

## **City of Charlotte's Proposed Rental Property Ordinance: Suggestions for Improvements**

**Cooperative Venture:** It is expressly understood that deterring crime in rental properties is a dynamic partnership among police, property managers, residents and neighbors, each one responsible for cooperating with the others. Police are to share crime data and provide advice on a management response.

**No Registration:** The preferred approach is no registration or fee. Use the register of deeds/tax assessor-collector and other public records to provide a minimum level of information that allows the owner to be contacted.

**Trigger Mechanism:** If a property is identified as having a higher incidence of crime, we suggest a four-pronged approach for prioritizing police response and remedial action. The key to fairness is having the police show some evidence that the crime problems:

- Were caused by occupants or their guests, and that the owners have not reasonably addressed those causes.
- Were caused by outside people whom owners have not attempted to exclude with reasonable measures, such as lighting and fencing.
- Have risen to a level of neighborhood nuisance.
- Were located in the highest 2 percent of crime per capita in the city. These properties will be singled out for remedial action, with an emphasis on the severity of the crimes.
- 

**Remedial Action:** If the owner of a property that meets the trigger mechanism above cannot be located or does not respond to police letters and calls, or the owner does not succeed in cooperating with police to deter similar criminal activity going forward, the owner will be required to register and develop a Remedial Action Plan with the police, using the CMPD Remedial Action Plan Manual.

**Police Duty to Share Crime Reports with Owners:** These reports are essential to having owners craft appropriate management response to crime activity. Police should help craft a management strategy.

**Residential Property Review Board:** The Residential Property Review Board, will act as proposed in the current ordinance draft, with the express exception being that final consideration of revocation of registration shall be the exclusive authority of the Charlotte City Council.

**Conclusion:** The City Council should enact crime ordinances that focus spending on fighting crime (which can include targeting landlords who ignore criminal activity that takes place on their properties), and also not duplicating ownership information that can be found elsewhere.