



**Neighborhood Safety and Stability Subcommittee  
3/18/08**

This packet contains handouts that were distributed at the Neighborhood Safety and Stability Subcommittee meeting on March 18, 2008 and includes the following items:

- Crime Free Multi-Housing Workgroup recommendations
- Presentation, Friends of the Park Jacksonville – Moving Forward

**Neighborhood Safety & Stability Subcommittee  
Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Work Group  
Recommendations**

**Preface**

The Work Group undertook the task of providing recommendations for reducing crime and improving general safety in multi-family housing communities. The group operated under the premise that there is much that can be done on many levels by: the owners/managers, the residents themselves, the police and government.

The recommendations listed represent the work of the group over three meetings. The group was supported by knowledgeable resource people from JSO, HUD and the city's Housing & Neighborhoods Department.

The strength of these recommendations lies in their voluntary, self-help nature, their ease of implementation and their cost effectiveness. Only a few recommendations call for additional allocation of city revenue. These methods are tried and validated to be successful and would serve to reduce crime in the impacted neighborhoods almost immediately. The JSO Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing program alone would take us a long way toward our goal. This program serves as the centerpiece for our recommendations.

The weakness of these recommendations lies, too, in their voluntary, self-help nature. They take commitment and a strong change in management attitude to bring about success. Therein lies the problem. These methods are not new but have not been widely applied voluntarily, especially in impacted areas. Other than the momentum created by *The Jacksonville Journey*, there is no reason to feel that these methods will be enthusiastically embraced and consistently applied.

Understanding that many of these recommendations could potentially add expense to affordable properties that, by their very nature, might not have excess cash flow, we identified ways the city might provide incentives and matching grants to property owners that participate in the JSO program. In addition, we propose city legislation with some "teeth" that would strongly encourage complexes that have excessive police service calls and crime to participate in the JSO program.

Finally, recommendations calling for more complex measures of action will take additional time for the city's legal and other staff to fully craft. But this must be done if we as a city are to reach our intended objectives.

**Recommendations to the City and HUD**

Support the JSO in the implementation of its Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing (CFMFH) program and encourage all apartment communities to participate in the effort.

Develop incentives for property owners to implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) recommendations. Incentives would be available to property owners in high-crime areas who are certified participants in JSO's Crime Free Multi Family Housing program. Depending on the source of revenue, this program may be expanded throughout Jacksonville.

Ask City Council to consider making resident services programs in properties located in high crime areas a priority for Public Service Grants, Community Development Block Grants or other City funds; Make a five year commitment for funding.

Consistent with due process and contractual rights, work with the court system and Legal Aid to have judges and attorneys understand the need for strong lease enforcement and the need to support property owners in maintaining crime-free environments. Furthermore, call for an accelerated eviction process through the court system to better serve as a deterrent for criminal behavior, and call for expedited service of writs of possession following judgment. JSO is currently working with judges to educate them on the Crime Free Multi Family Housing program.

Encourage HUD to:

- Require its subsidized properties to participate in the JSO's Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing program
- Stay in closer touch with its property managers
- Request that HUD be notified of all criminal acts on their properties
- Encourage or require properties to take advantage of HUD's Neighborhood Network Coordinator program

**Potential city legislative action:**

Review the existing property safety code to ensure inclusion of CPTED & HUD housing quality standards within the existing inspection framework

Enact legislation to impose a civil penalty or user fee on owners of apartment complexes with calls for police services over a threshold amount, similar to Section 168.104, Ordinance Code, concerning false burglary or robbery alarms. The penalty or fee would be waived for owners of complexes certified in and actively participating in the JSO's Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Program. Owners cited for excessive calls for police services could elect to participate in the Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Program in lieu of paying the penalty or fee established by this legislation, similar to the option in Section 603.302 for parents to attend parenting classes in lieu of paying a fine for children's curfew violations (see discussion section below).

**Recommendations to property owners:**

Become certified in the JSO Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Program

Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies

- Place sign on all properties in visible entry area listing a number to call to voice concerns or complaints

- Erect a clear and accurate site map at property entry way
- Enhance lighting
- Place locks on all doors and windows
- Ensure clear and legible street signs and apartment numbers
- Install useful peepholes (ie: wide-angle view, accessible by people with disabilities)
- Register cars and issue parking decals for all residents. Include in lease agreement that tenants must have long-term guests display visitor pass in vehicle.
- Improve attractiveness and cleanliness

#### Property Management

- Develop and enforce leases that prohibit criminal acts by leaseholders and make leaseholders responsible for their guests. The lease standards must be strict and uniformly enforced.
- Allow a tenant organization to hear disputed cases of eviction to allow room for extenuating circumstances.
- Participate in a citywide database showing the names and driver's license numbers of all persons evicted for violent crimes or drugs in order to prevent these residents from moving into another development. The JSO is working with a private party to take ownership of the database. Furthermore, property owners/managers should network regularly w/ adjoining communities to identify evictions.
- Offer diversity training for property owners/managers

#### Resident Services

- Develop resident organizations in all properties in high-crime areas
- Owners and managers should meet regularly with the resident organization and JSO to discuss crime, maintenance, services and other issues.
- Provide financial support so that resident organizations can conduct their business where possible. (For example, the Jacksonville Housing Authority provides \$25 per unit for stamps, phone, supplies, etc.).
- Encourage resident organizations to participate with other area community organizations such as CPACs and SHADCOs
- Space should be provided by property owners/managers where possible for resident organizations and their activities.
- A Neighborhood Watch program should be a basic component of all resident organizations.
- Provide social service programs or partner with health, education, social services or faith based programs to enable residents to improve skills and transition to higher levels of housing. Where possible, space should be made available for these services to take place.
- Encourage all CPACs, SHADCOs and the Jacksonville Tenants Association to assist in placing tenants in CFMFH-certified housing

#### **Recommendations to Jacksonville Sheriff's Office**

Provide more frequent policing in high-crime developments during peak hours of criminal activity

Ask officers to knock on doors and get to know as many residents as possible, with the

knowledge and concurrence of property owners, managers

Encourage police personnel, preferably the beat officer, to attend resident organization meetings and discuss crime information and crime prevention measure, as often as possible  
Provide statistics to property managers/owners about calls for service and crime on property and within the neighborhood (perhaps through the Crime Free MFH Program website that is being developed.)

Encourage JSO to provide adequate resources to facilitate all recommendations in this section through additional funding and/or the re-allocation of existing resources.