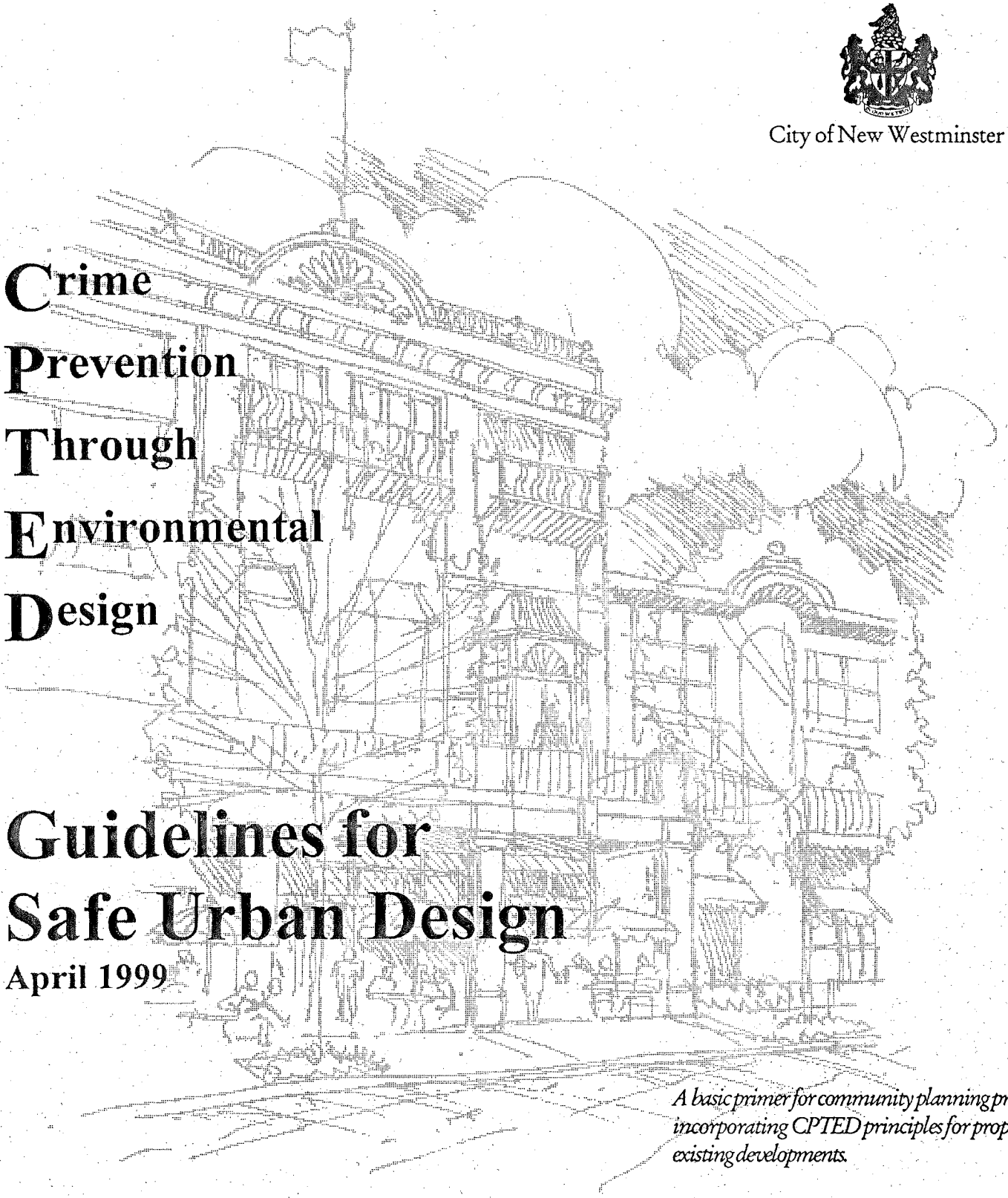
City of New Westminster

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design



Guidelines for Safe Urban Design

April 1999

A basic primer for community planning principles incorporating CPTED principles for proposed or existing developments.

This brochure is for:
Property Owners, Architects, Engineers, and other Design Consultants, Business Managers / Owners, Property Managers, Resident Associations.

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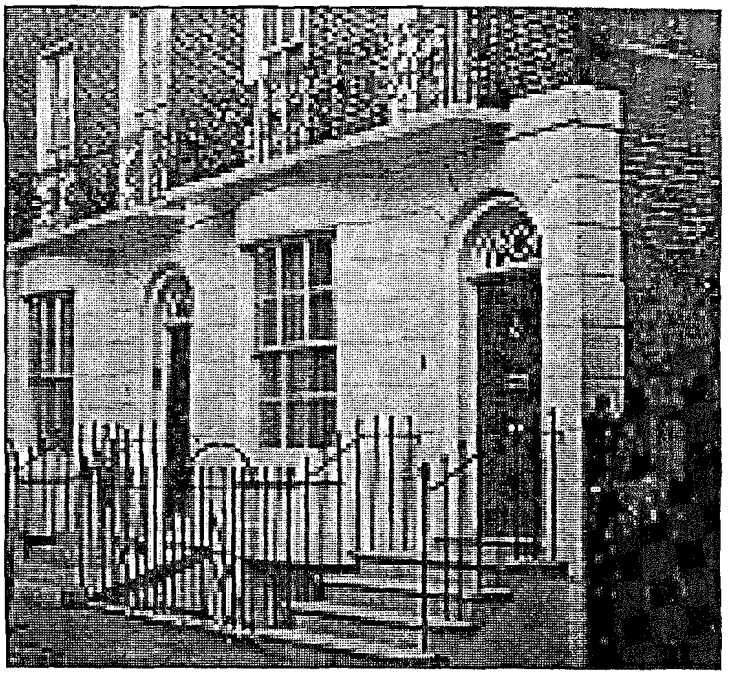
Introduction

New Westminster is a compact urban municipality, and one of the oldest in the province. As a result of its role as transportation hub for many decades, our buildings, streets and public places have changed dramatically with increasing population. New Westminster is unique in that it has the range of crime problems a larger city typically would have, but at a scale that is still possible to manage. At the same time, opportunities exist for us to capture and use the historical value of our downtown areas, and enhance the charm of our residential neighbourhoods by good design.

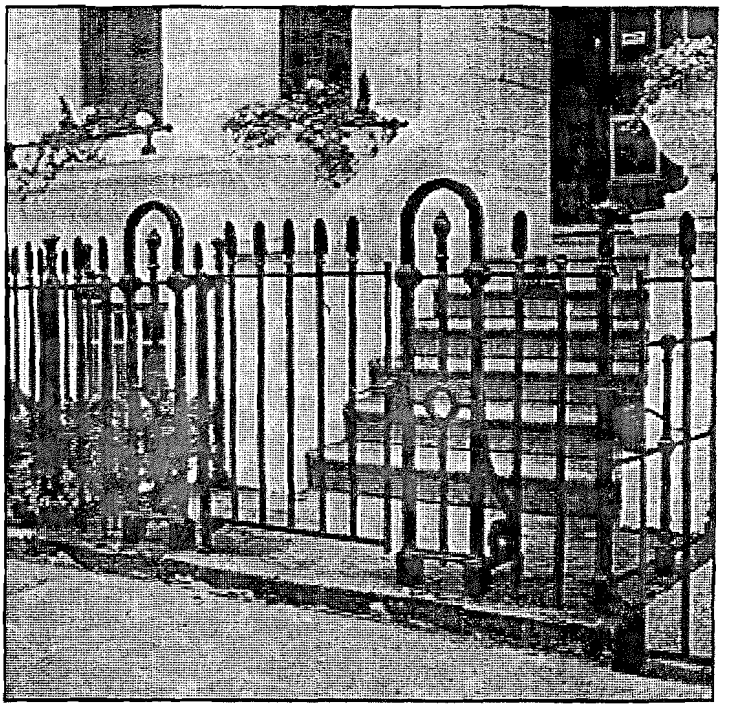
What is CPTED?

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is the field of study that focuses on modifying the physical environment to affect criminal behaviour. Over the past 25 years, people have begun to realize that following certain principles when designing and planning buildings and landscapes can prevent many crimes. CPTED has its origins in Jane Jacob's *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961, New York, Random House), where she recorded observations of her neighbourhood in New York City. Jacobs observed that the more diverse and active the street life, and opportunities for natural surveillance by proprietors of businesses provided for community security. Moreover, she noted the relationships of buildings and spaces on the street that presented legitimate users of public spaces to have "eyes on the street". Since then many others including Oscar Newman (*Defensible Space*, MacMillan Co. New York, 1972), and C. Ray Jeffery (*Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design*, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, 1977) began documenting ways to modify the urban environment to create safe urban spaces.

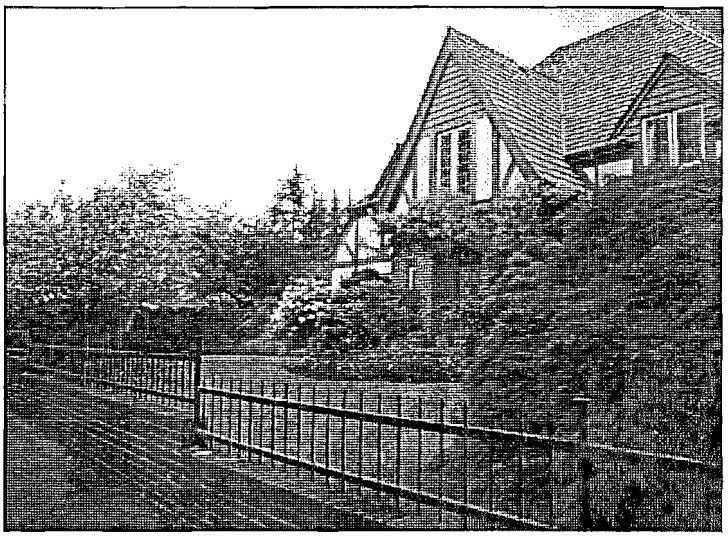
This field, known as environmental criminology attempts to explain patterns of opportunistic crime, why they happen and how urban spaces affect our emotional reactions to the built environment.



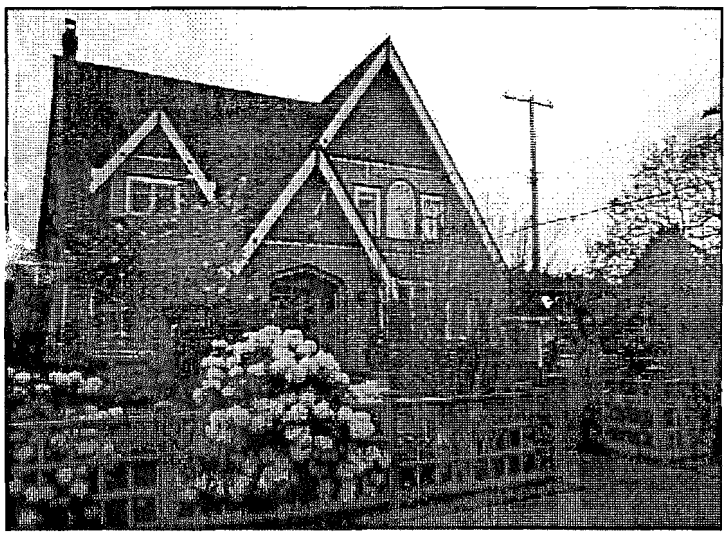
Target Hardening and Hierarchy of Space, can be tastefully done with wrought-iron fencing such as these two examples in an older urban area.



Why use CPTED?



Our homes and our communities should be enjoyable, safe places to live, work and play. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is applicable to individual homes, businesses, and whole neighbourhoods. CPTED is also for existing or proposed developments. Pride of ownership (eg. landscaping, building maintenance) as well as clearly defining public and private spaces (such as the fences shown here) are examples of CPTED principles in practice. They can enhance property values if they are done attractively.



Most crimes are not random, and occur and recur in particular locations for very specific reasons. This is known as situational crime. The majority of crimes are not directed at personal injury, but are oriented toward objects that can be stolen quickly. Key factors include:

- a reason or motive for the commission of an offence;
- a site with multiple access and egress for quick entry and escape;
- a specific target (object for the offence); and
- an opportunity to commit the crime (time, where time can be the hours of commission of crime, or the seasons in which they occur).

If the site presents opportunities for repeated attacks, CPTED can address making site changes to lessen the risk of further criminal offence. CPTED is one tool of many that can be used in creating safer communities. CPTED cannot address all crime incidents and nuisance behaviour or predict the location or time of offences. However, CPTED implemented with a thorough understanding of the circumstances surrounding a problem area can save municipalities and property owners significant sums of money, and potentially avoid damaging legal costs resulting from premises liability lawsuits. Enhancing the security of a project may enhance the marketability of a project for developers, and especially to seniors.

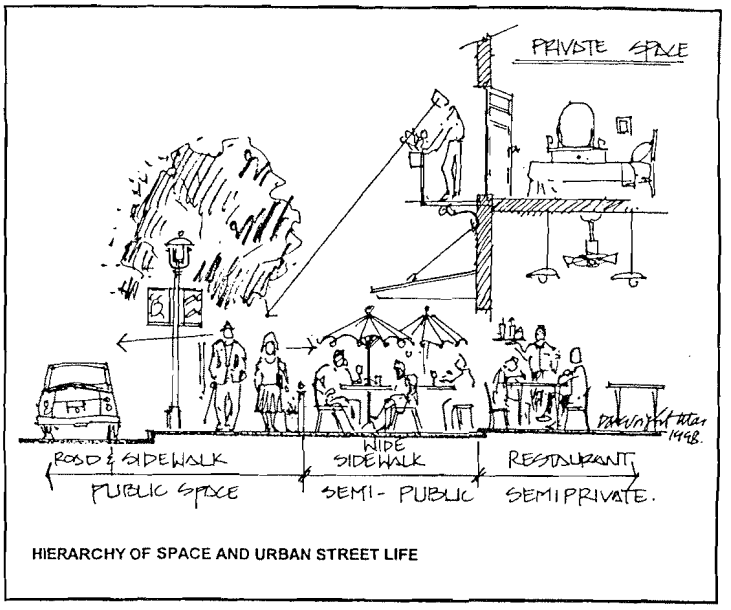
CPTED has a role to play in urban sustainability. When we can reduce the fear of crime in our City neighbourhoods and streets, people will be more likely to spend time in interesting, safe areas. Fundamentally, CPTED is good urban design with pedestrian safety and comfort as its basis. New Westminster has immense potential for tourism, public transit, shopping, and overall livability, and it is the life of our streets that make the City an enjoyable place to be. CPTED can work to improve our urban spaces, and the perception that New Westminster is a livable community.

Reason for Brochure

New Westminster is a City with enormous potential of being a more attractive pedestrian friendly urban environment. We would like to maintain and enhance our City's attractiveness. Like all urban areas, crime or the threat of crime is a part of our perception of cities. Our image of the City hinges on its appearance. If buildings are defaced with graffiti, garbage and have bars and grills on windows and doors, the risk of crime may not actually be present, but the presence of these "incivilities" send a message that criminal activity is a possibility. This produces fear of crime, and research shows that a negative image of cities does drive legitimate users away from businesses and downtown.

As a result, people experience fear of crime and property or business owners want a quick, economical solution that protects their premises and goods. One such method is via "target hardening", such as installation of bars on windows and grills for doors and gateways. However, these can exacerbate the problem if they are unattractive. Other techniques are via decorative or movable "night only" grill, security wiring or security film or better locks and better lighting.

Sometimes excessive removal of landscaping can produce the same fear of crime around a site. People are sensitive to the details that soften the hard edges of the urban street and enhance street life. The inclusion of well placed landscaping, street furniture or hanging baskets go a long way in improving a street's appearance.



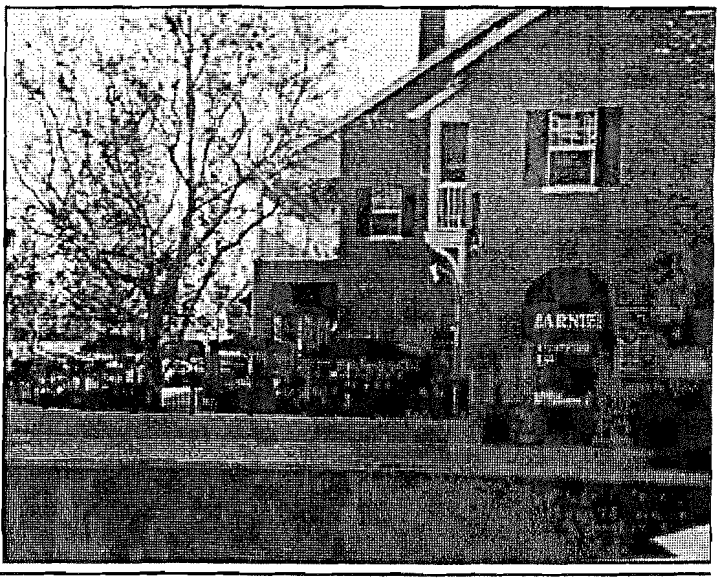
HIERARCHY OF SPACE AND URBAN STREET LIFE

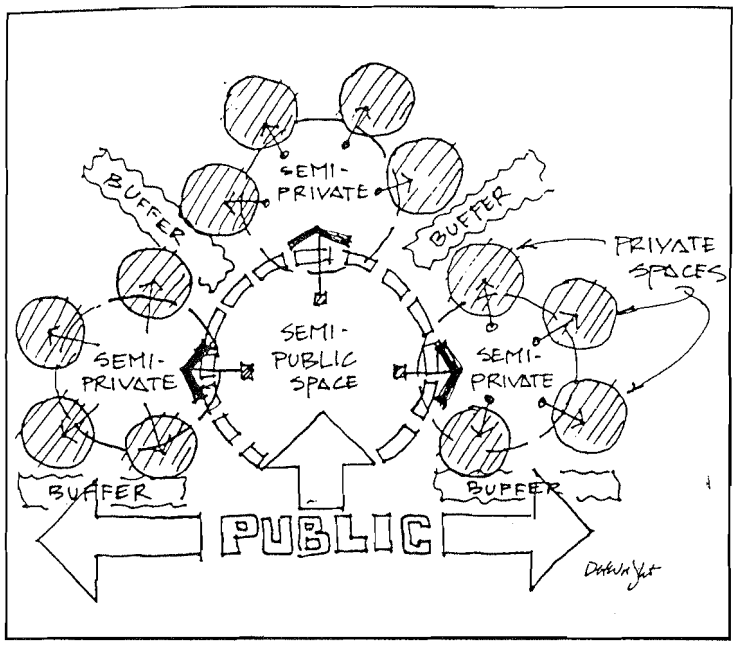
Hierarchy of space on the public street is important to establish territorial control. Here, the hierarchy is vertical as well as horizontal in the illustration above. An existing example of this is shown below, of this outdoor dining area on a public street corner. Below is a public area with residences and offices above which can provide "eyes on the street" at all times of the day (e.g., offices/restaurants along the day and residences at night). Notice that street tree planting and landscaping provide a welcoming street presence.

Does CPTED Work?

An underlying principle guiding CPTED is that if a place is used frequently by legitimate users of public areas and the proprietors of compatible businesses, the presence of people is felt by visitors to mean that the space is safe.

Numerous reports indicate that when asked about what people would like to see that would make them feel safer in their communities, most respondents' answer that the presence of people on their streets is the number one priority.





In multifamily housing, in order for territorial control, natural surveillance and access control to work, the hierarchy of spaces from public to private zones need to be well thought out and organized, so they are clear to regular users and visitors alike.



This coffee shop uses good CPTED principles in the interior layout and placement of seating. Natural surveillance of the street and sidewalk are enhanced by customers sitting at the windows. Proprietors have full visual control of entry points and establish a presence on the street via natural surveillance and access control.

Over the years, CPTED principles have been successfully put into practice in many different situations. For example in 1976, a company concerned about the number of robberies in its convenience stores decided to implement some CPTED strategies. They improved both the interior and exterior lighting, redesigned the interior of the store, made changes to the lot, on which the store sat, improved the surveillance and clearly marked the territorial boundaries. This lead to a 30% reduction in the number of robberies.

Recently, in Ontario, in the Peel region, The Peel Regional Police Community Services bureau were asked to provide some crime prevention advice for a neighbourhood shopping centre (the Council Ring Plaza) after the more traditional policing methods failed to stop a break-in problem. The shopping centre had some leftover land resulting from poor site design; and this piece of land was not visible from surrounding roads and the parking lot due to a brick garbage collection area, and six foot fences. The Peel Regional Police's CPTED practitioners recommended opening up the fence by removing alternate vertical slats in the fence to open sight lines to the back of the store. They recommended removal of the brick wall surrounding the garbage enclosure so that opportunities to hide in this anonymous space were eliminated. The results were dramatic. For a minor outlay of money, this approach increased natural surveillance and lessened the opportunity for most minor property crimes. The net result was an average 92% reduction in the number of break-ins almost immediately after CPTED principles were applied.

These are examples where CPTED is useful at a small scale. CPTED can also guide planning of large residential development proposals, and for improving whole existing neighbourhoods.

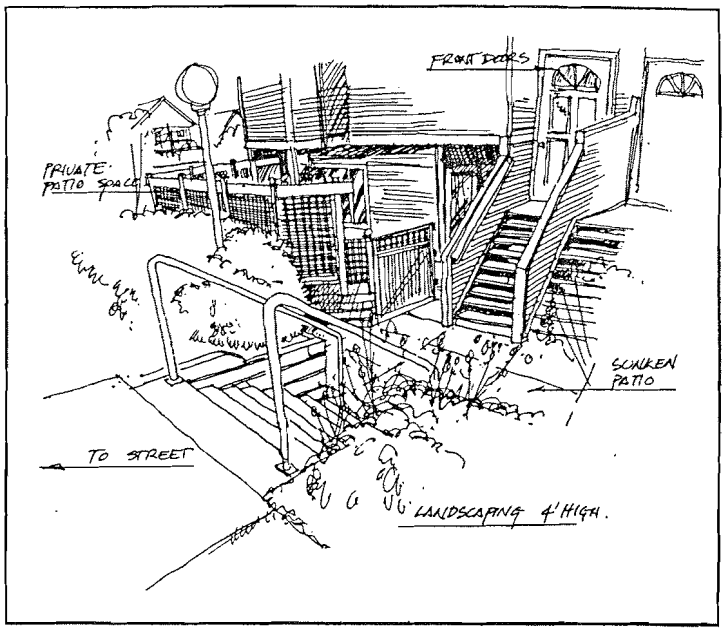
Basic CPTED Principles

CPTED is based upon at least four basic design and usage concepts, that when applied in a site-specific fashion, can reduce fear of crime and some actual crime. It should be noted that CPTED can not address all the potential for crime or nuisance behaviour, but it can over time, change our environment to make it safer. Just as small negative choices can have a cumulative effect to make a place feel unsafe, positive choices, even those that seem small can have a much larger cumulative effect to make new space feel attractive and feel safe. CPTED can be used for existing or proposed developments. The ultimate aim of CPTED is to reduce fear of crime by non-intrusive and sometimes invisible methods of modifying the surroundings. This can be done via visible means of Hierarchy of Space, Access Control, Target Hardening, and Territoriality; explained below:

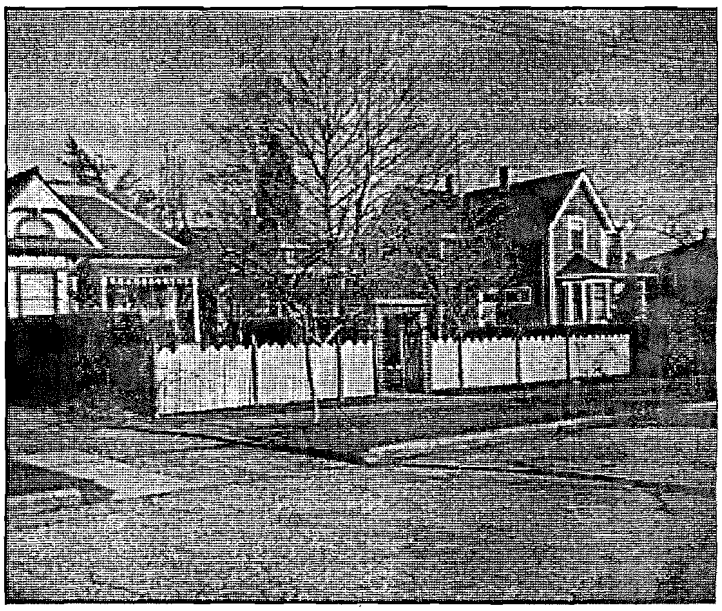
Hierarchy of Space is the sequence of spatial boundary markers that define the transition between what is public, semi-public, semiprivate, and private space. Hierarchy of space in residential areas is primarily horizontal, from the street curb toward the individual front door. In urban areas, hierarchy of space can be horizontal and vertical, such as in mixed-use buildings.

Defensible Space is the creation of space whereby boundaries are defined by owners or proprietors of that space that allows natural surveillance and territorial control against illegitimate activities. An area of personal influence created in this manner, in combination with other CPTED principles can be called defensible space.

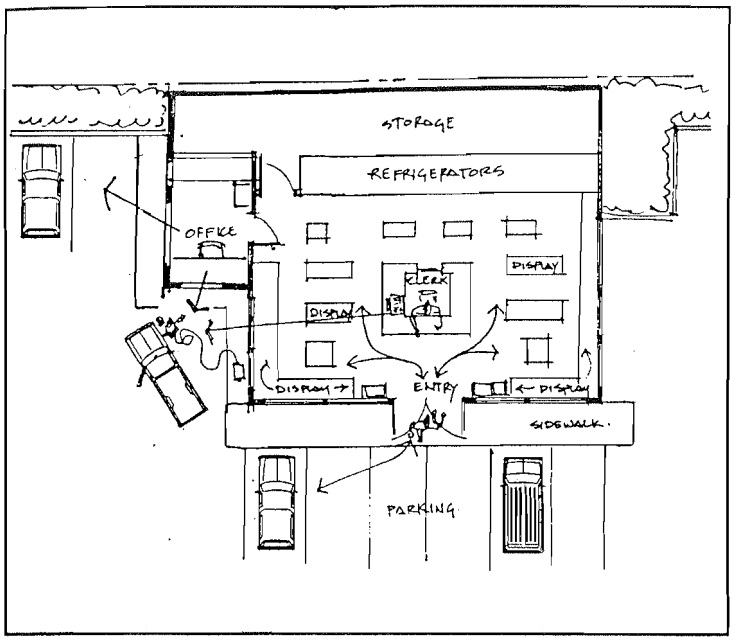
Access Control means that proprietors of a site can control points of egress and ingress to the premises. This can be done by reducing the number of entry ways to a minimum, or by security systems using magnetic strip key locks, or relocating critical entry points to areas likely to be highly supervised.



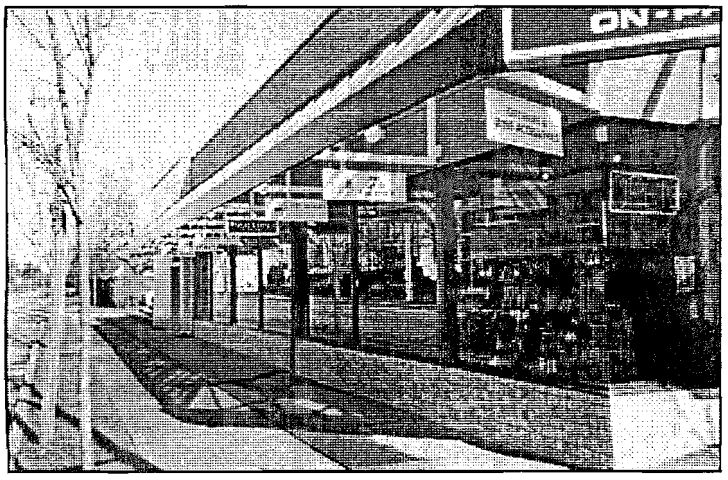
This sunken entry patio area between the apartment front door and the street (at left) lacks opportunities for natural surveillance and access control. The area at the bottom of the stairs is invisible from the street.



Many older homes made use of low fences and landscaping along the edges of the public right of way. Fences such as this one and the ornate gate define personal territory and symbolically demarcate public and private spaces. In addition, it enhances the appearance of the street.



Convenience store design should permit only one entrance to direct the customers past the clerk's station centrally located in the store near the doors. Clerks should have clear sightlines of surrounding premises. Windows wrap around three sides and displays should be no higher than 3 feet at sill level.



In this context, pedestrians can walk right against the windows of the store, and gaze within. Customers inside the store have visibility out to the street. In some cases like this, landscaping is better out in the boulevard and separates pedestrians from traffic. The signage reinforces the presence of legitimate users.

Target Hardening is the placement of physical barriers between the offender and the object of the criminal's illegal act. Common methods are to use decorative grilles, electronic tape on glass windows, concrete planters, etc.

Territoriality is the means by which proprietors define their area boundaries of influence and "stake out their turf" and take ownership. Design features like signage, strategically located landscaping, fences, and regular maintenance of the surroundings reinforce territoriality. For example, residents can reinforce territoriality by mowing the grass and planting flowers around street trees in the municipal boulevard in front of their homes.

Natural Surveillance in CPTED means the ability for pedestrians, proprietors and owners of premises to casually observe activity in their surroundings. People watching is a favourite past time in our cities. Founded on the "eyes on the street" principle, it is important to determine whose eyes are on the street. Care must be taken to design spaces and plan compatible uses for harmonious groups of users that will occupy territory for legitimate reasons.

CPTED measures tend to work best when changes to sites or buildings are made after a careful analysis of the surroundings affecting the targeted premises is made. "Target Hardening" tactics ideally should be applied only as a last resort. Sometimes the solution can be as simple as increasing visibility to the site from surrounding uses, or relocating (and in some cases removing) the object of the criminal's intent. An example might be relocating cigarette packages under the cashier's counter where they are not so visible.

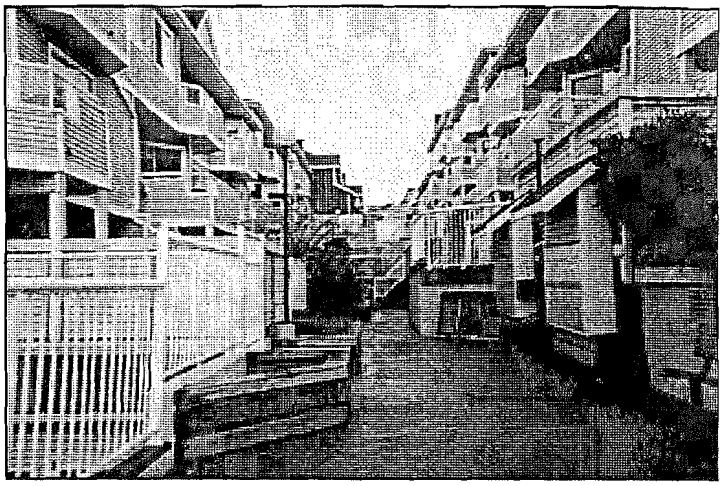
Failure to understand the site contexts, and that no lock or security system will deter the dedicated criminal can force business owners or property managers to get caught in the "Target Hardening Trap", and turn the affected premises into an urban fortress. This presents an unpleasant message to casual passers-by and legitimate users of that space.

Fear of Crime

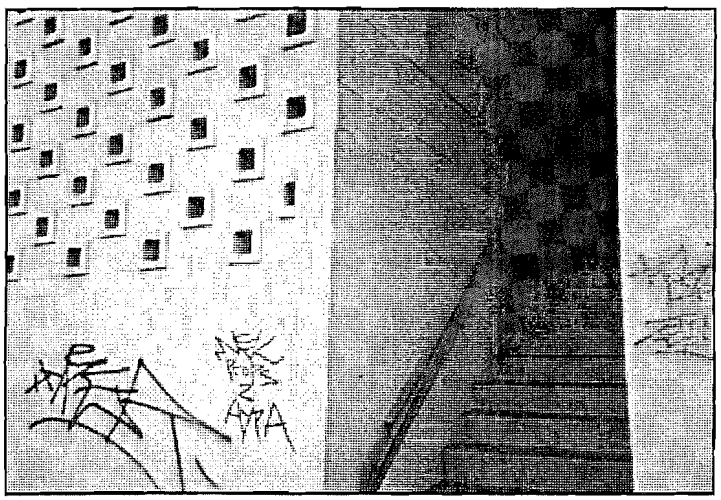
Fear of crime is the perception of the threat of crime whether the actual risk is present or not. It is our emotional reaction to the image of our surroundings. The fear of crime is more damaging to the economic and social wellbeing of our community than actual risk of crime. Studies by environmental psychologists have shown that the fear of crime actually has little to do with the actual rates of crime. People base their anxieties on many things other than their actual victimization or knowledge of specific incidents. The things that contribute most to fear of crime are parts of the landscape that have apparent ***"incivilities"*** such as:

- Poor maintenance, where it appears that owners or proprietors of a site do not care about the image of the site, and allow it to fall into disrepair. Excessive removal of landscaping or denuding a site can convey a sense of abandonment by owners or proprietors.
- Vacant lots, with no known proprietor or sense of ownership.
- High traffic volumes. It often appears that the higher the traffic volume and noise level associated therewith, the fewer people will spend time in a human unfriendly environment.
- Graffiti that is not eradicated when it appears. This falls under maintenance and image.
- Empty storefronts are an indicator that economic hardship has befallen the area or that the owner has abandoned the site.
- Trashy streets. This leaves the impression that the City does not care for the wellbeing of the residents.
- Excessive target hardening, such as chain link fencing with razor wire, the ubiquitous presence of bars or grilles on ground level windows and doors.

Fear of crime is useful to the offender. When legitimate users vacate those spaces out of fear that crime will occur, this weakens territorial control and increases anonymity.

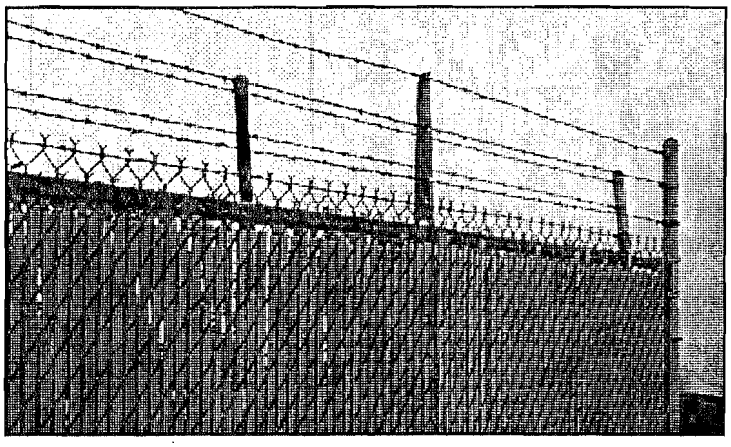


The common walkway between units in this housing project is architecturally and visually confusing. Sightlines along the walkway are not clear due to numerous horizontal projections. It is not clear where residents' doors are, or how this space is monitored.



Above: graffiti known as "tagging" next to darkened stairwells and a blank wall next to a sidewalk can generate concerns for pedestrians at night. It is not clear where the stair leads to, and the graffiti conveys the message that this space is not cared for.

Crime Problems CPTED Can Address



The presence of barbed wire on chainlink fences like this in a central urban area does not improve perceptions of personal safety. The actual risk of crime may be very low but incivilities like this can enhance general fears of crime, and drive away legitimate users.

Early CPTED before the mid 1990's focused primarily on simple tactics such as target hardening, better lighting and stronger locks. Since then, today's CPTED practitioners recognize the situational nature of crime, and that social behaviour is influenced by our surroundings. Now, social planning plays a role in crime prevention planning. Therefore, other urban features affecting social behaviour are design flaws that impact our sense of personal safety such as crime generators, movement predictors, entrapment areas and conflicting user groups, and edge effects.

Advanced CPTED methods focus on community standards and agreements, and developing networks of support among concerned stakeholders in the community, aesthetics, and good urban design. If the problem appears larger than the application of simple CPTED tactics will solve, it is advisable to contact your local police CPTED liaison officer, or a qualified crime prevention planner.

The visual clutter of the storefront here (e.g., bars obscuring window display and unattractive sidewalk sign) presents an image of poor maintenance practices. Also, the presence of graffiti can convey a negative image to transit riders at the bus stop located here.



Crime Facilitators or Activity Generators

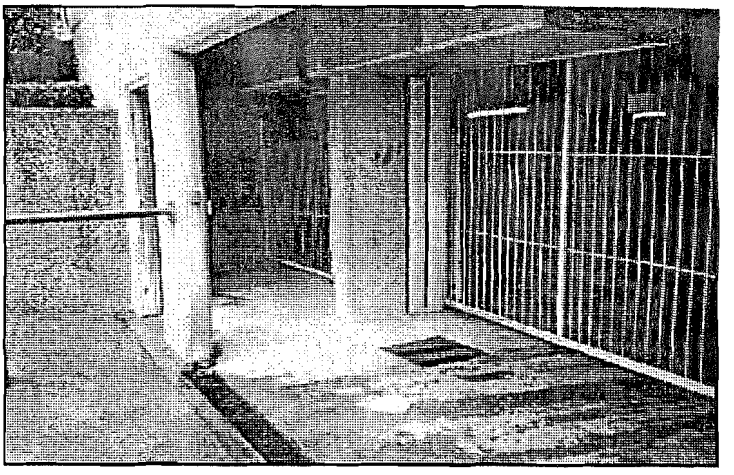
These are places and uses that provide opportunities and resources that attract criminal offenders. The combination of factors is said to facilitate the commission of criminal acts. An example would be the grouping of a liquor store, ATM cash machine, and bar near a video arcade.

Movement Predictors

Movement predictors are design elements that restrict personal mobility from one point to another, and do not provide adequate escape routes or enough room for people to pass comfortably. An example would be a pedestrian bridge or public walkway between two structures restricting personal mobility.

Entrapment Areas

Areas that pose a potential for attackers to hide in waiting for victims, or are places that are dead ends are said to be entrapment areas. They may include "refuge areas" in building stairwells, or empty spaces under landings in parking garages, or concealed garage spaces in older apartment buildings. Overgrown landscaping may need to be strategically thinned to remove entrapment areas and open up sight lines.



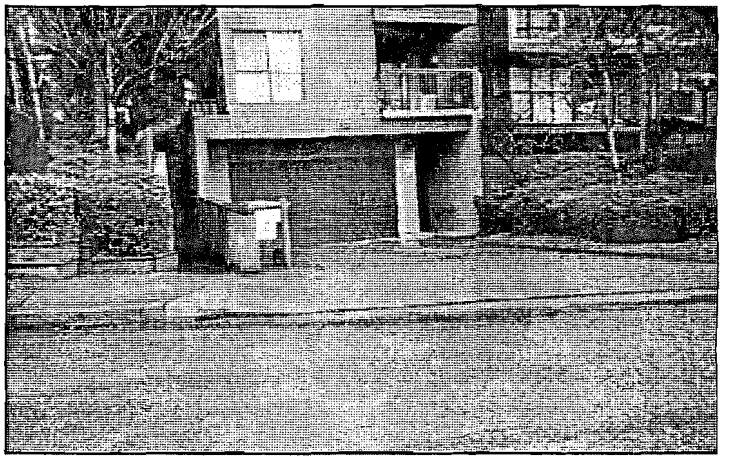
Conflicting User Groups

Conflicting user groups are groups of people who occupy the same space for widely differing reasons at the same time. A case might be placing a video arcade near a seniors home, where the path to the front door of the elderly housing complex take elderly persons past the arcade entrance (i.e., they may feel they are "running the gauntlet" in from of teenagers who seem hostile to them).

Above and Below: examples of potential entrapment areas with limited visibility. In the case above, the recessed space in the centre of the photograph might be labelled as a "refuge area" in the event of fire, but poses security concerns. Below, little opportunity is provided for direct surveillance of the parking garage entry to this apartment community.

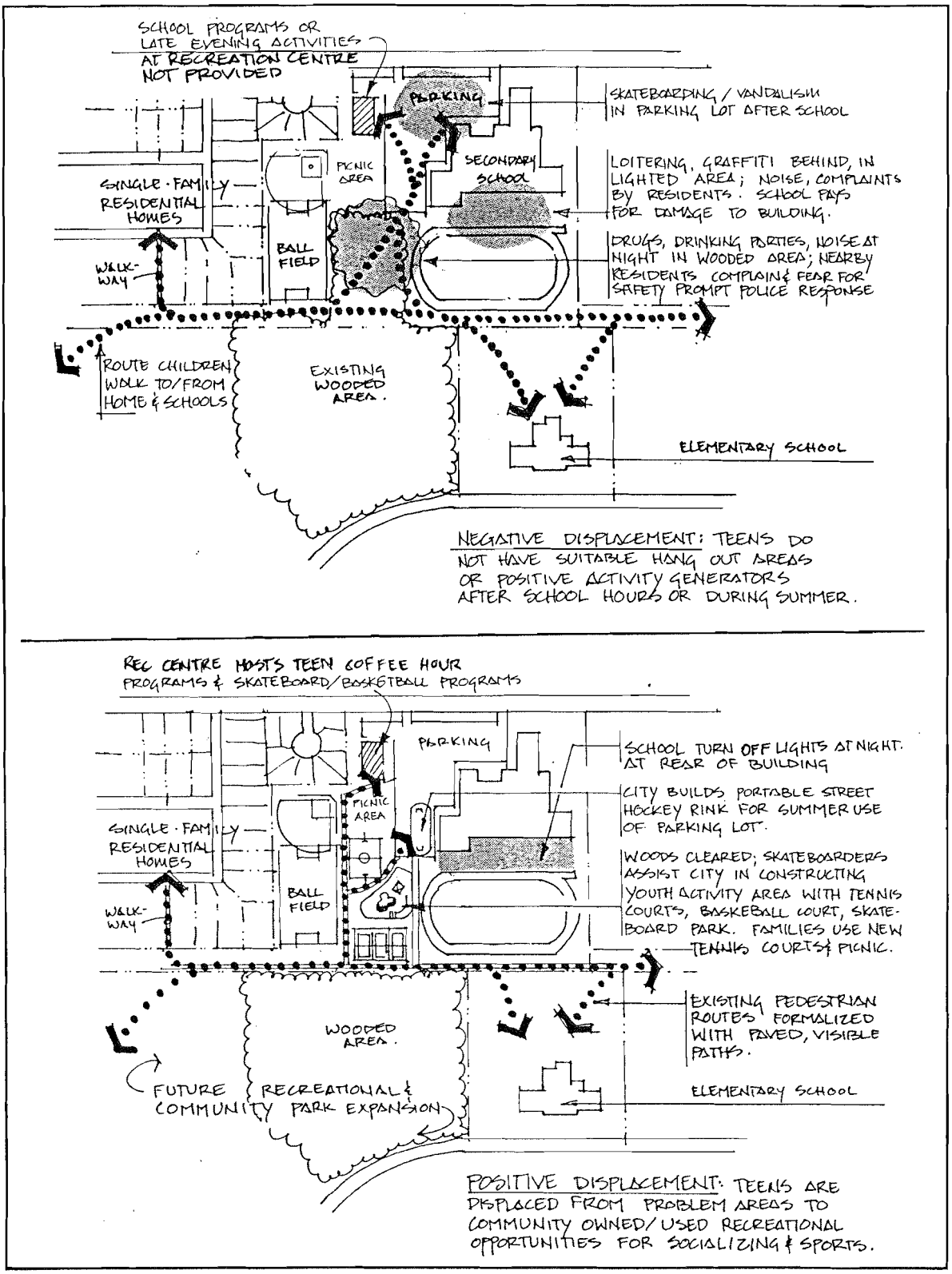
Hotspots

Hotspots are existing locations of incidents, which can impact on nearby developments. They include such areas as underground parkades, (which can be areas of numerous car thefts), bus terminals (where pick pocketing can be a problem), or certain bars where fighting is common.



When planning new developments, the location of nearby hotspots must be taken into account and measures taken to protect the public. For example, a parking garage proposed in a known crime activity area should have:

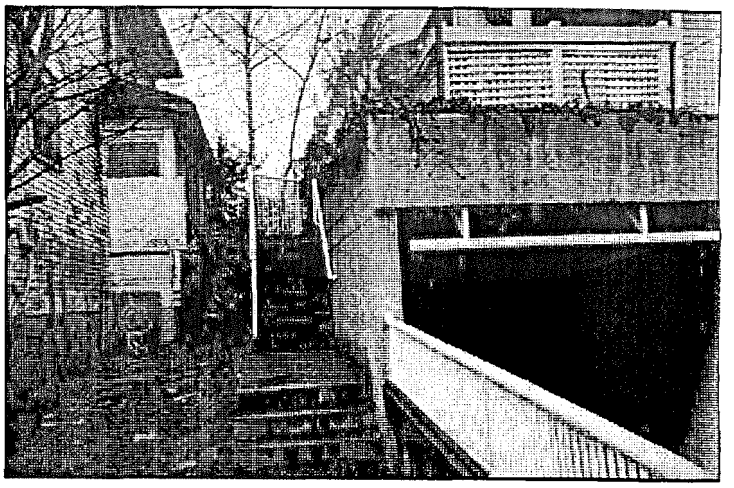
- ceilings, walls and columns painted white
- good lighting
- good signage for way finding
- access control (preferably an attendant at an entry booth)
- protection such as decorative grilles on windows and parking garage gates
- surveillance cameras in locations of poor visibility
- entrance vestibules should have glass walls to allow people to scan the parking garage or elevator lobby before going to or from their cars.



These illustrations show neighbourhood conditions contributing to negative and positive displacement. Human activity changes with the addition of positive activity generators for teenagers and families in an appropriate setting. In this case a municipality collaborated with teens to design a skateboard park and youth activity area near their school and on major pedestrian routes. Programs run out of the municipal recreation office ensure territorial control and supervision of this area.

Displacement

Displacement is the movement of a type of criminal activity or nuisance behaviour from one area to another either physically or in time (as in temporal displacement). Usually this means the relocation of criminal activity from one place to a weaker area where territorial control is not as strong. Research has shown that displacement is not always negative. Sometimes displacement is used to break up and weaken concentrations of undesirable activity if done properly. It can be addressed effectively if proper CPTED planning is incorporated into new designs. *An example is shown on the previous page.*



This example of an "edge effect" includes an abandoned house on the left with graffiti and poor maintenance, and a multifamily residential community adjacent. Visibility in this area is severely restricted. The sidewalk leads residents to their front doors. As a movement predictor, the walkway confines pedestrian mobility, and directs pedestrians through an unsupervised area.

Edge Effects

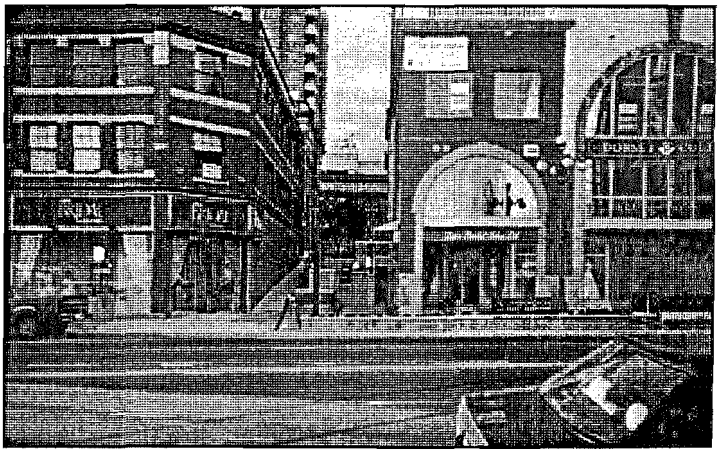
Edge effects are the actual or perceived areas that lie between widely contrasting land uses or territorial boundaries, where territorial control is not evident. Edge effects typically have higher crime rates than areas with a distinct and defined land use. Contemporary CPTED aims to identify and modify these areas in order to create safer environments.

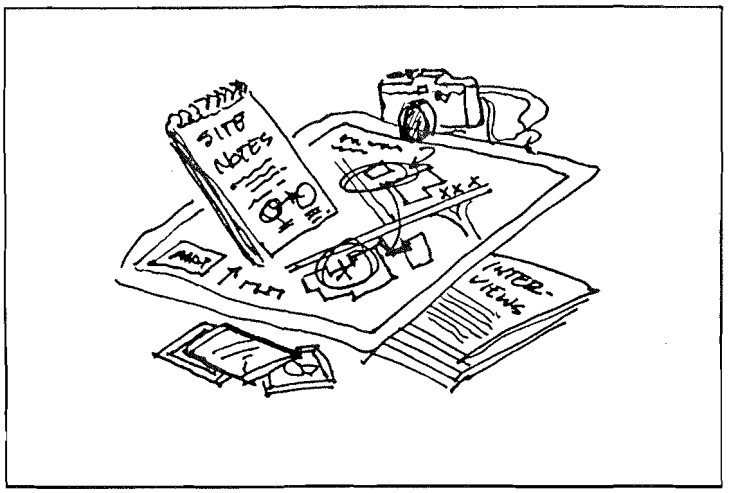
As stated before, crime is not random; and CPTED today not only focuses on the opportunities for crime created by architecture, but also takes into account the wider physical environment, and the routine activities of the people in the neighbourhood. For example, things that have a direct impact on the opportunity for crime include:

- the paths people travel to and from work;
- the location of bus or Sky Train routes;
- the location of popular shopping areas; and
- the places where young people gather.

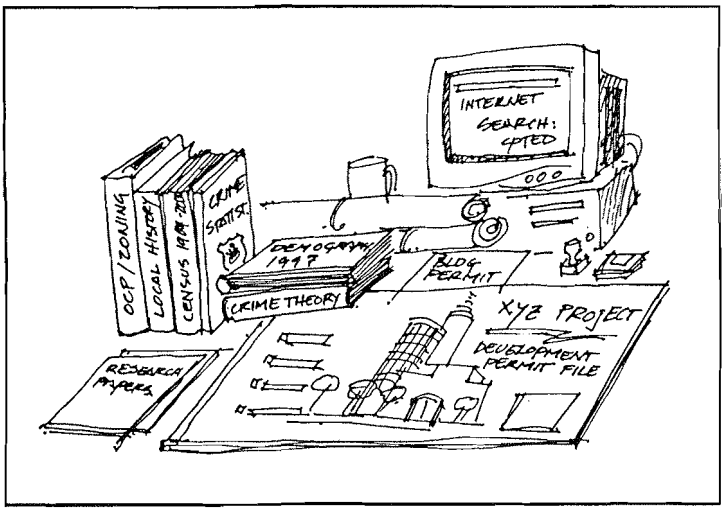
It should be kept in mind that not all nuisance behaviour is crime. Young people need safe places where they can meet and develop social skills, such as recreation centres, coffee bars, and intentionally designed hangout spaces (e.g., skateboards parks). However, if the site is near amenities that facilitate such activity where gathering and recreational mingling is not intended it can generate fear of crime in other legitimate users of that space. What is required is an understanding of the context of the site and what its intended uses are.

This walkway is integrated with the street, and is well lighted at night. The businesses on either side enhance evening windowshopping by staying open later and keeping their lights on inside. This potential edge effect has been integrated as part of the street environment.

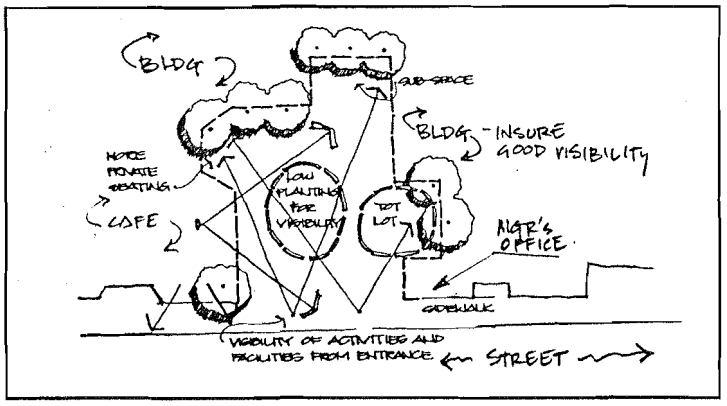




Sometimes site visits are required to answer questions about the context of a proposed development



Land use analysis, demographics, history and police data are often useful in understanding potential impacts on a site.



Diagrams of adjacent uses, plans can help clarify functional spatial relationships desired in CPTED planning

Reducing Opportunities For Crime and Nuisance Behaviour

In order to reduce the opportunities for crime and nuisance behaviour, CPTED designers ask a number of questions about a site within the context of designation, definition and design.

1) *Designation*

What is the intended purpose of this space?

How was the space originally used in the neighbourhood (sometimes it is useful to analyse the historical context of the site, and see if current behaviour is related to past patterns)?

Are there conflicts with surrounding uses?

Are safe activities being planned in an unsafe area?

How well does the surrounding environment support the intended use of the space?

2) *Definition (how will territoriality be made obvious?)*

How is the space to be defined?

Where are the borders?

Are there signs indicating what the site use is, and who it belongs to?

Are there social or cultural traditions or patterns that affect how the space will be used?

3) *Design (how the design reflects the end user of the project)*

How well does the physical design support the intended function of the space?

Does the design reinforce the designated purpose for the space and how it is to be used?

Does the design define who should be using the space?

When Do We Apply CPTED?

CPTED strategies must be applied carefully. Indiscriminate application of CPTED measures can create new problems in the course of solving other ones. Therefore, an accurate assessment of the site and its physical, social and temporal context is necessary to discover existing environmental conditions and crime patterns. This assessment can reveal potential solutions to problems. CPTED practitioners often find it useful to conduct a crime risk assessment.

Typically, CPTED follows several steps, for medium and large- scale projects.

1) *Site Visit*

First, a **site visit** is required in order for the CPTED practitioner to see the site and the context of its surroundings at day and night times.

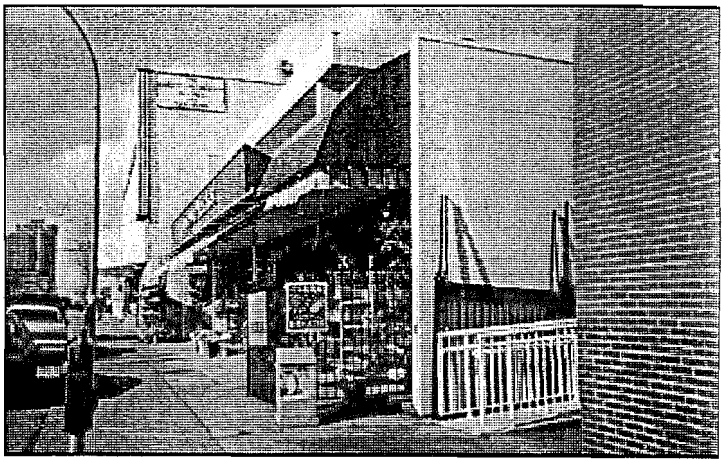
2) *Safety audits*

A safety audit with stakeholders at night around the site can also yield places in the neighbourhood that generate high levels of emotional discomfort and feelings of vulnerability.

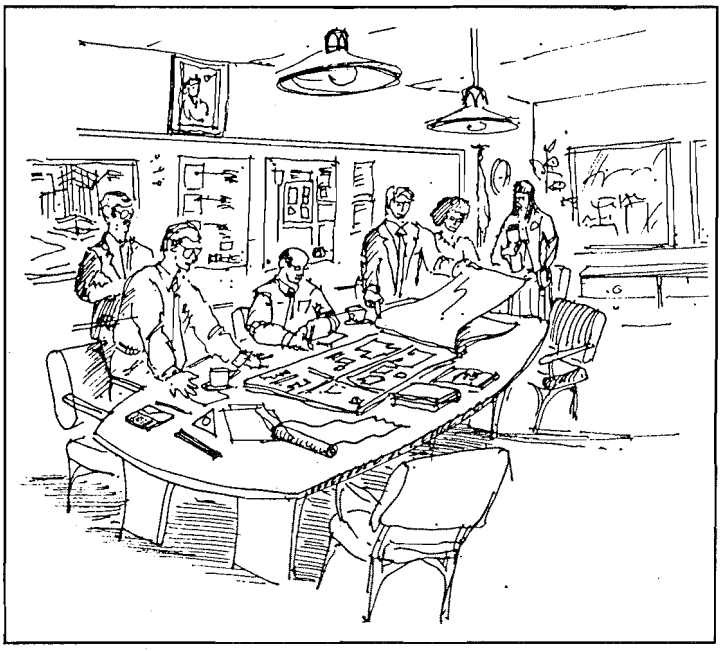
3) *Preliminary Review*

In this stage of the assessment, meetings with planners are necessary to uncover demographic and statistical information on the character of the neighbourhood under study. Crime data may be gathered at this point from the police. Sometimes a series of interviews and data gathering in the form of mail out surveys and questionnaires may be required to gain information on crime patterns.

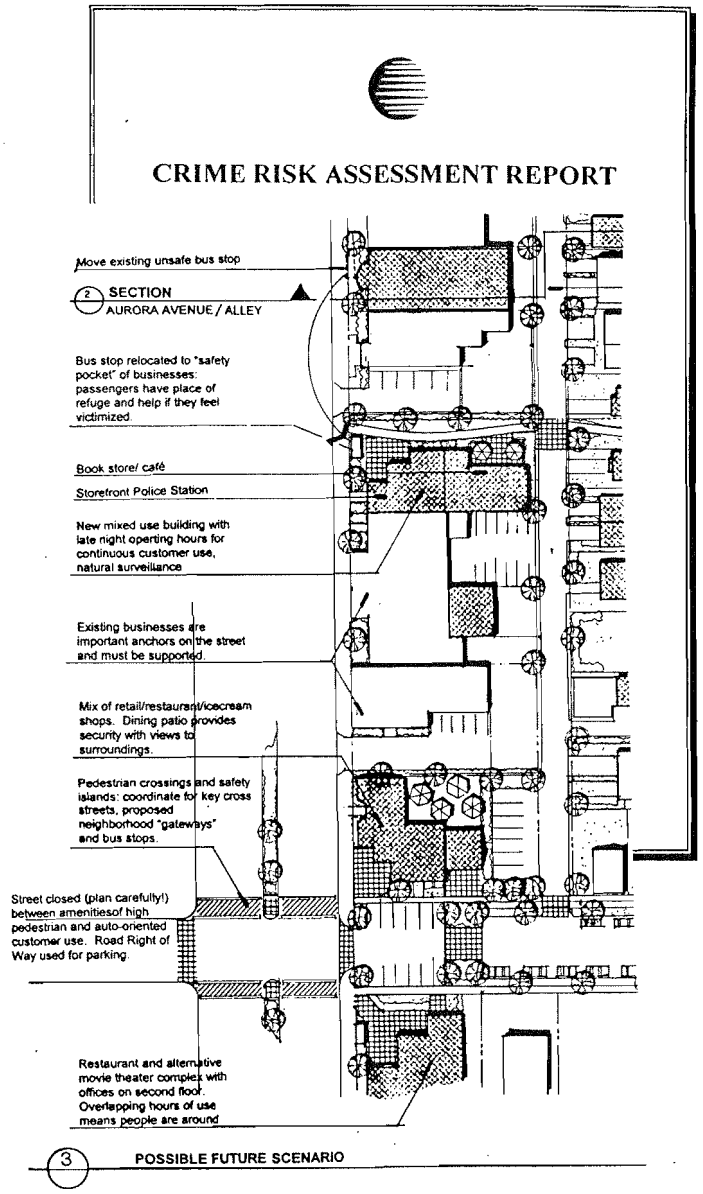
Planning at this stage allows stakeholders to examine how well the site layouts respond to known crime patterns in the neighbourhood, and make appropriate design changes early on.



This local store provides good example of public presence. The removable fencing which is installed at the front of the store at night only, stored at the side for this business, generates activity in an area which might be otherwise unused or unmonitored.



Pre-design meetings and design charettes (also known as brainstorming sessions) with stakeholders, landscape architects, architects, CPTED practitioners, and planning staff are sometimes used before design is finalized on a project. This can go a long way in removing design errors and surprises before final approval and construction begins. The timely incorporation of CPTED principles early in the design process can save time, money and potential legal difficulties.



Based on the findings of the crime risk assessment and suggested improvements, a CPTED implementation plan can be developed. This may help expedite site planning and design approvals.

4) *Risk Assessment*

This involves synthesizing and analyzing the traffic, demographic, planning/zoning, economic, and crime data to uncover crime and human mobility patterns. Coupled with population growth statistics, this method can allow the CPTED practitioner to develop design and planning strategies that deal with existing and anticipated crime. Sometimes the result is a crime risk assessment report that can help guide future development to improve safety / security, as well as perception of a project.

5) *Design Review*

At this stage, CPTED practitioners can make design recommendations specific to certain developments, existing or proposed, to address crime patterns affecting the project. The design review involves assessing design charettes and plans to see how well they incorporate CPTED principles. Detailed landscape plans, computer generated models of the site(s), and sketches can be used to examine sight lines, entrapment areas, and natural surveillance opportunities.

How New Westminster Implements CPTED Guidelines

New Westminster has planners and police officers who have been trained in CPTED to review and comment on proposed plans at the Design Review Panel and Consultative Design Committee reviews. New Westminster also has the Crime Free Multi-housing Program, administered by the New Westminster Police Service. This program incorporates CPTED principles to make multifamily housing developments safer, and is now used province wide.

Finally, CPTED is an important part of the New Westminster Official Community Plan (OCP), adopted June 15, 1998. The OCP's aim of creating sustainable, safe, and livable communities is consistent with the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) Livable Region Strategic Plan.

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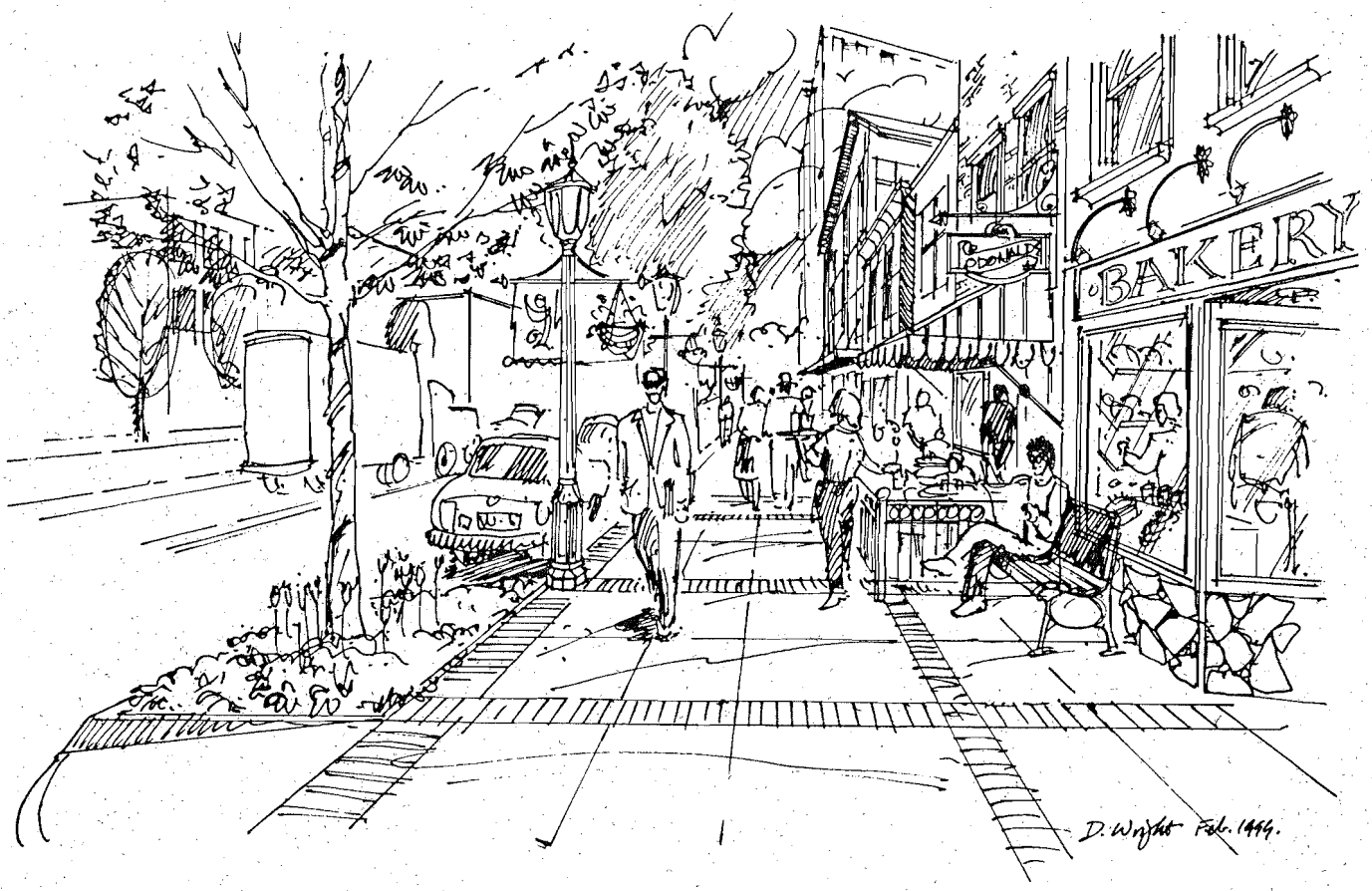
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Need More Information?

Your municipal planning department and police service are well equipped to answer most questions regarding CPTED principles.

For CPTED information or for additional copies of this booklet,
call your local Planning Department,
Phone: (604) 527-4532.

For CPTED and Community Policing issues
call New Westminster Police Service,
Phone (604) 525-5411.