Second Generation CPTED
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Beyond the First Generation

Since the 1970's, it has been noted that certain architectural and planning designs have unintentionally created environments that provide greater opportunities for crime to be committed. Known as first generation crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED), this approach focussed entirely on the rational offender, who calculates the potential risks and rewards before committing a crime. By including the dynamics of the social realm (known as second generation CPTED), not only are the original principles (i.e. natural surveillance, access control, territorial reinforcement and space management) better understood, but more holistic and integrated strategies may also be developed. By considering the physical environment and involving the communities that inhabit these spaces, it is hoped that not only will greater reductions in crime be seen, but also that these communities become more vibrant and enjoyable places to live.[1]

What is Second Generation CPTED?

Second generation CPTED is conceptually divided into four areas. Rather than dealing exclusively with opportunity reduction, these four areas interact to reduce the potential motives for the commission of crime, and seek to promote the notions of community and neighbourliness in order to help prevent crime.

1. Social Cohesion

Strategies that fall under the banner of social cohesion seek to establish and affirm relationships that exist between residents, formal and casual users of an area. Beyond the social limitations of casual observation utilised in first generation CPTED surveillance, social cohesion strategies also aim at instilling ways in which conflicts and problems may be resolved in an agreeable and legal manner. This may be achieved through individuals participating in events such as community barbecues or through involvement in locally based organisations. Through taking part in activities such as these, friendship networks may be established and strengthened. Through the *social glue* that is formed via this process, it has been noted that people are more likely to take responsibility for their community and develop the necessary social and emotional skills needed for social conflict resolution.[2]

2. Connectivity

While the relationships that exist within a community itself are vital to the prevention of crime, it is also necessary to ensure that the community does not become isolated, and is able to establish positive relationships with organisations and groups external to itself. This may exist in the form of being able to contact the media to promote events, social successes or to gain support. In addition, this also includes the ability to maintain Government funding for public infrastructure such as transport. By fostering these relationships, not only are the problem-solving solutions from external sources such as social welfare groups made available, but residents may also be empowered through having greater influence in planning and development of the area.[3]

[1] Saville, G., and Cleveland, G., 1998, *Second Generation CPTED: an Antidote to the Social Y2K Virus of Urban Design*, Paper presented to the 3rd International CPTED Association conference, Washington DC, 14-16 December.
[2] Atlas, R., 2008, 21st Century Security and CPTED: Designing for Critical Infrastructure, Protection and Crime Prevention, CRC Press, Florida.
[3] Atlas, p 82.

3. Community Culture

Many of both the first and second generation CPTED concepts are underpinned by the underlying culture that promotes and allows these initiatives to be realised. One of the most prominent criticisms of first generation CPTED has been that while it may lower rates of assault on the streets, it does nothing to address this problem within private homes. As such, by initiating education groups that are based on gender, ethnicity or age, the prevalence of violence may be reduced in all settings by addressing the culture that underlies these actions.

Through the use of festivals and other sporting and cultural events, a unique local culture may also be fostered. This local culture may help to encourage the community to take ownership and protect their shared area, as well the other members of the community itself. Events such as these can also help to remove the stigma associated with particular geographic areas, and help to include residents that have previously been isolated from previous involvement.[4]

4. Threshold Capacity

Drawing from the knowledge of social ecology, the fourth principle of second generation CPTED suggests that it is necessary for a balance to be achieved socially, as well as in the use of land space. Through discouraging the presence of abandoned buildings and encouraging safe congregation areas for young people, it is believed that people will be tipped towards socially productive activities. Conversely, if an area's threshold for supporting an intended activity is exceeded, then this may lead to an increase in crime.

A social balance that allows people to develop a strong sense of community and shared standards should also have a positive impact on crime rates for an area. This process may be assisted via the introduction of a variety of public performances and activities, and by initiating community gardens. It should be noted however, that while social and land use diversity should be encouraged, it is important to avoid congestion of both people and resources in any area.[1]

Implications for Local Government

By employing the principles and strategies that have been mentioned above, councils will have extra strategies at their disposal that may help to reduce crime rates. By providing these extra options for dealing with similar problems, a more accurate and tailored response that goes beyond first generation CPTED is enabled. As such, rather than locking down a public area with excessive CCTV and access control technology, a council may choose to employ street performers, hold a market or host a cultural event to help prevent crime.

All of the above techniques can also be seen to assist in reducing fear of crime, and can help to address the 'fortress mentality' that stifles many communities that are prone to crime. As a whole, second generation CPTED aims to promote the tools that make a community safer and make a community enjoyable to live in, without sacrificing one for the other.

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[4] Atlas, pp 83-84.
[5] Atlas, p 84.