

hilly or steep site because of the additional costs of grading. Another factor driving up the cost is the lower density of hillside development compared with similar flat sites. In spite of the higher costs of hillside development, however, buyers are attracted to such sites because of the long views and interesting terrain.

There are some fundamental elements that most successful hillside developments have in common (Fig. 3.1) For example, it is often necessary to have differing street widths to minimize site development costs and to maintain the character of a site. Finished grading tends to mimic the natural condition as much as possible, and building sites are selected on the basis of physical conditions. The methods of optimizing the site begin with a careful analysis of the site as discussed in Chap. 2. Hillsides are unique, and their analysis must address and identify those aspects of a specific site that are conducive to successful development. Views, slopes, soil conditions, access, utilities, and individual home sites must be evaluated in terms of development costs and market values.

The finished grading of the site should mimic the original terrain. This is especially true if the original character of the site was considered an important element of the project. If the views and terrain are features that are to attract prospective buyers, then it is important to maintain the sense that the sites are undisturbed and are as “natural” as possible. The most important aspect of this is the quality of the grading. The project shown in Figure 3.1 is a successful



Figure 3.1 Photograph of a hillside development.