FEDERATION OF
CALGARY COMMUNITIES

Community Safety Audit

One way of determining resident perceptions of safety in your community is to conduct a safety audit. The goal of a safety audit is to identify why resident may feel unsafe in an area and, if possible, to improve the environment or the activities in the area to make it safer and less threatening.

The benefits of conducting a safety audit in your community include:
- Getting to know your neighbours
- Reducing feelings of fear
- Changing physical spaces to make those spaces feel safer
- Increasing participation in community programs
- Reducing incidences of crime
- Increasing community pride

Often, your Community Resource Officer (CRO) with the Calgary Police Service will be able to provide you with support, information and perhaps accompany you on a safety audit.

Community:

Specific Location:

Audit was conducted: □ Indoors   □ Outdoors

Date: _____ Day of the Week: _____ Time of Day:_____

Audited by (name and contact number): _____

Reason for auditing the area: _____

_____ -

_____

_____

_____

Tips on taking notes during a safety audit:
- Regardless of how sharp your memory is, you will not remember everything. Therefore, it is important to take good notes during a safety audit.
- Our experience is that using a checklist as well as writing notes will make it easier to organize your ideas and suggestions later on.
- Write down any questions you have (even if you don't have the time to find the answers).
- Sometimes a place is so poorly designed that there aren't any real solutions beyond a temporary   Band-Aid. If this is the case it is still important to note the problem.

- Identifying and naming a problem is the beginning of changing your surroundings and the way new buildings and spaces are designed.
- Take notes on everything, including your comments on the process of the safety audit itself.
- Look over your notes a day or two later to see if they still make sense. Would someone who wasn't on the audit understand what you mean? If not, try to make your notes clearer.

1. **General Impressions**

   What is your first impression of the location? What is your "gut reaction" to it?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   List five (5) words that best describe the location.

   _____

2. **Lighting**   good lighting allows you to see the area and what's happening in it Circle all that apply.

   | Very Poor | Poor | Satisfactory | Good | Very Good |

   Too Dark   Too Bright

   Is the lighting consistent throughout the space?   Yes   No

   Are there any lights out?

   _____

   _____

   Are you able to identify a face from 25 meters (75 feet) away?   Yes   No

   Do you know where/whom to call when lights are out, broken or not on?   Yes   No

   Is outdoor lighting obscured by trees or bushes?   Yes   No

   How well does the lighting illuminate walkways and sidewalks?

   | Very Poor | Poorly | Satisfactory | Well | Very Well |

3. **Signage** [good signage lets you know where you are, what resources are available and helps you develop some familiarity with the location] Circle all that apply.

   Is there a sign (building name, room #) identifying where you are?   Yes   No
   If "No", are there directional signs or maps nearby which can help?   Yes   No

   Are there signs to show you where to get emergency assistance?   Yes   No

   Are there signs to direct you to wheelchair access?   Yes   No

   Do exit doors identify where they exit to?   Yes   No

Are there signs posted showing the legitimate operating hours of the area?   Yes   No

What is your overall impression of local signage?

       Very Poor   Poor   Satisfactory   Good   Very Good

In your opinion, what signs should be added?

_____

_____

4. **Sight Lines** [clear sightlines are important as they let you see, without interference, what lies ahead] Circle all that apply.

Can you see clearly what is up ahead?   Yes   No

If not, why not? Reasons could include:

   Indoors: sharp corners, walls, pillars _____

   Outdoors: brush, fencing, hills _____

Are there places where someone could be hiding?   Yes   No

   If "yes", where? _____

   _____

What changes would make it easier to see and provide sight lines?

   Transparent materials like glass   Angled corners   Trimmed bushes

   Vehicles moved   Snow/ Debris Cleared

   Other: _____

   _____

5. **Isolation – Eye Distance** [this lets you assess how far away things are from the location and if someone would see you if you were in trouble] Circle all that apply.

At the time of your audit, does the area feel isolated?   Yes   No

How many people are likely to be around?

In the morning?	None	Few	Several	Many
During the day?	None	Few	Several	Many
In the evening?	None	Few	Several	Many

Late at night (after 10pm)?   None   Few   Several   Many

Is it easy to predict when people will be around?   Yes   No

Is there a monitor or surveillance system?   Unsure   Yes   No

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

6. **Isolation – Ear Distance** [lets you assess if you could be heard in an emergency]

How far away is the nearest person to hear a call for help?   _____

How far away is the nearest emergency service such as an alarm, crisis phone or security patrol?

_____

Can you see a telephone or sign directing you to emergency help?   Yes   No

7. **Movement Predictors** [a predictable or unchangeable route or path; this allows you to assess whether or not you can determine the way or direction people will move] Circle all that apply.

How easy is it to predict people's routes/paths or direction when traveling?

   Very Easy   Somewhat Obvious   No Way of Knowing

Is there an alternative well lit, frequently traveled path available?   Yes   No

Can you tell what is at the end of the path, tunnel or walk?   Yes   No

Are there corners, alcoves or bushes someone could hide behind?   Yes   No

Other Comments: _____

_____

_____

8. **Possible Entrapment Areas** [lets you assess whether or not there are locations which are of special concern] Circle all that apply.

Indoors:
   Are there empty rooms that should be locked?   Yes   No

   Are there small, defined areas available such as:

      Recessed doorways?   Yes   No

      Stairwells?   Yes   No

4

Unlocked Closets?   Yes   No

Elevators?   Yes   No

Other: _____

Outdoors:

Are there empty buildings that should be locked?   Yes   No

Are there small, confined areas where you could be hidden from view?   Yes   No

Unlocked Equipment or Utility Shed?   Yes   No

Alley?   Yes   No

Recessed Doorway?   Yes   No

Construction Site?   Yes   No

Other: _____

_____

How easy would it be for an offender to disappear?   Easy   Very Easy   Don't Know

How difficult would it be for you to escape if needed?

Very Difficult   Difficult   Easy   Don't Know

9. **Nearby Land Uses** [lets you assess the impact of how the land is used as it relates to your comfort and safety] Circle all that apply.

What is the nearby land area mainly used for?

Stores   Restaurants   Parking Lots   Factories   Woods

Traffic   Residential Homes   Offices   Bodies of Water

Can you identify who owns or maintains the nearby land?   Yes   No

What is your impression of the nearby land use?   Poor   Satisfactory   Good

Is the land use in the area changing?   Yes   No

Does the new land use make you feel more or less comfortable than its old use?   Yes   No

What about the land use change makes you feel more or less comfortable?

10. Maintenance of the Area [these questions let you assess whether or not the location is used or abused by people] Circle all that apply.

Does the area seem cared for?	Yes	No
Does the area seem abandoned by people?	Yes	No
Is there graffiti visible?	Yes	No
Are there any signs of vandalism?	Yes	No
Would other materials, tones, textures or colours improve your sense of safety?	Yes	No

Is there litter lying around?   Lots   Some   None

Is there need of major repair?	Yes	No
Do you know who to contact for repairs?	Yes	No

Other Comments: _____

_____

_____

11. Overall Impressions of the Area. Circle all that apply.

If you weren't familiar with the area, would it be easy to find your way around?	Yes	No
Is the entry point visible and well defined?	Yes	No
Are public areas visually protected and well lit?	Yes	No
Is the area designed to be too spread out for safety?	Yes	No
Are there a confusing number of levels or paths in the area?	Yes	No

12. Social Concerns [this lets you assess whether or not there are groups and organizations in place which add to your feelings of comfort and safety] Circle all that apply.

Are there social activities occurring in the neighbourhood?   Yes   No

Describe how this makes you feel:

_____

_____

Are there organizations and groups in the neighbourhood which are concerned about the
neighbourhood and its people?   Yes   No

Describe how this makes you feel:

_____

_____

Do you have friends or neighbours in the area you could count on in an emergency?　　Yes　　No

Is the population of the area changing?　　Yes　　No

Describe how more or less safe this makes you feel:

Are there people with special needs in the area whose needs are not being met?　　Yes　　No

Describe how this makes you feel:

Are there institutions in the area which make you feel more or less comfortable?　　Yes　　No

Describe how this makes you feel:

Now that you have completed your safety audit, some suggested next steps include:

- Sharing your results with the community association board of directors and general public. Consider hosting a meeting open to the public where you share your safety audit results and ask for feedback. This could give you more information around the issues, encourage ideas for change, and help to develop volunteer support for the changes you want to see. This can also help you to identify the community's top issues.
- Develop recommendations to amend some of the issues you documented.
- Prioritize amendments and consider what amendments could be done by the community itself, for example, increasing signage or adding lighting. Sometimes these will be inexpensive and relatively easy to do, while alternatively some recommendations may be costly to complete and involve other stakeholders like, The City of Calgary, local businesses, schools or even private landowners.

Don't forget to visit the Virtual Resource Centre on our website for various other helpful resources including crime prevention and safety resources, community engagement resources, Calgary Police Resources and more.