

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Designing for A Safer Public Housing Community:  
A Case Study of Chester Le, Toronto

Crime and fear of crime are major concerns confronting public housing tenants

A group safety audit was conducted with five local residents in Chester Le, led by the researcher using a safety audit guide consisted of seven evaluation criteria. The findings from the safety audit revealed some of the main safety concerns associated with the built environment in Chester Le, including

- Insufficient signage to define the entrances and exits;
- Inconsistent

SAFETY AUDIT CRITERIA	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<b>Territoriality</b>		
Signs and Maps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A variety of signs are present throughout the neighbourhood</li> <li>Existing signs are easy to read and understand</li> <li>Emergency contact information is available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entrances and exits could be better defined by appropriate signage</li> <li>Absence of wayfinding signage and maps</li> <li>Stigma attached to TCHC logo on the signs</li> </ul>
<b>Natural Surveillance</b>		
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brighter Nights Program</li> <li>Tenants knew where to report broken lights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low illumination level</li> <li>Inconsistent level of lighting throughout neighbourhood spaces</li> <li>Vandalism</li> </ul>
Sightlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tree trimming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sharp corners</li> <li>High fences</li> <li>Walls</li> <li>Overgrown vegetation</li> <li>Grade separation</li> </ul>
Isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well-used playground and outdoor sitting area</li> <li>Functional CCTV</li> <li>Regular police patrol</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of emergency services</li> </ul>
<b>Image</b>		
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessible superintendent's office</li> <li>Painted graffiti</li> <li>Curb Appeal Project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintenance of garbage dumping areas</li> <li>Maintenance of backyards</li> <li>Long time for repairs</li> </ul>
<b>Environment</b>		
Nearby Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Busy commercial plaza</li> <li>Schools</li> <li>Well-used community centre</li> <li>Well-used park</li> <li>Adjoining busy public streets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open access to the park</li> <li>Separation from the main street by wall</li> </ul>
<b>Natural Access Control</b>		
Entrapment Sites and Escape Routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Locked unused spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unlocked garbage dumping areas</li> <li>Unlocked community garden</li> <li>Complicated alleyway networks</li> </ul>

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