

Chapter 4 – Lighting

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

The basis of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is that properly designing and effectively utilizing the built environment can reduce the incidence and fear of crime. Consequently, this leads to improvements in the quality of life. In contrast to the approach of addressing crime concerns by implementing visually affronting security or target hardening measures such as locks, hard barriers, security gates, security patrols, etc., CPTED promotes high quality and visually pleasing solutions as first responses that aim to enhance the legitimate use of space. CPTED can be utilized without interfering with the normal use of the space. It is simple to apply and can be economical to implement, especially if it is done early at the planning and design stages of a project.

CPTED principals include Natural Surveillance, Natural Access Control, Territorial Reinforcement, and Maintenance. Principal number 1, Natural Surveillance, directly pertains to lighting. Properly addressing lighting can reduce crime and improve security. Lighting provides users of the built environment with the information needed to decide if people walking towards them are friends or foes. It helps people feel safer while reducing the opportunity for being a victim of crime by surprise or ambush.

Lighting is subjective and has to be done effectively. There cannot be too much light, too much contrast, or too little light. Effectively providing good lighting can create a psychological deterrent to criminals and improve detection, identification, and capture potential intruders or criminals. When applying effective lighting through CPTED, one must begin by identifying the designated purposes of the space, how that space is defined, and how well the physical design supports the intended function. Many of the best resources regarding lighting and CPTED can be found below.

1. CPTED and Lighting: Reducing Crime, Improving Security:
http://www.cpted.net/resources/Documents/ICA%20Resources/Guidebooks%20and%20Journals/Guidebook_02_CPTED%20and%20Lighting.pdf
2. Illumination Engineering Society of North America (IESNA): <https://www.ies.org/>
3. Guideline on Security Lighting for People, Property, and Public Spaces:
<http://rageuniversity.org/PRISONESCAPE/PERIMETER%20SECURITY%20PDFS/security-lighting-guide.pdf>
4. National Crime Prevention Institute: <http://nicp.net/>
5. The Outdoor Lighting Pattern Book: <http://www.lrc.rpi.edu/publicationDetails.asp?id=100>