DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Building Safety Division

Building and Unit Security Plan

In cases where property owners request help, City staff will work with landlords to establish a Building and Unit Security Plan. The plan will be based on CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) techniques. CPTED is the proper design and effective use of the built environment in order to lead to a reduction in the fear and incidence of crime, and an improvement in the quality of life.

A security plan should include how a landlord will address the following concepts. Taken alone few of the following elements will have a significant impact on crime. Taken together, they will stop some crime operators from wanting to move into the property, and will make it easier for neighbors to observe and document illegal activity.

- **Use lighting to its best advantage**. Install photo sensitive lighting over all entrances. Buyers, sellers, and manufactures of illegal drugs don't like to be seen. Front doors, back doors, and all outside entrances should be equipped with energy-efficient lighting. Walkways, parking lots and activity areas should be well lighted. Covered parking areas should have lighting installed under the canopy.

- **Make sure fences can be seen through**. If you install fencing, chain link or wrought iron types are best, because they limit access without also offering a place to hide. Wood fencing can also be used effectively, provided wide gaps are left between the boards.

- **Keep bushes around windows and doorways trimmed well**. Bushes should not impair the view of entrances and windows. Tree branches should also be trimmed up from the ground so as to discourage the possibility of a person hiding.

- **Post the address clearly**. Only the drug operator will benefit if the address is difficult to read from the street. When address numbers are faded, hidden by shrubs, not illuminated at night, or simply falling off, neighbors will have one more hurdle to cross before reporting activity and police will have more difficulty finding the unit when called.

- **Control traffic flow and access**. In larger complexes, control access points to deter pedestrian passerby from entering the property. Then do the same for automobile traffic. People involved in drug activity prefer "drive through" parking lots—those with multiple outlets. Consider blocking some exits, and rerouting traffic so all automobile and foot traffic, coming and going must pass the same point—within view of the manager's office.

- **Keep it looked cared for.** Housing that looks cared for will not only attract good tenants—it will also discourage many who are involved in illegal activity.

- **Remove graffiti fast**. Graffiti serves as an invitation for more problems and it can demoralize and intimidate a neighborhood.   Remove it and paint over it, remove it if it appears again-do not let it become an eyesore.

- **Repair vandalism**. An important part of discouraging vandalism is to repair the problem fast. If vandalism appears to be directed against you or your tenants, the police should be advised immediately.

- **Keep the exterior looking fresh and clean**.   Fresh paint, and litter-free grounds help communicate that the property is maintained by someone who cares about what happens there.

The above concepts are what a landlord should address in a security plan. Each property has many factors, including landscaping, building architecture, availability of resident managers, management practices, presence of security personnel, desires of law abiding residents and more. Every landlord's security plan should be based upon the security factors which affect them most.

Owners, managers and community users have a joint responsibility by reporting to the police all suspicious activities and criminal occurrences; without this, the effectiveness of CPTED is minimized. Residents should be encouraged to report suspicious activities to the police.

Source: Campbell DeLong Resources, Inc., www.cdri.com