

CPTED PERSPECTIVE



THE CHILE EARTHQUAKE

A View from CPTED Eyes

Macarena Rau V. Director, ICA Latin America

Macarena is an ICA board member from Santiago, Chile. She recently sent this story following the devastating earthquake that struck Chile

The recent natural disaster that has affected Chile prompts us to reflect upon the role and relationship between environmental security and human solidarity, in this particular case using CPTED.

At 03:34 in the morning of February 27th, an 8.8 magnitude earthquake hit a vast area of Chile. Its epicenter was located 100 miles northwest of the city of Concepción. Later, a deadly tsunami impacted the Chilean coast, devastating a number of coastal towns. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs the quake and tsunami caused 495 deaths and a considerable number of displaced and homeless.

[CONTINUED PAGE 2](#)

IN THIS ISSUE:

The Chile Earthquake, pages 1,2,7
Ghost Neighbourhoods, 1,4 ,5
SER: The Safety Effect Report, page 3
Detroit's Central Woodward, pages 6
ICA Notes from the Office, page 7
The Final Story, page 8

GHOST NEIGHBORHOODS CPTED & The Foreclosure Crisis

Lynn Clark
University of Akron
Brent Teasdale
Georgia State University

How do we create sustainable neighborhoods in the midst of the urban (and now suburban) mortgage and foreclosure crisis? Old neighborhoods that were viable are now decimated with boarded up homes! These are neighborhoods where residents are faced with declining property values, vacant lots, fewer long term residents, and an increasing presence of absentee investors or landlords.

[CONTINUED PAGE 4](#)



The Chile Earthquake

...it triggered a *socialquake*

Continued from cover

The aftershock of the earthquake triggered more than geological faults – it triggered a *socialquake*. Large groups of people, scared by the possible shortage of food, and encouraged by the conspiracy to commit crime, started pillaging department stores and grocery stores, generating even more panic.

Two weeks after the quake, there are still many people living up in the hills, either because they are afraid of a new tsunami or the aftershocks.

Motivated by fear and the unexpected subsistence lifestyle, the formal and informal public spaces in the cities have been affected; they have become crowded with people who need to regroup in order to face the environmental insecurity together.

Outdoor Urban Room

Under these circumstances recall what CPTED and architecture tell us about one particular public space – the Public Square.

Public squares are a form of *outdoor urban room*.

Often they are the heart of a town, the place around which the most significant buildings are constructed. Consequently they embrace a sense of power. Many towns have the town hall located near the church square and in larger cities we can find the cathedral square or the palace square. They are often known simply as the Town Square.

Squares are the quintessential center of urban life. In them, many of the social, business and cultural activities take place. Symbolic acts, both political and religious, are of great importance in these spaces. Moreover, since they are gathering places, they also offer recreational and playful activities. The role they play as a market square is a response to the vibrancy of spontaneous transactions.

But what is the difference between the normal uses of an urban square in contrast to the use of the same space in the context of a devastating earthquake? Maybe, the answer lies once again in the inherited need for human contact and solidarity.

In Chile people have had to share the little food they have with the rest of the community, they have had to share flashlights, blankets, mattresses and all those items necessary for subsistence. They have also had to organize themselves to face the risk of becoming victims of crimes and natural disasters. Public spaces like squares provide the ideal social gathering place for this too.

CONTINUED PAGE 7

SAFETY EFFECT REPORT

FOR A SWIMMING POOL

A DEEPER INSIGHT INTO SAFETY RISKS

Kyra Kvitert
DSP - groep
Amsterdam, Netherlands

The city of Alphen aan den Rijn, in the western part of the Netherlands, has a policy requiring a Safety Effect Report (SER) for every large construction or restructuring project. The SER is an initiative of the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. A SER is designed to get a deeper insight into the safety risks of spatial and building plans. Even before construction takes place, the SER maps out possible risks and safety measures. SER is implemented through a cooperative process which includes the use of a structured safety dialogue between the public and private parties involved in the project.

The coordinator of the Dutch Design Out Crime Network - the Amsterdam based research and consultancy firm, DSP-groep - did a SER for swimming pool *De Thermien* in Alphen aan den Rijn. This pool was largely destroyed by a fire in 2007 and will be totally rebuilt. It will include space for different sport clubs and fitness, a physiotherapist, a dentist practice, a large parking garage and 36 houses around a public court yard.



Five architects offered a preliminary design and an appraisal commission chose the plan of AGS. The DSP-groep, together with a special SER working group, including representatives of the police, fire brigade, city council, association of the disabled and the neighbors, summarized the most important risks and strong points of the plans.

After several sessions, including surveying the area, the working group came up with a list of alternatives and measures. These measures were centered on

visibility, accessibility and attractiveness. They included moving the entrance of the swimming pool, guaranteeing a safe entrance route for kids and analyzing the escape routes for wheelchair users. Recommendations were accepted by the design team, which was both positive and rewarding for the SER working group.

The SER process is published by the Dutch Centre of Crime Prevention and Safety and is available in English. Contact E-DOCA for more information.





We now see another type of flight from many North American neighborhoods:
Flight due to subprime lending and subsequent mortgage foreclosures.

Ghost Subdivisions

CONTINUED FROM COVER

The economic crisis has important lessons for creating sustainable neighborhoods. Proposals for sustainable neighborhoods include ideas such as walkability, local recreational opportunities, small community business, mass transit, diverse house construction for a diverse population, and a denser concentration of housing.

Yet, for different reasons, too many neighborhoods still do not thrive. Migration of populations out of the inner American city – *white flight* in the 1960s and 1970s and *middle income flight* in the 1980s – disrupted many older, previously stable neighborhoods.

In the 2000s, we now see another type of flight from many North American neighborhoods – flight due to subprime lending and subsequent mortgage foreclosures, two factors

that show the need for better planning and long term neighborhood survival strategies.

In 2004-2005 there were two studies conducted in the Akron, Ohio area on the links between subprime lending, foreclosures, and crime rates.

The first documented that many subprime loans issued in low to moderate income neighborhoods fell into foreclosure three to five years out. The second study found that as the number of foreclosures increased in a neighborhood, the rate of crime also rose.

These studies illustrate how subprime lending and mortgage foreclosures impact neighborhood stability and crime rates.

The Clark and Teasdale study found that foreclosures increased public order crimes: larceny, burglary, drug, and disorderly conduct crimes.

Ghost subdivisions

When a home goes into foreclosure, especially if it is vacant, home values can decline. This can lead to poor upkeep and decreased informal social control, in CPTED terms diminished *territorial reinforcement*. Because of a high potential for the buyer to be an absentee property investor or landlord, there is increased risk of criminal activity as the area suffers visible signs of physical decay – the *broken windows effect*.

If proponents of sustainable and safe neighborhoods do not take into account the economics of homeownership, then it will only be realistic for upper income residents who can afford opportunities unavailable to those dependent upon outside institutions and entities for loans.

Continued page 5

Ghost neighborhoods and CPTED

Continued from page 4

CPTED PLANS CAN HELP

Another risk from the foreclosure crisis is the creation of “ghost subdivisions”. These are new housing developments that have not been sold or occupied by residents. In such places CPTED is crucial.

For example, in Atlanta legal changes were required for the issuance of occupancy permits to new homes. Certificate of occupancy permits were not issued prior to appliances being placed in new residences. When appliances were installed prior to actual occupancy, the permit signified to potential criminals the presence of the appliances in homes that did not have guardianship. This led to residential burglaries in new developments and the theft of these appliances.

The laws governing the issue of these certificates were changed to allow issuance of the certificate *without* appliances in the residence.

Important also is the cost of neighborhood features such as small local shops and services. Competition from big box stores (where residents drive to shop) means that

smaller stores must have lower prices. But lower prices in a smaller consumer base (usually within walking distance of the smaller stores) results in a reduced profit margin. While some upscale or specialty stores might be feasible in high income neighborhoods, shops such as hardware or grocery stores will find it very difficult to balance the profit potential against the average income of the residents.

This is especially a problem when residents find their housing values declining due to foreclosures, aging of the housing stock, increased tax burden for schools and services, or a slowing of the economy. That is when a neighborhood is put at risk. Residents must be able to afford to maintain the most desirable features of the community such as local stores, services, and schools.

All this accords with broader community development theories and programs about safe neighborhoods such as 2nd Generation CPTED.

The U.S. Community Reinvestment Act was intended to help provide needed funding for sustainable living spaces in these unstable conditions. Unfortunately, it has failed to change the lending strategies of most banks.

Communities, both at the neighborhood level and at the city/county levels, also failed to plan for their future. Instead they leave financing decisions up to the individual families. As the current housing crisis shows, individual families are not always given the best of choices, have the necessary knowledge, or make the best of decisions.

CPTED practitioners must reinforce to communities that plans for a safe neighborhood need to include the economic viability of its commercial and residential members. While individual businesses or families may fail to maintain themselves, a community must make sure that it makes available financial resources to sustain the neighborhood. Without that it may find itself joining the growing numbers of ghost neighborhoods.



Notes

Kaplan, David, Gail Sommers, and Brian Sommers. 2004. “Analysis of Lending in Summit County.” *Ford Foundation*.

Clark, Lynn M. and Brent Teasdale. “The Impact of Mortgage Foreclosures on Neighborhood Crime Rates.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology, Toronto, Canada, November, 2005.

Saville, Gregory. “SafeGrowth: Moving Forward in Neighborhood Development.” *Built Environment*. Volume 35 (No. 3). 2009. pp. 386 - 402



COMMUNITY

WITH A GRASS-ROOTS APPROACH

CLEAN CORPS SUMMER PROGRAM



DETROIT'S CENTRAL WOODWARD Building a Safe & Sustainable Community

Lori Ella Miller,
Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corporation

Reprinted with permission

Originally published October 15, 2009

<http://www.detroit-lisc.org/display.aspx?pointer=9122>

At a time of incredible economic and social challenge, Detroit has launched a program with some good news. The Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the Central Woodward/North End Collaborative joined forces to cut crime and increase the quality of life in the Central Woodward and North End neighborhoods.

The new plan, the Safety Management Program, combines CPTED, community organizing and neighborhood rebuilding strategies. *Focus: HOPE*, an organization in the community for 40 years, was selected to become the coordinator of the Program.

The Safety Management Program calls for the creation of a Community Safety Coordinator who could shepherd the project. Bridget Vance was hired for this role. Vance received additional training from the successful SafeGrowth training program coordinated by the Community Safety Initiative of the national LISC office. The SafeGrowth model employs both basic 1st Generation CPTED and advanced 2nd Generation CPTED principles, which focus on minimizing opportunities for crime and deterring criminal motives.

Vance believes that it is essential to first understand the problems that plague communities in order to solve them, and proper neighborhood crime analysis and problem diagnosis is a training competency taught in the SafeGrowth model.

Another key element of the Program is that she also takes a grass-roots approach. She established an open line of communication with area residents by attending block club meetings, faith-based functions and hosting monthly safety meetings and workshops. Area residents became true advocates for safety and were empowered to take an active role in developing problem-solving strategies.

One success story in this area is the "Clean Corps Summer Program." Five area teenagers served in the Corps for eight weeks. They canvassed more than three miles in the target area, preparing reports on the vacant and abandoned properties, as well as photographing them. They uploaded the data and images to Google Earth to create a user-friendly mapping tool.

The teens also returned to the vacant homes to clean-up the lawns, remove debris and litter and trim the hedges.

Targeted policing, camera systems accessible to residents via a wireless network, social media to reach youth, and educational workshops, are among other strategies.

The concept of neighbors helping neighbors is the driving force behind the success of the program, now successfully running for a year.



Chile

Continued from page 2

Environmental Security Culture

Jane Jacobs, in her visionary work "Death and Life of Great American Cities" already posed the importance of human contact to fight against urban insecurity. Jacobs, as the forerunner of CPTED, affirmed the need for building cities to foster human integration.

She upheld that the sidewalks and public spaces like Town Squares need to stop being abstract areas and instead become meeting grounds for positive human contact.

The earthquake that devastatingly and painfully struck Chile has once again forced this need for human contact and the public spaces that facilitate that contact.

Ultimately, what the Chile earthquake revealed is that it is not enough to simply construct the appropriate public spaces and buildings. We must also build a more caring and interconnected society, one that keeps positive contact alive between neighbors in order to avoid the abstract nature of public spaces. We must help create such vital vibrant areas in order to create an *environmental security culture* – a culture that provides benefits, not only to those affected by natural disasters like earthquakes, but also for all citizens, especially children, so as to bring about a more secure future.



The ICA has been busy the past couple of months putting the program in place for the upcoming 2010 International CPTED Association Conference in Calgary, Canada this October. The Conference Committee is reviewing submissions and putting the program together and we are excited to announce a partnerships with the 2010 TAGS Conference during the same time period. For a small additional fee registrants from each conference will be able to attend sessions from the other conference – double your opportunity to experience programs and solutions appropriate to your work. TAGS is a national conference that focuses on graffiti and was attended last year by several of your international board with rave reviews.

The ICA has also secured well known and respected author and speaker Jim Diers to be our keynote speaker at the dinner and he will present a session through the conference as well. Truly a conference that should not be missed by anybody looking to become more effective and connected within the realm of CPTED and community safety.

The ICA also has two new board members after the recent on-line election. We welcome Steve Woolrich from Red Deer, Alberta, Canada and Greg Perkins from the beautiful Vancouver Island in British Columbia. Both of these additions have already begun to make their mark through expanded relationships and program ideas. Welcome! We also wish an outgoing Director, Rick Draper, a heartfelt thank you! After many years on the Board and tireless hours working with the office to create and support the website, programs and conferences Rick has stepped back into his work but assures us he will be staying active and offering support where he can.

The website resource section is steadily growing with updates every couple of weeks. Based on traffic to the site we see that you have noticed! We will continue to add information as it is made known to us and we would like to send a special thank you to our International Chair, Diane Zahm, for her diligent work sending us information and articles she runs across.

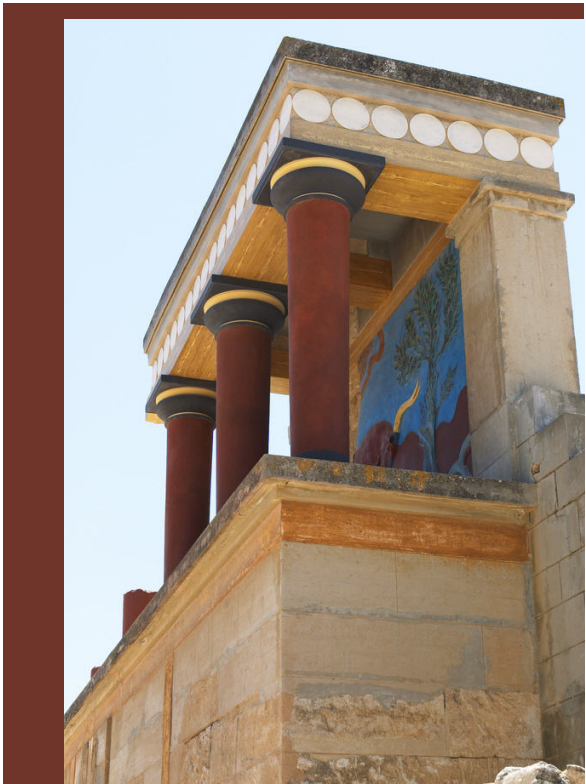
Thanks to all of you who have made it through our new members database and I see we are working the bugs out. Our membership and certification program continues to grow – we have seen more than a 150% growth in membership since 2008! Thank you for your support and input and we will continue to offer resources, information, networking and the only international certification program for practitioners available!

The Office

THE FINAL STORY

Colour your world

Ancient cultures also knew the importance of color in urban places. 4,000 years after they were created, beautiful frescos still resonate from the Minoan temples in Crete.



Steven Woolerich, ICA Director

Color psychology is another valuable tool we can use to help reduce crime and improve quality of life. Color evokes memories and mental associations that can drastically alter how we feel. The various hues can produce the power to recall sounds, smells, textures and other sensations that can comfort, calm, or intimidate. It's difficult to predict with any certainty how someone may react to a specific color but there are some basic guidelines that can help us as professionals.



Choosing proper colors can help us create moods that are more "positive" and therefore support safer environments to live, work and play. Red for example, is considered one of the boldest colors because it demands our visual attention. However, where this colour is used could be very important as it is associated with rage, confrontation, blood, aggression and ferocity. Orange tends to make people feel rushed, or in a hurry. People tend to feel that blue is clean, crisp and airy like a cloudless sky. Blue is a color for relaxation, it lowers the heart, pulse and breathing rates and has a cooling effect.



As crime prevention practitioners, urban designers, architects and anyone dealing with the built environment, we should learn to utilize more color in our CPTED planning.

See the color psychology website for more information:
<http://psychology.about.com/od/sensationandperception/a/colorpsych.htm>



For the past 14 years, CPTED Perspective has been the quarterly newsletter of the **INTERNATIONAL CPTED ASSOCIATION**. It is archived at www.cpted.net. All members of ICA are welcome to submit articles for review.
ICA, Box 13, Site 17, RR 2, Strathmore, Alberta, Canada – T1P 1K5



Phone: Int + 1-403-668-7085  Fax: Int + 1-403-278-4965  Email: office@cpted.net

Editor: Gregory Saville
Graphics and Layout: Michelle Saville