

# **SAFE CITY AND CRIME PREVENTION STRATEGIES**

## **ICURR LITERATURE SUMMARY NO. 5**

**May 1999**

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### **BACKGROUND**

In today's society municipal governments are challenged by many and varied responsibilities, including preventing crime and fostering a sense of public safety. Crime rates are reported to be declining, yet the fear of crime is on the rise. In light of this fact, municipalities are implementing a broad range of public safety and crime prevention strategies.

One of the ways local governments can reduce or even prevent crime and foster public safety is through a Safe City Program. Safe city programs are comprehensive, community-based approaches that target the root social and economic causes of crime, as well as the physical environments that support criminal activity. These programs rely on municipal staff, businesses, and citizens all working together.

Another popular strategy is Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). Municipalities are increasingly recognizing the power of physical environment to both support and prevent crimes. Physical design is therefore being embraced as a simple, affordable, and effective method of preventing crime and making public and private areas safe.

This summary reviews a selection of documents which present many of the key issues, ideas, and strategies relating to public safety and crime prevention. Drawn from Canadian and American experiences, these documents are organized under the following three categories:

- Safe Cities, Safe Communities
- Crime Prevention Strategies
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

## ORGANIZATION

This document assembles a selection of existing resources on safe cities / crime prevention which are available through the ICURR library. In choosing publications for inclusion in this document, the following criteria were considered: currency, Canadian content or relevance, and the potential for practical application by municipalities. Entries are presented beginning with the most recent works in each section. While this summary of available resources on safe cities and crime prevention is wide-ranging, it is by no means exhaustive.

## ICURR LITERATURE SUMMARIES

ICURR Literature Summaries are an information service provided by ICURR. The intent of these summaries is to provide an overview of key resources available through ICURR on topics of interest and relevance to Canadian municipalities.

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## OTHER ICURR LITERATURE SUMMARIES

- June 1998 *Alternative Guidelines and Practices for Municipal Planning and Development (No. 1)*
- July 1998 *Healthy Cities, Healthy Communities (No. 2)*
- July 1998 *Performance Measurement and Program Delivery (No. 3)*
- August 1998 *Remediation and Redevelopment of Former Industrial Sites (No. 4)*
- June 1999 *Causes and Consequences of Urban Sprawl (No. 6)*
- July 1999 *Communication Strategies for Municipal Governments (No. 7)*

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## SAFE CITIES, SAFE COMMUNITIES

**City of Toronto. 1999. *Toronto, My City, A Safe City: A Community Safety Strategy for the City of Toronto*. Toronto: Task Force on Community Safety. (43 pages, bibliography, ICURR Document MI 352, English).**

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### **Purpose**

To provide a comprehensive, coordinated and community-based crime prevention strategy for the City of Toronto.

### **Key Definition(s)**

A *safe city* is where crime is on the decline, the number of people who feel safe in their neighbourhoods and downtown is increasing, people know their neighbours and use neighbourhood services, people have confidence in municipal services, people are tolerant of diversity and feel that everyone is treated fairly, and people are optimistic about the future of the city. (p. 22) A *community safety survey* measures top community safety issues identified by citizens and community groups, including social agencies, parent/school councils, resident/tenant associations, childcare centres, and business groups. A *safety audit* is an effective way for community groups to identify unsafe neighbourhoods and determine how they can be improved. (p. 25) *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* (CPTED) uses physical design elements to decrease the possibilities of a crime being successfully committed. (p. 15)

### **Summary**

Despite a declining crime rate, citizen fear of crime in the City of Toronto remains high. This report provides strategies for improving crime prevention efforts and diminishing the fear of crime. It also identifies Toronto's top safety concerns; explains the economic and social roots of crime; and offers a vision for a safer Toronto. Five main directions for action deal with strengthening neighbourhoods; investing in children, youth, and families; policing and justice; information and coordination; and implementing, evaluating, and monitoring crime prevention programs.

### **Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

The report outlines three long-term goals of the Community Safety Strategy:

- to see reported and unreported crimes against both people and property decline over time
- to see fear of crime decline over time
- to increase people's knowledge of and involvement in community organizations working to promote a safer Toronto.

The Task Force on Community Safety established five directions for action in achieving these goals and their vision of a Safer City:

- *Strengthening Neighbourhoods*: using safety audits to identify problem areas in the city that contribute to crime and make people feel unsafe. Property owners are encouraged to manage and maintain property in a manner that promotes community safety.

- *Investing in Children, Youth, and Families*: offering better coordinated support to children and youth at risk, parenting programs, and youth crime prevention resources.
- *Policing and Justice*: encouraging citizen involvement in problem-oriented policing, community justice initiatives, and expansion of programs for young offenders.
- *Information and Coordination*: creating a comprehensive database on crime prevention and community safety resources; promoting research and evaluation grants for violence prevention.
- *Implementation, Evaluation, and Monitoring*: allocating a percentage of police service funding to expand crime prevention programs; measuring progress of the Community Safety Strategy through annual reports.

Chapter 1: Introduction; Chapter 2: What we know about crime and fear in Toronto; Chapter 3: What we know about the root causes of crime in Toronto; Chapter 4: Vision of a safer city; Chapter 5: Recommendations.

**Province of New Brunswick. 1998. *New Brunswick Safer Communities Program*. Fredericton, NB: Department of the Solicitor General. (10 pages, ICURR Document MC 011, English and French).**

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### **Purpose**

To announce the launch of the New Brunswick Safer Communities Program in Moncton, NB, and outline its key initiatives for crime prevention.

### **Definition(s)**

The *Safer Communities Program* contains community-based strategies for crime prevention, enhancement of services for victims, and enhancement of services for offenders in order to prevent further crime and victimization. (p. 2) The program details over 40 initiatives in crime prevention and social development. *Community-based initiatives* mobilize the community and encourage citizen involvement in crime prevention and safety promotion. (p. 2) *Victim-based initiatives* attempt to adequately respond to victims of crime and reduce further victimization. (p. 5) *Offender-based initiatives* offer rehabilitative services to offenders in the hopes of preventing re-offending. (p. 7) *Provincial initiatives* include public education campaigns, safer communities programs, and the amendment of pertinent criminal legislation. (p. 8)

### **Summary**

This document outlines the four key components of the New Brunswick Safer Communities Program. It focuses on initiatives that involve community support, victim participation, offender rehabilitation, and provincial legislation. These initiatives build on existing services and programs, and provide new crime prevention strategies.

### **Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

The four key components of the New Brunswick Safer Communities Program are:

- *Community-Based Initiatives*: develop school-based programs, enhance community-based policing programs, establish corporate crime prevention responses, and institute a mentorship program targeting youth at risk.

- *Victim-Based Initiatives*: provide advice, support, and counselling for victims of violent crimes through Criminal Justice Support Services from both police and the court; provide violence prevention programs which address issues of family violence and the social factors contributing to crime.
- *Offender-Based Initiatives*: provide offender rehabilitation services which offer opportunities for change and the prevention of re-offending.
- *Provincial Initiatives*: develop provincial government media campaigns which promote safer community strategies as the primary tools for crime prevention; amend provincial legislation including the Liquor Control, Private Investigators and Securities, Victims Services, and Family Services Acts.

Section 1: Building a safer community; Section 2: Community-based initiatives; Section 3: Victim-based initiatives; Section 4: Crime prevention social development initiatives; Section 5: Offender-based-initiatives; Section 6: Provincial-based initiatives; Section 7: Conclusions.

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**City of Phoenix. 1997. *Safe Communities Resource Guide*. Phoenix, Arizona: Planning Department. (90 pages, bibliography, ICURR Document MA 472, English).**

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**Purpose**

A basic reference tool to assist implementation of the Safe Communities Program.

**Key Definition(s)**

The *Safe Communities Program* is a proactive, coordinated response to safety and crime issues that threaten the stability of neighbourhoods. *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)* uses urban planning and design tools which emphasize physical design features and land use characteristics, and reduce or remove opportunities for criminal activity. The five main principles of CPTED are: natural surveillance, natural access control, territorial reinforcement, activity support, and management and maintenance. *Neighbourhood safety audits* identify areas that make residents feel uncomfortable and/or unsafe. Strategies for making places safer can then be developed and applied, with a view to deterring criminal behavior.

**Summary**

This resource guide was produced to facilitate implementation of the City of Phoenix’s *Safe Communities Program*. The guide assists both city departments and community organizations in the development of policies and programs based on CPTED principles. Programs and resources relevant to safety issues are outlined and indexed according to city department. A “how to” section aids community groups in developing and conducting neighbourhood safety audits. In addition, reference materials are provided regarding the relationship between crime and physical environment.

## Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

The report makes recommendations for seven different city departments, some of which are presented below:

- *Development Services*: should incorporate CPTED principles into the Design Review Process, and include new and revised standards into the Design Review Manual.
- *Neighborhood Services*: should use Neighborhood Preservation Ordinances to deal with blighted areas, vacant lots, and open structures; secure and demolish properties deemed to be hazardous.
- *Parks, Recreation and Library*: should develop Adopt-a-Park and Park Watch programs that involve a partnership between city and community in the security and maintenance of local parks.
- *Planning*: should coordinate the Safe Communities Program, promote interdepartmental and interagency collaboration, teach CPTED principles, and launch public awareness and education campaigns to help residents identify unsafe situations.
- *Police*: should promote community-based programs including block watchers on patrol, neighbourhood police officers, neighbourhood cleanups, graffiti paint-out, crime-free multi-housing programs, motorist assistance, gang resistance, and citizen education and training.

Community organizations are advised to use safety audits, identify problem areas, and develop recommendations on how their neighbourhoods can be made safer and criminal activity reduced. Neighbourhood problems can often be easily resolved by property owners and residents.

Section 1: Introduction; Section 2: Development services department; Section 3: Fire department; Section 4: Human services department; Section 5: Neighborhood services department; Section 6: Parks, recreation, and library department; Section 7: Planning department; Section 8: Police department; Section 9: Street transportation department; Section 10: Safety audit; Section 11: Reference material.

**Prairie Research Associates Inc. 1996. *Building a Safer Canada: A Community-Based Crime Prevention Manual*. Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada. (45 pages, ICURR Document MA 033, English and French).**

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### Purpose

To support community action by providing community groups with the information needed to undertake a leadership role in ensuring public safety.

### Key Definition(s)

The *safer communities approach* to crime prevention uses strategies that rely on community involvement. *Problem-oriented prevention* tailors crime prevention strategies to the unique problems of a particular community and assumes that crimes do not occur randomly but rather in a patterned way. (p. 1)

### Summary

This manual offers communities step-by-step development of community safety / crime prevention programs, as part of the larger National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention. A systematic approach to program planning is detailed using the four-phase

Community Problem Solving Model, which includes: Identification and Description of Community Problems, Development of an Action Plan, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Program, and Implementation of the Action Plan. Comprehensive instructions for completing each phase of the model are provided, as well as a sample citizen survey.

### **Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

The manual concludes that crime is rooted in the broader social problems of a community. A community-based approach to crime prevention is therefore essential in building a safer Canada. The four main principles of community-based crime prevention are:

- The community is the focal point of effective crime prevention.
- The community needs to identify and respond to both short- and long-term needs.
- Crime prevention efforts should bring together individuals from a range of sectors.
- Strategies for crime prevention should be supported by the whole community.

The manual recommends a four-phase problem-oriented crime prevention program:

- *Phase 1 (Research Stage):* Identify and describe community problems; collect supporting information; choose the most important problems. Product: Description of the Problem.
- *Phase 2 (Strategic Planning Stage):* Develop an action plan; determine level of intervention; select participants; brainstorm and select the best strategies; set goals and objectives, and prepare a work plan. Product: Action Plan.
- *Phase 3 (Action Stage):* Carry out the Action Plan; obtain support within the community and maintain the program. Product: Implemented Program.
- *Phase 4 (Assessment Stage):* Monitor the implementation of the Action Plan and evaluate program impact. Product: Information to Determine Whether Program Should Continue and How it Should Change.

Section 1: Planning for crime prevention programs; Section 2: Identifying and describing problems; Section 3: Developing an action plan; Section 4: Carrying out your action plan; Section 5: Monitoring and evaluating your program.

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## **CRIME PREVENTION STRATEGIES**

**National League of Cities. 1998. “Crime Prevention for America’s Cities”. *Issues and Options* 6 (2):entire issue. (21 pages, bibliography, ICURR Document UA 107, English).**

### **Purpose**

To discuss crime prevention topics and present safety strategies for local governments.

### **Key Definition(s)**

*Crime prevention* involves fostering conditions, attitudes and behaviors which promote a safer community and draw on mechanical, natural, human and organizational security methods. (p. 20) The *National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)* is a “private non-profit, tax-exempt organization whose mission is to prevent crime and build safer, more caring communities”. (p. 1)

The *Comprehensive Communities Program* involves a community-based approach to crime prevention. Local and state governments, the private sector, and neighbourhood residents all cooperate to address issues of violence, crime, drug abuse, and community quality of life. (p. 2) *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)* creates physical environments which encourage positive behaviors and discourage negatives ones. (p. 20)

### **Summary**

The NCPC provides comprehensive crime prevention assistance and training to communities throughout the United States; develops and implements highly-acclaimed and innovative youth development programs; runs ground-breaking demonstration programs; and disseminates information on effective crime prevention practices to thousands of individuals and organizations. This issue of *Issues and Options* (March/April 1998) contains articles which describe various crime prevention initiatives and programs; provide crime statistics; and suggest tools and techniques for preventing crime. Also included are checklists which aid in the implementation of community crime prevention programs. These checklists outline the resources required for events such as citizen patrols, graffiti cleanups, neighbourhood watches, and bicycle rodeos. Crime prevention techniques for individuals and business owners are discussed as well, and address such issues as behavior modification and building design.

### **Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

The document concludes that there are two tracks of crime prevention: preventing victimization and preventing criminalization. Prevention of victimization involves changing conditions to make people less vulnerable to crime. Prevention of criminalization involves identifying potential future criminals and steering them in a more pro-social direction.

Victimization can be prevented by altering individual behaviors. Recommended personal safety techniques include:

- at night, avoiding walking alone; sticking to main routes; avoiding parks, alleys, vacant lots, sparsely lit areas, and excessive trees and bushes
- keeping an arm's length away from people
- making eye contact in sparsely populated areas
- checking the peephole before answering the door
- keeping car doors locked while driving
- reporting crimes, even minor ones
- lighting all entrances and vandal-proofing fixtures
- avoiding leaving personal belongings unattended.

The Comprehensive Communities Program uses crime prevention and control strategies that emphasize partnerships. This demonstration program of the Bureau of Justice Assistance operates in 16 jurisdictions across the country. The program's goals and objectives are:

- to suppress violence and restore a sense of community wellness
- to initiate comprehensive planning and improved intergovernmental and community relationships

- to coordinate existing federal, state, local, and private agency resources and to concentrate those resources in the program communities so as to maximize their impact on reducing violent, drug-related crime.

The document concludes that crime prevention initiatives are important in small cities. The NCPC Small Cities Initiative provides technical and informational support so that small communities can develop and implement a comprehensive local anti-crime strategy. Small cities, like large ones, can prevent crime through neighbourhood watches, teen court and juvenile restitution programs, parenting education, recreational events for youth and families, cross-cultural education and community events, job referral networks for adults, and the application of neighbourhood CPTED principles.

Part 1: Crime prevention for America's cities; Part 2: Comprehensive communities program; Part 3: Small cities and rural initiatives; Part 4: Crime prevention statistics; Part 5: Tools and techniques; Part 6: Resources.

**Gann, John L. 1997. "Building Crime Prevention into Land Use Codes". *Urban Land* 56 (2):41-44. (4 pages, ICURR Document MA 412, English).**

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### **Purpose**

To examine the role of land use regulations in preventing crime and making communities safer.

### **Key Definition(s)**

*Defensible space* is created by retrofitting neighbourhoods with street closures, speed bumps, front porches, pedestrian paths, border definition, and landscaping treatments. These measures increase community surveillance, discourage outside traffic, and reduce the number of public areas vulnerable to criminal activity. *Land use regulations* are the tools used to govern the form of new and redeveloped buildings, additions, and other structures; open spaces; and streets.

### **Summary**

Recognizing the connection between physical environment and incidence of crime, local governments have come to acknowledge land use regulations as important tools for preventing crime. This article (from February 1997) examines the role of land use regulations (most commonly zoning ordinances, subdivision codes, sign controls, landscaping regulations, and historic preservation codes) in governing the safety of buildings, open spaces, and streets. It also illustrates the use of land use regulations in new suburban subdivisions, and their effectiveness in shaping and reshaping safe environments. Land use regulations that impair or support crime control are discussed as well.

### **Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

Land use regulations have the power to both support and undermine crime prevention. Through their guidance of development, redevelopment, alteration and maintenance of the built environment, they have become essential tools in shaping the safety of physical environments.

Land use regulations often conflict with efforts to prevent crime. Examples of such regulations are those that:

- *allow screening and landscaping* which conceal criminal activity
- *ban bright lights* and thus prevent surveillance of streets, parking lots, transit stations, and commercial districts
- *prohibit infill projects* in favour of green spaces or plazas that are often devoid of human activity
- *permit alleys* which often lack lighting and have poor surveillance
- *prohibit on-street parking*, which abuts the street and is easily surveyed
- *prohibit front porches*, which encourage neighbourhood surveillance and train residents to have eyes on the street.

Land use regulations, however, can also support crime control efforts. Examples of such regulations are those that require:

- *minimum percentages of unobstructed ground-floor facades* and ensure a direct view of the interior for police and passers-by
- *intersection site clearance* and allow for increased visibility within a triangular area
- *property maintenance codes* that prevent the deterioration of the physical environment, a state which tends to encourage both crime and fear of crime
- *site plan review* and reject site plans containing features that hinder crime prevention efforts
- *cul-de-sac streets* which protect against drive-by malefactors looking for targets, and make it easier for residents to spot people or vehicles that do not belong, while making it harder for perpetrators to escape.

Local government managers, community leaders, and business owners are advised to consider crime prevention during the process of preparing and updating land use plans. The cooperation of planners, planning commissions, public safety agencies, neighbourhood groups, and businesses is an essential part of amending and implementing land use regulations that effectively prevent crime.

Section 1: Introduction; Section 2: Zoning and crime; Section 3: Rules impairing crime control; Section 4: Rules supporting crime control; Section 5: Adding crime prevention to the code.

**City of Scarborough. *Public Safety & Development Review*. Scarborough, Ontario: Planning and Buildings Department. (12 pages, ICURR Document MH 177, English).**

### **Purpose**

To provide guidelines that integrate the concept of personal safety with the perception of safety in the design and approval of new buildings and public space.

### **Key Definition(s)**

The physical environment has a profound effect on the way in which we assess the safety of our surroundings. Development review processes use five elements to evaluate the safety of an area: isolation, lighting and visibility, movement predictors, sightlines, and territorial reinforcement. Areas of *Isolation* are defined by their poor surveillance of and by pedestrian traffic. Effective *lighting and visibility* require illumination that provides contrast between light and shadow.

*Movement predictors* allow people the ability to see the approach of other people and identify *entrapment spots* which are areas without easily accessible escape routes. *Sightlines* allow people to monitor both short and long distances. *Territorial reinforcement* involves the identification and definition of public spaces which provide physical and psychological protection.

## **Summary**

This document provides guidelines aimed at increasing public safety, using the City of Scarborough's development review process. These guidelines, a component of a larger City Safety Program, attempt to unravel the complex issues of crime, and enhance citizen perceptions of personal safety. The guidelines offer information on creating safe places and ensuring that new designs enable people to manage their own safety and security effectively. They address the issues of isolation, lighting and visibility, movement predictors and entrapment spots, sightlines, and territorial reinforcement.

## **Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

The physical environment can either facilitate or hinder our sense of personal safety. Citizens have the right to expect the city's public space system to be both comfortable and safe.

The document concludes that development review processes can effectively prevent crime and increase the public's sense of safety by requiring the incorporation of safety elements into the built environment.

Areas of isolation can be avoided through the use of:

- clear, concise, highly visible signs and other visual aids
- strategically placed surveillance cameras and telephones to complement natural surveillance
- parking beside buildings which maximize the visual connection to the street, or parking in back of buildings with continuous access to another public space or parking lot
- windows and doors which face parking lots, and thus increase a sense of safety.

The use of lighting is recommended to minimize the potential for vandalism by improving visibility and monitoring. Lighting fixtures in indoor parking areas, and along pedestrian routes, bus stops, and streets make both indoor and outdoor spaces safer.

The document also recommends creating movement predictors and avoiding entrapment spots by providing glass panels in doors to stairwells, corridors, and entrances; eliminating unnecessary corners, planters, walls and fences; and using columns rather than solid walls as structural elements.

Sightlines should maximize visibility of areas ahead, behind, and to both sides. Barriers and fencing should not impede the long view or reduce lighting levels. The overall design and location of buildings should also serve to maximize natural surveillance of public spaces.

The document further advises establishing territorial reinforcement using clearly defined public places with built edges. Buildings should maximize views both in and out, and clearly identify entrances and exits to public spaces.

Part 1: Introduction; Part 2: Isolation; Part 3: Lighting and visibility; Part 4: Movement predictors and entrapment spots; Part 5: Sightlines; Part 6: Territorial reinforcement.

**City of Edmonton. 1995. *Design Guide for a Safer City*. Edmonton, AB: Planning and Development Department. (66 pages, bibliography, ICURR Document MA 305, English).**

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### **Purpose**

To aid planning and design professionals, developers, and community groups in integrating safety and security concerns into the planning, design and development review process for all private and public projects; to promote and develop community awareness of the importance of creating safer physical environments. (p. 1)

### **Key Definition(s)**

*Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)* is based on the concept of physical environments being shaped in a such a way so as to deter crime and enhance safety.

### **Summary**

This document provides design guidelines for creating safer cities. These guidelines help design professionals incorporate crime prevention principles into their plans and allow community groups to make informed decisions regarding safety issues. The guide details how to create a plan for a safe and functional physical environment and provides a strategy for its implementation. A checklist summarizing the design guidelines is also included. This document further provides a description of the safety and security principles of CPTED and how they can be used to prevent crime.

### **Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

The three main Safety and Security Principles that enhance safety through planning and design are:

- *Awareness of the Surrounding Environment*: unobstructed sightlines, adequate lighting, and warnings of confined and hidden areas
- *Visibility by Others*: ability to be seen by others and reducing isolation through land use mix, intelligent use of activity generators, and a sense of ownership through maintenance and management of the built environment
- *Finding Help*: ability to communicate, get help, or escape when in danger through improved signs and physical design.

The document advises applying these principles to areas of concern such as:

- *Transportation-Linked Urban Spaces* such as parkades, parking lots and walkways from transit stops and LRT stations
- *Neighbourhoods* in and around residents' homes
- *Downtown Streets* which are often less active and less monitored in the evening
- *Other Places* such as isolated washrooms, back lanes, elevators, and stairwells; major shopping centres; industrial areas; university/college campuses; and river valleys.

A four-step implementation strategy is recommended:

- *Step One*: approval of the design guide for a safer city by city council
- *Step Two*: inclusion of safer cities references in land use controls
- *Step Three*: modification of the design review process to incorporate recognition of CPTED concepts and principles
- *Step Four*: establish partnerships with the community and gain the support critical to the building and maintenance of safer environments.

Part 1: Introduction; Part 2: Safety and security principles; Part 3: Areas of concern.

## CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

**Brennan, Dean and Al Zelinka. 1997. "Safe and Sound: An Update on Planners' Efforts to Curb Crime Through Environmental Design". *Planning* 64 (8):4-10. (7 pages, bibliography, ICURR Document BI 011, English).**

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### **Purpose**

To examine the application of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in North America.

### **Definition(s)**

CPTED involves the design or redesign of the built environment in order to reduce the opportunities for crime. The three basic principles of CPTED are natural surveillance, natural access control, and territorial reinforcement. *Natural surveillance* involves arranging physical features, activities, and people in such a way that visibility is maximized. (p. 5.) *Natural access control* occurs through the placement of entrances, exits, fencing, landscaping, and lighting. (p. 5) *Territorial reinforcement* involves the use buildings, fences, pavement, signs, and landscaping to express ownership. (p. 5)

### **Summary**

This article (from August 1997) reviews the application of CPTED principles in both public and private sectors. Across North America, CPTED principles are increasingly acknowledged as an effective tool for deterring crime and making cities safer. The article outlines local government use of CPTED principles in the development of city programs and processes, such as Toronto's Safe Communities program and Irvine, California's development review process. The use of CPTED principles in the private sector is also mentioned, noting the key role of the National Association of Convenience Food Stores in promoting the benefits of CPTED in store design, maintenance, and management.

### **Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

As CPTED ideas are increasingly incorporated into official procedures, regulations, ordinances, and plan reviews, planners are better able to include safety principles into new development as well as older retrofits.

The article concludes that successful CPTED programs rely on both the political support of government officials and the administrative support of agency staff who oversee program implementation. Planners are advised to take a leadership role in the coordination of CPTED programs by acting as “facilitators responsible for bringing together the various players ... property owners, residents, neighborhood representatives, and city departments.” (p. 10)

Crime and fear of crime have high financial costs. Clients and shoppers will continue to avoid areas in which they do not feel safe, thus affecting the economic outcome of businesses. The article therefore recommends the adoption of CPTED principles in the private sector. The application of CPTED principles in store design, maintenance, and management is both economically feasible and beneficial to business owners.

Section 1: Introduction; Section 2: Safety first; Section 3: Start here; Section 4: This Mexican city takes on prostitution; Section 5: Private side; Section 6: Last word; Section 7: References.

**Newman, Oscar. 1996. *Creating Defensible Space*. Washington, DC: US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research. (123 pages, bibliography, ICURR Document HG 152, English).**

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### **Purpose**

To illustrate how communities can improve security in residential areas through case studies in the use of defensible space principles.

### **Key Definition(s)**

*Defensible space* is created through the subdivision of large public spaces and the reassignment of these smaller spaces to individuals or small groups, to use and control as their own private areas. *Defensible space programs* serve to restructure the physical layout of communities to allow residents to better control the space around their homes, thereby discouraging crime. The *mini-neighborhood concept* involves the restructuring of streets, primarily with street closures, to create smaller groupings of houses which encourage greater association amongst neighbours.

### **Summary**

This book provides guidelines on making residential areas safer through the use of defensible space principles. Defensible space programs are used as tools for increasing the safety and security of urban environments by encouraging affinity for both property and neighbours. Case studies of three residential areas in the United States are presented. Each case describes the planning process and the outcome, including problems faced and lessons learned. The first case study examines the application of the mini-neighbourhood concept in Dayton, Ohio. The second case study analyses the reassignment of yard space in a row-house public housing project in the South Bronx, New York City. The third case study assesses the scattering of public housing amongst town-house developments on small lots in Yonkers, New York.

### **Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

The document concludes that physical form plays an important role in determining the safety and liveability of residential areas. Defensible space designs alter existing physical forms to

maximize control over space and minimize the opportunity for crime. It is a simple, low cost, and effective tool for stabilizing urban communities.

In Dayton, Ohio, the alteration of the street grid to create a system of mini-neighbourhoods successfully revitalized a district plagued by crime. By applying defensible space principles, residents were able to reassert control over their neighbourhood and strengthen their ability to monitor the activities taking place on their streets. For the mini-neighbourhood concept to be successfully applied in residential areas, there must be at least 40% of homes that are owner-occupied, a predominance of single-family units, the existence of area programs/amenities to attract residents, and a high level of community participation.

The application of defensible space principles in public housing projects revealed the following lessons:

- Increasing a sense of association amongst neighbours improves surveillance and control of neighbourhood streets.
- Shared space, both interior and exterior, should be minimized. The greater number of people sharing a space, the less control individuals have over it.
- Scattering housing projects among many small sites is preferable to the clustering of families with similar problems in large housing projects.
- Lower-density, low-rise housing is safer than high-density high-rise buildings.
- Housing authorities must have the ability to quickly evict problem tenants.
- Tenants can be successfully trained in basic maintenance skills for their homes and yards.

The document concludes that while defensible space principles are not a solution to crime, they can limit the opportunity for crime and provide residents with better control over their living environments. Citizens are empowered with a greater sense of pride and protection over their living spaces, and learn to respect the space of others.

Introduction; Chapter 1: Defensible space principles; Chapter 2: Mini-neighborhoods in Five Oaks, Dayton, Ohio; Chapter 3: Clason Point experiment; Chapter 4: Dispersed, scattered-site public housing in Yonkers; References; Addendum A: Defensible space guidelines used in Yonkers; Addendum B: Tenant training course.

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**Atlas, Randall. 1991. "Other Side of CPTED". *Security Management Magazine*, March 1991. (7 pages, ICURR Document BA 067, English).**

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### **Purpose**

To illustrate that *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)* and defensible space principles can be used to actually support criminal activities.

### **Key Definition(s)**

*Defensible space* is a defined area of influence that combined with opportunities for surveillance, brings the environment under the control of its residents. (p. 1) CPTED uses of design principles to return control of the built environment to law-abiding users. The main elements of CPTED are territorial definition, natural surveillance, building form, and compatibility of building placement. *Territorial definition* is achieved through subdivision of the residential environment in order to provide inhabitants with an area of influence in which they can project proprietary

attitudes. *Natural surveillance* is the supervision of open areas that legitimate residents use in a safe manner. *Building form*, particularly in regard to public housing, affects outsider perceptions of the vulnerability and isolation of residents. It should therefore be carefully selected to avoid encouraging criminal activity. *Compatible building placement* enhances safety by locating residential developments in functionally sympathetic urban areas adjacent to non-threatening activities. When criminals appropriate these elements, *offensible space* is created. *Offensible space* uses access control, surveillance, and territorial perceptions and behaviors to promote, rather than deter, criminal activity.

### **Summary**

This article describes how CPTED and defensible space principles can be used to support illicit activities rather than prevent crime. In such cases the physical environment does not defend against, but rather sustains criminal activities, and is therefore termed *offensible space*. *Offensible space* allows criminals to spot police and outsiders approaching the area; report back to those in command; provide a communication network to warn dealers of approaching police; and build obstacles that slow down police entry. The article also suggests strategies for curbing the creation and continued use of *offensible space*.

### **Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations**

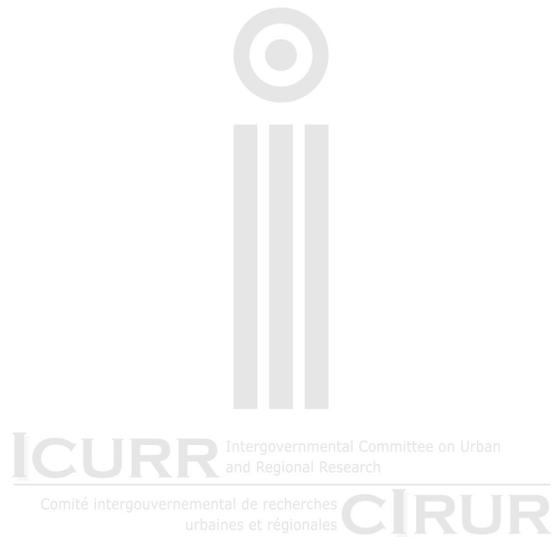
The author concludes that defensible space and CPTED strategies have not been successful in most low-income urban public housing environments. Relying on cooperation amongst residents, owners, and managers of public housing, and hoping for availability of financial resources to implement security measures and make physical design improvements have made safety strategies difficult to implement. Lack of resources and commitment have therefore resulted in increased crime in low-income public housing projects over the past twenty years.

Criminals in contrast, have both the financial resources and the group consensus to successfully utilize CPTED principles to delineate their territory. They will choose locations with good surveillance opportunities and areas that allow them to control in and out access. The common goal of evading law enforcement provides consensus amongst the group, and allows for total control of the environment using the power of intimidation and the willingness to back up threats with action.

The article also determines that *offensible space* is a by-product of society's inability to apply crime prevention and law enforcement uniformly within the community. It is the result of a community's disorganization, lack of citizen consensus, and insufficient of financial resources. In contrast, criminals are organized, motivated, and well financed. They are thus able to create physical environments that are resistant to outside intrusion from law enforcement officials.

A multi-level approach to crime prevention is recommended as the solution to *offensible space*. The causes of crime must be addressed, not just the symptoms. In addition, the built environment must be designed to prevent crime, but also to support good, accountable building management practices. The law-abiding community needs to organize, achieve consensus, and commit adequate resources to fight the criminal community, or else *offensible spaces* will continue to grow and pose a clear and present danger to society.

Part 1: Introduction; Part 2: Definitions; Part 3: Application of CPTED and defensible space; Part 4: Offensible space.



## Appendix A

### A Community Problem Solving Model

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*Source: Prairie Research Associates Inc. 1996. Building a Safer Canada: A Community-Based Crime Prevention Manual, p. 2.*

## Appendix B

### Comprehensive Communities Program Goals & Objects

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*Source: National League of Cities. 1998. "Crime Prevention for America's Cities",  
Issues and Options 6 (2), p. 2.*

## Appendix C

### Design Guide for a Safe City Checklist

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Safety and Security Factors			
	Yes	No	Remarks
Activity Generators			
Ownership, Maintenance, and Management			
Signs and Information			
Overall Design			
Planning			
Sightlines			
Lighting			
Predictable Routes			
Entrapment Spots			
Isolation			
Land Use Mix			



Source: City of Edmonton. 1995. *Design Guide for a Safer City*, p. 62.

## Appendix D

### Defensible Space Neighborhood Layouts

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*Figure III-12: Revised Plan of Clason Point showing 90 percent of the grounds assigned to individual families.*

*Figure II-9: Greek cross plan for an ideal mini-neighborhood layout.*



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*Source: Newman, Oscar. 1996. Creating Defensible Space, p. 74; 43.*

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