Guns, Guards, Gates

Defensible Space (Newman, 1972)

Target “hardening”

Lack of coordination between overlapping units of governments
CPTED

CPTED - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Road Rage

Countering Vehicular Weaponization in the United States

Fortress Cities

Urban streetscapes are “texts that can be read” Coaffee (2009)
Guns, Guards, Gates

We may try to communicate that people are safe in a particular built environment, but those safety features may cause fear and anxiety.

Homeland Security

FEMA guidelines (2007) for security design:

1). Balance security for sensitive locations with vitality
2). Provide security through streetscape enhancements
3). Expand elements that provide security (rather than endless jersey barriers and bollardization)
4). Priority should be given to aesthetic continuity along streets
5). Provide security while not impeding commerce, vitality, pedestrianism, mobility, or greenspace
Vehicular Weaponization

Road Rage

Vehicular Weaponization

Road Rage
**Vehicular Weaponization**

*Rumiyah Magazine* called for sympathizers to “mow down the enemies of Allah”

Not always related to terrorism

- Toronto – 2018 – 10 dead, 16 injured
- London – 2017 – 8 dead, 48 injured
- London – 2017 – 5 dead, 50 injured
- Barcelona – 2017 – 16 dead, 152 injured
- Stockholm – 2017 – 5 dead, 14 injured
- Berlin – 2016 – 12 dead, 56 injured
- Columbus, OH – 2016 – 13 injured
- Nice, France – 2016 – 86 dead, 458 injured
- Las Vegas – 2015 – 1 dead, 37 injured
- Stillwater, OK – 2015 – 4 dead, 36+ injured
- Xinjiang, China – 2014 – 39 dead, 90+ injured
- Santa Monica, CA – 2003 – 10 dead, 63 injured
Where We Are
Methodology

We employed qualitative research methodology with semi-structured interviews to answer:

What do transportation administrators say they are doing to respond to the threat of vehicular weaponization?
1). What strategies are transportation administrators utilizing to mitigate vehicular weaponization?
2). What do transportation administrators say they do to balance walkability, bikeability, and livability with vehicular weaponization mitigation strategies?
Findings

Key themes

1). FEMA VW guidelines are not operationalized in local transportation planning

2). Planning for VW is event-specific, not infrastructural

3). VW is “someone else’s” problem / It’s not a transportation problem
FEMA Guidelines Not Operationalized

“I would put [vehicular weaponization] pretty far down the list of important issues to talk about when trying to activate a public space.”
San Francisco

FEMA Guidelines Not Operationalized

“Improperly-placed bollards...that are more of a nuisance because you have to dismount and walk”
Las Vegas
FEMA Guidelines Not Operationalized

“Some of the jersey barriers have been made permanent.... [They’ve] been there for more than a decade.... I guess the problem is when people are asking [about safety where people congregate] and we say, ‘I have no idea. We have 1,100 miles of streets.’” Washington, D.C.

Findings

2). Planning for VW is event-specific, not infrastructural
Planning for VW is Event-Specific

“If there is a demonstration or rally on the Mall...they had military vehicles at the entrances...big trucks in Desert Storm tan”
Washington, D.C.

Planning for VW is Event-Specific

“I think [the responsibility] is in events management.... Usually we just park a trash truck in the middle of it.... We do think a lot about of VW in terms of events but not infrastructure.”  Philadelphia
Planning for VW is Event-Specific

At farmers markets and events “usually you just officers at the main entrance points and barricades” Dallas

Findings

3). VW is “someone else’s” problem / It’s not a transportation problem
VW is Someone Else’s Problem

“We are giving buildings and places the ability to do their own protection...if they want to pay for it and build it themselves, there’s nothing stopping them from doing that. But the stuff that we’re doing as a city is really being directed by our counterterrorism folks.” New York

Las Vegas rapid transit moved bus stops back from arterials. Bollards are placed by the hotels
VW is Someone Else’s Problem

Dallas cited VW being the responsibility of private entities’ construction design and planning.

“...it is not part of the conversation with the Portland Bureau of Transportation, possibly it is part of the conversation with Portland Police Bureau.”

Portland
VW is Someone Else’s Problem

“That’s not what we as a transportation agency look at. We would rely more on agencies that are focused on security and enforcement and thinking about those kinds of risks. We focus more on the risks that ordinary people every month are getting hit and killed by cars in Portland.” Portland

Interviewees are cautious about the role of the federal government
Differences in Approach

Cities that experienced attacks (New York, Santa Monica, and Las Vegas) approach the topic differently.

Their approaches don’t necessarily align with FEMA’s recommendations.

New York, Santa Monica, and Las Vegas have taken direct action and developed specific measures to mitigate the threat of vehicular weaponization.
Differences in Approach

All interviewees in selected cities recognize the importance of urban livability.

Interviewees in non-affected cities say they *can’t* focus on VW mitigation to protect urban livability; interviewees in affected cities say they *must* focus on mitigation to protect urban livability.

“One of our biggest challenges is how to do this in a way that still makes it feel like a public space people want to be in; that makes it permeable so that nobody feels like they’re stuck in a spot, and so they can move about.... That’s a thing we’re doing a lot of talking about as we move toward permanent fixtures - ‘how does this really blend into the surroundings and not make you feel like you are in a security state?’” New York City
Differences in Approach

“I do know that additional safety measures were taken such as adding permanent bollards and creating additional buffer space between where the road was closed and where the activity was taking place. So in essence, providing a gap so that if an incident did occur, it would minimize the loss of life.... I don’t think anyone thought that would happen before, but after it did happen, we’re being more cautious...”  
Santa Monica

Recommendations

1. VW is a transportation problem
2. Be careful with target hardening
3. VW is also a global problem. Efficacious responses require collaboration
Collaborate!

Local decision-making with multi- and intra-jurisdictional collaboration is important.

Instead of this...
Where We Are

Or this...

Collaborate!

Aim for this...

Road Rage
Countering Vehicular Weaponization in the United States
Collaborate!

Or this...

“...and they gather people in large numbers too. High density of people. It’s a ripe crowd for vehicle attacks.”

Minneapolis

Collaborate!
Road Rage
Countering Vehicular Weaponization
Through Urban Design Strategies

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