

# October 2021 CPTED Assessment of Proposed Homeless Shelter 209-16<sup>th</sup> street North, Cranbrook, B.C.

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this report, and any other comments or recommendations made during the CPTED assessment, do not form a guarantee regarding the security of the inspected property. In no event shall the individual(s) conducting the assessment, City of Cranbrook, be responsible for any damage or loss suffered by the property owners or residents through any criminal incident following CPTED security assessment



## Opening Statement

Completing the recommendations and requirements outlined in this assessment will contribute to the overall security of the property; however, it does not ensure that crime will never occur on, or near the property.

**This report is not on the design of the building, but on the proposed site and how it may relate to the environment, behavior of people, and how this may interact with the community. The intent of a CPTED assessment is to minimize the opportunity for crime and reduce the fear of crime.**

As a CPTED Practitioner, I have a creed to “do no harm”. This works for those in need and those already living in the area. The goal of this review is to solve crime and incivility before it exists.

This assessment, as requested by the City of Cranbrook, will consider fact based CPTED principles and strategies, crime prevention strategies, site assessment, and area of influence information.

## Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

CPTED and crime prevention is seen as risk management when it is applied in the framework of crime prevention, as an aspect of governance. As a consequence, CPTED experts are regarded as similar to other risk management experts who identify risks (inputs in program logic terms) to be addressed. The processes for addressing those risks in order to produce crime prevention outputs, can result in the outcome of reduced crime, which in turn supports more accurate governing.

With the intent of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), we are looking for the effective use of design, maintenance, and management, to control the behavior of people. This will cause a reduction of incidents, and reduce the fear of crime; producing a better, safer standard of life for the residents and users of the recreational space that the shelter will be located within.

CPTED emphasizes that there is a direct relationship between the environment, people, land use and crime and loss prevention. The primary overlapping strategies/concepts of CPTED are:

1. Territoriality,
2. Natural surveillance
3. natural access control
4. maintenance
5. management

### General Overview

As presented, this shelter at 209-16<sup>th</sup> Ave N, is proposed to be a long-term solution to provide 40 beds to active homeless people – 24 hours a day – 7 days a week.

***The community, service providers and the Municipality, as well as the stakeholders, Bylaws and Police should all understand, and be involved in the search for the best housing solution first and then solve the other problems after.***

In delivering this report, the goal is to present the elements of the current suggested location as they relate to the principles of CPTED and consider the possible future conflicts, and community safety issues that the City of Cranbrook and the residents will want to minimize.

Communities are ecosystems with finite carrying capacities for certain land uses and activities—including crime and antisocial behavior.

This report will also look at public space, private space, schools, neighbourhoods, parks, and recreational spaces located around the proposed shelter, where safety is the key element in promoting quality of life.

In surveying the area around the proposed site, it was noted that there are significant blocks of single residential housing, and apartments in the area, and multiple recreational/educational facilities, including:

1. Memorial arena
2. Kinsmen arena
3. MBSS High School
4. Key City Theatre
5. Day Care
6. Boys and Girls Club
7. The Cranbrook Library.
8. Cranbrook Rec Plex.

***All these locations make up the Neighborhood Inventory and should be considered when introducing a new element like a homeless shelter, into this mix.***

When conducting this CPTED assessment, I considered activities that are projected to happen.

### **1. Crimes of Opportunity**

Given the police supported information that an intravenous drug user requires \$100.00 to \$200.00 per day to support this addiction while unemployed, I know from other communities that I have reviewed, that crimes of opportunity – thefts from vehicles, and property items left out- including bicycles, will occur within .25 km of the proposed new location. ***This will take in the entire residential area, as well as Memorial arena next door, the high school and the larger arena complex just on 2nd Ave.***

Upon reviewing the information that I have received from your local RCMP detachment, concerning the increase in separate calls ( last assessed at 316 ) to the address of the present temporary shelter at the Travelodge, located at 1417 Cranbrook Street North, a similar increase in separate calls to the proposed new facility will likely occur.

A crime generator is a location whose most likely frequented participants create a higher-than-average probability of illegal or inappropriate activity. *The Travelodge is a crime generator along Theatre road.*

It is important to note that in 2109, the Travelodge listed only 10 in calls to the RCMP .

## 2. Evidence of Street Stress

The proposed new homeless shelter has the potential to become a “hot spot” – which is defined as a geographical area of higher-than-average crime and disorder. *If this occurs*, evidence of street stress – tagging, garbage, needles, alcohol, loitering, drinking, and panhandling will become common place.

From the information I have received from local residents and city officials, there already is conflict between some users of the Ankors facility, and Memorial arena users. ( I am aware that the Ankors has now moved one block west of the new proposed new homeless shelter, but it remains evidence of the issues that could arise.)

There are reports from city staff, of used needles, trespassing, loitering, camping in doorways of the arena and drug deals being observed from willing dealers at the side of Memorial Arena.

## 3. Social unrest

Street stress and petty crime, could lead to the intended users ( Eg., recreational users to hockey games, tournaments, and theatre activities) withdrawing from the area and activities.

There is also evidence from other communities that further unwelcome users will fill the void.

Neighborhoods have a threshold within which they can cope or deal with a certain amount of disorder and crime. This neighborhood has been able to deal with the current state, but from my observations and discussions with residents in the area, they are not prepared for what may come with this type of homeless facility.

They will see a reduction of property values and be put into a position to fortify their homes and outbuildings.

*“Activity support”*, a definition from BC Housing Design and Construction Standards, sets standards for the planned use of this space, and should have been openly considered when assessing whether this may be a high risk for the location.

***By reviewing BC Housing’s own standards, there is, in this case a, high risk, and consideration of a safer location is needed.***

Despite the opportunity BC Housing is presenting to the City of Cranbrook, which they deem appropriate in terms of “facility and service”, it is in my opinion, that the outer perimeter of this new homeless shelter is somewhat of a “Square Peg in a Round Hole”.

In my findings, this is not compatible land use, as this facility allows drug use through an Overdose Prevention location within the building ( OPS ). Given that drug dealers follow their market, and a school is directly across the street, these dealers could now target youth in the area as witnessed in other communities.

There is a serious potential for conflict among the residents in this area as well as all those users of the parking areas with thefts of vehicles, thefts from vehicles and petty theft from yards and outbuildings.

This will create an unsafe environment for youth and families at the eight education/recreation locations previously listed.

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Further, to my overall CPTED assessment of the new homeless shelter, the following measures should be implemented if the development of the shelter is continued at this location.

### CPTED Principal 1

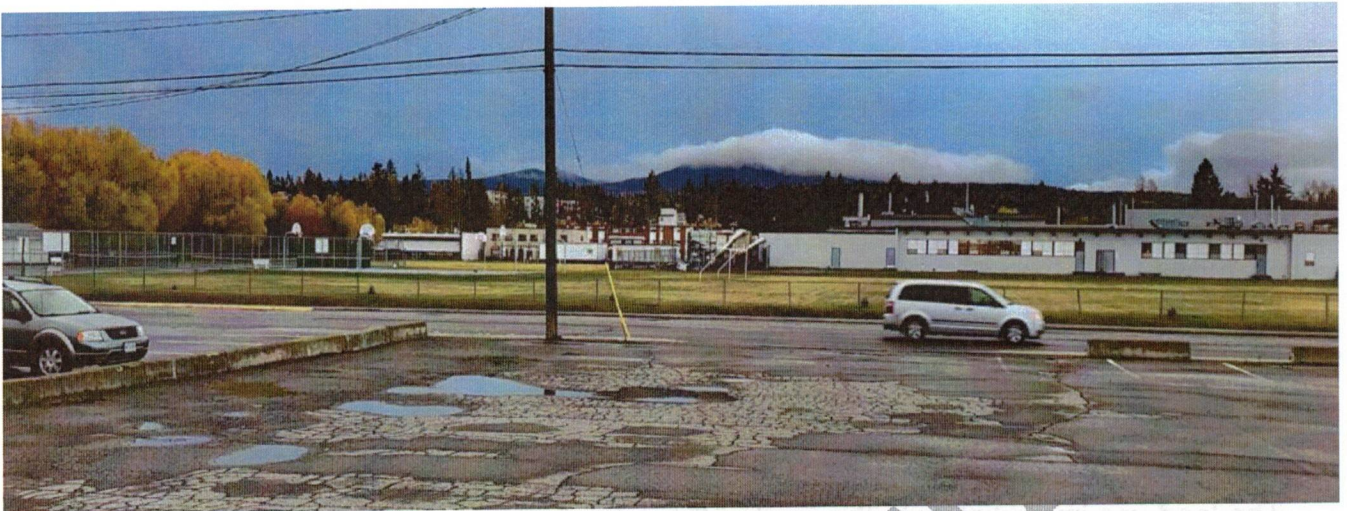
**Territoriality** – Deals with the separation delineating private space from semiprivate and public spaces.

The boundaries are:

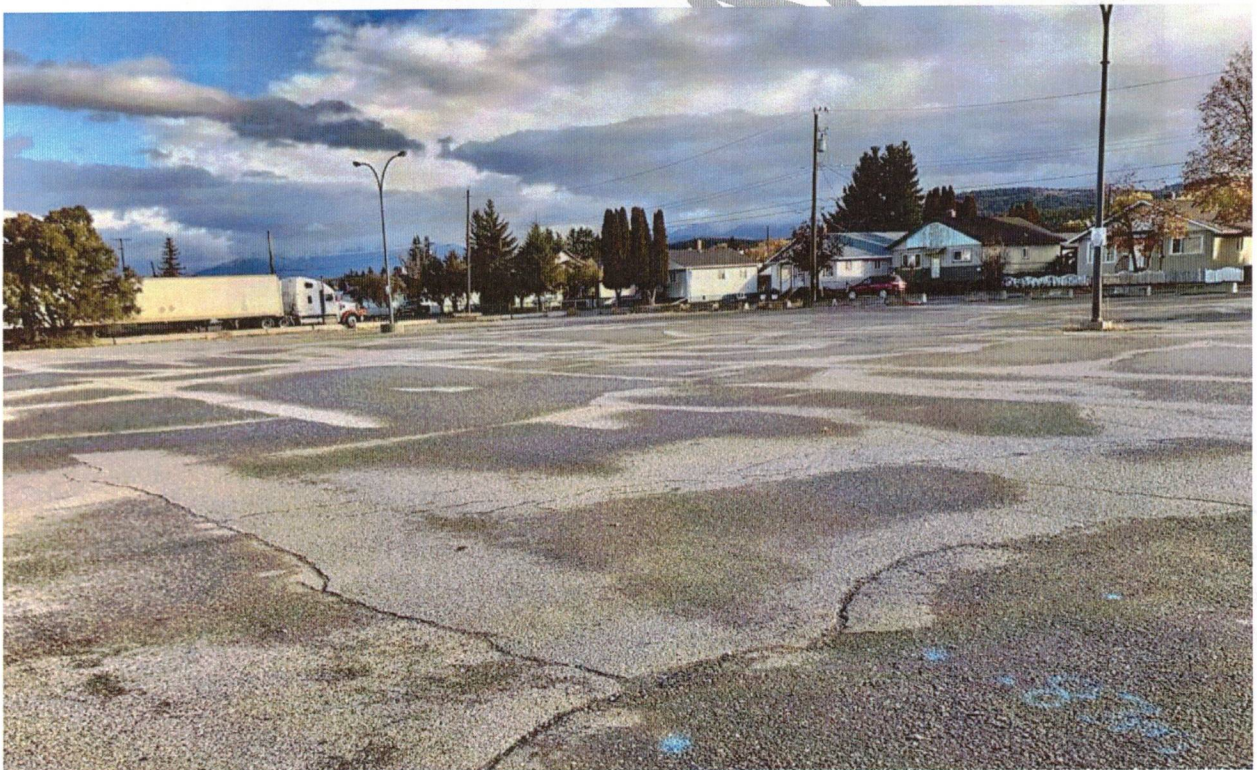
North – Valley freight Company separated by a 6' chain link fence only the width of the building. The parking lot is completely open to the sidewalk.



South – 2<sup>nd</sup> Street runs the width of the property at its extreme boundary with Mount Baker Secondary school across the street.



East – The privately owned parking lot for this property runs to 16<sup>th</sup> Ave. with private residences that continue one block over to the creek.



West – is the Kinsman Arena which is about 55' from the proposed site which takes in a roadway /parking area.



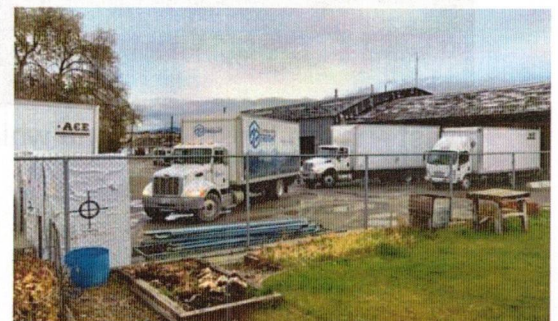
The land use immediately to the west of the arena is the Boys and Girls club and a Day Care on 14<sup>th</sup> Ave. North and 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.



In consideration of the new proposed homeless shelter, we need to address the *designation* and *definition* of the purpose of this property and acceptable behaviors of the space, which can then be supported by the *design* of that space.

Questions that need to be addressed are:

1. *How is the space defined?*
2. *Is it clear who owns it?*
3. *Where are the borders?*
4. *Will there be conflict between the designated purpose and the current use?*
5. *Does the design facilitate access control and promote surveillance?*





**The challenge here is in clearly delineating the private space of the shelter from the semi-private and public spaces surrounding it.**

**This is necessary because** a clear delineation fosters ownership and helps to readily identify strangers and uninvited people.

This property, which includes the building and the large parking lot, is privately owned.

As depicted, the rear of the building will be used exclusively for the new residents as a smoking and private zone and should be reworked to ensure there is only one access to it through the building.

### **Perimeter Considerations:**

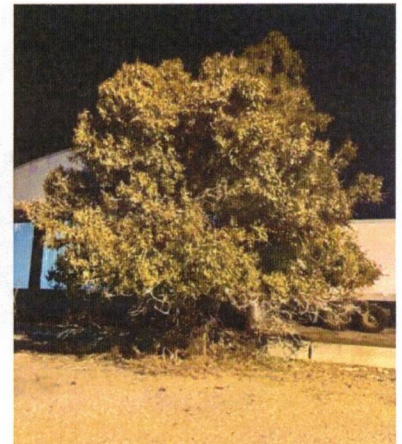
This space does not lend itself to adding landscaping to help create boundaries. In speaking with city officials, they also stated that the parking lot is often full with cars for events taking place in this recreation zone eg. *Key City Theatre, WFP events, high school tournaments etc.*

### **Recommendation:**

Ensure this private space will remain private is to completely fence the area with 6' black chain link down both sides and 4' chain link fencing across the front leaving the entrance open with good signage declaring it as private property for the use of the owners and homeless shelter residents only. The fence in this case should be a continuation of the rear fence on the North boundary and should attach to the building on the South boundary making the use of the area completely for those in the shelter.

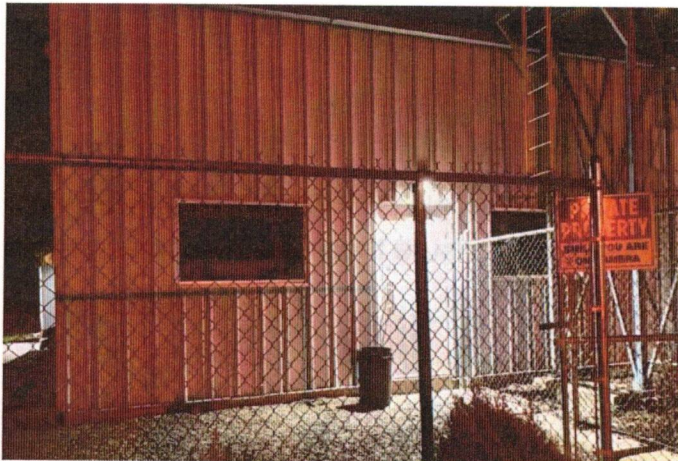
**Recommendation:** In terms of landscaping there is only one tree on the property that should be trimmed up from the ground to 6' to ensure it cannot be used as a hiding place.

**Recommendation:** With regards to securing the smoking and private zone at the rear of the building, both current gates should be removed and completely fenced in, and slats inserted to create privacy from the trucking lot.



**Recommendation:** On the West side of the building, the fence as seen in the picture should be moved to the edge of the building to prevent access to the door and to ensure that they do not use the fence, as they are doing now, to access the ladder to the roof.

Note the bent down tops to the fence and the proximity to the ladder to the roof.



**CPTED Principal 2: Access Control** – Controlling the access to the site that physically guide people through a space by the design.

**Recommendation:**

In this case by using the delineation of this space with permeable fencing and creating only one entrance to the site from the street and one entrance to the building within this private space will create the necessary barrier to unwanted users.

**Recommendation:** This must be accompanied by good signage as illustrated.

This will make a significant change to the way the space is being used now.



There must be a clearly designated purpose of this space, that will secure the privacy and allow for the exclusive use of the area by the proposed users. Doing this this should create less conflict (potential theft, damage, break and enters etc.) for the recreational users ( events, tournaments etc.) and for the residents in the surrounding neighbourhood.

Of course, the removal of this much parking may create a minor hardship for recreational users, and residents who used to utilize this space for casual parking during events.

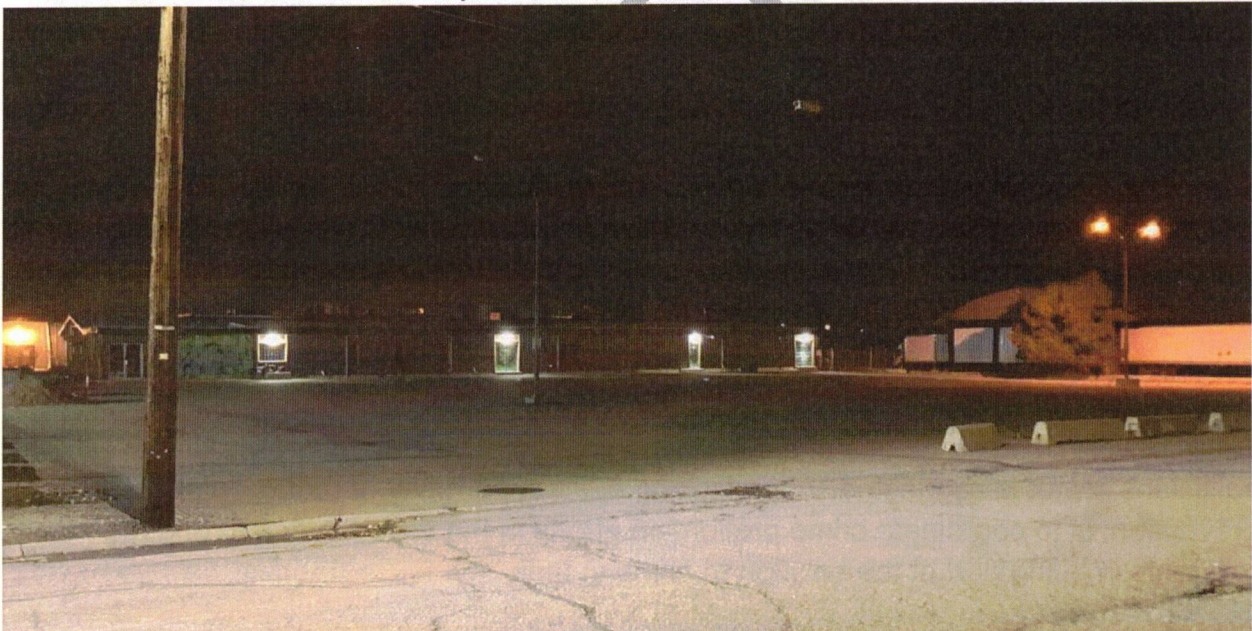
As event users park in the residential neighbourhood, this will create its own challenges.

**CPTED Principal 3: Surveillance** – *Facilitates maximum visibility/observation by the residents, community and law enforcement reducing the opportunity for vandalism and crime.*

On this site, with the recommendations suggested, it will provide great visibility from all areas of this property. This should help with all aspects of reducing unwanted visitors and vehicles, deterring antisocial behavior, and reducing high risk activities due to being completely open.

**CPTED Principal 4: Lighting & Security** - *Use signage to identify public & private property - Limiting access is vital*

Part of the surveillance section deals with lighting which is the first line of defense against crime. Of the two double lamp standards in the parking lot only one works. These standards are so far away from the building that the



building front is very dark. There are four lights now in place however they act as accent lighting and are not allowing light to extend beyond the front of the building.

**Recommendation:**

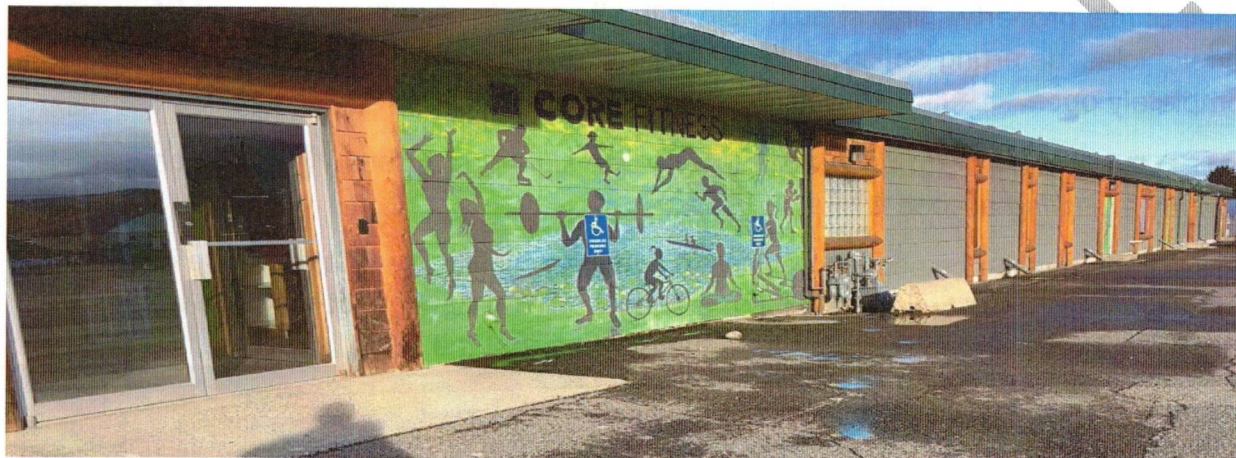
Replace these with fixtures with ones that will extend the light 20' beyond the face of the building and set with a light sensor to come on at dusk and off at dawn.

### **Recommendation:**

Include the fixtures that are over the entrance in the sensor. (They either do not currently work or were left off.)

### **CPTED Principal 5: Image & Maintenance**

The face of this stretch of building is flat and has no windows. This presents a great opportunity to install Spandrel glass with an awning to project an image that this is a building that fits into this community.



This will personalize the space and give the impression that there is pride of place. This could also be done with murals.

One key concept is that the design should reinforce the users control of the property which may help to reduce the perception of potential crime.

### **Neighbourhood Inventory – Demographics and land use.**

When people become victims of crime, they immediately blame the police or the politicians. What is suggested, when looking at an opportunity of reduction and prevention, is to coordinate crime prevention efforts in the community and engage residents in being part of the solution to crime in their city.

### **Recommendation:**

***To mitigate and stem the potential crime that will occur, should this site be approved, it is recommended that Council should anticipate hiring at least 2 more full time Bylaw positions (to accommodate two officers on shift each night) to provide night patrol shifts for this area for residents and those attending events. These bylaw officers, would then report their findings and incidents to the local RCMP detachment.***

This would provide a minimum level of responsibility, by the Municipality, to the legitimate users of the area surrounding the proposed change in land use.

**Recommendation: Other services can be established within the city to help offset the potential for criminal activity:**

- Using Volunteers in the RCMP Volunteer Program
- Establishing Block Watch Community groups
- Conducting retail security classes with the business community – Business Watch Program
- Working with ICBC on auto crime solutions and signage- “Lock it or Lose it” Program
- Publicity campaigns with the media, on the web and social media sites
- Starting education in schools on programs like “See something Say Something”

**Regan J Borisenko BA, ICPS**  
**Crime Prevention Specialist**

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