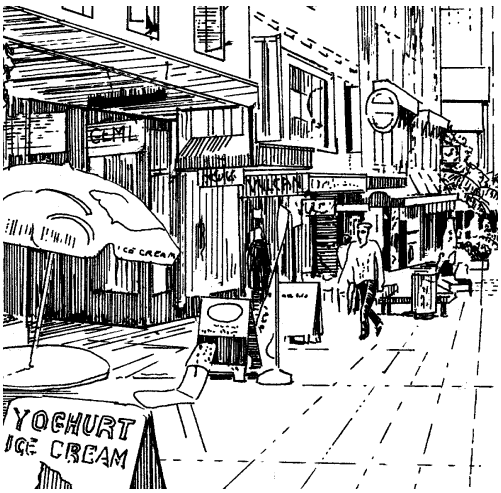
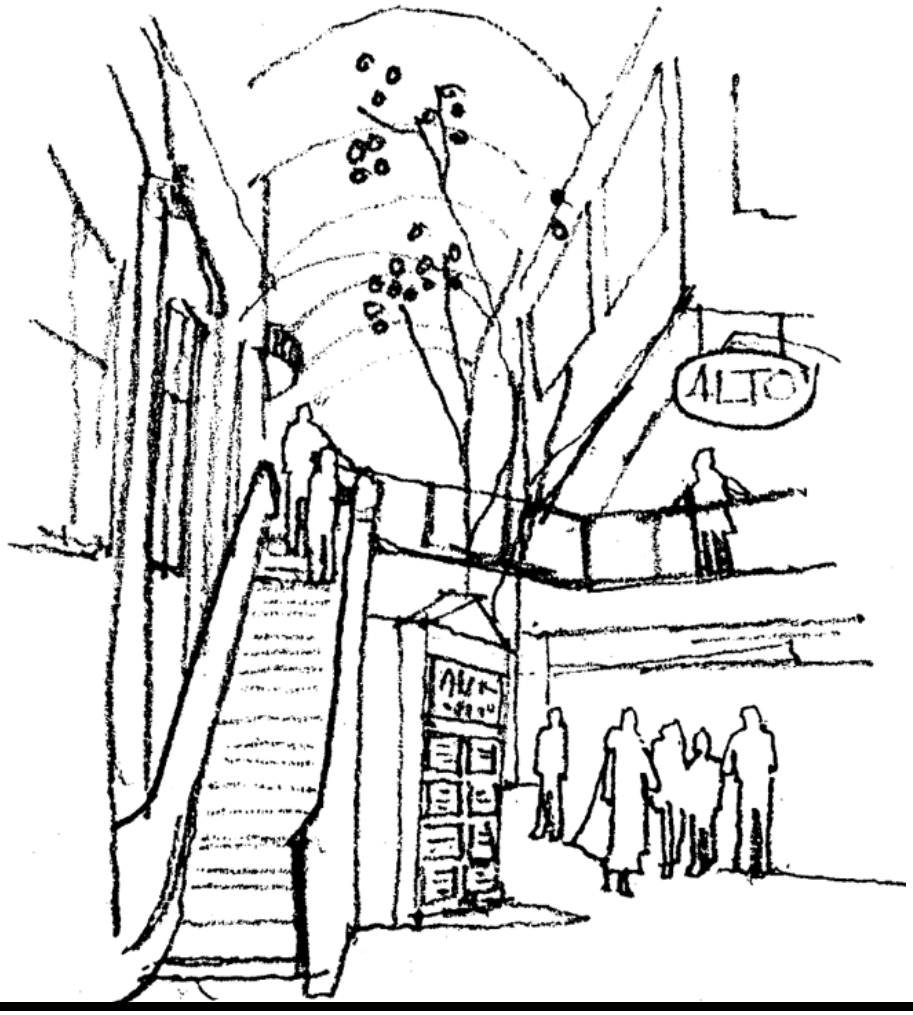
# ANNEXURE 6



# DESIGN AGAINST CRIME



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# INTRODUCTION

## SAFE DESIGN

The objective of this document is to guide the design of development to minimise the opportunity for crime to occur, and increase the perception of personal safety in the Auckland Central Area. The document also identifies relevant safe design considerations that could be incorporated in the District Plan. In addition this document provides criteria for assessing certain pedestrian facilities provided by developers in developments in order to gain floor space bonuses.

Under the Resource Management Act 1991 local authorities and persons acting under the Act have a statutory obligation to achieve the purpose of the Act, which is "*...to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources*." The Act defines sustainable management to mean: "*...managing the use of natural and physical resources in a way or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being and for their health and* ***safety****..".*

One way of providing for the safety of people and communities is to encourage the use of techniques, in design of the built environment, that reduce the opportunities for crime to occur.

The personal safety of people living and visiting Auckland has been recognised by Auckland City as an important issue in its 1996 draft review of its Strategic Plan. Auckland City takes this further in its document titled *Directions: Strategies for the Central Area Plan* in which one goal is to achieve a quality environment.

"To improve safety in the Central Area through improved lighting, signage, and public place and building design."

The relationship between the design of urban areas, the perception of an area as safe and the incidence of crime has been the subject of many studies looking at the decline of central urban areas both overseas and in New Zealand. Although the likelihood of a person being attacked may be relatively small, if an area is perceived to be unsafe then people will be less inclined to visit or use the area. If people do not use an area the area will indeed become less safe.

If an area is perceived to be safe then people will use that area. A safe urban environment has both social and economic benefits.

> *"A high level of lawful street activity helps inhibit anti-social behaviour and increases the multiplier effect and economic vibrancy of the business community."*[1]

Design of buildings and spaces to reduce the opportunity for crime is therefore critical to the social and economic vibrancy of a city.

The relationship between the perception of an area as safe and the economic wellbeing of the area is well recognised. Fear of crime creates a preference for insular activity at the expense of sidewalk, outdoor activity and encourages the desertion of downtown areas after 5.00 PM. Conversely if the area is perceived to be safe then people are more likely to use the area and stay in the area. High pedestrian counts and the presence of people around the clock are both important issues for the economic health of central areas. The perception of an area as safe encourages people to make use of it; this has a multiplier effect on the economy of the area. The more people that use an area the more diverse the range of services and activities that are available. The more activity and the greater the diversity of an area the greater the attractiveness of the area. The perception of an area as safe increases its desirability and becomes a selling point for both inner-city living, and for encouraging use of the area by people who live outside it.

1. The Citizens Crime Commission of New York City and The Regional Plan Association *Downtown Safety, Security and Economic Development* Downtown research and development Centre 1985. Page 14

Safe environmental design is based upon the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Principles (CPTED). CPTED can be said to be based on four main underlying concepts:

### Ownership

The design of space in or around buildings to promote "ownership" of the space by the users and residents of an area.

### Passive surveillance

The design of spaces and buildings that encourage the residents and users of an area to police that area, by providing for them to clearly see and survey the surrounds while they go about their business.

### Reducing entrapment areas

Design that avoids recessed or visually isolated areas that may be used to trap and isolate a victim.

### Environmental quality

Designing high quality, well maintained and attractive buildings and spaces.

Places that incorporate the above create a perception of an area as safe, reduce the fear of crime and are conducive to activity and use. They deter persons intent on criminal activity, and opportunistic crime by creating a sense of supervision and surveillance and reduce the opportunity for crime by increasing the chance of being seen.

## PERSONAL SAFETY IN THE CENTRAL AREA

In 1993 Auckland City undertook a study of users and residents to determine the perception of safety in the Auckland Central Area.

The study concluded that:

"*...many Aucklanders perceive the Central Area to be safer during the day than in the evening. This perception has been identified as having the potential to affect the way the central area functions as a vibrant, exciting and people oriented place. In particular, overseas experiences have shown, that the fear of crime has been identified as a contributing factor in the economic success of areas like the Central Area".*[1]

- The study made a number of recommendations that are particularly relevant to this document. These include:
- That all development in the Central Area should be subject to development controls that focus on both amenity and personal safety.
- That appropriate lighting standards for pedestrian facilities and at grade carparks need to be developed and implemented.
- Improved maintenance and paving of service lanes is essential if they are to have a role in the pedestrian network.
- A policy for the provision of signs around the city needs to be developed to direct people safely through the city.
- That pedestrian routes are improved through the use of design and light.
- That the design of carpark developments include design that addresses safety measures such as passive surveillance.

The study identified seven indicators which should be considered when looking at the safety of an area. These indicators form the basis of the Design Guidelines contained within this document.

## GOOD PRACTICE IN CREATING PUBLIC AREAS.

The guidelines contained within this document address personal safety concerns in public areas and public areas contained within private developments. In many instances the design of the interface between buildings and public areas is paid particular attention. The interface area includes the facade of buildings, entrances and exits to buildings and the curtilage of buildings.

Design to reduce the opportunity for crime is concerned largely with the detail of any design. It looks at public spaces from the point of view of the pedestrian or person who is likely to use the space.

1. Auckland City *Report of the Study on Personal Safety in the Central Area* 1993. Page 38.

The safe cities committee of the City of Toronto[1] suggest a number of useful questions that should be asked before a development application is lodged:

*What kinds of concerns have come up with similar developments in the past?*

*What kind of solutions were developed?*

*Who are the usual users?*

*What might their concerns be?*

*How might they be consulted?*

*How might the building or open space be used during the day?*

*How might it be used in the evening?*

*Has the architect explicitly addressed the issue of evening use?* [42]

The objectives seek to both reduce the opportunity for crimes to occur and to increase the perception of the area as a safe place. To achieve this places must be clearly visible (night and day), attractive and well maintained, encourage and promote activity and promote responsible behaviour by creating a sense of ownership of the space.

To achieve a safe environment all of the guidelines must be taken into account but one must apply a balance depending on the specific need or location. The designer should apply the guidelines based on the social and physical context, and the relative need to apply guidelines to achieve the balance.

1. Safe Cities committee of the City of Toronto and the City of Toronto planning and Development Department ***A Working Guide for Planning and Designing Safer Urban Environments.*** City Of Toronto 1992.
2. [4] Idem Page 7