5. THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN -
GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

This section outlines considerations for Goals, Objectives and Policies for various types of developments that are addressed in Official Community Plans.

It is divided into sections similar to Official Community Plans so that sections can be referred to by topic - Residential, Parks and Open Spaces, Public Buildings, Parking Areas, Commercial, Industrial.

Each section contains a brief description of women's safety issues that pertain to that topic, then goes on to outline suggested objectives and policies for the OCP to support safety.

Each section also contains additional considerations for design and management.

5.1. Goals for Public Safety

The OCP begins by setting out general social, economic and environmental goals to be achieved by the plan. Social goals usually consider maintaining and supporting the lifestyle of people in the community and can be the starting place to include personal and public safety of residents and potential residents as a priority.

As discussed previously in Section 3.5, the potential for conflicts in trying to achieve these goals can present unique challenges. Questions may arise with regard to designing for safety and maintaining economic viability or the natural environment. In some cases, the challenge will be to obtain a balance between what may be the ideal design for safety and the other goals.

> An example of conflict might be the desire to create a pedestrian walkway in an area that contains hazardous slopes or in an area where an existing road right of way would be affected, thereby impeding vehicular traffic and parking availability.

5.2. Objectives, Policies and Design Considerations

5.2.1. RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The form and character of residential development will depend on the vision of the community.   Whether they envision the future as more urbanized or maintained as rural, communities can incorporate public safety principles into residential development.

i) Objectives

- Residential development should seek to accommodate a diversity of lifestyles and ensure safe and affordable housing and corresponding community services (such as transportation) are made available and accessible to the greatest extent possible.

- Ensure residential development provides for public safety and security in design and layout of neighbourhoods, buildings, streets, parks, trails and other private and public spaces.

ii) Policies   General Residential:

- Public safety and security should be important considerations in residential development proposals. Proposals should be evaluated as to their provisions for public safety and security, and accessibility of all user groups with consideration of women, children, visible minorities, people with disabilities.

- Criteria for evaluation of new developments should include design that promotes public safety and accessibility, with attention to visibility, accessibility, mobility, provision of amenities such as park land, and general and emergency services.

- Ensure affordable, adequate and safe forms of housing are available to women, children and people with disabilities. Ensure zoning by-laws do not preclude provision of essential support services such as transition houses and group homes.

iii) Residential Areas - General design considerations:

a) Urban and Suburban Neighbourhoods:

1. Layout and design of neighbourhoods should provide for awareness of surroundings, adequate visibility, particularly for pedestrians, and opportunities for casual surveillance from the street and surrounding dwellings and businesses.

   - Ensure there is adequate lighting along well-traveled routes and in well-used public and semi-public places such as parks, bus stops.
   - Minimize places of concealment; entrapments spots and movement predictors.
   - Landscape design should allow for adequate visibility and avoid creating entrapment and hiding spots.
   - Consider security risks that may be posed by land uses such as parks, schools, parking lots, businesses, that contain isolated spots or attract groups of people hanging out (refer to specific sections of this guide).
   - Current trends in neighbourhood design favour the grid pattern which is thought to provide more predictability in terms of layout, particularly for people not familiar with an area. Whatever design is chosen, and whatever design currently exists, consider the following:

       - Where appropriate, consider reducing front yard set backs to encourage closer relationships of houses to streets.
       - Ensure adequate signage to tell people where they are and where the nearest emergency services are. Ensure signage is designed for both motorists and pedestrians.
       - Plan for an adequate number of public telephones and transit stops (consider street corners, local convenience stores, community halls).

2. Design of on-street, off-street and consolidated parking should provide for safety through maximizing visibility, surveillance opportunities, and seek to avoid conflicts between cars and pedestrians, both in layout and design, including landscaping.   *(Refer to Parking Areas for details on parking lot design).*

3. Layout and design of road networks, public transportation networks, road surfaces, pedestrian walkways should provide for compatibility between vehicle and pedestrian traffic (including wheelchairs and scooters) to ensure safety and accessibility.

- Ensure provision of adequate and clearly marked pedestrian walkways (for example, routes to school).
- Maximize linkages between neighbourhoods through pathways and access routes.

4. Encourage management of multi-family, apartment, strata and manufactured home developments to be aware of personal safety issues and incorporate policies and practices in support of safety.

- Managers of buildings and complexes should be aware of concerns and ensure they are noted and dealt with. Managers can be effective in ensuring maintenance is carried out promptly, and can work with residents groups and RCMP in developing and implementing safety programs such as accompaniment to cars, "Porch Lights On" campaigns and Neighbourhood Watch.

b) Rural areas:

Obstacles to safety for women and children in rural communities include:

- *Geographical isolation*
- *Lack of essential and /or accessible emergency services such as crisis centres, medical clinics, social and police services*
- *Long distances to work and recreation*
- *Lack of adequate public transportation systems*

While design considerations to support safety include aspects of lighting and other strategies discussed above, it is important to acknowledge people's desire to maintain the rural character of an area. For example, this is sometimes seen as detracting from the character of a rural area.

Some general design considerations may not apply to residential developments planned for rural areas. It will be necessary to explore other community development strategies to achieve safety objectives.

Suggestions to enhance safety in rural areas:

1. Support and encourage the provision of <u>local</u> information and services which reduce isolation and increase safety of women, people with disabilities, youth, seniors, immigrant women, and aboriginal women.

- For example, existing local services may provide places to display information about transition houses, seniors supports, etc.
- Rural mailboxes are well-used places and will also provide opportunities to post information.
- Local community centres and firehalls may provide facilities for education and information, for example, self defense workshops.

2. To the greatest extent possible while recognizing the desire of residents to maintain the rural character of an area, encourage provision of adequate pedestrian routes and public transportation services.

- While many areas of rural roads may not be appropriate for lighting, lighting at intersections, and lighting in specific areas such as rural mailboxes and well-used gathering areas such as bus stops will help to reduce isolation, increase visibility and increase general pedestrian safety.

- Public transportation is an important service to provide access to central services for people who do not own or have access to a vehicle.

5.2.2. PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Parklands and public open space range in size, intended uses and provision of facilities.   Safety policies will reflect the nature of intended and actual use patterns. In general, parks and recreational areas are subject to public safety issues relating to isolation, visibility, lighting, user conflicts. A balance needs to be sought between what the park is intended for and actually used for.

i) Objectives

- Parks and recreational facilities should provide for a broad range of activities, from "tot lots" to nature parks, maximize access and opportunities with consideration for all needs, and should be designed to maximize personal and public safety.

ii) Policies

- Public safety and security should be important considerations in location, layout and design of parks and open spaces. Layout and design of parks and open spaces should include attention to ease of navigation, visibility and opportunities for informal surveillance in and around buildings, structures, parking lots, trails and pathways, minimize potential hiding and entrapment spots and provide for emergency outlets.

- Encourage and support public participation with respect to personal safety in design and management of parks.

- Encourage provision of information and education, both to managers and park users, to increase awareness and respect for park facilities and users, and to enhance the safety of users.

iii) Parks and Open Space - Design Considerations

1. Ensure provision of adequate informational and directional signage noting entrances, pathways, use restrictions, direction to emergency services and telephone numbers of maintenance authorities.
2. Ensure well-traveled pathways and trails have clear and unobstructed view of at least 15 metres. Ensure sightlines are clear, avoid solid hedges in landscaping.
3. Encourage location of public telephones near to park entrances. (Public telephones are usually lit at night. This can provide another source of lighting.)
4. Where appropriate, lighting should be located to promote safety during nighttime use, with particular attention to park entrances, parking lots and around buildings, trails, footpaths, bike paths.
5. Ensure areas are maintained to eliminate vandalism and graffiti.

5.2.3. PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Institutional facilities and other public buildings such as recreation centres, community halls, schools, churches, provide essential recreational, educational and other opportunities for both urban and rural communities. Similar to parks, which themselves often contain public facilities, buildings can present safety issues with respect to lighting, visibility, isolation, security.

Public buildings and surrounding parking areas may also present safety issues with respect to maintenance, hiding and entrapment spots, access to emergency services. Potential problems include:

- poorly lit and designed parking lots.
- hallways in buildings with sharp corners that impede visibility.
- outbuildings, elevators and washrooms that present opportunities for entrapment.
- entrances and exits that are improperly lit, or are recessed, impeding visibility.
- places in and around buildings that present obstacles to accessibility.
- isolated areas in and around buildings (e.g., reception areas that are isolated from other staff and security supports.)

i) Objectives / Policies

- Public safety should be important considerations in development and maintenance of public buildings and other facilities. Location and design of buildings and facilities should provide for a range of opportunities and maximize personal and public safety and accessibility through attention to layout, design and provision of emergency outlets.

- Development proposals should be evaluated with respect to their provisions for personal and public safety with respect to design (lighting, sightlines, accessibility, landscaping, etc.) and other provisions for safety of staff and facility users.

ii) Public Buildings - Design Considerations:

a) General

1. Encourage building location and design that maximizes surveillance of the facility in general and of communal areas, including hallways, entrances, parking lots in and around the facility.

2. Where possible, encourage a variety of uses for both day and night.
3. Avoid creating isolated areas, entrapment spots and barriers to visibility. Where sightlines are or may be obscured by barriers or corners, install convex mirrors.
4. Ensure provision of adequate lighting in all areas, with special attention to entrances, exits, and isolated areas. Where problems exist with respect to maintenance, install protective covering on lighting.
5. Encourage placement of windows in elevators, hallways and stairwells to increase visibility and surveillance.
6. Ensure provision of adequate directional and operational signage with particular attention to information about emergency access and facilities for people with disabilities.
7. Encourage provision of emergency outlets for elevator users in the event of power outages.

EXAMPLE:
Inappropriate uses of baseball dugouts due to poor visibility, lack of opportunities for surveillance results in problems around personal safety, cleanliness and hygiene. The Municipality of North Cowichan is constructing new dugouts out of wire to be easy to see into from all points. The new dugouts will be preferable from a personal safety perspective since better visibility and surveillance opportunities will provide less opportunities for entrapment.

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b) Washroom buildings

From neighbourhood parks, to community centres, to roadside stops along highways, washrooms are often problematic places with respect to lighting, entrapment, isolation, maintenance and security.

1. Locate washrooms near to other (active) land uses such as park entrances, residences, streets, to enhance surveillance.
2. Post signage with information about emergency services, maintenance problems, location of nearest public telephone.
3. Entrances and interiors should not provide opportunities for entrapment, have clear sightlines, and provide for nighttime visibility. Avoid recessed entrances. Where possible, install windows to increase visibility.
4. Avoid double doors for washroom entrances. These are potential entrapment spots and are particularly difficult for people with mobility difficulties.
5. Where they are used in the evening, ensure interior lighting is adequate and has protective covering. Ensure exterior lighting is adequate for nighttime uses.
6. Where possible encourage location of public telephones in these areas.

c) Washrooms located in public buildings

As above where applicable, and

1. Washrooms should not be located in isolated areas of buildings.
2. Lighting should be sufficient and maintained.
3. Where sightlines are obscured, install convex mirrors.
4. Encourage installation of baby facilities, also for men's rooms.

iii) Public Buildings - Management Considerations:

Facility managers, coaches of team sports, etc., should be aware and be able to deal with personal safety issues and concerns of staff and the public.

1. Public facility managers should be provided with information about personal safety of staff and public.
2. Institute personal safety programs such as accompaniment of staff and patrons to cars at night.
3. Encourage regular communication between departments and programs, with respect to personal safety concerns to ensure safety needs are being met.

EXAMPLE:
The City of Duncan holds meetings on the second floor of its downtown building. Having the main entrance to the building on the bottom floor presented safety concerns during late evening hours when the building is otherwise vacant.   Even when locked, someone answering the door would not know who would be outside. At the request of a Councilor, the City installed an intercom system between the meeting room and entrance to provide for better security. This is a simple, innovative solution, brought about by communication and willingness to act upon a safety concern.

5.2.4. COMMERCIAL AREAS

In general, commercial centres are more actively used during the day. In larger urban areas, they may also be active in the evening hours; however, in smaller and rural communities, outside of community halls, restaurants or theaters, commercial areas will be more isolated during evening hours.

Potential problem areas may include:

- Vacant buildings and lots.
- Parking lots that are isolated.
- Buildings and parking lots that are improperly lit and contain visual barriers.
- ATM's in general, and particularly in small centres where there are no other businesses open at night.
- Conflicting uses, for example, bars located next to bus stations or residences; isolation in terms of location and proximity to other businesses, residential areas or nighttime uses. Examples include: gas stations, grocery / food outlets that are open later than other businesses.

As with public buildings, attention to public safety should include, isolation, lighting maintenance, visibility, security and accessibility of various user groups.

In small and rural communities where there are fewer services by nature, (the focus may be the community hall or corner store), planning can incorporate safety through supporting and encouraging these places in the provision of services to support safety.   For example, information boards or stations can provide pamphlets and flyers on regional support and emergency services.

i) Objectives

- Location and design of buildings, streets, sidewalks, parking lots and open spaces should provide for public safety and security, encourage a mix of land uses and availability and accessibility of services.

- Encourage proper maintenance and security in management of buildings, including vacant buildings and lots.

ii) Policies

- Public safety should be important considerations in planning and development of commercial areas. Development of commercial areas, including buildings, streets, open spaces, driveways and parking areas should provide for a range of opportunities and maximize personal and public safety and accessibility through attention to location of services, layout and design and provision of emergency outlets.

- Commercial area development proposals should be evaluated with respect to their provisions for personal and public safety with respect to design of buildings, streets and open spaces and include attention to lighting, sightlines, accessibility, and provisions for emergency outlets.

- Accessibility of people with disabilities should be an important consideration in layout and design of commercial developments.

iii) Commercial Areas - Design Considerations:

(Also refer to Public buildings regarding lighting, visibility, accessibility, maintenance, entrapment spots, landscape and building design.)

1. Encourage location, mix of land uses and services which maximize opportunities for natural surveillance. (See following points.)
2. Where possible, encourage a variety of uses in an area for both day and night; (for example, residential and commercial uses); cluster businesses that are open late at night; building design with windows overlooking parking areas.
3. Building design should maximize opportunities for surveillance of parking lots and of entrances and exits by staff who work in communal areas.
4. Avoid creation of isolated areas, entrapment spots and barriers to visibility for building interiors as well as exteriors.
5. Where sightlines are or may be obscured by barriers or corners, install convex mirrors.
6. Ensure provision of adequate lighting in all areas, with special attention to entrances, exits, and isolated areas such as parking lots. Where potential or actual problems exist with respect to maintenance and vandalism, install protective covering on lighting.
7. Encourage building design that maximizes surveillance of communal areas, including hallways, entrances, parking lots.
8. Encourage placement of windows in elevators, hallways and stairwells to increase visibility and surveillance.

9. Ensure provision of adequate directional and operational signage with particular attention to information about emergency access and facilities for people with disabilities.
10. Provide emergency outlets for elevator users in the event of power outages.

iv) Commercial Areas - **Management Considerations:**

1. Encourage management of commercial buildings and business operators to be aware of personal safety considerations and to institute policies and practices which will support and enhance safety of staff and the public. (Refer also to Public Buildings.)

Examples include:

- Ensuring safety of staff who must work in isolation (janitorial and other staff who work after hours, receptionists who work alone at isolated stations, students who deliver food) through regular safety programs.
- Practices and policies which include escorting staff to vehicles, cellular phones for field trips and deliveries, education and awareness of various safety issues and hazards.
- Communication between businesses using common areas to coordinate safety strategies.

EXAMPLE:

Valleyview Centre in Cobble Hill incorporated design and management provisions to support safety of staff and the public. In consultation with planners and RCMP, designers adjusted siting of buildings to promote a mix of uses during a range of times and casual surveillance opportunities from main roads into the centre (i.e., RCMP driving by would have better visibility into the site).

Two buildings were joined to eliminate a potential hiding and entrapment spot. Additional windows were planned into office spaces overlooking parking lots, again to provide for more surveillance opportunities; additional lighting was planned into parking lots and around buildings; landscaping has been planned . In addition, security personnel will provide accompaniment to cars for staff working late.

5.2.5. PARKING AREAS

Parking areas, including those located in commercial, institutional, residential and industrial areas are often cited for safety problems. Even small lots behind or adjacent to buildings are often isolated, poorly lit, and contain visual barriers and shadows.

i) Design Considerations

a) Above ground parking lots:

1. Ensure lighting is sufficient (but not too bright) and consistent so that a person can see and be seen in the back seat of their car before entering.
2. Avoid dense vegetation and placement of structures that obstruct view.
3. Encourage building design that enhances surveillance of parking lots and provide direct access from parking area to entrances and exits.
4. Encourage availability of public telephones and clear signage indicating location.
5. Encourage reserved parking for employees in areas with high visibility.
6. Clearly mark pedestrian routes and internal pathways.

b) Underground parking facilities:

1. Ensure lighting is sufficient and consistent.

   - Lights should have protective covering.
   - Walls should be painted with a light color.
   - Encourage windows in doors, stairways, corridors to increase visibility.

2. Entrances and stairways should be located in high activity areas.
3. Proper and strategically placed directional signage pointing to entrances, exits and emergency services.
4. Encourage installation of video cameras in larger facilities and signage saying the area is monitored.
5. Minimize obstruction of views from pillars. Where sightlines are obstructed, install mirrors?
6. Avoid and/or minimize sharp corners and any other view obstructions.

5.2.6. INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Industrial areas vary in type, scale and intensity of use.   They are often clustered and in a sense isolated by use/type; they may also be geographically isolated, such as saw mill operations.

Potential problems are posed in some areas with respect to isolation, particularly at night, and existence of entrapment spots which are threatening, particularly for women working late at night. Traffic and transportation may also be safety issues, for example, large sized vehicle traffic through rural communities, or safety of shift-workers while traveling to and from work.   Problems may also arise if sites are used as pedestrian routes between places (for example, recreational areas, schools and residential areas).

i) Objectives and Policies

- Personal and public safety should be important considerations in development of industrial sites and should include location, site and building design that incorporates personal and public safety.

- Encourage location and design of buildings to provide for a range of opportunities and maximize personal and public safety and accessibility through attention to location, design and provision of emergency outlets.

- Development proposals should be evaluated with respect to their provisions for personal and public safety regarding design of buildings, parking lots and open spaces with respect to lighting, landscaping, sightlines, accessibility, and other provisions for safety of staff and the public.

ii) Industrial Areas - Design and Management Considerations:

(Refer to Public Buildings and Parking Areas sections with respect to parking lots, building design, management considerations).

1. Where appropriate, and with consideration for potential noise, odor or lighting issues, encourage location of industrial uses near to other land uses to promote opportunities for casual surveillance and reduce isolation.
2. Location and site design criteria should include attention to isolation and potential hazards for personal safety.
3. Encourage building and parking lot design which incorporates personal safety.
4. Placement of emergency outlets and signage containing information on emergency services.
5. Provision of security in problematic areas; management policies and procedures which support personal safety of staff and the public.

5.2.7. TRANSPORTATION

Safe, accessible and affordable movement of people and goods, as well as means of transportation are key considerations for community safety. Considerations for planning should include design and maintenance of highways and roads, as well as providing to the greatest extent possible, safe and adequate means of transportation.

Highways, Roads and Road Networks

Highways, roads and road networks, including frontage roads and intersections, need to be designed with the needs and safety of pedestrians in mind. Problems may include isolation, lack of adequate lighting, directional signage, emergency outlets such as telephones, lack of adequate pedestrian and bicycle paths, intersections and crossing areas that pose hazards for pedestrians, particularly for people with disabilities, for various reasons such as poor design or poor maintenance, lack of signage, sidewalks or traffic controls.

Public Transit

Safe and affordable transportation is essential for accessibility, to work, shopping and essential services and recreation, particularly for people who don't have other available means. Lack of safe and adequate transportation places barriers upon people who do not have the benefit of owning a vehicle, and people with disabilities. Provision of services needs to consider frequency and timing, location of stops.

Transit stops can present safety issues with respect to lighting, isolation, entrapment spots. Seasonal variations may make it difficult for people who depend on transit, i.e., to plan their activities for daylight hours. School bus stops are also potentially problematic for the same reasons.

In rural areas, school children walk to bus stops early in the morning, sometimes along isolated secondary roads, or highways that are also dark, and may have the added hazards of inadequate pedestrian walkways.

For rural areas, streetlighting may be difficult for various reasons: it may not be desired by many rural residents, it may be also cost prohibitive in terms of taxes. Where streetlighting is not an immediate or desired option, other options may be available, such as neighbourhood campaigns to leave porchlights on, or motion detector lighting in specified places.   Attention to location of uses can also enhance safety; for example, placing a transit stop in front of a corner store can help to minimize times when the stop will be isolated and can provide a source of lighting.

i) Objectives and Policies

- Encourage and support provision of road networks and road design that maximizes motorist, pedestrian, bicycle and scooter safety, with attention to provision of safe and accessible pathways, crossings, adequate lighting, signage and emergency outlets.

- Encourage provision of safe and affordable public transit in urban and rural areas, with attention to safety in location and design of transit and bus stops.

- Encourage and support public consultation in both design and maintenance of streets and roads.

ii) Design Considerations

a) Highways and Secondary Roads

1. Provide streetlighting at major intersections.
2. Provide public telephones at regular intervals and at stopping areas.
3. Crossing areas need to be well-marked and lit.
4. Provide clear, uncluttered and well-lit directional signage, prioritize information that supports safety.

b) Transit stops

1. Where possible, encourage location of transit stops near activity nodes, intersections and/or where they are clearly visible to residences and shops.
2. Ensure adequate lighting for early morning and nighttime use.
3. Ensure nearby structures and buildings do not impede sightlines and don't provide opportunities for entrapment.
4. Post signs indicating how emergency services can be accessed and schedules.

6. CHECKLIST FOR ASSESSING DEVELOPMENTS

The following checklist suggests some steps and questions to ask about proposed developments, Official Community Plan development and reviews, by-laws and zoning regulations. It is followed by a Safety Checklist which outlines design and management factors that may be relevant to development proposals.

6.1. Process Considerations

1. Introduce and ask questions (noted below) about safety issues and concerns at the beginning of a process.
2. Provide information to applicants on safety and security issues, and design and management solutions.
3. Include a process for referral and suggest community contacts to provide input. (In the Cowichan Valley Regional District, the Women's Safety Advisory Committee has been established with a mandate to review development proposals for safety.)
4. Suggest a women's safety audit of the local area.

6.2. Questions to Ask:

1. Context of the area / development:

   a) Are there any existing safety issues that need to be addressed? Has a safety audit been done to determine existing and potential problems?

   - Is the area known for vandalism, thefts, assaults?
   - Is it perceived to be unsafe for / by women, children, youth, seniors, people with disabilities?
   - Is the area isolated, dark, poorly maintained?
   - Is it known for traffic or pedestrian issues?
   - How might the proposed development affect or improve the area in terms of safety?

   b) Who are the present and proposed users?   Are there any potential conflicts for example, between neighbouring land uses?
   Examples might include:

   - A vacant lot next to a proposed housing complex, a school next to a farm, mall, video arcade, a liquor store next to a bus stop, industrial complex next to a park.

2. How do/will women and children use this area both day and night and what might their safety concerns be? Day? Night?

Examples might include:

- A neighbourhood park that will be used by women and children whose safety concerns might be around using washrooms, or need for emergency outlets, possible alcohol/drug use in the park.
- A proposed neighbourhood in a rural area where children and youth would need to walk to school and recreation?

Have all needs/views been considered/solicited?

> Has the developer contacted people who may be the most vulnerable and/or who are not able to come out to public meetings? Have parents, women, seniors, people with disabilities. been specifically asked for their views?

3. Does the development consider design elements which support safety? **See the Design Safety Checklist.***

- Does layout and design of the proposed development (interior and exterior) maximize opportunities for casual surveillance, minimize potential entrapment areas, hiding spots?
- Will there be adequate lighting, signage, accessible pedestrian routes, transit, security, emergency services and outlets? (How has this been determined?)
- What provisions are there for accessibility?
- Again, has consultation been done to determine the concerns of people who are the most vulnerable, and does design incorporate those needs?

4. What are requirements or considerations for management to support safety of staff and the public?

- For example, will store owners, building managers be made aware of women's safety issues (and how) and will there be programs/policies to support safety of staff, residents, patrons?

5. What is the potential impact on community services?

- Does the development provide for or augment existing community services?
- Will there be adequate access to public transportation?
- Does the proposed development target a specific group, for example seniors? If so, will there be adequate access to services for people who may be mobility impaired, require medical attention?
- What might the impacts be for recreation opportunities, school grounds safety, traffic safety for children? Have school parent groups been contacted for their views?

6.3. DESIGN CHECKLIST

*The following questions have been drawn and adapted from **Safety Audit Checklists**[1] regarding design of places related to personal safety.*

1. OVERALL DESIGN

- Is it easy for someone who is not familiar with the area to find their way around?
- Is there adequate signage that tells people where they are and how to find services, who to call in an emergency?
- Is the information provided visible and legible to someone in a wheelchair, someone who is visually impaired?

Is the area/building accessible?

- Is the area served by public transportation? If so, does transit meet the needs of users? If not, what other assistance is available?
- Are buildings, sidewalks, streets and crossing areas well-placed and accessible, particularly for people with disabilities? How has this been determined?

2. ISOLATION

- Is / will the area, building (or parts of the building) be subject to isolation? If so, are there practices in place to enhance personal safety and security of people who must use the area during those times?
- Do the surrounding land uses encourage people to be there?
- How far away are the nearest emergency services?
- Is the area patrolled by security, police, neighbourhood watch?
- Would someone hear a call for help?

3. VISIBILITY

- Does layout of the site and building(s) provide for maximum visibility of the street and parking areas, paths and walkways?
- Does the building interior contain sharp corners, isolated areas?
- Are there any structures, landscaping, vegetation, corners, ditches, vehicles, signs that would impede visibility?

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[1] Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children. Women's Safety Audit Guide, Toronto, 1992. and, Women's Action Centre Against Violence. Women's Safety Audit Guide, Ottawa-Carlton, 1996.

Cowichan Women Against Violence Society, Duncan, B.C.

4.   LIGHTING

- Is the lighting adequate? How has this been determined?
- Is the lighting bright enough (without being too bright or causing glare), is it evenly spaced and unobscured by landscaping or fences?
- How well does lighting illuminate parking lots, pedestrian walkways, sidewalks, directional signs and maps? Is lighting adequate for someone to see another person 20 metres (60 feet) away?

5. SIGNAGE

- What signage is planned? What signage is needed to serve all users? Does it provide necessary information?
- Does signage direct people with disabilities to accessible entrances?
- Is it located properly? (e.g., so that it is visible to someone in a wheelchair?)
- Is the lettering large enough to read, easy to understand? Visual symbols?
- Are transportation points clearly indicated? (Taxi stands, bus stops, para transit?)

6. MOVEMENT PREDICTORS AND ENTRAPMENT SITES

- Are there small, confined areas, such as alcoves, solid staircases, between garbage bins, alleys, lanes, parking spots where someone could hide or be hidden from view?
- How easy would it be to predict someone's movements along a route?
- Is there more than one main route/ exit through well-traveled areas, into buildings?

7. MAINTENANCE

- How will the area/building be maintained?
- Who will be responsible for removing graffiti, repairing vandalism? Will this be done promptly?
- Will there be information posted to tell people how to report problems?

8. MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY

- How is the area or building monitored? (police, security staff, etc.)
- Are security staff and building managers aware of personal safety concerns for women and children?
- Where buildings are used by businesses and services, are there safety measures and programs in place?
- How far away is the nearest emergency service? (alarm, personnel, emergency telephone)
- Are there areas that should be locked, fenced or barricaded?

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APPENDIX A:

COMMENTS

Thank you for taking the time to read this guide. Your assistance in evaluating this document would be appreciated.   We have listed some questions that will help us in determining how useful the guide is and what information should be included. This form can be returned by mail or faxed to the following address:

Cowichan Valley Safer Futures / Safety Audit Project
304 - 80 Station Street, Duncan, B.C. V9L 1M4
Telephone: (250) 746-9221
Fax: (250) 748-9364

What is your interest in reading this guide?
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What information did you find helpful? Not helpful?
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Is there other information that you would like to be included in this guide?
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Comments (use additional paper if necessary)
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