



Safety Audit Guide For Crime Prevention

"Building Partnerships For Safer Environment"

**Safer Cities Initiatives Office
The City of Edmonton**

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“It is efficient to confine the initial survey to bare essentials and gather special data later in the design process as new questions arise.”

Kevin Lynch

THE CRIME PREVENTION SAFETY AUDIT CONCEPT

A Safety Audit is a partnership among residents, community groups, local businesses, neighbourhood institutions and government. It helps your neighbourhood feel like a safer place by enabling you to assess how safe or unsafe you and your neighbours currently feel in your surroundings. It facilitates communication with your neighbours, local merchants, neighbourhood schools, Community Services Centre, Police Neighbourhood Foot Patrol, and other stakeholders to address safety problems and bring about solutions that will make your neighbourhood a safer place for you and your family.

The perception of being safe enhances the feelings of security in our living environment. Government alone cannot make us feel safer nor can they create safer neighbourhoods. Our feelings of safety are our own and each of us must work for the solutions that satisfy our own feelings.

Neighbourhood Crime Prevention Safety Audits are a practical way for monitoring a **Safer City**. It is hoped that citizens of Edmonton, volunteer groups, and businesses will use this tool to reduce opportunities for crime by identifying and addressing specific safety concerns in their area. By working together, people in communities and the City of Edmonton can help to prevent crime and enhance feelings of safety.

Use the Neighbourhood Crime Prevention Safety Audit Guide:

- ♦ **GIVE IT TO YOUR FRIENDS**
- ♦ **TAKE IT TO YOUR COMMUNITY GROUP**
- ♦ **TAKE IT TO YOUR LOCAL MERCHANT**
- ♦ **TAKE IT TO YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD SCHOOL**
- ♦ **TAKE IT ...**

and help build a Safer Edmonton for yourself, your neighbours, and for us all.

We wish to acknowledge and thank METRAC [Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children], a Toronto-based group, for their pioneering work on Safety Audits. We used their resource materials extensively. This guide has been developed from their Women's Safety Audit Guide, adapting it to our situation in Edmonton.

Crime Prevention Safety Audits focus on working together as a neighbourhood to increase people's safety in public and semi-public places like:

- parks
- bus stops
- streets
- the workplace
- colleges and universities
- underground parking garages
- school yards
- washrooms in shopping malls
- the transit system
- pedways
- laundry rooms
- parking lots and parkades
- recreation centres
- and anywhere you feel unsafe

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INTRODUCTION

"What can we do to make our communities safer? This question is asked more and more by Canadians across the country. For many, the obvious answer is more police, courts and corrections. But it is becoming increasingly clear that this response cannot work alone. If we are to succeed in improving the quality of life in our communities, we will need to do much more to prevent crime, and to deal with the underlying social problems that cause it." (Source: *Toward A Safer Edmonton For All, Final Report, Mayor's Task Force on Safer Cities, May, 1992*).

It is our belief that "that the community is the focal point of crime prevention". Government and citizens must work together to foster community-based efforts to increase neighbourhood safety. What follows is one tool that can be used to assist in this process. This tool was developed with two important principles in mind:

1. The reduction of feelings of fear and vulnerability leads to perceptions of enhanced safety and quality of life for us all.
2. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design [CPTED] offers perspectives that help in the identification of problems and leads to solutions for a safer neighbourhood.

We trust that this guide will aid you in addressing questions you might have, inspire you to get involved, and challenge you to work for change in parts of your neighbourhood where you or your neighbours feel unsafe or uncomfortable. By working together, we can make Edmonton a **Safer City** for us all.

➡ Mayor's Task Force on Safer Cities

The starting point for the Safety Audits in Edmonton was the Mayor's Task Force on Safer Cities. The Task Force first met in October 1990 and built upon the work being done across the country connecting crime prevention with social development and environmental design.

Several recommendations put forward by the Mayor's Task Force encouraged the development and use of the Neighbourhood Crime Prevention Safety Audit Guide. This document was developed in response to these recommendations and it is our hope that it will be one step forward in creating a **Safer City**.

➡ What is a Crime Prevention Safety Audit?

A Crime Prevention Safety Audit is a tool that can be used to note, for future corrective action, what evokes uncomfortable or unsafe feelings in your surroundings. It is an inventory of the features in an area, (or building, parkade, alley, park, street) which you feel affect your safety and allows you to take action to correct them. Whether there is sufficient lighting, whether you would be heard if you called for help, whether there are people who can help, or what improvements you'd like to see to enhance safety are questions whose answers help determine the appropriate action to take.

The main goal of a Crime Prevention Safety Audit is to work together to create safe places. The result will be reduced opportunities for anti-social behaviour, violence and crime in the area in which you live.

Crime Prevention Safety Audits are simple but powerful tools. The strength of the Audit lies in people's experience. We each have a wealth of knowledge from living in or frequenting an area. We are the experts on our own neighbourhoods. By sharing what we know and what we feel, and by working together, we can make change happen.

➡ How to begin

Now you have obtained a copy of the Safety Audit Guide for Crime Prevention and you are interested to conduct an Audit. If you are a member of a neighbourhood group e.g., community league, church, neighbourhood association) you may want to work with and involve them and perhaps request that they sponsor the Neighbourhood Crime Prevention Safety Audit. While this is not essential to a successful Audit, such collaboration can bring the resources of the group to the Audit and help build upon its strengths.

To begin your Audit, contact the Safer Cities Initiatives Office (tel. 496-5821) to obtain a copy of the *Safety Audit Guide for Crime Prevention*. Copies are also available from the Citizen Action Centre (tel. 496-8200), Community Services Department (tel. 496-4999) and various Police Stations.

The steps you need to follow to do your Safety Audit are outlined in the next five sections. These sections show you:

1. How to invite others to join you.
2. How to prepare for an Audit.
3. How to do an Audit.
4. What you need to do after you've finished the Audit.
5. Some ideas for special types of Audits.

A. TALKING TO OTHERS

Safety Audits do not have to involve a lot of people, but often the very places you want to audit are those where you feel unsafe. Since the best time to audit is at night, it is recommended that you do the Audit with other people.

You can start by talking to people or groups you know. For example, you could contact:

- friends and neighbours
- your community league
- a tenants' or residents' association
- your church group or other organization

If you are doing the Audit at work, invite co-workers and your union or staff representative. If you are auditing your university or college campus, invite student union members and staff.

➡ *Inviting others to join the Crime Prevention Safety Audits:*

You may want to invite people to join you on the Audit who can help you get improvements made, such as your city councillor or school trustee, reporters from a community newspaper, or the person in charge of a place that concerns you.

B. DEFINING THE AUDIT

➡ *How big an area do you want to cover?*

Sometimes it is not clear what size of area you to audit - a building, a street, an area surrounding an LRT station, a neighbourhood, or an entire city. You may want to start small. For example, if your concern is the whole neighbourhood, you could do things in steps or stages:

- do a full Audit of a typical street;
- audit the whole neighbourhood from the point of view of one or two factors like lighting and signs or the social connections of residents; or
- audit your route to and from the Transit zone, the store, the community league hall or the school.

At work or school, you may want to concentrate on the places that most concern you. These may be washrooms, parking lots, stairways and tunnels, or any isolated areas.

A survey of local residents and others who frequent the area of concern could be taken around the neighbourhood or in a specific building. This is one way to find out where and in what situations people in the area feel least safe or least comfortable.

Survey questions could include:

- How safe do you feel in your building/on the street/waiting at the bus stop?
☐ very safe ☐ safe ☐ unsafe ☐ very unsafe
- Have you limited what you do because you don't feel safe? ☐ yes ☐ no
- Have you ever felt at risk of sexual assault in this area? ☐ yes ☐ no
- Please list five specific places where you feel the least safe.

- Do you have friends and/or neighbours you can count on if in trouble? ☐ yes ☐ no
- Please comment on what would help you to feel more safe.

Audits have been done in different ways. For example:

- Two adjacent cities invited women to participate; in one night they did an Audit of the areas in the city that were of most concern to them.
- Over a 5-month period, every building and outdoor area was audited on a major University campus.

- A neighbourhood group encouraged residents to do Audits on their own street and to hand in the results to the residents' association.
- Employees in an office building audited their workplace, the parking garage, and bus stops in both the summer and winter.

➡ ***How many people on an Audit Team?***

The best size for an Audit Team is three to seven people. This size allows for different points of view, but is still small enough to enable much discussion. If you want to cover a large space, like a neighbourhood, you may need more than one team.

➡ ***The Audit Team:***

The Audit Team should reflect the needs and opinions of people in the whole neighbourhood. It should, if possible, include isolated seniors, those with disabilities, and other vulnerable people. If this is not possible, try to be aware of the unique points of view of other people who might be:

- using a wheelchair
- hard of hearing
- blind
- mentally challenged
- very young
- elderly
- poor
- shift workers
- travelling with young children
- carrying parcels
- members of a minority culture or group
- unable to read
- not familiar with English

Remember, when scheduling time for an Audit, consider potential child care needs. This consideration will make it possible for more people to participate.

➡ ***Time frame:***

The ideal time to allow for a "first audit" is approximately two to three hours. You will need about 1/2 - 1 hour to talk about the Audit and decide on the location and size, 1 - 1 1/2 hour to complete the Audit, and 1/2 - 1 hour to discuss the findings and plan to write the recommendations. If the same group continues to work together, subsequent Audits may not require as much time.

C. DOING THE AUDIT

➡ ***What you need for the Audit:***

- Take a flashlight along.
- Use a red or black pen or marker instead of a blue one. Your notes will photocopy better.
- Take a camera or video camera if possible. If you're going out at night, use a high speed film --not less than 400 ASA (high speed films can be used to take pictures indoors). It is also a good idea to write down the number of each photo and note the location from which it was taken.
- Take notes or use your camera to document ***positive*** features as well as problem areas. It can be very powerful to contrast both good and bad examples of the same factor -- for example, a well-lit street and a poorly-lit street.

- It is important to talk to people you meet during the Audit. Introduce yourself. Tell them that you are looking at safety in the area and would like to know what they think. You might ask how often and why they are there, whether they have had any bad experiences, and what changes they'd like to see.
- If it's difficult for you to take notes, use a tape-recorder.
- Make arrangements for a place to meet before and after the Audit.
- Ensure each participant has safe transportation home from the Audit.

➔ ***When to Audit:***

- Time of Day:

It is recommended to do outside Audits after dark. It's the only way to know if there is a problem with lighting -- one of the most important safety features. Night time is also the time of day when people are most isolated and feel least safe.

Sometimes a place is more deserted and threatening early in the morning or in the middle of the afternoon when everyone else is at work. Only you will know which part of each 24 hours is of most concern TO YOU.

- Time of Year:

Seasons also affect how safe a place feels. For example, safety concerns are different when tree branches and bushes are bare in winter. Trees and plants in full bloom in summer potentially hide an attacker or block out light. Dry parking lots are different when they are full of puddles, covered in ice, or surrounded by snow banks which block the view.

You may want to go back to the same place more than once to note differences at alternative times of day, week, season or year.

➡ ***Using a checklist:***

You've decided to do an Audit because you feel unsafe in a part of the city and you want to do something about it. The idea, then, is to gather the information that will help you press for changes.

The questions you are trying to answer are:

- "Why don't I like this place?"
- "When and why do I feel uncomfortable here?"
- "What changes would make me feel safer?"

Experiences from other cities' Audits indicate that taking the time to think about the questions on a checklist enables the auditor to get a clearer picture of the area.

Stopping to take a closer look at different factors also allows people to share feelings about a place.

Sometimes one person will remember something, and that story will trigger another memory in someone else. Each of these stories helps us determine why a place does or doesn't feel safe.

Finally, if you are working with other people who do not understand the problems as well as you, the checklist can help you work together. For example, your building superintendent may rush past an area, but the checklist will remind you to take the time to look at the lighting there before you move on.

- What if you were walking along here late at night?
- What if you had to wait for someone to pick you up?
- Is this doorway a possible entrapment site?
- Does it feel safe in winter? In the rain?
- Are there fewer people around at different times of the day, week, or year?

Going through a checklist gives you an outline of the kinds of questions to ask. It takes the whole picture and breaks it down into parts. Remember, this checklist only contains suggested questions. There may be additional ones you want to answer that are not included.

****You can photocopy and enlarge the
checklist on the following pages to make it
easier to write on****

A CHECKLIST OF SAFETY AUDIT FOR CRIME PREVENTION

☐ OUTDOORS

☐ INDOORS

GENERAL AREA: _____

SPECIFIC LOCATION: _____

DATE: _____

DAY: _____

TIME: _____

AUDITED BY: _____

REASONS FOR AUDITING THE AREA:

➡ *Tips on taking notes:*

- Regardless of how sharp your memory is, you will not remember everything. Therefore it is important to take good notes. Our experience shows that using a checklist and writing notes on it will make it easier to organize your ideas and suggestions later on.

- Write down any questions that 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. 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 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

a] Describe your first initial reactions to the site:

b] What 5 words best describe the place?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Lighting [good lighting allows you to see the area and what's happening in it]

a] What is your impression of the lighting?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> very poor | <input type="checkbox"/> poor | <input type="checkbox"/> too dark |
| <input type="checkbox"/> satisfactory | <input type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> too bright |
| <input type="checkbox"/> very good | | |

b] Is the lighting consistent throughout the space?

☐ yes ☐ no

c] Are any lights out? _____

d] If so, how many? _____

e] What proportion of lights are out? _____

[e.g. Maybe only two bulbs in your hallway are burned out, but if there are only three bulbs to start with, then a more powerful way to say this is that two-thirds of the lights are out.]

f] Are you able to see and identify a face 25 metres (75 feet) away?

g] Do you know where/whom to call if lights are out, broken, not yet turned on, etc.?

☐ yes ☐ no

- h] Outdoors: Is the lighting obscured by trees or bushes? ☐ yes ☐ no
- i] How well does the lighting illuminate pedestrian walkways and sidewalks?
☐ very poor ☐ poor ☐ satisfactory
☐ good ☐ very good

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

- a] Is there a sign (i.e. room no., building name) identifying where you are? ☐ yes ☐ no
- b] If no, are there directional signs or maps nearby which can help you identify where you are? ☐ yes ☐ no
- c] Are there signs which show you where to get emergency assistance if needed? ☐ yes ☐ no
- d] Are there signs which direct you to wheelchair access? ☐ yes ☐ no
- e] Do exit doors identify where they exit to? ☐ yes ☐ no
- f] Is there information posted describing the hours the building is legitimately open? ☐ yes ☐ no

- g] What is your impression of the overall signage?
☐ very poor ☐ poor ☐ satisfactory
☐ good ☐ very good

4. Sightlines [clear sightlines are important as they let you see, without interference, what lies ahead]

- a] Can you clearly see what is up ahead?
☐ yes ☐ no

- b] If no, the reasons may be:
Indoors: ☐ sharp corners ☐ walls
 ☐ pillars
 ☐ others _____

Outdoors: ☐ bushes ☐ fences
 ☐ hill
 ☐ others _____

- c] Are there places someone could be hiding?
☐ yes ☐ no

- d] If yes, where? _____

- e] What would make it easier to see? e.g.:

- ☐ transparent materials like glass
☐ vehicles moved ☐ angled corners
☐ security mirrors ☐ trimmed bushes
☐ snow cleared

Other comments?

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]

a] At the time of your Audit, did the area feel isolated?
☐ yes ☐ no

b] How many people are likely to be around?

- *In the early morning:*

☐ none ☐ few ☐ several ☐ many

- *During the day:*

☐ none ☐ a few ☐ several ☐ many

- *In the evening:*

☐ none ☐ a few ☐ several ☐ many

- *Late at night (after 10 pm):*

☐ none ☐ a few ☐ several ☐ many

c] Is it easy to predict when people will be around?
☐ yes ☐ no

d] Is there a monitor or surveillance system?
☐ yes ☐ no ☐ don't know

e] Other comments?

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

- a] How far away is the nearest person to hear a call for help?_____
- b] How far away is the nearest emergency service such as an alarm, security personnel, crisis telephone?_____ ☐ don't know
- c] Can you see a telephone, or a sign directing you to emergency assistance? ☐ yes ☐ no
- d] Is the area patrolled? ☐ yes ☐ no ☐ don't know
- e] If yes, how frequently?
☐ every hour
☐ once per afternoon/evening
☐ don't know
Other comments?

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]

- a] How easy is it to predict people's movements? (e.g. their routes)
☐ very easy ☐ somewhat obvious
☐ no way of knowing

- b] Is there an alternative well-lit route or path available?
☐ yes ☐ no ☐ don't know
- c] Is there an alternative frequently travelled route or path available?
☐ yes ☐ no ☐ don't know
- d] Can you tell what is at the other end of the path, tunnel, or walk?
☐ yes ☐ no
- e] Are there corners, alcoves, or bushes where someone could hide and wait for you?
☐ yes ☐ no
- f] Other comments?

8. Possible Entrapment Sites [lets you assess whether or not there are locations which are of special concern]

Indoors:

- a] Are there empty rooms that should be locked?
☐ yes ☐ no
- b] Are there small, well-defined areas? e.g.:
☐ stairwells
☐ recessed doorways or lockers
☐ unlocked closets
☐ elevators
☐ others: _____

Outdoors:

- c] Are there small, confined areas where you would be hidden from view? e.g.:
- ☐ unlocked equipment or utility shed
 - ☐ alley or lane
 - ☐ recessed doorway
 - ☐ construction site
 - ☐ others: _____

9. Escape Routes [lets you assess whether or not there are ways to escape should there be an incident]

- a] How easy would it be for an offender to disappear?
- ☐ very easy ☐ quite easy ☐ don't know
- b] How difficult would it be for you to escape to safety if you had to?
- ☐ very difficult ☐ quite difficult ☐ don't know

10. Nearby Land Uses [lets you assess the impact of how the land is used as it relates to your comfort and safety]

- a] What is the surrounding or nearby land used for?
- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> stores | <input type="checkbox"/> offices |
| <input type="checkbox"/> restaurants | <input type="checkbox"/> factories |
| <input type="checkbox"/> heavily treed/wooded area | <input type="checkbox"/> busy traffic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> parking lots | <input type="checkbox"/> river bank |
| <input type="checkbox"/> residential houses and streets | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> don't know | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ | |

b] Can you identify who owns or maintains nearby land? ☐ yes ☐ no

c] What are your impressions of nearby land use?
☐ very poor ☐ poor ☐ satisfactory
☐ good ☐ very good

d] Is the land use in the area changing?

e] Does its new use make you feel more or less comfortable than its old use?

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

11. Factors That Make the Place More Human [these questions let you assess whether or not the location is used or abused by people]

a] Does the place feel cared for?

☐ yes ☐ no

b] Does the place feel abandoned?

☐ yes ☐ no

- c] What gives you that feeling?

- d] Is there graffiti on the walls? ☐ yes ☐ no
- e] In your opinion, are there racist or sexist slogans/signs/images on the walls? ☐ yes ☐ no
- f] Are there signs of vandalism? ☐ yes ☐ no
- g] Would other materials, tones, textures or colours improve your sense of safety? ☐ yes ☐ no
- h] Other comments?

12. Maintenance [these questions help you tell if the area is well looked after and well used by people]

- a] What are your impressions of maintenance?
☐ very poor ☐ poor
☐ satisfactory ☐ good
☐ very good
- b] Is there litter lying around? ☐ yes ☐ no

- c] Is there need for major repair? ☐ yes ☐ no
- d] Do you know to whom maintenance concerns should be reported? ☐ yes ☐ no
- e] From your experience, how long do repairs generally take? ☐ yes ☐ no

13. Overall Design [lets you express your overall feeling after you have looked at the site in detail]

- a] Describe your impressions of the overall design:
☐ very poor ☐ poor
☐ satisfactory ☐ good
☐ very good
- b] If you weren't familiar with the place, would it be easy to find your way around? ☐ yes ☐ no
- c] Is the entry visible and well defined? ☐ yes ☐ no
- d] Are public areas visually protected? ☐ yes ☐ no
- e] Does the place make sense? ☐ yes ☐ no
- f] Is the place too spread out? ☐ yes ☐ no
- g] Are there a confusing number of levels? ☐ yes ☐ no
- h] Other comments?

14. 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]

a] Are there cultural and social activities occurring in the neighbourhood?

☐ yes ☐ no

b] Describe how this makes you feel more or less

c] Are there organizations and groups in the neighbourhood which are concerned about the neighbourhood and its people?

☐ yes ☐ no

d] Describe how this makes you feel more or less comfortable:

e] Do you have friends or neighbours in the area you could count on in an emergency?

☐ yes ☐ no

f] Is the population of the area changing?

☐ yes ☐ no

g] Describe how more or less safe this makes you feel:

h] Are there people with special needs in the area whose needs are not being met?

☐ yes ☐ no

i] Describe who they are:

j] Are there institutions in the area which make you feel more or less comfortable?

☐ yes ☐ no

k] Describe how they make you feel more or less comfortable:

From the Crime Prevention Safety Audit questions that you just completed, identify what can be done to make you feel safer about this location

What improvements would you like to see?

Do you have any specific recommendations?

What skills or resources could you contribute to making these improvements?

D. AFTER THE AUDIT

➡ Organizing Your Findings:

After you have completed the Audit, you may have a lot of information about problem areas and many ideas about changes you'd like to see.

One method of organizing the information is grouping all the points on one factor, such as "lighting", together. As well, comments about how far a person has to go to get help, whether there are enough telephones nearby, and how likely it is that other people might see an assault, can be brought together under "isolation" factors.

Another way of organizing the information from the checklist(s) is by *type* of space. For example, safety factors common to all parking lots could be grouped together.

When you have finished organizing the findings, ensure that no part of the area has been overlooked. If it has, consider collecting more information using a mini-Audit or by surveying people in the area.

➡ **Sharing the Results:**

Whether they were part of the Audit or not, you may want to get support, information, ideas, and feedback from people living or working in the area. Consider holding a small meeting where those who did not participate can talk about their concerns and help with the recommendations.

This will give you more information concerning the problems, encourage ideas for improvement, and create support for the changes you want to see.

➡ **Making Recommendations:**

The first step is to look at the checklists(s) and determine what are the most important concerns. List these concerns in order of importance, most urgent first.

The second step is to make recommendations aimed at alleviating the problems. For example, if the Audit shows that buildings are hard to identify and find, the recommendation might be to put up signs. Signs need to be readable at night and by those who may be blind (for example, lit signs with symbols instead of words or Braille signs). Develop clear and easily implementable recommendations. Audit recommendations should be prioritized to aid those who need to act in understanding what is most important to you.

➡ **Working for Change:**

Once your Safety Audit is complete and you have made the necessary recommendations, contact the Citizen Action Centre (telephone 496-8200).

Some recommendations can be implemented easily and relatively quickly, while others may take time to effect. Some negotiations may be necessary as there may be many requests for changes. Respective City Departments will advise you or your organization of the action it is taking or is making on your behalf.

Some recommendations will require action be taken by other stakeholders for example, local businesses, schools or the Provincial government. The City cannot ensure that other stakeholders will comply with the recommendations. The City staff can advise your group as to strategies that have been effective in getting attention and action from them. One strategy that may be useful in grabbing the attention of property owners is sending a follow-up letter. This letter will alert the stakeholder to areas of concern. An example of one such letter can be found in the appendix.

Implementation of recommendations of Safety Audits will take time. The strength and support of your group will make the work seem easier and the benefits of having a **Safer City** more worthwhile.

➤ *Review and Ongoing Assessment:*

Your group will need to review progress in the implementation of recommendations periodically. Has the situation changed? Have changes made as a result of recommendations alleviated or reduced the need for others? Are other changes more urgent? After a year or two, you and your group may want to evaluate the effectiveness of the Audit. Is there a more positive feeling about safety in the neighbourhood now, as opposed to prior to the Audit? In what areas do people feel safer? If you conducted a survey, this could be repeated and the results compared. You could conduct a second Crime Prevention Safety Audit and compare the situation now with that during the first Audit. An evaluation may support resident improved feelings of safety. An evaluation could point out additional areas needing change.

➤ *Connecting With Your Community:*

Recommendations and actions to address recommendations which stem from the Safety Audit may affect the entire neighbourhood. Your group should develop ways to inform the community of the Audit, the Audit recommendations and of the actions that are taking place. As well, the community should also be advised of the reasons some recommendations will not be implemented. Your local community league newsletter, neighbourhood newsletter, or school newsletter maybe useful vehicles to make local residents aware of the Audit results.

E. SPECIAL AUDITS

➤ Large Audits

If you want to do an Audit of a large area of a city, you will need to do a lot of extra planning. We are unable to predict everything you will need to do, but here are some things to think about:

- How many teams do you need?
- Do you have maps and any other important information?
- Can you arrange for safe transportation to and from the Audit areas?
- What about child care?
- How will you organize the volunteers, train the team leaders, collect the checklists, write a summary report and put forth recommendations?
- How will you present the findings?

If the place being audited is large or complex, the Audit should focus on one part at a time. For example, when a subway system was audited, three to fifteen copies of the checklist were filled in for each subway station, depending on its size and complexity. One checklist might concern the station platform, another the tunnel, one for the passenger pick-up area, or any area where lighting, availability of help, and other factors were considered.

➡ **Joint Audits:**

If there are many safety problems in your area (or you want to do a large area) and if you have a lot of energy, you could pursue others for a joint Audit team before you go out on the Audit.

Here is a list of some of the people you may wish to contact to be partners in a joint Audit:

- ◆ Neighbourhood businesses (shops, restaurants, gas stations, 24 hour stores)
- ◆ Business Associations
- ◆ Planning and Development Department (City of Edmonton)
- ◆ Residents Associations
- ◆ Community Leagues
- ◆ Local churches
- ◆ Community Services Department (City of Edmonton)
- ◆ Transportation and Streets Department (City of Edmonton)
- ◆ Neighbourhood Watch
- ◆ Edmonton Police Service
- ◆ Block Parent
- ◆ Emergency Response Department (City of Edmonton)
- ◆ Neighbourhood Centres
- ◆ Elected Representatives
- ◆ Sexual Assault Centre
- ◆ School Representatives

Who you want to involve is up to you.

➤ ***Auditing the Transit System:***

Whenever you are doing an Audit of a street area that includes a bus stop, or an LRT station, be sure to look carefully at where people wait for a bus, and how they get to and from the stops.

Here are some extra questions for auditing the transit system:

- How good is the lighting inside the shelter or LRT station?
- How far away is the nearest public phone? The nearest private phone (commercial or residential)?
- Is there visible information for passengers about what to do in an emergency?

➤ ***Safety in Relationships***

While conducting an Audit, concerns for your personal safety or issues about your relationships may have come to your mind. Should these concerns trouble you, there are agencies which you can turn to for help. Some of the major service agencies you can contact are:

- Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton: Tel. 423-4102 [24 hour crisis line 423-4121]
- The Family Centre: Tel. 423-2831
- Community Services: Tel. 496-4855

APPENDIX A

➡ **Sample Follow-Up Letter:**

After an Audit has been completed, a follow-up letter may be sent to anyone your group wants to inform of the results. The letter will encourage implementation of recommendations by alerting the person in charge of the area to the existence of safety concerns. The letter will also serve as a record of action taken.

Sample Letter

Date:

From:

To:

On _____ (date of Audit), we conducted a Safety Audit for Crime Prevention at _____(specify location). The results of the Audit indicate the following safety concerns:

◆

◆

(list concerns)

◆

We have brought our safety concerns to your attention in an effort to work together to increase the safety in this area.

Thank you for your time. We look forward to working together towards a safer community.

Sincerely,

(Group Name)