



Australian Institute of
Landscape Architects

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AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS (AILA) SUBMISSION SAFER PLACES BY DESIGN (2021)

To whom it may concern,

The Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) would like to thank you and your teams for the invitation to comment on the Safer Places by Design – Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Planning Guidelines, released by the Department of Planning Lands and Heritage for public comment in December 2021.

AILA is the peak national body for landscape architecture, leading a dynamic and respected profession: creating great places to support healthy communities and a sustainable planet. We provide our members with training, recognition, and a community of practice to share knowledge, ideas, and action. We anticipate and develop a leading position on issues of concern in landscape architecture. Alongside government and allied professions, we work to improve the design, planning and management of the natural and built environment.

Landscape Architects conceive, reimagine and transform the outside world from streetscapes to parks and playgrounds, transport solutions to tourism strategies, new suburbs and even cities. Landscape architects shape project outcomes in a variety of ways. We bring a critical eye to the potential opportunities and constraints of a place, site, or landscape.

In operation since 1966, AILA represents over 3,600 members Australia wide and promotes excellence in planning and designing for life outdoors. Committed to designing better places, Australian landscape architects have the skills and expertise to improve the nation's liveability through integrated nature-based solutions delivering better environmental, social, and economic outcomes for all Australians

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Draft Safer Places by Design – CPTED Planning Guidelines 2021

Observations

The Safer Places by Design Guidelines (2021) create a comprehensive framework to Crime Prevention through Environmental Design based on best practice and AILA would like to congratulate the government on yet another considered and relevant guideline document.

Following conversations with our members, we offer the following commentary and recommendations for consideration. As CPTED considerations are an integral part of the planning and design process, AILA members regularly provide place based and innovative governance, engagement, and spatial solutions in this space, not because of policy but because we know that the success of a place is closely tied to perceptions of safety.

AILA would like to note the following elements of the document that members felt were of great benefit:

- Cross referencing to the SPP7.0 10 principles, with ‘safety’ in particular.
- Perspective drawings illustrating the principles are very beneficial and valuable. They help understanding the guide.
- The inclusion of the ‘scenario’s, examples of public spaces, is also helpful in illustrating intent.
- The overall set-up of the document and use of photos to illustrate the principles.

Recommendations

AILA members are adept at ensuring CPTED principles are embedded in the spatial design of places. However, many of the issues are beyond the scope of detailed design to address. We feel that the document currently lacks emphasis given to critical elements in a designing out crime approach and offer the following recommendations for consideration:

1. The document seems to be based mostly in ‘first generation’ CPTED, while ‘second generation’ CPTED thinking is implemented in many other parts of the world
2. The key to achieving CPTED outcomes is having people using the public realm. The document pays a lot of attention to other, also important, CPTED aspects, but gravely underrates the encouragement of users.
3. Finally, we include some suggestions to improve the structure of the document



1. Second Generation CPTED - Designing for and with the community

Community involvement is mentioned in the document (p.19 p.39, p37), but there is opportunity to increase its visibility to acknowledge that community involvement and pro-social strategies are integral to the designing out crime process.

Studies have revealed that in crime hot spots, physical/spatial interventions are limited in reducing crime without supporting social strategies (Judd et al., 2005). A key part of understanding and addressing the social issues that contribute to crime is engaging with stakeholders, the community and potential users of the public space. Stakeholder groups have spent time building relationships with local communities, and as such are a critical point of access to the community, its needs and its knowledge (Camacho Duarte et al., 2011).

The 5 step CPTED process infographic does not include stakeholder or community consultation. The Cozens and Love (2015) describe the evolution of CPTED from first generation CPTED as primarily focusing on modification to the physical environment to second generation or social CPTED with an increasing emphasis on social cohesion, community connectivity, and community culture. Social CPTED includes concepts of celebrating diversity and inclusivity, creating connections between different stakeholders, and creating spaces and opportunities for developing community culture (Cozens & Love, 2015). These principles should be elevated in the document.

Territorial Definition principle, Objective 2.1 Clear spatial structure, C2.1.2 'Create a sense of safety, security and pride in a place' is listed as one of the considerations. **Given the potential benefit of a community co-design process that creates site-specific design solutions that respond to community aspirations, we suggest this 'consideration' could be elevated to a principle in itself.** To meaningfully avoid the 'cookie cutter' approach that is a stated objective of the document, responding to context is an essential principle. Creative placemaking is a process which directly responds to the community's self-articulated needs (Ross, 2016).

2. Activation and Place

Jane Jacobs (1961) defined the three main qualities of a safe public space as creating demarcation between public and private space, eyes on the street, and users in public space. **It has been suggested that what is significant about Jacobs 'eyes on the street' principle is not the sightlines but the 'eyes'** (Saville and Cleveland 1997 cited in Cozens & Love, 2015). This aligns with a contemporary definition of activation or the second generation CPTED concept of 'activity support' (Cozens & Love, 2015).

There is limited reference to activation in the document. Objective 4.1 Activity support mentions co-location of playgrounds with café's and shopping areas, but a more expansive definition of activity support



could be framed around responding to community demand, youth activation, and creating neighbourhood gathering infrastructure. **This could become its own design principle and provide greater direction to appropriate land use planning outcomes.** Recent studies strongly emphasise the importance of community engagement, prioritization of youth, and enabling social connections in the design of public space for crime prevention (Studio Gang, 2017).

Streets

We appreciate the Draft guide pays attention to users at various moments. Rightfully, a key principle is *“To see and be seen”. The design of an environment should maximise the number of people using a space to encourage good passive surveillance.*” However, the overall attention for users on the street is underwhelming.

Striking is the prominent attention for ‘high-risk scenarios’, defines as “threats for terrorism and violent extremism” (page 9), while the guide omits to acknowledge the daily threat of motorised vehicles as the most prominent and constantly present high-risk to all children and other vulnerable people on the streets. Unsafety due to cars is not even a scenario, but an everyday reality to vulnerable users.

The majority of all urban streets have a speed limit of 50km/hr, causing a death-risk for pedestrians of 60% in case they get hit by a car (Rosen and Sanders 2009, Tefft 2013, Welle 2015). As streets represent over 80% of all public realm, the majority of public space is unsafe for children and other vulnerable people. Safety of pedestrians and cyclists, including children and vulnerable people, is currently only guaranteed by their own behaviour; in other words, by dramatically limiting their use of the street or not using the street at all. This results in a dramatic lack of people using the public realm, and therefore a poor CPTED outcome. CPTED can only be structurally improved if the safety for children and other vulnerable users on the street is dramatically improved by ensuring the street environment is designed to reduce vehicles speeds and by reducing maximum speed limits for motorised vehicles. A Safer Places by Design guide that does not acknowledge this, is only paying lip-service to safety.

Differing Perceptions

Critical to the effectiveness of design response is an understanding of the user and the circumstances around crime occurrence. User and abuser-centred design relies on conducting research about how users and potential abusers respond to their environment (Design Out Crime: Designing out Crime A Designers’ Guide, 2011).

There needs to be stronger recognition, guidance and associated requirements for mapping and designing for the different perceptions of safety within the community. Research has demonstrated that physical/spatial interventions affect different community members in disparate ways. For example, one



study demonstrated that graffiti removal and removal of solid walls had a greater impact on women than men (Navarrete-Hernandez et al., 2021).

Co-Design

Design strategies should address the complex roots of crime (Studio Gang, 2017). Provision of youth activity is critical given boredom is the most frequently cited circumstance surrounding youth offences (Anderson et al., 2010). Community and stakeholder engagement to understand existing provision, gaps, and youth needs in each community would enable projects to directly engage young people and mitigate boredom. These could include sporting infrastructure, art programmes, and community gardens.

Provision of spaces, infrastructure, and projects to enable community gathering would help support objectives to encourage community cohesion. Studies have demonstrated that regular neighbourhood events and gatherings reduce crime (Bellair, 1997). Community-based art projects can create greater empathy and understanding that can contribute to public safety goals such as reducing interpersonal violence (Ross, 2016). Engendering a sense of place through community festivals, cultural events, youth clubs, and commemoration is central to second generation CPTED (Cozens & Love, 2015).

Detailed consideration must be given to how landuse planning and subsequent projects can enable these activities. This approach involves community engagement to understand existing provision, community need and what an inclusive response may look like.

We have the opportunity to design public spaces that could mitigate crime by addressing some of the causes of crime through a process of co-design to develop place-specific solutions to community concerns. This should be given greater emphasis in the document.

3. Document Structure and Emphasis

Effective land use planning, community engagement, prioritizing youth, and facilitating community connections should be given greater emphasis in the document. The importance of these principles should be reflected in the design principles and the structure of the document.

Internationally, designing out crime projects place user and stakeholder engagement at the heart of designing out crime (Community Crime Prevention Victoria, 2022; Design Out Crime: Designing out Crime A Designers' Guide, 2011; Studio Gang, 2017). It is crucial to undertake research, user observation, and stakeholder interviews early in the design process and embrace expansive ideas generation, in order to extend the reach and influence of design work (Design Out Crime: Designing out Crime A Designers' Guide, 2011).



We argue for greater visibility within the guidelines for a people and place-centred approach to designing out crime to improve the response to what is a complex social issue.

We recommend the CPTED process section should be at the front of the document as it informs and gives context to the design principles.

AILA recommends consideration of revising the principles as follows:

- (1) Urban life on the street
- (2) Eyes on the street
- (3) Social connectivity

Conclusion

AILA would like to thank DPLH for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Safer Places by Design Guidelines. While we believe the Guidelines in their current form are a considered and common-sense approach to spatial design considerations, we encourage the next review phase to consider elevation and inclusion of second phase CPTED principles to ensure the guidelines reach both their potential and remain relevant to design professions over their lifetime.

We provide these comments and proposals for DPLH's consideration in the spirit of an ongoing collaborative relationship. We applaud the considerable work and thought that has gone into this initiative and welcome any future collaborations and consultation as the process unfolds.

Please feel free to call the undersigned to discuss this and any future advice we can offer in helping to finalise this incredibly important strategy.

Kind regards,

Shea Hatch

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SUBMISSION TEAM

This submission has been prepared by a working group of AILA WA Advocacy members.



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