

CPTED PERSPECTIVE

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Improperly located bus stops draw crime

THE BUS STOP

**CRIME HOT SPOT OR
COMMUNITY BUILDING
BLOCK?**

Megan Carr
Civita, LLC

Most transit agencies tend to focus crime prevention efforts onboard transit vehicles, however studies show the majority of transit crime occurs outside the bus, at the bus stop. At the same time, crime data collected by police often focuses on the characteristics of the offender and fails to describe the physical context of the site at which the crime took place.

As Transportation Planners work to improve strategies for growing ridership, it's worth it to include a crime analysis along with an evaluation of the physical and social environment at bus stops. To grow ridership we must first identify the barriers.

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2010 ICA CPTED
Conference
Calgary, Canada October 18-20

The theme of this year's conference is **21st Century CPTED - Collaboration, Partnerships, Empowerment**. It will be held at the Coast Plaza Conference Centre, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

SAFE & RESILIENT CITIES

**AN AFRICAN CONFERENCE
BY UN HABITAT AND CSIR**

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Project for Public Spaces,
New York

Cynthia is Vice President for Public Buildings and Downtowns and the director of the Civic Centers Program at the Project for Public Spaces in New York.

From July 26-29, I participated in a Safe and Resilient Cities 3-day Capacity Building Workshop hosted by CSIR Meraka Institute in Pretoria, South Africa, organized by the UN Habitat for Safer Cities. CSIR is a government funded research institute and is involved in local safety planning with communities to engage them in creating great and safe communities.

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BEFORE...land use prior to redevelopment in Los Angeles

BUS STOP

Continued

Once barriers are identified, we can begin to explore ways for a) removing them and b) replacing them with incentives towards attracting new patrons. As Brand Specialist, Carl Cummings suggests: "The bus stop is the store front to your service. If you don't feel comfortable at the store front you aren't likely to shop at the store."

The physical conditions and characteristics at bus stops convey many loaded and subtle messages regarding the presence or lack of social control. This is critical information as it factors directly into one's assessment of perceived safety and evaluation as to whether this is a form of transportation that would serve one's needs. Regardless of whether the site is actually a crime target, for many potential transit patrons, it's the perception of crime on which this evaluation is based.



AFTER...developed land use with bus stop access

Two recent UCLA studies (Loukaitou-Sideris, 1999 & Loukaitou-Sideris et.al 2003) examine the physical attributes of high crime bus stops in Los Angeles. What's especially interesting about these studies is that of the nearly 19,000 bus stops in L.A., it was found that 18 percent of the total crime incidents occurred at just ten bus stops. Such disproportionate distribution of crime reinforces the importance of evaluating the physical context of the site.

Were there consistent attributes among these sites? If so, what were they?

The majority of the high crime stops were located at intersections involving various inactive and minimally active land uses including vacant and dilapidated buildings, empty lots and surface parking lots. A number of the sites were without adequate lighting, nearby shops, public phones or police sub-stations.

Most notably, vacant buildings were present at 83% of the high crime sites. Furthermore, crime was significantly higher for intersections with an undesirable establishment including bars, liquor stores, check cashing establishments, and Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotels.

Based on these findings it's apparent that land use plays a vital role in influencing safety at bus stops; both in providing opportunities for natural surveillance as well as determining the level and type of activity present on the street.

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BITING THE HAND THAT FEEDS YOU

Garner Clancey

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Having been a crime prevention consultant for over eight years, I am acutely aware of the pressures on consultants to devise the right recommendations. What is the role of CPTED participants with their clients in their pursuit of objectivity? Do crime risk assessment reports reflect more of the client's desires than the reality of negative CPTED results?

To assess the risk assessment results and question client influence over CPTED practitioners, I reviewed four reports from New South Wales, Australia. They were similar to CPTED assessment reports in jurisdictions everywhere.

The Crime Risk Assessment Reports

These reports, prepared in 2008, ranged from 10 – 43 pages and were developed for quite different land use developments, including:

- A new heritage walk
- Re-development of a public hospital
- Expansion of an arts centre
- A large new mixed use development



Favourable Commentary

All four reports tended to provide favourable commentary regarding benefits of the proposed development. For example:

"The [proposed development] will also act as an activity generator by attracting more ... users who will be intrigued by the high quality design ..."

"We regard the overall design ... as robust, reinforcing access principles, strong amenity and attention to security and public surveillance."

Were these observations objectively true? Was there data presented to support them? Were they influenced by the relationship between the consultant and the client?

CPTED principles have different relevance in each case. One report states that "the principle of access control has been omitted entirely from the assessment ... owing its lack of relevance to this development proposal". This may be true for other developments involving public space.

Standards of accountability

Many recommendations are difficult to quantify. This means it can be difficult to determine the adequacy of the suggested remedies. For example one report continually mentioned:

"...after hours management measures such as adequate levels of lighting, CCTV and security patrols".

What constitutes 'adequate levels of lighting, CCTV and security patrols'? The standards one would use to assess these practices is open to interpretation. Unanswered questions like these render recommendations of this kind somewhat hollow.

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CRIME PREVENTION IN PUBLIC SPACES VIRGINIA'S OUTDOOR PLAN

Josh Brown, ICA Vice President

These are excerpts from the Virginia Outdoor Plan, Chapter 8, regarding outdoor green spaces and CPTED.

Using CPTED in public spaces is not new—it has been practiced since the early 1970's. However, its application to park and natural settings is more recent.

Providers and users of outdoor recreation need to be keenly aware of ways to integrate safety and security into the design and programming of outdoor facilities and activities. Many social aspects of outdoor recreation are influenced by a person's sense of safety and security.

Principles of CPTED

Design, maintenance, program scheduling and community support contribute to safe parks and open spaces. Though design alone will not ensure that sites are completely crime free, it can provide a balance between perceived threats and maintaining a peaceful, natural environment.

Principle applications of CPTED need to be focused on places with high use at access points to pathways, parking areas, trailheads, restrooms, playgrounds and courts. Isolated or problematic areas receiving inappropriate use may also be improved by applying CPTED principles.



Physical Access

Part of access control is "wayfinding" - the ability to know where you are and where you want to go. Users of public spaces need to have clear signage that indicates location, maps, nearby places of interest, contact and support information.

Access must be obvious, especially between high-use areas, like parking and restrooms. Clearly delineated walks and trails protect the environment, as well as provide a sense of direction and security. Cut-throughs should be closed off or opened up and hardened to create a more safe and sustainable environment.

Visual Access

Though maximum visibility is often sought, especially in urban situations, privacy may be desirable in more rural and natural settings. The determination for desired visibility is based on an assessment of risk and user expectations, as well as overall public safety.

Strategically placed viewing opportunities include seating near playgrounds, courts, beaches and concession stands, and overlooks at piers and ball fields. Vendors or shared public facilities located near entrances also create more traffic and visibility.

Lighting protects facilities and users; however, lighting in the absence of witnesses should never be equated with safety (McKay, 2006). Lighting should always reflect the intended hours of operation. For example, lighting of playfields or structures in local parks when not in use may actually encourage criminal activities.

Defined Ownership

Clearly delineated property boundaries are the most common form of defining ownership. Signage, logos, surface treatment, fencing and gateway treatments are other ways to express ownership.

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AN ENVIRONMENTAL DNA FOR CPTED

Gregory Saville
AlterNation Consulting

TORONTO JOINS IN

Another alternative option for CPTED practitioners is Toronto's new city hall, more specifically the recent opening of the massive green roof and public garden.

Toronto's iconic city hall was built in the 1960s as a monument to modernism. Semi-circular and bleak cement walls wrapped around a saucer-like city hall chamber. The ground level did feature opportunities for winter skating rinks and summer concerts. But mostly the massive upper and lower public levels of the public spaces were slabs of cement sameness. Bleak and featureless, they provided no sense of territoriality nor opportunity to gather for casual socializing. In short, they were a "no-man's" land.

No more.

Once desolate slabs of cement sameness are now covered by trees, shrubs and landscapes. Sitting areas offer respite and ample emergency phones provide access to security. Best of all, the greenery enhances the iconic structure of the building; it does not detract from it.

All kinds of people now take respite from the busy streets below. Legitimate eyes on this street provides what Oscar Newman called *defensible space*. The green areas and gardens are also environmentally friendly and very sustainable. They reduce heat once radiating off acres of cement and they break the monotony of the cement jungle.

Safety and sustainability can become part of our civic DNA if we learn how to make it part of the CPTED and SafeGrowth message.

Removing trees for sightlines, paving land for surveillance, and burning excessive energy with floodlights at night are not sustainable. Too many CPTED practitioners act as though they were the only option for safety. That is not only unfortunate. As anyone knows who has ever read a science article or environmental story about climate change, it is also unethical.

Environmental sustainability rarely makes it into CPTED recommendations. Too many practitioners over-trim trees, pave scary places into slabs of sameness, or light walkways like a championship game at a stadium.

It need not be so.

There are plenty of safe options. Urban gardens humanize vacant land, like Boston's Urban Garden program in Boston or the community gardens along Philadelphia's thriving South Street. These are land uses that bring residents down to an otherwise vacant area. They provide an opportunity for positive social exchange (a strategy from 2nd Generation CPTED) and they and provide legitimate eyes on the street (a strategy from 1st Generation CPTED).

Other options were featured in CPTED Perspective last year. They included live walls to prevent graffiti in the UK and in Japan. They also included the Intersection Repair program in Portland where residents used recycled materials and green roofs to re-build their residential intersections, bus stops, and public sitting areas.



Toronto's new public gardens and green space on the rooftop at city hall

BUS STOP

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Reinforcing the importance of access control, it was found that movement predictors such as nearby alleys near an intersection had an almost double crime incidence rate. Also present at a number of the high crime sites was litter thus supporting the importance of image and maintenance towards communicating social control.

Bus stops as building blocks

Now let's look at bus stops that have proven to serve as building blocks for community. Also in Los Angeles, in response to the civil unrest in the 1992 riots, Mayor Riordan launched the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI) designed to restore people's sense of ownership in their communities. Recognizing that bus stops can function as focal points in communities, the organization developed community plans starting with improvements around bus stops. New York's Project for Public Spaces was hired to assist the neighborhood groups who were each given a grant to develop a bus stop area plan. The members of these organizations have planted trees, installed streetlights, redesigned streets and transformed vacant lots into parks and community gathering places.

While LANI hasn't done impact studies, there have been many positive outcomes. For instance, the initial \$100,000 seed investment went to the creation of a transit park in North Hollywood. (see photo) As a result of this investment, 8 new businesses were attracted to the site replacing formerly vacant facilities. An additional \$500,000 was invested in property improvements abutting the park and \$60,000 in private funds were invested in park improvements. The investment also served to create 30 new jobs in the immediate vicinity of the park.

According to researchers familiar with the issue, placemaking improvements such as these are all factors in reducing bus stop crime.

By adding street lighting and replacing vacant buildings with active businesses, natural surveillance opportunities are provided from surrounding businesses. Placemaking at a human scale helps establish the pedestrian environment. This is demonstrated by human scale façade improvements, pedestrian walkways, lower lighting, intersections at regular and comfortable intervals, and trees that can serve to define pedestrian areas while also providing welcome shade.

Perceptions change when action is taken

The LANI example demonstrates how it is possible to 1) identify deterrents and 2) replace with incentives (invest in design improvements). This sends a clear message of social control, helps change perceptions and grow ridership.

Notes:

Loukaitou- Sideris "Hot Spots of Bus Stop Crime: The Importance of Environmental Attributes" 1999

Loukaitou-Sideris, Liggett, Iseki and Thurlow "Measuring the Effects of Built Environment on Bus Crime" 2003

SAFE & RESILIENT CITIES



Public spaces and safety workshopping in Pretoria, South Africa

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One part of the event was called the Capacity Building workshop for community facilitators from Korogocho (one of the largest informal settlements in Nairobi, Kenya). It had community facilitators from three pilot projects in South Africa facilitating sessions on local safety interventions and principles of safe places.

One example was a soft spoken, brilliant young man by the name of Daniel Oyongo, the founder of a musical social empowerment group called Hope Raisers (www.hoperaisers.com) that uses music and performance to change the lives of the kids living in Nairobi's slums.

Another part of the event was called A Local Safety Partnership Building day. It brought together many different organizations to share approaches and work, explore ways to build and formalize coalitions and partnerships and develop joint funding proposals for collaborative work.

For example, I lead a discussion on urban space and its role in safety, linkages to integrated development planning, how public space can create sense of ownership, and become an asset. The popularity of the Fun Parks/ Fan Parks all over South Africa during the World Cup spoke eloquently to this point. Parks, plazas, vacant lots, backyards, areas around transit stations were turned into places where fans watched matches, international teams alighted from buses and started pick up soccer games with local kids, people stayed out past dark.

Parks, plazas, vacant lots...were turned into places where international teams started pick up soccer games with local kids

Overall, the participants, leaders from all over South Africa, dedicated to their work and their client communities, were savvy in terms of the roots of unsafety and the role of communities in creating their own security. They were, however, unaware of the types of urban planning, land use, and design principles that would physically support their social, humanitarian, and economic development missions.

This included:

- smart growth,
- SafeGrowth,
- livable communities, and
- place-making.

Consequently, I introduced these ideas and make a clear linkage between their goals and that of the safe communities and UN Habitat organizations. Participants from Namibia, Kenya, and South Africa really "got" our PPS hands on evaluative engagement processes including our activity mapping and observation techniques, place evaluation and people-focused collaborative visioning exercises.

United Nations Habitat headquartered in Nairobi wants to enlist the help of the Project for Public Spaces on an international safe cities campaign with an International *World Safer Cities* conference taking place in Bahrain in 2012. We need to identify safer city candidates; those made safer by improving their public spaces such as New York City (now safer than London). Suggestions for best practices are welcomed from the ICA, so please do share!

21st Century CPTED 2010 ICA Conference

The 2010 ICA Conference (www.cpted.net)

Calgary, Canada, October 18-20

The theme of this year's conference is **21st Century CPTED - Collaboration, Partnerships, Empowerment**. It will be held at the Coast Plaza Conference Centre, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

This 2-day conference will feature a look at the latest trends in CPTED, 2nd Generation CPTED, SmartGrowth, terrorism, local empowerment, and other exciting and important topics that affect you, the community leader, Police, Security Professionals, Planners, government officials and NGOs.

We are also excited and honored to have renowned author and community leader *Jim Diers* presenting a session and speaking as our keynote address at the conference dinner on "**Crime Prevention Through Community Empowerment**"

Jim is former director of the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods. Jim spends most of his time at the University of Washington where he teaches courses in architecture and social work and supports community initiatives. He is a faculty member for the Asset-Based Community Development Institute and the author of *Neighbor Power: Building Community the Seattle Way*.

CRIME PREVENTION IN PUBLIC SPACES

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Programming

Thoughtful programming will increase the number of users, thus decreasing the opportunity for criminal activity. This is especially true for sites that have traditionally been vacant or abandoned.

Programs targeting specific groups, like scouts and school children, encourage users to take ownership of the site. Education should be incorporated into site programming to make citizens more confident with site use.

Maintenance

Proper maintenance of a site, especially the landscape, supports accessibility, visual access and defined ownership.

Partnerships with business and community organizations promote an anti-crime culture and create safer outdoor environments. Crime watch groups composed of community volunteer organizations provide help and contribute to the maintenance of the site, reducing litter and pre-

Resources for CPTED
Virginia Crime Prevention Association CPTED Safer By Design Coalition
www.vcpa.org/CPTED.htm

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries Crime Watch Program
www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildcrime

Seattle, Washington Police Department CPTED program
www.ci.seattle.wa.us/police/prevention/Tips/CPTED.htm

BITING THE HAND THAT FEEDS YOU

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Overstating the merits - Understating the evidence

Some caution against overstating the merits of CPTED. Shaftoe and Read (2005: 250) suggest that "there is much common sense in a 'designing out crime' approach, but also a danger of overstating its impact". They suggest that some CPTED concepts (such as symbolic barriers) have not been evaluated in any systematic way.

In other cases the literature on actual research is ignored. There are lengthy CPTED bibliographies over the past 30 years that provide excellent results on hundreds of studies regarding CPTED principles (Cozens, Saville and Hillier, 2005). These are rarely cited.

Despite these cautionary words, it could be argued that there is a tendency to overstate the merits of CPTED in crime risk assessments. For example:

"CCTV is proposed to be mounted within the (site) which will enhance real and perceived safety and thereby encourage greater use of the (site)".

The tendency toward sweeping positive generalisations about particular features of a development, neglect the often contradictory evidence regarding the utility of particular treatments.

Conclusion

The developer wants smooth passage of the development application to speed up construction time and begin sales or leasing. This does not bode well for a thorough CPTED risk assessment nor the CPTED practitioner.



Only small sums are often allocated for a crime risk assessment. The size of the project fee will determine the amount of time that can be invested in completing the assessment tasks, which will in turn affect the quality of the analyses.

There is likely to be implicit pressure to highlight the strengths of the proposed development without drawing too much attention to potential crime risks. The preliminary review above seems to indicate some crime risk assessment reports are slanted toward the best interests of the client rather than being completely objective.

Obviously not all developers behave this way. Nor do all crime risk assessment reports conform to these observations. In fact, many CPTED practitioners experience very positive relationships with developers, architects and planners. They are engaged sufficiently early to help shape and mould a development to positively minimize crime risks.

The point is that what we need is further discussion of the bitten hand paradox, perhaps in organizations such as the International CPTED Association which was, after all, established to help professionalize CPTED practice. We need to encourage and welcome more discussion on the bitten hand paradox.

References:

Cozens, Paul, Gregory Saville and Bill Hillier. (2005). CPTED: A Modern Bibliography. *Property Management*. Vol. 23, No. 5., pp. 328-356.

Shaftoe, H. And Read, T. (2005) Planning out crime: the appliance of science or an act of faith?, in Tilley, N. (ed). *Handbook of Crime Prevention and Community Safety*. Devon: Willan Publishing.

THE FINAL STORY

Sustainable lighting in CPTED



New LED technology lighting public walkways

SUSTAINABLE LIGHTING IN CPTED

Randall I. Atlas
Atlas Safety & Security
Design Ltd.

Many 1st Generation CPTED practitioners use lighting to improve nighttime sightlines. But lighting can be a waste of energy in a time when conservation is key. You may have noticed in recent years a new style of light appearing on our streets. Light Emitting Diodes - LED - are a developing technology that offers significant environmental savings. In some cases they are 10 - 50 times more energy efficient than traditional light sources.

LED bulbs produce little to no heat, which make them safer since they are cool to the touch. This is so much the case that some northern cities have discovered LEDs tendency to freeze over in winter because the lack of heat fails to melt ice from light fixtures.



Despite the snags, this lighting technology offers several new opportunities to mesh CPTED principles with better environmental sustainability.

- The Lumecon LED street light "Relume" model uses white LEDs to increase outdoor visibility and also meets new environmental standards as well as Dark Sky initiatives.
- LEDtronics has released its new DC to DC Dimmer for LED lighting products that makes it possible to dim various LED lamps, thereby extending the life of the LED.
- The new Topco Streetlight is a new solar powered luminaire complete with automatic controls that turn the light on and off as well as regulate the intensity of power during the various times of day. This light can operate at 100% power at night, but can conserve energy by operating at only 60% power during the early morning hours.



For 14 years, CPTED Perspective has been the quarterly newsletter of the **INTERNATIONAL CPTED ASSOCIATION**. It is archived at www.cpted.net.

All ICA members are welcome to submit articles to

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