



The Division of Police is Internationally Accredited.

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Colonel D. A. Middleton
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Proud of our progress;
Excited about our future.

The County of Henrico does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability.

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Henrico County
Division of Police

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design



Planning Today for A Safer Tomorrow

Designing a Safer Henrico County

Henrico County

“...is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for all our residents.”



The landscaping, signage, outdoor dining area and overall ownership shown at this site reflect Territorial Reinforcement, Natural Surveillance and Maintenance.

We constantly respond to our environment, whether we are aware of it or not. Our responses can help us interact safely in our communities. Effective design of the environment helps us feel safer and reduces opportunities for criminal acts to occur.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Henrico County was one of the first jurisdictions in the nation to employ a professional civilian planner in the position of CPTED Planner within a Police Department. This position has been in place since 1994.

The CPTED Planner reviews all rezoning applications, provisional use permits, plans of development (site plans), administrative reviews, landscape and lighting plans, conditional use permits and variances. The CPTED Planner makes recommendations based on knowledge and experience in the field of planning, crime prevention and CPTED.

The CPTED Planner also conducts security surveys for businesses, multi-family residences, governmental facilities and a variety of other uses. The CPTED Planner works closely with the Residential and Commercial Crime Prevention Officers, and the Community Officers.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design or CPTED (pronounced “sep-ted”) is based upon the belief that: “... *the proper design and effective use of the built environment can lead to a reduction in the fear and incidence of crime and an improvement in the quality of life.*”

How CPTED Works

CPTED promotes design principles that encourage safe behavior and reduce the opportunities for crime to occur.

Four *interrelated* principles make up CPTED: Natural Surveillance, Natural Access Control, Territorial Reinforcement and Maintenance.



The location of windows and landscape design allow customers and employees to see into and out of this business. This is a form of Natural Surveillance.

CPTED Principles

Natural Surveillance is the placement of physical features, activities and people in such a way as to maximize visibility.

A potential criminal is less likely to attempt a crime if he or she is at risk of being observed. At the same time, we are likely to feel safer when we can see and be seen.



Fencing provides Access Control. The sidewalk, landscaping and sign show Territorial Reinforcement.

Natural Access Control is the physical guidance of people coming and going from a space by the judicious placement of entrances, exits, fencing, landscaping and lighting.

Access control prevents criminals access to potential victims and creates a perception of risk for would-be offenders.

Territorial Reinforcement is the use of physical attributes that express ownership, such as fences, signage, landscaping, lighting, etc.

Defined property lines and public spaces are examples of territorial reinforcement.

Maintenance allows for the continued use of a space for its intended purpose. It also serves as an additional expression of ownership.

A well-maintained home, building or community creates a sense of ownership, which helps deter criminals.

In addition to the four main CPTED principles, one other idea supports CPTED efforts in communities:

Activity Support encourages interaction by putting activities in public spaces that are intended for use by residents and other legitimate users and therefore discourages criminal acts.



This park's overlook and shelter provide Natural Surveillance to the surrounding area and trails. The park Maintains its amenities, which is apparent at this park.

Putting CPTED to Work

CPTED principles can be applied in both existing and new development. CPTED principles should be applied during the design phase to avoid potential costly changes later.

In Existing Development:

- CPTED can be applied by identifying problem areas and creatively finding solutions to make those spaces safer. These solutions help those spaces more effectively meet the users needs.

- A CPTED survey can be done for an existing community, home, building, school, park or business.

In New Development:

- Many problems can be avoided if the principles of CPTED are applied during the design and planning stages of a site.

- In Henrico County, CPTED reviews are a standard component of the development review for rezoning applications, plans of development, lighting and landscape plans and various area studies.