neighbor if you never have a chance to interact. So we encourage the construction of front entry design, but we require that the garage be placed on the rear half of the lot. As an added bonus, cars are parked in driveways instead of on the street.



Alleys

We build alleys so that trash collection and service can take place behind the homes rather than in the front yard. We provide utility service from the alleys rather than from the street to minimize the number of utility structures in front of the houses. We also make the parkways a little wider and allow tree planting in them.

Park Structures

The park structures are designed to be appealing to children. The rationale behind these designs is to create inviting public areas for children, because we believe children provide a means by which homeowners meet each other. Our "pocket parks" help facilitate a sense of community at Castle Hills. In addition, we have attempted to place our neighborhood parks within walking distance of each home (three blocks or less).



My brother Clay and I worked briefly on the farm when we were in high school. After I ran the tractor into a bar ditch, they were less enthusiastic about our help.

In Closing

The Castle Hills concept is known by many names, from the new urbanism to neo-traditionalism. But the bottom line is that we are building neighborhoods in which people want to live. Thank you for taking the time to read about our community. We hope that you will find Castle Hills a warm and inviting place to live and raise your family.

Chris Bright



CASTLE HILLS

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