

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

8th Avenue Trail, South Park Neighborhood Seattle

A pedestrian pathway
located between the intersections of

8th Ave. S. & S. Donovan St
&
10th Ave. S. & S. Henderson St.

Site Visits:

February 6th 9:30a – 11:30a

February 16th 2:30p – 4:00p

April 2nd 8:00p – 10:00p

*Site visits took place between April – July of 2018
Document Draft: July 30, 2018*

CPTED Practitioners

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Seattle Neighborhood Group



3 GOALS: **increase safety** for kids and families using the trail for school and commute, **retain a valuable community asset** in good repair
promote healthy use of the area.

VISION: engage community, approach the problem inclusively with a creative mindset, collaborate and experiment to find effective and appropriate solutions, support what works in the long term through good planning, maintenance, and through ongoing community contact.

OVERVIEW

The bicycle/pedestrian path between 8th Avenue South and Henderson Avenue South is a major neighborhood connector for South Park residents, especially young school children, their older siblings and parents, and residents. The community that would like to use this path cannot do so because the **collective impact of individual problems works together to create a place often referred to as “the Scary Trail”** – essentially, the path suffers from a negative reputation and a lack of positive identity. It also shows clear indication of uses incompatible with its designated purpose and intended function, including some dangerous and illegal uses. Evidence of negative use includes discarded needles, alcohol containers, stolen mail, and empty Amazon boxes. These items indicate active drug use and its supporting activity, notably theft, here.

To control the negative perception and guide this community asset back into healthy and safe use, the **individual problems must be approached as a system of problems, not as individual “cherries to be picked” or as easy to address “low hanging fruit.”**¹

A team of CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) practitioners from Seattle Neighborhood Group (SNG) a local nonprofit, and Seattle Police Department’s Southwest Precinct made several site visits to the path at a variety of times and days. Each site visit produced strong indications of misuse of the path along its length and at both openings in the neighborhood. Some smaller nodes along the path strongly indicated unsavory, dangerous, and ongoing behaviors including drug and alcohol use or sales and theft. **Our recommendations are based on evidence observed over time, and strong CPTED/criminology principles which, when implemented correctly can change site use dramatically.**

In our experience as CPTED practitioners we feel a strong, coordinated environmental approach based on these findings will help turn the bad reputation of this path around, and reestablish it as a safe place for the South Park community.

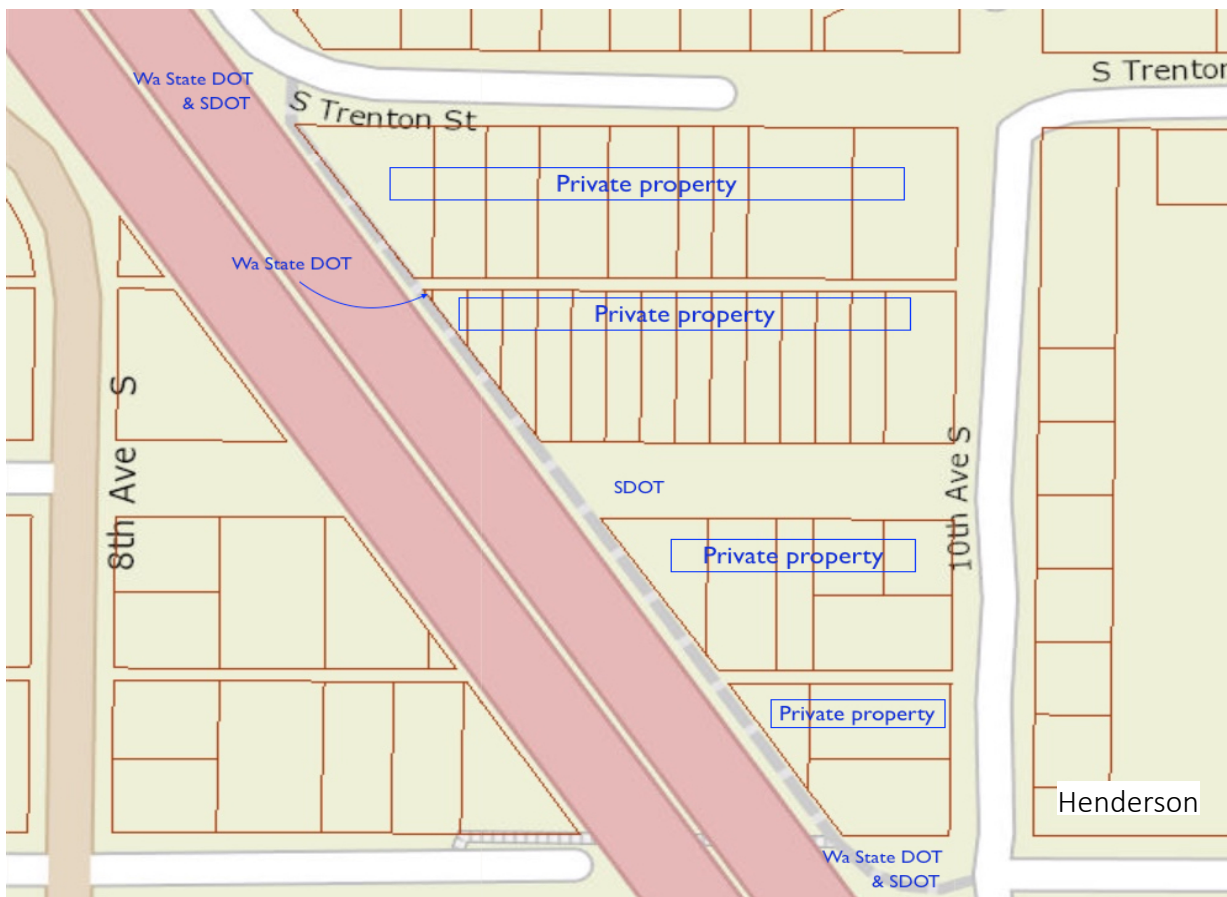
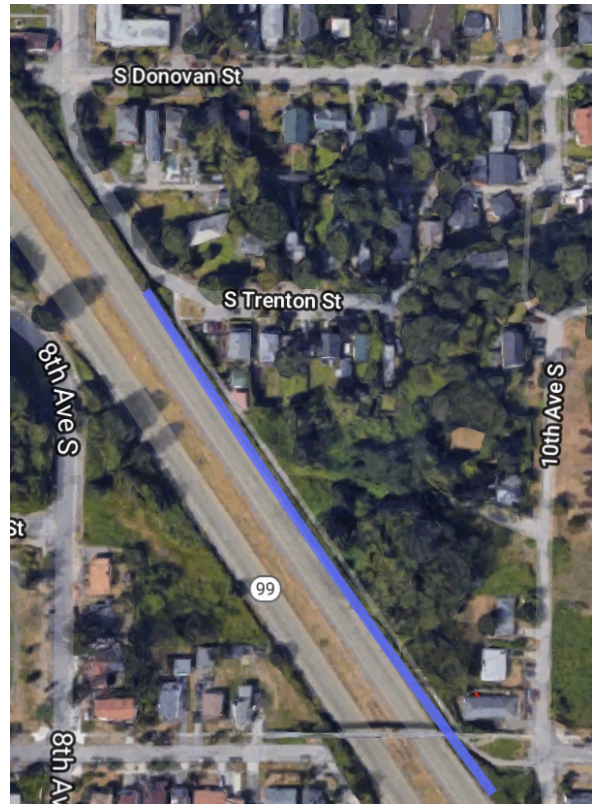
¹ Time and again communities see the “resolution” to a complex and dangerous geographically-based problem treated as “low hanging fruit” - check boxes easy to tick off so the responsible parties can claim ‘success’ — while the problem festers and returns, hours and resources wasted, ultimately unaddressed.

Maps & Location Notes

The entrance to the “Scary Trail” for the purpose of this analysis is at South Trenton St. as it abuts the Northbound (NB) lanes of State Route 99 (SR99). The data points for 8th Avenue S. are not at the trail site per se, however most pedestrians access the trail by walking through the 8th Ave. S. intersection with S. Donovan St.

Right: The blue line along State Route 99 in the satellite image of the 8th Ave. trail indicates the shared WSDOT and SDOT fence-line.

Below: The parcel map shows property ownership in the vicinity of the trail. SDOT owns the easement within a few feet of the private property.



Site problems we address with our recommendations include:

Pedestrians cannot see or hear danger during daylight, or after dark due to generally poor field of view at the north entrance and along the path, poor lighting after dark, encroaching plants, and the overwhelming sensory environment (noise from adjacent highway).

Pedestrians feel vulnerable to harm from others on the path due to encroaching plants, and the clear indication of misuse (drug paraphernalia, mail and package theft debris, bicycle parts, human waste)

Responsible land owners exert little control over the property leaving it open to misuse, and choked with massive brambles that support completely hidden campsite complexes.



Looking South along the northern third of the trail.

Disclaimer:

The recommendations and strategies suggested here are intended to reduce opportunities for crime, improve quality of life and provide for a safer environment.

The Seattle Police Department, and Seattle Neighborhood Group

do not guarantee that any specific crime will be prevented if these recommendations are implemented.

Crime Data & Site User Interviews

We use two sets of data with this CPTED, as well as extensive narrative data from community members and our own observations. The data sources include publicly available 9-1-1 Calls for Service data, as well as crime data provided by a SPD's Southwest Precinct Crime Analysis Unit Detective.

The date range for our analysis is five and a half years – however there is not enough data to provide the foundation of a robust statement regarding what is, or is not, happening on the site. For many communities, crime data may not be reflective of the community members' experiences due to underreporting, or site avoidance. This place likely falls into both of these scenarios.

The data we see (especially both datasets broken out by "Year") can indicate a variety of things including a shift in neighbors' reporting activity, an uptick in proactive policing, an increase in negative activity, or some combination of those.

What is clear from the community narrative, our observations on site visits, and the data as it exists, is that something unsavory is happening on the path, and there is evidence of it in community perception, in garbage seen on the ground, and in the activities reflected in the data sets.

Jan 1, 2013 - July 1, 2018

9-1-1 by Year

| Row Labels | 2013 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | Grand Total |
|---|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| ABANDONED VEHICLE | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| AUTO RECOVERY | | | 2 | 2 | | 4 |
| AUTO THEFT | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| AUTO THEFT AND RECOVERY | | | | 2 | | 2 |
| CASUALTY (NON CRIMINAL/TRAFFIC) - MAN DOWN, SICK PERSONS, INJURED, DOA) | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| CRISIS COMPLAINT - GENERAL | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| DISTURBANCE, OTHER | | | 1 | 3 | | 4 |
| DRIVING WHILE UNDER INFLUENCE (DUI) | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| MISCHIEF, NUISANCE COMPLAINTS | | | 1 | 4 | | 5 |
| MOTOR VEHICLE COLLISION | | | | 2 | | 2 |
| NOISE DISTURBANCE | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| PARKING VIOLATION (EXCEPT ABANDONED VEHICLES) | | 1 | 1 | | | 2 |
| PROPERTY DESTRUCTION | | | 2 | | | 2 |
| SUSPICIOUS PERSON | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | | 10 |
| SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| THEFT - CAR PROWL | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| THEFT - MISCELLANEOUS | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| TRAFFIC (MOVING) VIOLATION | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| TRESPASS | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Grand Total | 1 | 8 | 12 | 23 | 2 | 46 |

1-1-2013 to 7-1-2018

Police Report by Year

| Cal Type | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| ANIMAL-BITE | | 1 | | | | |
| ASSLT-AGG-DV-WEAPON | 1 | | | | | |
| COLLISION - HIT AND RUN - UNAT | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| COLLISION - TRAFFIC | | 1 | | | | |
| CRISIS | | | | | 1 | |
| DEATH-OTHER | | | | | | 1 |
| DISTURBANCE-OTH | | | | 1 | | |
| IMPOUND - NO HOLD | | | | | 3 | |
| PROPERTY DAMAGE-NON RESIDENTIA | | | | 1 | | |
| PROPERTY FOUND | 1 | | | | | |
| THEFT-CARPROWL | | | | | 1 | |
| THEFT-OTH | | | 1 | | | |
| TRESPASS | | | | | 1 | |
| VEH-RCVD-FOR OTHER AGENCY | 1 | 2 | | | 2 | |
| VEH-THEFT-TRUCK | | | | | 1 | |
| WARRARR-MISDEMEANOR | | | | 1 | | |
| Grand Total | 3 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 10 | 1 |

911 by Location

| Call Type | 10 AV S / S HENDERSON ST | 8 AV S / S DONOVAN ST | 8 AV S / S TRENTON ST | SR99 NB / S HENDERSON ST OP | Grand Total |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| ABANDONED VEHICLE | | | 1 | | 1 |
| AUTO RECOVERY | 1 | 2 | 1 | | 4 |
| AUTO THEFT | 1 | | | | 1 |
| AUTO THEFT AND RECOVERY | | 2 | | | 2 |
| CASUALTY (NON CRIMINAL/TRAFFIC) - MAN DOWN, SICK PERSONS, INJURED, DOA) | 1 | | | | 1 |
| CRISIS COMPLAINT - GENERAL | | 1 | | | 1 |
| DISTURBANCE, OTHER | | 4 | | | 4 |
| DRIVING WHILE UNDER INFLUENCE (DUI) | | 1 | | | 1 |
| MISCHIEF, NUISANCE COMPLAINTS | | | 5 | | 5 |
| MOTOR VEHICLE COLLISION | 1 | | | 1 | 2 |
| NOISE DISTURBANCE | | 1 | | | 1 |
| PARKING VIOLATION (EXCEPT ABANDONED VEHICLES) | | 1 | 1 | | 2 |
| PROPERTY DESTRUCTION | 1 | 1 | | | 2 |
| SUSPICIOUS PERSON | 4 | 3 | 3 | | 10 |
| SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE | 2 | 1 | 2 | | 5 |
| THEFT - CAR PROWL | | 1 | | | 1 |
| THEFT - MISCELLANEOUS | | 1 | | | 1 |
| TRAFFIC (MOVING) VIOLATION | 1 | | | | 1 |
| TRESPASS | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Grand Total | 12 | 19 | 14 | 1 | 46 |

Please note that the data points for 8th Ave. S. and S. Donovan St. in the Location data are not on the trail, but in the nearest neighborhood node to the north of the north trail entrance.

The data for this intersection may or may not be related to activities on the trail.

Police Report by Location

1-1-2013 to 7-1-2018

| Offense Type | 10 AV S / S HENDERSON ST | 8 AV S / S DONOVAN ST | 8 AV S / S TRENTON ST | SR99 NB / S HENDERSON ST OP | Grand Total |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| ANIMAL-BITE | | 1 | | | 1 |
| ASSLT-AGG-DV-WEAPON | | 1 | | | 1 |
| COLLISION - HIT AND RUN - UNAT | 1 | 2 | | | 3 |
| COLLISION - TRAFFIC | 1 | | | | 1 |
| CRISIS | 1 | | | | 1 |
| DEATH-OTHER | 1 | | | | 1 |
| DISTURBANCE-OTH | | 1 | | | 1 |
| IMPOUND - NO HOLD | 1 | | | 2 | 3 |
| PROPERTY DAMAGE-NON RESIDENTIA | | 1 | | | 1 |
| PROPERTY FOUND | 1 | | | | 1 |
| THEFT-CARPROWL | | 1 | | | 1 |
| THEFT-OTH | | 1 | | | 1 |
| TRESPASS | | | 1 | | 1 |
| VEH-RCV-D-FOR OTHER AGENCY | 1 | 3 | 1 | | 5 |
| VEH-THEFT-TRUCK | 1 | | | | 1 |
| WARRARR-MISDEMEANOR | 1 | | | | 1 |
| Grand Total | 9 | 11 | 2 | 2 | 24 |

Jan 1, 2013 - July 1, 2018

9-1-1 by Day of Week

| Row Labels | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Grand Total |
|--|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| ABANDONED VEHICLE | | | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| AUTO RECOVERY | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | 4 |
| AUTO THEFT | 1 | | | | | | | 1 |
| AUTO THEFT AND RECOVERY | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 2 |
| CASUALTY (NON CRIMINAL/TRAFFIC) - MAN DOWN, SICK PERSONS, INJURED, DOA) | | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| CRISIS COMPLAINT - GENERAL | 1 | | | | | | | 1 |
| DISTURBANCE, OTHER | | | 1 | 1 | | | 2 | 4 |
| DRIVING WHILE UNDER INFLUENCE (DUI) | | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| MISCHIEF, NUISANCE COMPLAINTS | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| MOTOR VEHICLE COLLISION | | | 2 | | | | | 2 |
| NOISE DISTURBANCE | | | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| PARKING VIOLATION (EXCEPT ABANDONED VEHICLES) | | 1 | | | | 1 | | 2 |
| PROPERTY DESTRUCTION | 2 | | | | | | | 2 |
| SUSPICIOUS PERSON | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 10 |
| SUSPICIOUS VEHICLE | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | 2 | 5 |
| THEFT - CAR PROWL | | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| THEFT - MISCELLANEOUS | | | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| TRAFFIC (MOVING) VIOLATION | 1 | | | | | | | 1 |
| TRESPASS | | | | | 1 | | | 1 |
| Grand Total | 8 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 5 | 7 | 46 |

Police Report by Day of Week

1-1-2013 to 7-1-2018

| Call Type | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| ANIMAL-BITE | | | | | | 1 | |
| ASSLT-AGG-DV-WEAPON | | | | 1 | | | |
| COLLISION - HIT AND RUN - UNAT | | 2 | | | | | 1 |
| COLLISION - TRAFFIC | | | | | | | 1 |
| CRISIS | | | | | | | 1 |
| DEATH-OTHER | | | | 1 | | | |
| DISTURBANCE-OTH | 1 | | | | | | |
| IMPOUND - NO HOLD | | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | |
| PROPERTY DAMAGE-NON RESIDENTIA | 1 | | | | | | |
| PROPERTY FOUND | | | | | 1 | | |
| THEFT-CARPRAWL | | | | | | | 1 |
| THEFT-OTH | | | | | 1 | | |
| TRESPASS | | | | | 1 | | |
| VEH-RCVD-FOR OTHER AGENCY | 1 | 1 | 2 | | 1 | | |
| VEH-THEFT-TRUCK | | | 1 | | | | |
| WARRARR-MISDEMEANOR | 1 | | | | | | |
| Grand Total | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 4 |

“Who uses the 8th Avenue Trail? Why or Why Not?”

As we prepared this CPTED Analysis, we were curious to find out who uses the path, and why they do, or why they do not. SNG’s Jake Hellenkamp put the question to a popular neighborhood social media site, and collected a robust response.

People pointed out that the path was an easy connection that eliminates some of the hills for bikes and pedestrians between the Henderson/Concord Elementary side and the Donovan side of the path. Some respondents also indicated that they weren’t afraid to use the trail, but had altered their hours of use, avoiding it at night, and not using it in daylight hours alone. Some said they won’t use it anymore. Specific examples of negative use included two observed incidents of indecent exposure, a family living under the pedestrian overpass buttress at Henderson & 10th, stolen vehicles dumped at the street ends, camping, and drug use. One respondent offered the memory of “a couple murders there since the 90’s”, which will not show up in our data. The sense we get from the narratives, and other community interactions about the path is a mix of sentiments ranging from “I won’t use it now” to “What a great community feature!” often coming from the same person.

SDOT improvements to the South Terminus of the trail.





The entrance from the North approaches the main body of the trail with an immediate curve and dense plantings.



The entrance from the South approaches the main body of the trail with an immediate curve, thick laurel hedge, and the demand that pedestrians walk near a space often used for shelter. On several of our site visits there was evidence of drug and alcohol use here, as well as mail stolen from a variety of addresses in South Park.

CPTED Problem Analysis

Natural Surveillance Problems

Path orientation creates immediate blind corners, especially the narrow field of view at the north entrance.

Encroaching vegetation creates pinch-points along path, renders users vulnerable to unwanted contact with others.

Poor lighting (too bright, too dark, glaring and uneven — does more harm than good).

Sensory environment overwhelms auditory cues about danger, drowns out sounds indicating help is needed.

Access Control Problems

Motorized vehicles are able to use the path, and do so on occasion.

Path is accessible along its entire length from the greenbelt/private property.

People climb over the short chain-link fence separating the path from the highway.

Dangerous things happen under the pedestrian bridge at the south end of the path, including alcohol and drug consumption (needles have been observed here), sleep, use as a 'den' to shelter while sorting through stolen items (clear evidence of this behavior).

Territorial Definition Problem

- There's no "there" there... the path has no identifying features, either at its opening points, or anywhere along the different sections between the openings. There is no name, no information about who to alert in case of problems, no address in helping emergency responders find those in need. The openings are not welcoming, nor are there any indications of what is okay or not okay to do.

Image, Maintenance, and Reputation Problems

Litter and dumped items cover the path on both the west side (WSDOT) and the east side (SDOT & private property).

Private property is usually extremely overgrown, supporting uses incompatible with adjacent public space.

Community Activation Problems

- This place has many stakeholders, but little communication to bring them together productively.
- Trail sees fewer positive uses, further degrading the important community connection and asset.
- People living near the trail are "fortressed" and have poor regard for the trail
- The trail is engagement waiting to happen, but in its current state is quite boring — there is little along it to draw interest, or stimulate thought or use.

CPTED Recommendations

Change how pedestrians feel about walking along the path by increasing Natural Surveillance, establishing Access Control, celebrating the Territorial Definition of the place, and controlling its Image, Maintenance, & Reputation.

- Assure that **plants and infrastructure do not encroach the path within 3 feet of either side.**
- WSDOT, SDOT, and private property owners **proactively clear undergrowth to 50 feet east of the path in the deeply overgrown areas, clear space generously at the entrances.** Establish a regular schedule to do so in concert with high growth seasons to keep the space open and inviting. **Place garbage cans at either end of the path.**
- Change Territorial Definition and Access Control — **install a 4-foot tall chainlink fence along the property line to the east, and a tall barrier to the highway on the west.**

*Work closely with WSDOT (and possibly King County Public Health) to **establish a tall fence/barricade along the west side of the path in order to provide a strong barrier to the overwhelming amount of noise produced by the adjacent highway.** There is also ample evidence of people using the highway easement for a variety of activities, as well as darting out in traffic on the highway to reach the other side of the neighborhood. **Soften the impact of the barrier with low plantings (nothing taller than 2 feet) and some surface art to alleviate psychological discomfort associated with these types of structures.***

*The property line to the east between SDOT path property and the variety of agency and private property owners needs clarification, and a boundary. **A short, see-through fence will help path users understand where they are allowed, and where they should not be.** Additionally, keeping the fence short will help it 'read' as an indicator, but still provide some sense of psychological relief as a potential escape route or open area.*

- Change the lit environment to include lighting solutions that **provide light at 5-6 vertical feet that comes from an indirect source such as downward pointing fully shielded fixtures that reflect off of a light colored path surface.**
 - *Light should have a contrast ratio no greater than 1:4, meaning it should look fairly even as one travels along the path. There should never be high contrast between bright spots and dark pools of light along the path.*
 - *Lumen levels should not be too bright. It is a setup for failure, as the surrounding darkness will hide any unsavory activities.*
 - *No shadows. In the dark, human eyes will adapt well to a dimmer environment, "daylighting" the environment is dangerous and will produce aversion behaviors.*
 - *No bare bulbs exposed to view. Eyes cannot tolerate the intensity of a bare bulb and will not adapt quickly enough to keep people safe. Exposure to a bare bulb can render someone "night blind"² and even a few seconds of decreased vision is enough for them to be victimized, or to stumble on an obstacle.*
- **Exclude all access to the area at the south terminus that is under the stairs to the pedestrian walking bridge** — this space is being used for a plethora of negative activities, and there is little reason in the current condition of the overall site to try to reclaim it for positive use *at this time.* Revisit the space in the future as the other CPTED recommendations are integrated

· Photoreceptor Bleaching, or Retinal Bleaching is the term for the condition of a dark-adapted eye exposed to light. Rhodopsin, a chemical that changes our perception of intensity of light is 'erased' immediately, and getting the rhodopsin levels back to a state that helps the eye translate important information to the brain takes between 3-15 seconds for minimally functional dark adaptation in a healthy, young person. **This physiological reality renders pedestrians extremely vulnerable, and compounds psychological feelings of unease.**

and implemented, it may be that this could become a positive attribute with constant and careful management.

- **Engage the community to determine the identity and uses of the path**
- **Create exciting and dramatic entryways** — perhaps the community along with local artists and designers could generate some wonderful visual ‘greeting’ spaces to either end of the path
- **Help community establish the rules for use**, incorporate that language into signage for the path that speaks directly to those who will be using the path in a community-appropriate way. (Try to avoid putting up a “jargony” city department sign with boring layout...give the people who use the place the opportunity to extend their idea of what the ‘rules’ should be into the signage. A good example of this is the signage at the children’s play area in Westlake Park.)
- **Establish community kiosks** at the south outlet of the path and another in the pocket park at the end of S. Donovan & 8th S. Let a community representative gather information for the kiosk, control, and maintain the kiosk.
- Work with the community to ***give the path a name that means something to all who use it.***
- City departments could work with existing neighborhood groups, or **hire people from the community to pick up litter and remove graffiti weekly**, alerting the agencies when there is dumping to pick up.
- **SPD could be proactive in patrolling the path on bike and foot.**
- **Encourage neighborhood groups to use the path when planning activities** such as bike rides, runs, dog walks, hopscotch marathons, and support Safe Routes to School pathways. Engage with the school and neighborhood groups to help designate the pathway and develop identity markers that reflect positive community values.
- Reach out specifically to engage neighbors adjacent to the path, and Concord Elementary school to participate in community events and cleanups. Give a sense of ownership of the space to all involved.
- Collaborate with neighbors, artists, designers, planners, and anyone who can help make the path more interesting. Divide it into geographically logical segments that can **help users identify which path segment they are on, and help path users to have a sense of journey and belonging while using the trail.**



Sorting out the day’s take. Mail from throughout the South Park neighborhood.



Land of Many Uses.

top: entrance to different “rooms” that show heavy use (drinking, drug use, cast off clothing, cardboard that indicates sleeping) in the adjacent property to the east.

right: Gang-related graffiti along the trail
bottom: mail, needles, and bottles throughout the site.



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SW Precinct Seattle Police Department, Crime Analysis Unit Detective Jonathan Kiehn

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<http://www.nwfacts.com/licton-springs-tiny-house-village-ceremony/> last accessed Dec. 30, 2017

<http://komonews.com/news/local/homeless-no-more-seattles-first-village-that-does-not-require-sobriety>
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Various Subjects, South Park Facebook Group question: “Who uses the 8th Avenue Trail...why or why not?”

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