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Item No. 4

**Halifax Regional Council
November 27, 2007
Committee of the Whole**

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Wayne Anstey".

SUBMITTED BY: _____
Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

DATE: November 14, 2007

SUBJECT: Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Motion from September 25, 2007 requesting that staff provide a report on the adoption of a CPTED policy that would apply CPTED principles to:

- (a) all future subdivision development, new parks and playgrounds, and
- (b) existing HRP parks, playgrounds and properties.

Council also requested the report address specific principles of CPTED such as Lighting and Surveillance, as well as reference to HRM staff who are trained CPTED Practitioners and authorized to conduct CPTED audits.

BACKGROUND

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behaviour. CPTED strategies rely upon the ability to influence offender decisions that precede criminal acts.

Crime is unpredictable and can vary from one community to the next; one street to the next. CPTED is planning, development and operation related principles utilized to reduce opportunities for crime. Opportunities for crime may be related to existing land use (abandoned buildings); neighbourhood characteristics (no open sightlines nor natural surveillance), traffic and transit (drug dealing at specific locations, shortcutting due to bus schedules), change in tenure (homes converted to rental properties), inappropriate or ineffective rules or policies (high accumulation of garbage that is not removed on a regular basis; landlords not maintaining properties), neighbourhood routines (most residential break and enters take place mid to late afternoon).

CPTED principles (Access Control, Surveillance, Territorial Reinforcement and Lighting) can be used to manipulate the physical environment to influence behaviour in order to reduce crime and fear of crime, thereby improving a community's quality of life.

Access Control - Access control can restrict, encourage and safely channel movement of people and vehicles into, out of, and within a designated area. It can also decrease crime opportunities. Properly located entrances, exits, fencing, and landscaping can direct both pedestrian and vehicular traffic in ways that discourage crime.

Surveillance - Generally, criminals do not want to be seen and surveillance keeps intruders under observation. The placing of physical features in ways that minimize the ability for one to see what is taking place, increases the potential for crime. There are three types of surveillance (Natural, Organized and Mechanical) of which Natural is the most effective. The opening up of sightlines is paramount in enabling people to see and be seen. This can be achieved by limbing trees up 6ft - 8 ft and maintaining low growing vegetation no higher than 2 ft. It is also important for building placement and locations of entrances, parking areas and other activity areas. With parkland acquisition, it is important to maximize visibility into and out of the park via scale appropriate road frontage, topography and vegetation.

Territorial Reinforcement - Criminal behaviour can be reduced by property owners providing the perception that their property is well maintained and cared for (lawns mowed, litter removed, property damage repaired, graffiti removed).

Lighting - To Light or Not to Light - Proper lighting not only reduces improper behaviour but also provides a sense of security. Caution is given, however, in lighting areas that will simply create a well lit location for criminal activity in areas that are not easily seen by the public. It is noted that CPTED Practitioners are cognizant of the fact that lighting, if not directed properly, can be intrusive

onto residential areas, and take steps to ensure that this is not the case.

As established by Architect Oscar Newman, defensible space must contain two components. First, defensible space should allow people to see and be seen. Ultimately, this diminishes residents' fear because they know that a potential offender can easily be observed, identified, and consequently, apprehended. Second, people must be willing to intervene or report crime when it occurs (community mobilization). By increasing the sense of security in settings where people live and work, it encourages people to take control of the areas and assume a role of ownership. When people feel safe in their neighbourhood they are more likely to interact with one another and intervene when crime occurs. These remain central to most implementations of CPTED today.

CPTED audits are conducted both at the design stage or as a retrofit. At the design stage, staff have an opportunity to influence the actual design of a structure in an effort to reduce levels of crime (removal of ambiguous space, construction material that is easily maintained as a result of vandalism). Many existing built areas were not designed with CPTED in mind, which can lead to expensive modifications.

DISCUSSION

The planning and subdivision of land and the design of the built environment should include CPTED principles in the regulatory review and approval process. Currently there is an application of these principles although it is unofficial and ad-hoc. There is an opportunity for the regulatory review and approval process to formally acknowledge these principles and to encourage design elements which foster public safety in new developments.

Legislative opportunities to incorporate CPTED principles into practice for HRM may include amendments to the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy, Secondary Planning Strategies and Land Use By-laws (LUBs). These amendments would provide issue, objective and policy statements. The Regional Subdivision By-Law's Park Dedication Section contains Park Service Delivery and Quality of Land Criteria to be used by staff that assist in measuring proposed parkland for opportunities of Natural Surveillance, Territorial Reinforcement, Natural Access Control and Target Hardening.

The objective of the new guidelines are envisioned to improve the safety of the physical environment of HRM and may include:

- development of CPTED guidelines
- encourage the use of CPTED guidelines through reference in the LUBs
- encourage the use of CPTED guidelines through reference in the Regional Subdivision By-Law

- promote the application of CPTED principles through the design review process
- establishment of partnerships to foster the ongoing implementation of CPTED principles.

In the interest of CPTED principles forming an integral part of the design review process, proposed amendments to the Land Use By-laws may include requiring staff to encourage the inclusion of CPTED criteria within the design elements of new development or redevelopment, both in terms of building design and site layout. General performance standards for a safer physical environment may include design elements which readily allow for casual surveillance.

Currently all Parkland Planners in Infrastructure and Asset Management's Capital Projects, Parkland Planners in Community Development (parkland acquisition via the Development Agreement and Subdivision Application Process) and staff of Real Property Planning division have received training in CPTED design principles and, within project budget constraints, design new infrastructure with those principles in mind.

Since 1996, HRM's Park Planning Staff have endeavoured to acquire Park lands that display useable/developable characteristics in order to better manage capital development and operating costs. Embedded in the acquisition methodology has been the National Crime Prevention Institute's definition of CPTED - "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 of the quality of life." Several excellent examples of park land acquired since 2000 that adhere to CPTED principles include:

- a) Brookview Neighbourhood Park in Eastern Passage
- b) Rutledge Drive Neighbourhood Park in Bedford
- c) Cost Creek Community park in Lost Creek Village, Beaver Bank/Kinsac
- d) Timberstone Community Park in White Hills Village, Hammonds Plains
- e) Viscount Drive Community park in Kingswood North, Hammonds Plains
- f) Berry Hills Community Park in Berry Hills, Sackville.

HRM currently owns and/or maintains over 1600 park properties. A program of CPTED auditing of that entire portfolio would require significant human and financial resources. The identified shortfalls would undoubtedly generate a substantial capital demand requiring many years to deliver. A more effective use of resources might be to target locations with identified security issues first and through a multi year program that would identify appropriate new resources to deliver the program implement the upgrades on a priority basis.

CPTED audits or assessments (not requiring full CPTED audit) are conducted in consultation with

Police and other business units, as required. When an audit is requested, outside of one requested at the design stage, staff currently take the request, discuss with the relevant business unit and proceed to develop a document for the relevant business unit. The business unit takes the audit recommendations into consideration and proceeds in implementing same, resource dependent.

Training

While there has been no formal adoption of CPTED principles within HRM, a number of business units have been informally incorporating the principles as an inherent feature of normal operating functions through a variety of processes. The level of staff training varies from formal training in CPTED to informal educational course work (i.e., university/college) and through employment experience.

Approximately 150 staff members (HRP, RCMP, Community Development, Transportation and Public Works, Infrastructure and Asset Management, Water Commission and Fire) have received in-house CPTED Level One training (exterior of buildings/parcels of land/site plans) by the Community Response Team (CRT) over the past four years (assisted by an HRP Inspector). An additional 44 (approximately) have received Level One training outside of HRM.

Members of the CRT have received Level Two training (interior of buildings) as well as advanced training through the American National Institute of Crime Prevention. There are also a number of police who have received Level Two training. CPTED Practitioners may not necessarily conduct audits, however, they have the knowledge of incorporating CPTED principles into their daily functions.

HRP has seconded an officer to the Halifax Regional School Board, conducting CPTED audits of School Board assets. By the end of the secondment period (June 2008), the officer will have conducted approximately 140 audits. The officer is also working with the Department of Education, providing direct input into the initial design of new schools and renovations (retrofits) as well as providing CPTED/physical security training for school board employees.

HRP also has an officer seconded to Transportation & Public Works as an expert in the field of physical security for HRM facilities.

As far as the private sector is concerned, both HRP and the RCMP offer advice to alleviate or reduce criminal activity or fear of crime, as required.

It is the goal of the CRT to establish a forum where CPTED Practitioners would meet quarterly to share best practices and successes. This would constantly reinforce their understanding of CPTED

principles. Further, staff will be evaluating the sufficiency of existing training to offer Level Two in-house. This will be discussed by staff over the next number of months.

CPTED POLICY/GUIDELINES

Staff have been meeting to discuss the development of a set of corporate guidelines (to apply HRM wide) that may lead to a policy. It is anticipated these guidelines will address CPTED related components such as development of a common CPTED form; central database of audits and assessments; follow up process to audits; training; identification of staff whose job descriptions require them to apply CPTED principles, etc. Further, staff will be evaluating successes in terms of reducing crime through CPTED audits. Discussions will continue over the next few months, with a report to come back to Council early March, 2008 which will make recommendations for the formal incorporation of CPTED into appropriate HRM areas of business.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications at this point in time, however, associated costs resulting from the implementation of possible corporate CPTED guidelines, will be brought forward at a later date.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ATTACHMENTS - N/A

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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