

ITEM  
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 15  
COUNCIL MEETING 92/06/29 46

TO: ACTING MUNICIPAL MANAGER 1992 June 24

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

SUBJECT: CPTED PRINCIPLES FOR URBAN TRAILS

PURPOSE: To provide information to Council on the principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) as applied to the design guidelines for the Urban Trail System.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. THAT this report be received for information purposes.

**R E P O R T**

**1.0 BACKGROUND:**

Design Guidelines for the Burnaby Urban Trail System were approved in principle by Council on 1992 May 19. Arising from the discussion regarding the Design Guidelines, Council adopted a motion:

"That staff prepare a report outlining the principles involved in Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)".

Specific clarification was also requested on provisions for the safety of women using the trails, and on the effects of proposed privacy screening on visibility and surveillance of the trail.

**2.0 WHAT IS CPTED?**

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design or CPTED (pronounced septed) is the name given to a group of strategies intended to reduce crime opportunities through the design of buildings, neighbourhoods, and municipalities.

CPTED design strategies include increasing opportunities for natural surveillance, controlling circulation and improving access to public areas, improving real and symbolic definitions of private and public property, and fostering people's sense of ownership and responsibility for the territory near their homes.

CPTED principles are implicit in sound architectural, landscape, building, and urban design. The implementation of CPTED objectives cannot be rigidly applied but rather must be balanced with other planning objectives and regulations such as environmental protection, aesthetics, and privacy.

In short, CPTED equates with good planning practices aimed at improving and protecting the overall security and well being of a community.

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**3.0 CPTED PRINCIPLES FOR URBAN TRAILS**

On 18 April 1988 the council adopted a policy requiring that CPTED concepts be considered in the design, construction and renovation of Municipal facilities and developments. In keeping with this policy, CPTED principles have been incorporated as a key component of the planning and design of the Urban Trails.

Planning for Urban Trails incorporates public awareness and public input components which allows neighbourhood concerns regarding crime and safety to be identified and discussed within the local context at each stage of trail development. Further to this, the CPTED unit of Burnaby's RCMP detachment is consulted for input on the planning of each phase of the Urban Trails.

The Design Guidelines for Urban Trails incorporates a number of CPTED principles aimed at reducing the opportunity for crimes along the trail. These include:

- promoting public use of the trails as an active and well-used community amenity.
- encouraging natural surveillance of the trails from adjacent streets, buildings and other activity areas.
- controlling landscape treatments along the trails to enhance visibility and eliminate hiding places.
- providing lighting at key locations to improve surveillance and utilizing existing street lighting where possible.

Urban trails are considered to be very public-oriented facilities which serve to illustrate and typify the CPTED approach to Community planning. The documented experiences of other communities which have developed urban trails indicates that these types of trails do not increase crime in adjacent neighbourhoods. Discussions with the Burnaby RCMP CPTED unit have reinforced this finding.

**4.0 SAFETY AND PRIVACY ISSUES**

The safety of women using the Urban Trail is recognized as a legitimate and significant concern and has been given a high priority in trail planning. While the CPTED strategies incorporated into the Urban Trail Design Guidelines are aimed at reducing the opportunity for crimes to occur against all persons, the guidelines are particularly relevant for women. Many of the CPTED principles have evolved as a direct response to the special concerns of women and other vulnerable groups such as children. Staff have taken the approach that a trail that is safe for women and children will be comfortable for most other users as well. To further this approach, staff propose to conduct safety audits with women to monitor and evaluate completed Urban Trails Information from a strictly women's perspective. Information from these audits could then be considered in planning future Urban Trails.

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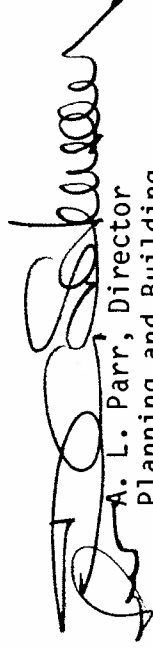
Privacy of public property adjacent to Urban Trails has also been addressed in the Design Guidelines. Where the trail is adjacent to front yards the guidelines recommend clearly marking the edge of the public right-of-way with treatments such as low fences or low planting for the purpose of protecting private property from trespass by the trail users. Visibility of the trail would not be reduced and natural surveillance of the trail from the street and from the "fronts" of adjacent homes would be maintained and promoted. However, where the trail is adjacent to rear yards residents often request that privacy screening is desired. In response to this the design guidelines recommend maximizing the setback from the trail to the property lines, clearly marking the edge of the public right-of-way, and if appropriate, providing treatments such as fencing and landscaping to screen private areas from trail users. It is felt that the resultant reduction in natural surveillance from immediate neighbours can be offset by measures to keep sight lines open along the trail, thus ensuring good visibility from adjacent streets and other public areas.

**6.0 SUMMARY**

Design Guidelines for the Urban Trail have incorporated the principles of CPTED aimed at protecting and improving the overall security and well-being of the community. Considerations for the safety of women using the trails is a major component of this approach. Measures to promote the visibility and public surveillance of the trails is also a component of the CPTED approach. Where specific local conditions require privacy screening, staff are confident that additional safety measures can be undertaken to ensure adequate levels of visibility can be maintained on the affected trail segment.

This is for the information of Council.

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KR/hr/ds

  
A. L. Parr, Director  
Planning and Building

