



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE ISSUED: March 6, 2012 REPORT NO. 12-028

ATTENTION: Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee
Agenda of March 14, 2012

SUBJECT: Informational Report from the San Diego Police Department
Regarding the Crime Free Multi-Housing Program

SUMMARY

THIS IS AN INFORMATION ITEM ONLY. NO ACTION IS REQUIRED ON THE PART OF THE COMMITTEE OR THE CITY COUNCIL.

BACKGROUND

In July of 1992, Mesa, Arizona, introduced the Crime Free Multi Housing Program (CFMH). This bold, new program had no precedent. The program's concept embraced a multi-faceted approach to crime prevention. CFMH is comprised of a unique partnership of law enforcement agencies, rental property owners, managers, and tenants. It is a voluntary, solution oriented, training and certification program that is widely used to keep illegal activity out of rental property. This can be accomplished through implementation of its three-phase approach to address the opportunities for crime in rental property.

The program's design includes a certification process by law enforcement agencies. With the local law enforcement agency providing signs, certificates, and advertising privileges, the program has drawn interest nationally and internationally. A Crime Free Lease Addendum proved to be the backbone of CFMH. This addendum to the lease agreement lists specific criminal acts that, if committed on, or about, the property, would result in the immediate termination of the lease.

The CFMH Program achieved almost instant success. In rental properties with the highest crime rates, the immediate results showed up to a 90% reduction in police calls for service. Although results vary, even the best properties saw reductions of 15% to 20% in calls for service and criminal activity.

THE SAN DIEGO PROGRAM

In the City of San Diego CFMH was piloted in Southeastern, Mid City and Central Division. In each of the pilot locations, the program was well received and readily accepted on a voluntary basis by owners, managers and residents.

Three of the original pilot locations included the Meadowbrook Apartments, Sea Breeze Gardens and the Bella Vista Apartments. In each case during a of six month comparison period, calls for police service to each specific location were reduced.

In February 2012, a meeting was held to identify future partners, potential funding sources and duties and responsibilities to support CFMH. Representatives from the San Diego Housing Commission, Housing Urban Development (HUD), City Attorney Neighborhood Prosecution Unit, Code Compliance, Price Charities, San Diego Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention, Institute for Public Strategies (IPS), San Diego Police Department and SAY San Diego were in attendance. As a result of the meeting, SAY San Diego agreed to assume the lead for CFMH. SAY San Diego brings a track record for organization and a strong reputation for developing sustainable funding. All others in attendance agreed to play vital supporting roles for this outstanding program.

During the February 2012 meeting, the partners agreed to support expanding the CFMH Program City Wide. The partners unanimously supported voluntary program compliance in lieu of enacting a municipal code ordinance. It is the staff's suggestion that the ordinance issue be reviewed again within eighteen months.

CONCLUSION

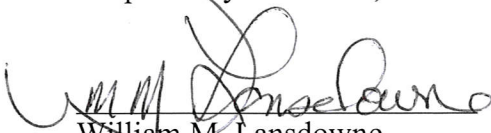
The Crime Free Multi Housing Program is successful because it approaches crime on many fronts. Law enforcement cannot solve crime problems alone. Neither can the management or residents of rental properties. However, by working together, the end result has been the most successful approach to crimes in rental communities. There are three ways criminal activity comes into a rental community: 1) The criminal lives there; 2) They visit friends there; 3) They come to the property to commit crimes.

The CFMH Program addresses all three of these possibilities. By implementing the principles of the program, property owners and managers not only reduce the likelihood of crime in the community, they also reduce the number of visitors who come to the property with criminal intent (i.e., to purchase or sell drugs).

For the opportunistic criminal, the use of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CEPTED) has been used to combat crimes that might occur in the parking lots or common areas. This includes assaults, robberies, drive-by shootings, and auto thefts.

If law enforcement, property managers and residents will make a dedicated effort to crime prevention and the Crime Free Multi Housing Program, the outlook for success is extremely high.

Respectfully submitted,



William M. Lansdowne
Chief of Police