

Calgary Transit

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design and the West LRT

One of the challenges of maintaining order in public areas, such as CTrain stations, is creating a space that supports legitimate use while discouraging illegitimate activities.

Fortunately, it is possible to greatly minimize the potential for crime in these spaces by taking certain measures during design and planning. This method is known as CPTED (“sept-ed”), or Crime Prevention through Environmental Design. All new stations along the West LRT line have been built with the following core CPTED principles in mind:

- 1. Sightlines:** To discourage illicit activities, it is important to create the impression that all actions can be seen by others. West LRT stations are designed with glass paneling and skylights, to ensure people and activities within the station are visible to others on the street and in all areas of the station, including stairs and escalators.
- 2. Elimination of Entrapment Spots:** Entrapment spots are areas where it is easy for one person to “corner” another, leaving no escape route. Stations are designed with wide open areas, such as the mezzanine in the Sunalta Station, to reduce the possibility of entrapment.
- 3. Information Signs:** By providing information about when the next train is coming, patrons can avoid long waits, thereby reducing the risk of being involved in an incident. Calgary Transit is in the process of installing electronic signage at all CTrain stops to provide up-to-the-minute information about next train times and schedules.
- 4. Reduce Isolation:** Isolated areas (fields, parking lots) can facilitate crime because often no one is there to witness or report it. All six West LRT stations are located in areas with considerable eyes on the street, including residential areas, commercial centres, and educational and recreation facilities.
- 5. Lighting:** When areas are well lit, people are more likely to feel like they can be seen. The West LRT stations have been designed to provide adequate lighting during daytime and nighttime hours. Adjacent pathways will also feature lighting.

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6. **Maintenance:** Areas that show signs of neglect suggest to criminals the area is not regularly inspected or patrolled and may be an ideal place to commit crime. The building materials chosen for the West LRT stations were selected in part because they are easy to maintain and remove graffiti.
7. **Formal Surveillance:** Surveillance measures not only discourage crime, but they also foster a sense of security for legitimate users. Calgary Transit now has a 24-hour live monitored CCTV system in place at CTrain stations across the city.
8. **Patrols:** Patrols increase the risk of being caught during a criminal act, creating a less appealing risk/reward ratio for potential crimes. Over the last two years, Calgary Transit has hired additional Peace Officers to monitor the transit system. More officers will be hired over 2011 in anticipation of the West LRT line opening.

It is important to remember the incidence of crime on Transit property (buses, LRT, stations) is much lower than crime in the communities. Calgary Transit constantly assesses crime and disorder conditions and develops strategies to respond both effectively and efficiently.

Crime and disorder tends to be more localized, which means people tend to stay in their own community if they are involved in crime and/or disorder on a Transit system.

You may read more about the Safety Audit and the safety and security measures implemented by Calgary Transit on Calgary Transit's website" www.calgarytransit.com.

