



# CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (CPTED)

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**Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design** or CPTED (pronounced sep-ted) is a crime prevention approach that combines proper design and effective uses of the environment to increase security, improve quality of life, and potentially keep crime out of Cheyenne.

The goal of all CPTED applications is to:

- Decrease crime
- Decrease the fear of crime
- Increase the quality of life

Crime decreases if the opportunity to commit the crime is reduced or eliminated. CPTED works by eliminating criminal opportunities in and around your property. This can result in your property being a less appealing target.

## THE FOUR STRATEGIES

CPTED does not have to be expensive or difficult to apply. It involves taking full advantage of your property's:

1. Natural surveillance
2. Access control
3. Reinforcement potential
4. Maintenance

**1 Natural Surveillance** is the design of an area to allow the greatest visibility by citizens. This strategy works because criminals do not want to commit crimes in areas where they feel exposed to observers. In the event a crime does occur, there is a greater chance that it will be witnessed and reported.

Take an objective look at your property. If you answer yes to any of these questions, your property's natural surveillance may need to be improved.

- Does landscaping or fencing obscure the view of my property from neighboring properties?
- Are there any areas around my doors or windows where a person could hide?
- Are there areas of contrast or shadow around my property where intruders can loiter without being seen?

To address any of the above concerns, consider adding motion-sensitive lights, reducing or pruning trees and shrubs, or altering fencing so intruders can be seen.

**2 Access Control** is the design of an area to physically obstruct or guide access by people and vehicles. This strategy works by deterring access to potential targets of crime, but it also causes improper access to be noticed more readily.

Take a look at your property. If you answer yes to any of these questions, your property's access control may need to be improved.

- Do people routinely trespass on my property and/or fence line?
- Can people trespass on my property without being seen by others?
- Do people access my property in ways other than I intended?



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To address any of the above concerns, consider better control of undesired movements onto and within your property. Install landscaping, fencing, or barriers to increase the chances of an intruder being seen when entering or exiting your property.

When selecting fencing or landscaping materials, consider the maintenance requirements and the impact that full-grown landscaping would have on your ability to see intruders trespassing on your property.

Keep furniture and equipment away from inaccessible windows and doors.

**3 Territorial Reinforcement** refers to how space is defined. All space can be defined as public, private, or semipublic/semi-private. Territorial reinforcement clearly shows the transition from public space to private space.

Take a look at your property. If you answer yes to any of these questions, improvements may need to be made.

- Do strangers regularly trespass on my property?
- Is my property being used as a shortcut?
- Does my property ever have an unlive-in or unkempt appearance?
- Are there seldom-used sections of my property where people loiter or hang out?

To address any of the above concerns, incorporate design elements that help distinguish between public and private property.

**4 Maintenance** refers to property up-keep. For businesses and residences, this can be done through well-placed markers, flowerbeds, low fences, walls, hedges, signage, and regular maintenance.

Create an “illusion of occupancy” at home. This is extremely important in deterring thieves. This can be accomplished by making sure your lawn is maintained, your driveway is shoveled and your newspapers and mail are picked up. Use timers to control your lights and have someone check on your property.

### CPTED STRATEGIES:

- Provide a clear border definition of controlled space
- Provide clearly marked transitional zones that indicate movement from public to semi-private to private space
- Create gathering areas at locations with natural surveillance and access control
- Re-designate the use of space to provide natural barriers to conflicting activities
- Improve scheduling of space to allow for effective use (parking for nightshift workers closest to the building)
- Redesign or revamp space to increase the perception or reality of natural surveillance
- Overcome distance and isolation through improved communications
- Place safe activities in vulnerable areas, e.g. community garden in vacant land
- Place vulnerable activities in a safe place, e.g. kindergarten play area in a school courtyard
- Increase the perception of natural surveillance (especially around access control points)