South Bay Moves welcomes you to

Manhattan Beach



History · Lifestyle · Schools · Real Estate

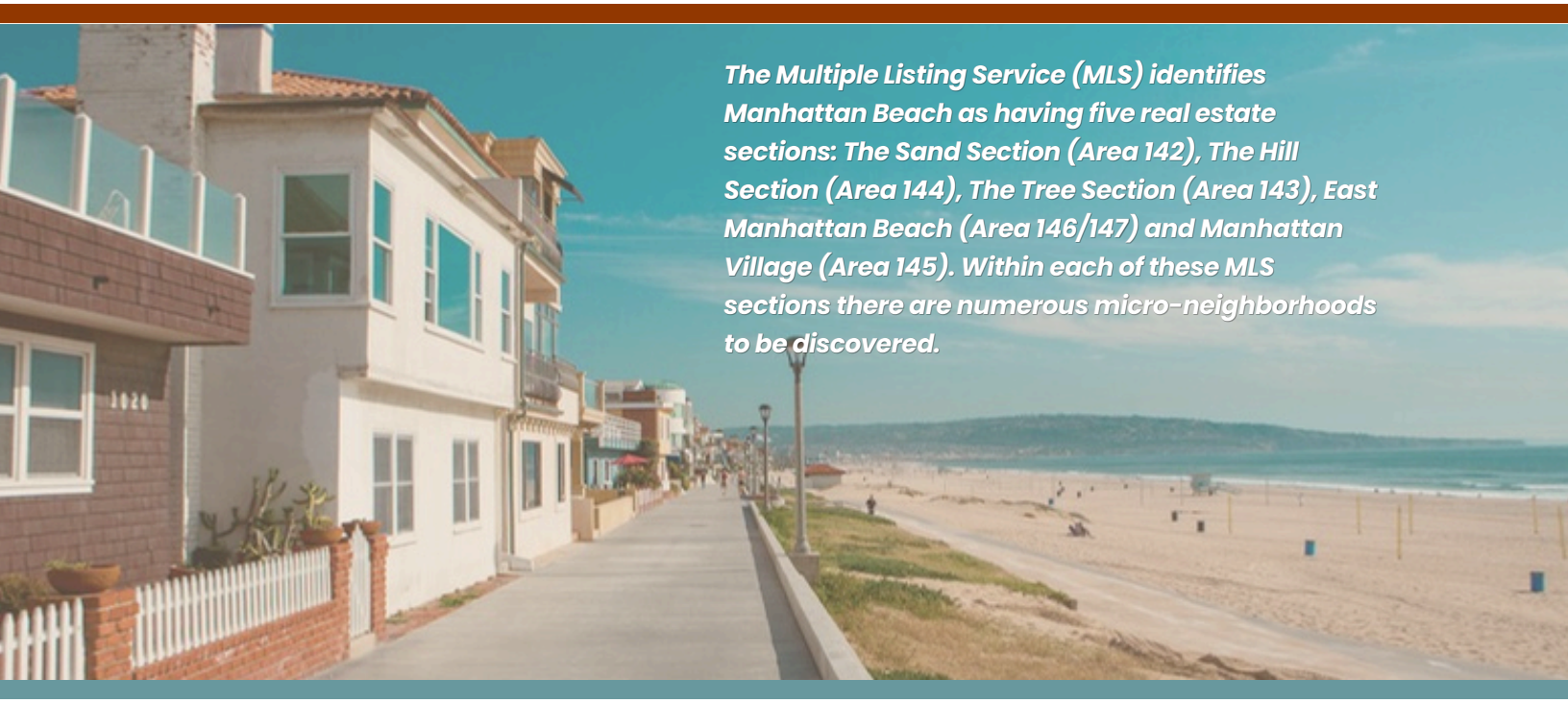
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Manhattan Beach

Sand Section · HIll Section ·Tree Section · East Manhattan Beach · Manhattan Village

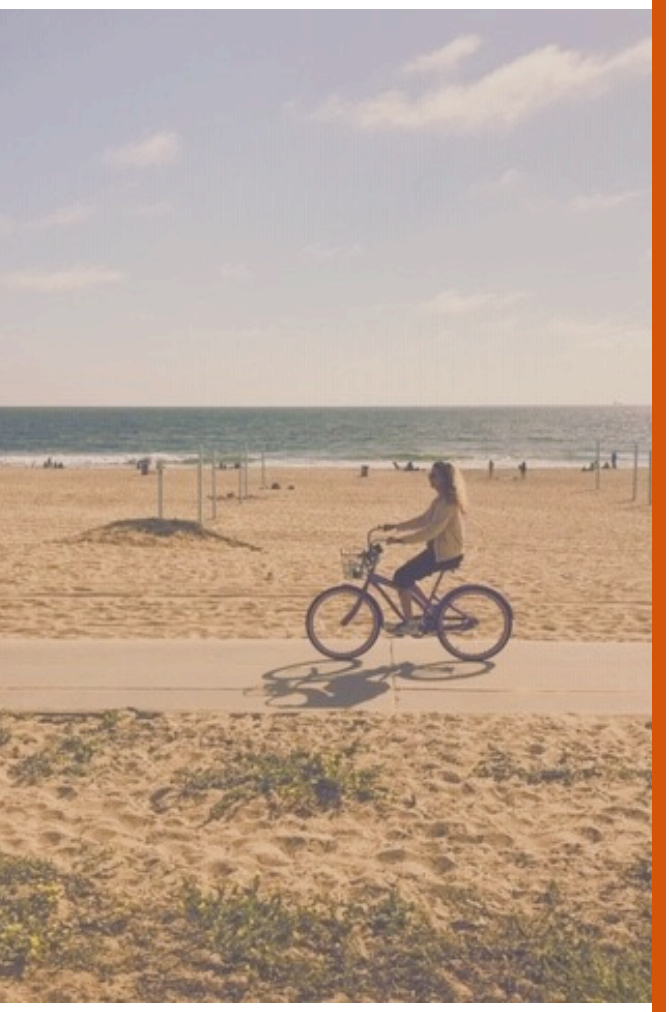
The city was officially incorporated on December 7, 1912. Post-WWII, the defense industry drew a new wave of residents to the South Bay, and the area's year-round desirability took hold permanently. Manhattan Beach is situated just 4 miles South of LAX airport, making it an ideal location for super-commuters. Because the public schools operate outside of the Los Angeles school district, the quality of education is a huge draw for home-buyers. The Manhattan Beach Unified School District is an Apple Distinguished School District and a national tech leader. Schools consistently rank in the top 1% nationally.

The South Bay enjoys some of the best year-round weather in the world and because of this, Manhattan Beach is home to many community events that locals look forward to year after year. From the spectacular Holiday Fireworks show in December, to free summer concerts in the park, each neighborhood offers something special to be enjoyed. Traditional favorites include the Hometown Fair in the Fall and the International Surf Festival in the summer.



The Multiple Listing Service (MLS) identifies Manhattan Beach as having five real estate sections: The Sand Section (Area 142), The Hill Section (Area 144), The Tree Section (Area 143), East Manhattan Beach (Area 146/147) and Manhattan Village (Area 145). Within each of these MLS sections there are numerous micro-neighborhoods to be discovered.





Before it was one of the most coveted addresses in the country, Manhattan Beach was shifting sand dunes, sea breeze, and not much else. The land traces back thousands of years to the Tongva people, who passed through on their way to the coast in search of shellfish and food from the shallows. Later it became part of Rancho Sausal Redondo — "Ranch of the Round Clump of Willows" — a Spanish land grant encompassing nearly 25,000 acres stretching from what is now Playa del Rey down to Hermosa Beach.

The 1888 arrival of the Santa Fe Railway connected the South Bay shore to a booming Los Angeles and brought the first wave of entrepreneurs who saw possibility in the coastal dunes. The name itself was settled the only way three competing developers could agree: a half dollar coin was flipped in 1902, and "Manhattan" won.

Early structures were wooden beach cottages ranging from 300 to just over 1,000 square feet, most painted rusty red, with no gas, electricity, or indoor plumbing. Families arrived by train from Pasadena and Los Angeles and were greeted by a real estate agent the moment they stepped off. Some things don't change.

One of the more unexpected footnotes: excess sand from Manhattan Beach's dunes was loaded onto Santa Fe Railroad cars in the 1920s and 1930s and shipped to Waikiki to transform Hawaii's eroding rocky shoreline into the soft, sandy beach it's famous for today. More of it went into the construction of the Los Angeles Coliseum and sections of the Pacific Coast Highway.

The Strand, The Pier and The Culture That Grew Up Here



The modern beach volleyball movement was born in Manhattan Beach in the 1930s, and the city has carried the title of Beach Volleyball Capital of the World ever since. The first surfboard shop in the continental U.S. opened here in 1949.

Today, the AVP Manhattan Beach Open is considered the epicenter of the beach volleyball world — a tournament where winners don't just take home prize money, they have their names permanently etched into the Volleyball Walk of Fame on the pier. The Charlie Saikley 6-Man tournament, now more than 50 years old, adds a different dimension; costumes, camaraderie, and multi-generational participation that reflects exactly the kind of community Manhattan Beach has always been.

The northern end, El Porto, is one of Southern California's most consistent surf breaks, drawing everyone from first-timers to serious wave riders year-round. The Strand connects it all — a 2.1-mile paved path buzzing with joggers, cyclists, and strollers from early morning to well past sunset, with the pier at its center and the Pacific at its edge.

Manhattan Beach Unified School District consistently ranks among California's top districts, with Mira Costa High School regularly sending graduates to universities across the country. The downtown corridor is lined with independent restaurants and boutiques.

Manhattan Beach simply is what it is: a small town that happens to sit on some of the most valuable land in the Western United States.



The Strand and The Sand Section

THE STRAND

The Manhattan Beach Strand is a part of the Marvin Braude Bike Trail that reaches north to Santa Monica and terminates south at the Palos Verdes Peninsula.

The Strand is also a micro-neighborhood located within the Sand Section of Manhattan Beach. It is home to world-class luxury beach-front properties and some of the most expensive real estate in the western United States. The Strand itself is defined by niche markets; South of the Pier, North of the Pier and El Porto.

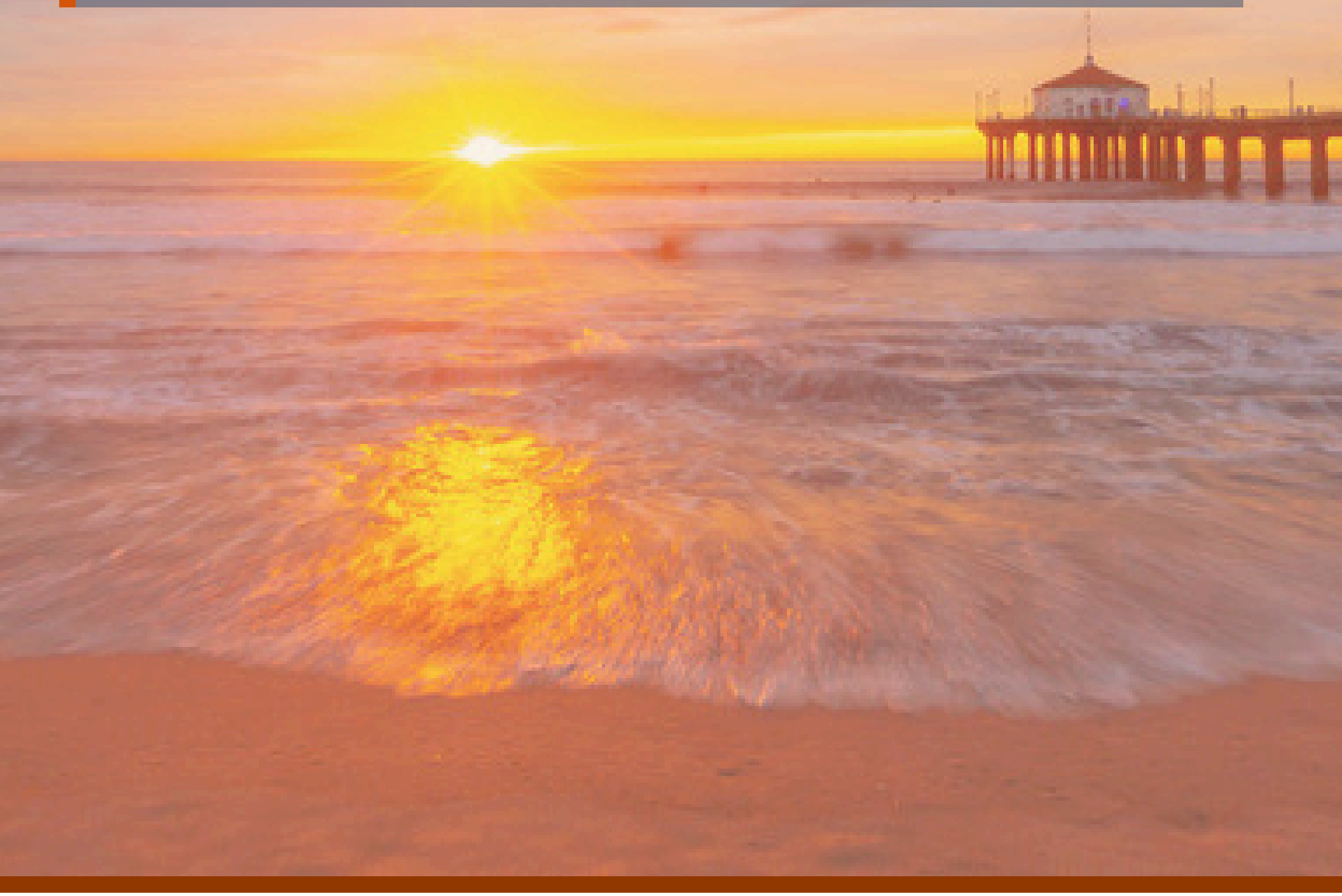
As a rule, the closer the property is to the pier, the higher the value, as being within walking distance of Downtown Manhattan Beach is key. Corner lots can add coveted outdoor space and those lots also come at a premium. With unblockable, panoramic ocean views and the pristine beach as a playground, it's hard to dispute why this is some of the most sought after real estate in the country.

THE SAND SECTION

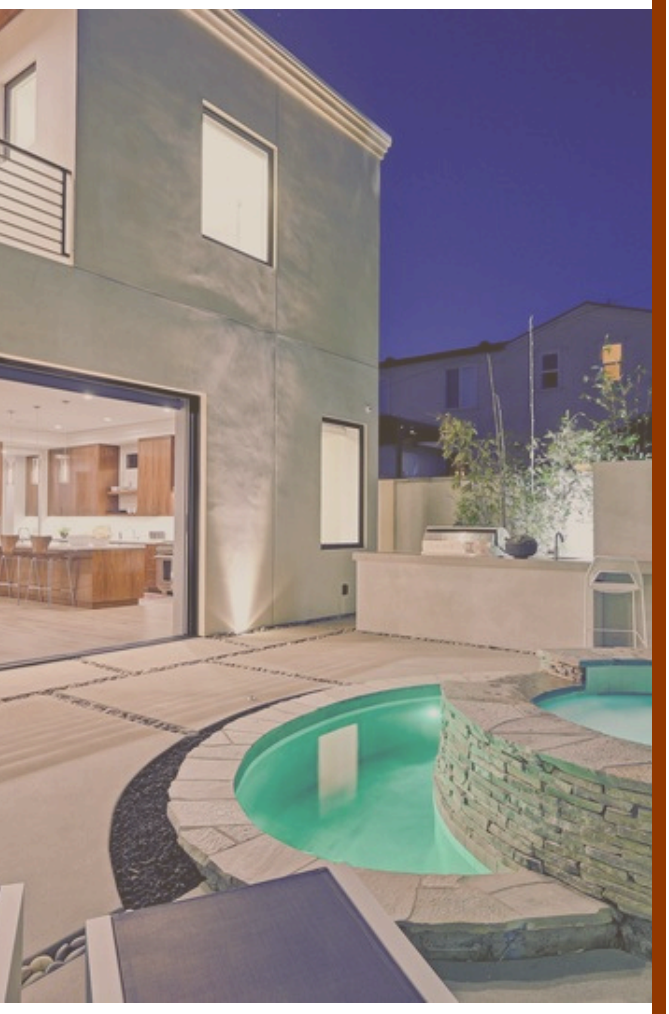
(AREA 142)

Sand Section real estate is highly sought after, and even more so are the unique walk-streets found within the Sand Section. The flat walk streets in South Manhattan Beach are generally preferred over walk- streets located on the steeper sections of what once were rolling sand dunes. Walk-streets are portions of the Sand Section neighborhood that offer completely paved sidewalks on the front of the property, with garage parking at the rear, accessed by alleyway. Walk-street living is a social environment that is very connected with neighbors. Properly valuing Sand Section property takes an expert as values can swing drastically based on varying, complex criteria.

The North Manhattan Beach Sand Section has recently taken ownership of its location as a branded experience. North Manhattan residents have encircled the businesses and eateries located north of 31st St past Rosecrans Ave. as their own and have openly created the North Manhattan business district which includes what locals have always referred to as El Porto. El Porto is the area north of Rosecrans to 45th St. and has a high density of income properties.







THE TREE SECTION (AREA 143)

Close to daily conveniences such as shopping at Target, Trader Joe's, The Pointe and the newly refurbished Manhattan Village Mall, the Tree Section is named for its tree-lined streets that are protected by a local ordinance designed to preserve the special rural feel of this urban neighborhood. Many streets within the neighborhood are named after tree species such as Laurel, Pine, Maple, Walnut, etc. Homes within the Tree Section vary from ultra-custom, new construction to older, original homes that are popular to remodel as entry-level properties.

Many residents enjoy a 10-15 minute walk to Downtown Manhattan Beach, while still enjoying larger yards and more space between neighbors. A 4-mile greenbelt walking path cuts through the heart of the Tree Section. The Santa Fe Railroad ran through Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach and Redondo Beach back in the 1880s and the greenbelt now sits on what was the old railway line. The greenbelt is popular with local residents as a jogging path and dog-walking route, as it leads right to all of the community happenings in Downtown Manhattan Beach.

The gleaming bell tower of American Martyrs church and school centers the Tree Section. Homes located along the borders of this community hub are referred to as belonging to the "Martyrs" section. These homes are ideally located within walking distance of both the private school at American Martyrs and Pacific Elementary School. The weekly Farmer's Market held at the nearby Metlox Center, the local little league and soccer fields, the Badminton Club & Pool, and the community center are also within walking distance of most Martyrs area homes.

Another sought after micro-neighborhood of the Tree Section is the Gas Lamp section. The Gas Lamp section is made up of a few streets lined with original turn-of-the century gas lamps that still burn at night as reminders of original Manhattan Beach streets. Many newly constructed homes in this area have embraced the charm of the working gas-lamp and have added them as exterior lighting on personal property.

THE HILL SECTION (AREA 144)

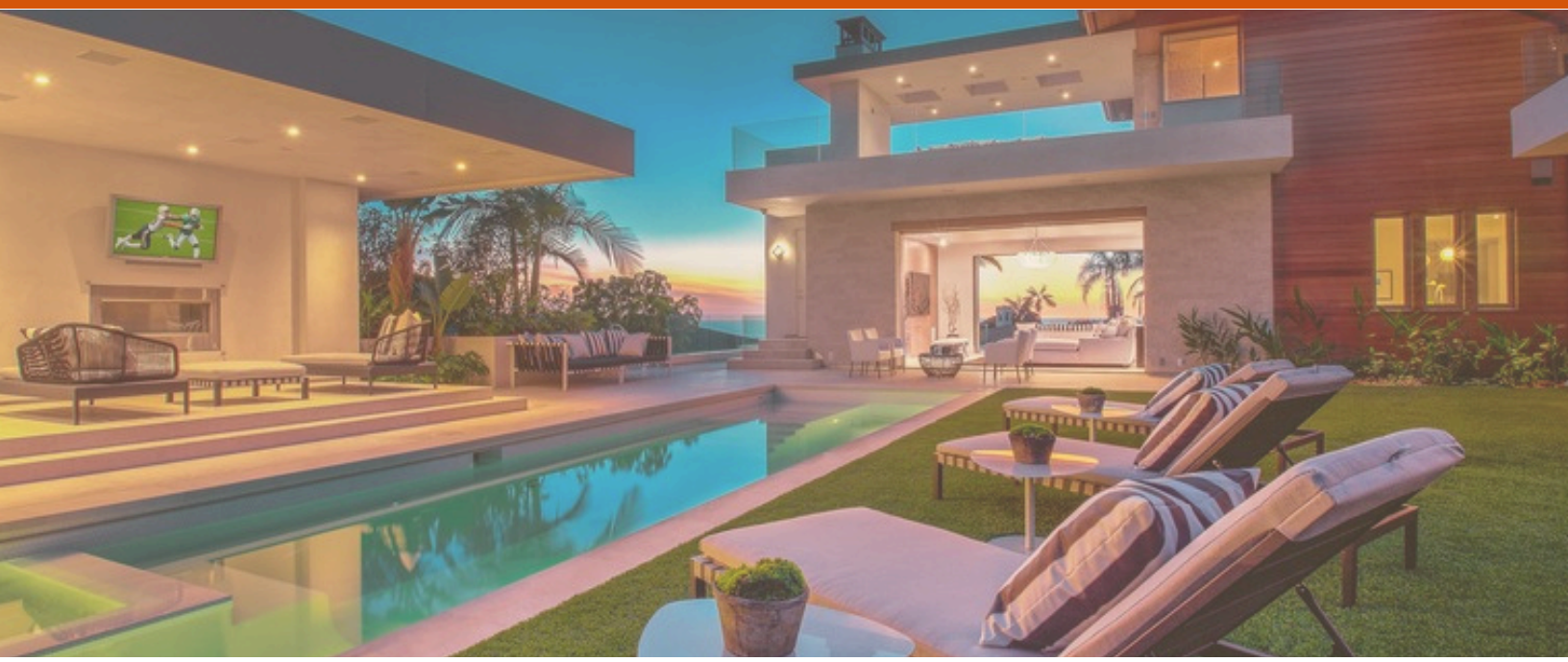
The Hill Section of Manhattan Beach is made up largely of newer luxury homes on large, sprawling lots, many of which capture outstanding ocean views. Most of Manhattan Beach's estate-style homes are located within the Hill Section.

The South-western side of the hill is known as premium real estate and is where most of the South Bay's record-setting sales have recorded. Most lots West of John St, between 5th and 10th St can be considered within this zone. Homes in the northwest quadrant can still offer some ocean view.

Many residents prefer Hill Section living for the large pool-sized lots that allow for legacy homes to be built on, while still being only a few minutes' walk to Downtown Manhattan Beach.

Many homes within this very exclusive section enjoy a greater sense of privacy, which is a huge draw for high-profile homeowners wishing to enjoy a quiet, beach life.





East Manhattan Beach

Properties located east of Sepulveda Blvd., West of Aviation Blvd., North of Artesia Blvd. and South of Manhattan Beach Blvd. are located within East Manhattan Beach.
Micro-neighborhoods within East Manhattan Beach are known as the Mira Costa section (Area 147), Manhattan Heights and Liberty Village (Area 146). The draw to East Manhattan Beach is largely the larger lot sizes and the more traditional neighborhood feel. Properties here tend to offer a nice blend of a larger home with a larger lot at a greater value, though new construction in the area is breaking new records for home prices here. Some lots that sit on the few hills in the area may offer views of Downtown L.A. and the mountains beyond.

MIRA COSTA (AREA 146/147)

The Mira Costa section surrounds award-winning Mira Costa high school . Lots here generally are about 7,500 SF, which allows for private pools. Within Mira Costa is another micro-neighborhood called the Poet's Section, with streets named after the Romantic poets. There is a small section of Mira Costa with lots that can exceed a half acre. This is a very private and secluded section where homes rarely are offered for sale.

MANHATTAN POINTE

There is a small emcalve of townhomes called Manhattan Pointe on the East side of Aviation Blvd. at 2nd St. which is considered East Manhattan Beach. Students that live within the Manhattan Pointe complex may attend Manhattan Beach public schools.



LIBERTY VILLAGE

The sub-section is found by crossing Manhattan Beach Blvd. and staying east of Polliwog Park. This section of East Manhattan Beach was originally made up of post WWII era tract homes that were built to accommodate rapid growth brought on by the expansion of the aerospace industry. These homes are popular with younger families starting out as homeowners in Manhattan Beach. Many of the original floor-plans have been greatly altered over the years as homeowners remodeled and recently some homes have been acquired by builders as lots for new construction projects.

MANHATTAN HEIGHTS

Manhattan Heights is located west of Polliwog Park. These lots are typically smaller than those found in Mira Costa, however some lots also capture views of Downtown L.A. Homes within Liberty Village/Manhattan Heights are walking distance to some of the city's best parks and outdoor recreational facilities, as well as the elementary schools, middle school and high school. Situated between Manhattan Beach Blvd. and Marine Ave., these homes enjoy much of what Tree Section owners take advantage of; the proximity to Target, Trader Joe's, The Manhattan Village Mall and more.

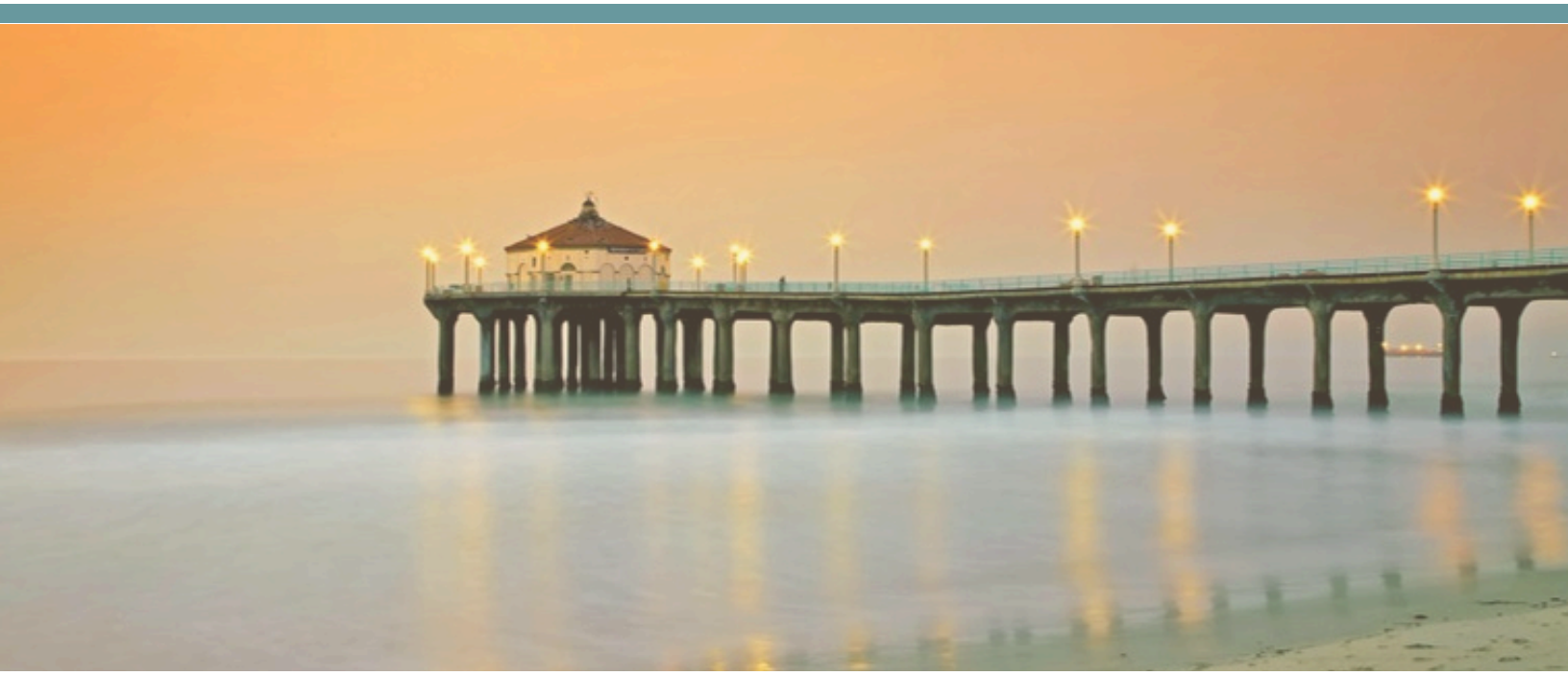
Manhattan Village (AREA 145)

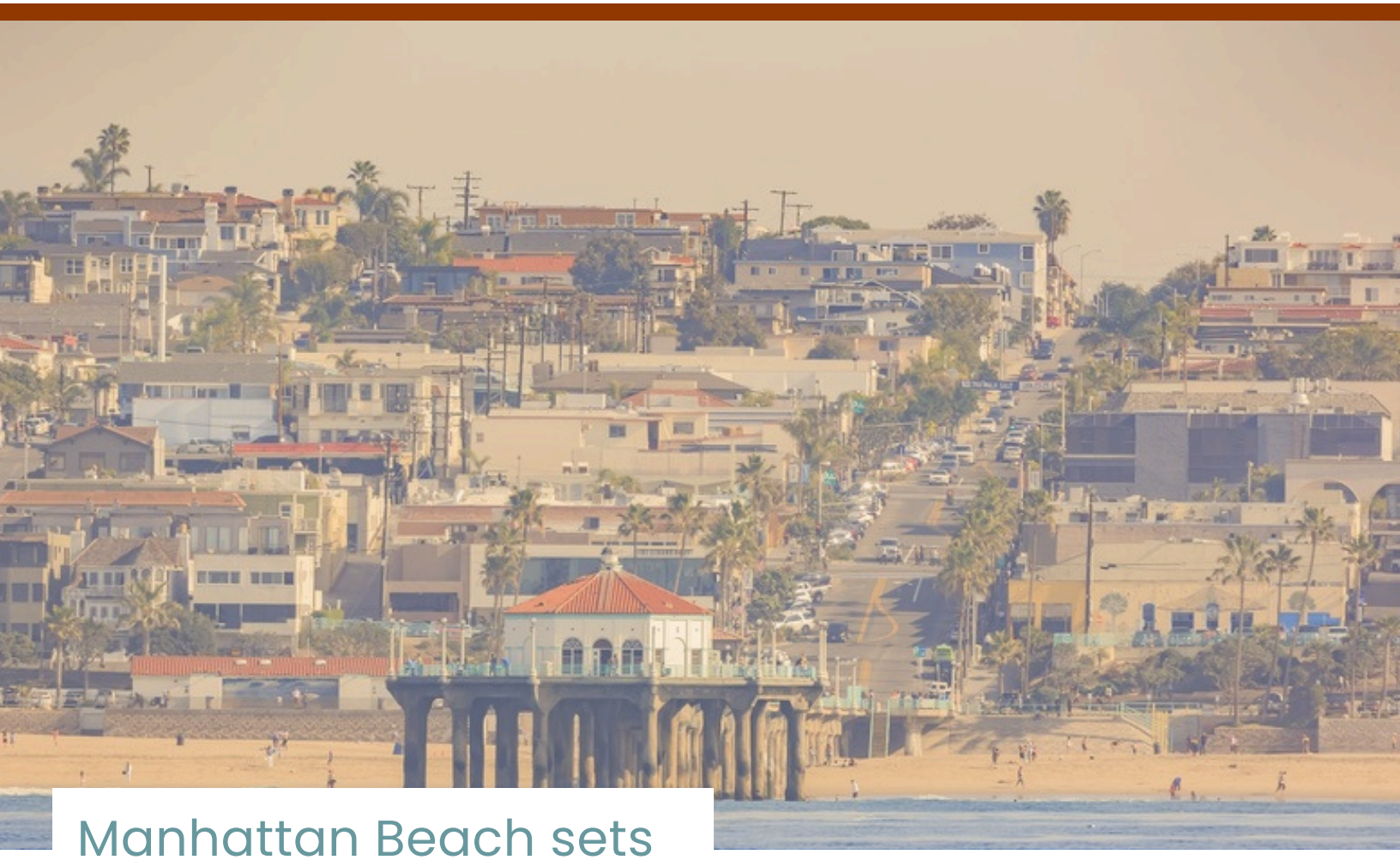
Manhattan Village is the only gated community located in the beach cities. A quiet enclave of 400 townhomes and single family residences is found behind the gates and the community operates within a master Homeowner's Association. The HOA offers pools, in-ground spas, a clubhouse, private security, controlled community access and views of lush greenbelts that wind throughout the grounds.

The Village consists of three smaller HOAs: The Court Homes, The Town Homes and The Estate Homes. Court Homes are clusters of attached town-homes located within private cul-de-sac "courts" that are arranged to enjoy greenbelt views. Town Homes offer end-unit style living, as they sit side by side and share only one wall. Many of the Town Homes enjoy views of the Westdrift Manhattan Beach Golf Club. Court Homes and Town Homes are sprinkled in a mix all along the eastern side of the Village grounds. Estate Homes are all located together along the western portion of the grounds. Estate Homes are single family residence style, completely detached and offer private yards.

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The area's momentum isn't slowing. In 2025, the LA Sparks announced a $150 million training facility that has broken ground on the border of El Segundo and Manhattan Beach. It is the largest single investment in women's professional sports history. The 55,000-square-foot complex, designed by Gensler and slated to open in 2027, joins the Chargers, Lakers, Kings, and Rugby LA in what is quietly becoming the most concentrated professional sports corridor in the country, right on the doorstep of the South Bay.





Manhattan Beach sets an all-time record for well-being.

It's always nice to receive a little positive recognition.

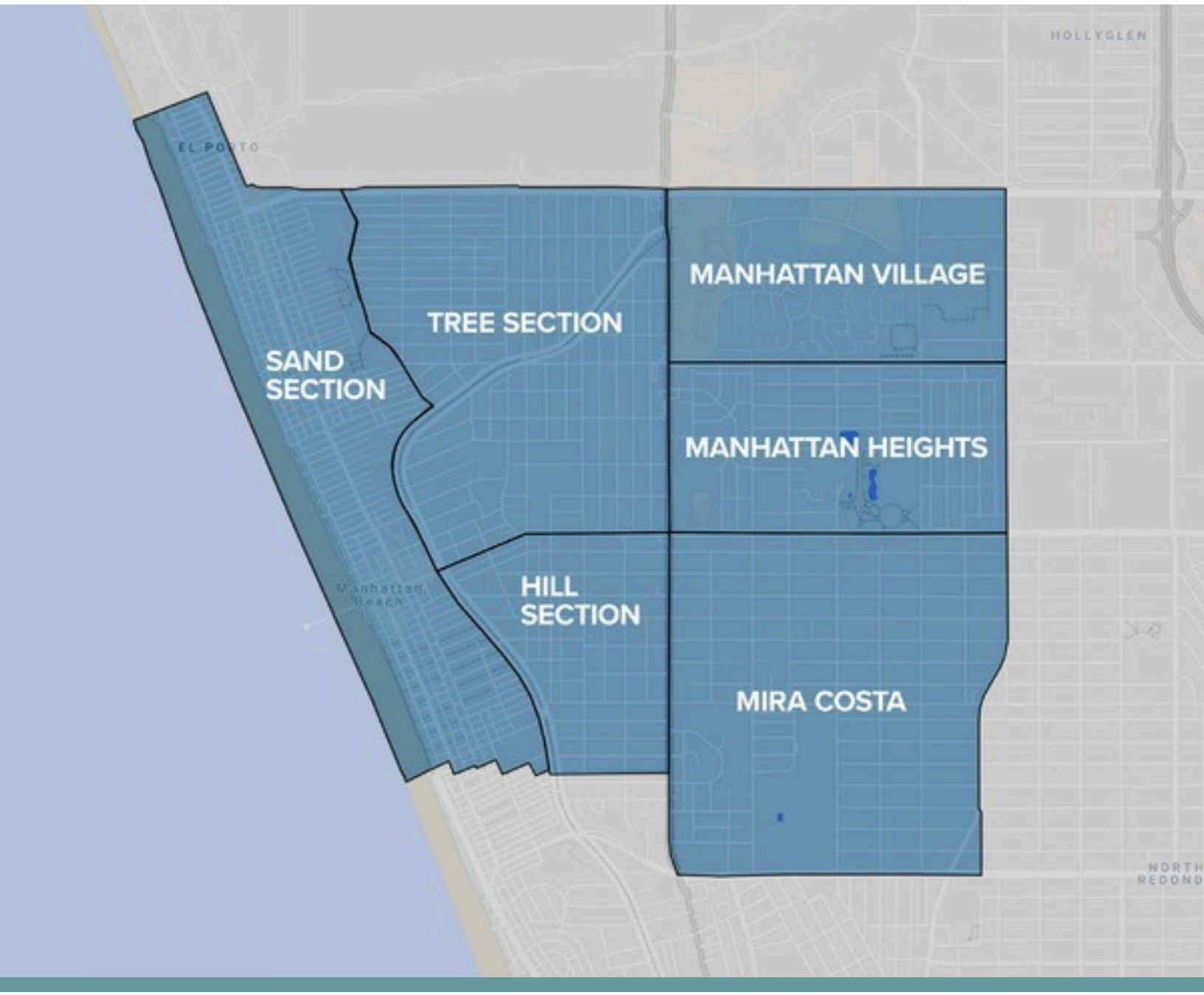
Some places don't just rank well. They redefine what's possible.

In February 2026, the Gallup National Health and Well-Being Index released its latest findings; and Manhattan Beach didn't just top the list. It recorded a score of 71.6, the highest community well-being measurement ever captured in the index's 17-year history, spanning more than 1,500 communities nationwide. Manhattan Beach has held this record before. In 2026, it broke its own.

by the numbers

Population: 34,600 Median household income: $193,904
Violent crime rate: 154.2 per 100,000 (national average: 525.9)
Residents who say their neighborhood is safe: 94.6%
Gallup Well-Being Index score: 71.6 — highest ever recorded

That kind of result doesn't happen by accident. It reflects what residents already know: that living here isn't just comfortable, it's categorically different. The combination of coastal access, exceptional safety, high household income, and a tight-knit community culture has produced something that's genuinely difficult to replicate.





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