

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

DATE: 2015 May 6

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING
OIC – BURNABY RCMP

FILE: 2410 20

SUBJECT: PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE 2015 WORKPLAN

PURPOSE: To provide an update on implementation of the Public Safety Committee's 2014 Workplan, and to propose a Workplan for 2015.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** the Committee request Council to endorse its proposed 2015 Workplan, *attached as Appendix 1.*

REPORT**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Terms of Reference for the Public Safety Committee (formerly the Community Policing Committee) require the Committee to develop an annual Workplan for Council endorsement. At its meeting of 2014 March 24, Council endorsed the Committee's 2014 Workplan. In the Workplan, it was noted that given the complexity of some of the issues and associated actions, implementation of the Workplan could take place over a two to three year time span. This report outlines progress with implementation of the 2014 Workplan, and proposes a 2015 Workplan prepared by the Committee. The proposed 2015 Workplan consists of four continuing actions from the 2014 Workplan and one new action.

2.0 PROGRESS ON THE 2014 WORKPLAN

During 2014, the Public Safety Committee provided input into the development of police service strategies through the procedural means of regular Committee meetings, participation in the RCMP annual performance review, and through the discussion of the Detachment's regular community policing reports and reports submitted by each community policing districts' Community Policing Advisory Committee (CPAC).

The Public Safety Committee's 2014 Workplan focused on the following six topics:

- expansion of the Business Watch Program;
- consideration of the feasibility of a Crime Free Hotel/Motel program;
- expansion of external communications regarding community safety and crime prevention;

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- monitoring of the RCMP Mental Health Intervention Program;
- promotion of increased traffic enforcement and pedestrian safety in school zones; and
- consideration of the feasibility of a Taxi Watch program.

Progress on each topic is described below.

2.1 Business Watch Program

Action: Work with the RCMP to examine the viability and feasibility of expanding the “Business Watch” program.

The Business Watch program encourages business owners/operators to watch out for other businesses near them and to call 911 when suspicious activity is observed. It aims to increase communications between the police and the business community, reduce calls for service through crime prevention, and promote a safer working environment.

The existing Business Watch model involves auxiliary constables and community policing volunteers visiting individual businesses and encouraging them to take part in the program. In 2014, the RCMP reviewed the effectiveness of the model and determined it was not possible to use volunteers to reach over 6,000 businesses in Burnaby. Instead, the RCMP have determined that an internet-based program similar to its other crime prevention programs would be more effective. Work has been initiated to develop a web-based platform for the Business Watch program.

2.2 Crime Free Hotel/Motel Program

Action: Work with the RCMP to examine the viability and feasibility of implementing a Crime Free Hotel/Motel program in Burnaby.

The 2014 Workplan action involves examining the viability and feasibility of implementing a Crime Free Hotel/Motel program similar to the Burnaby RCMP’s existing Crime-Free Multi-Housing Program. The Crime Free Multi-Housing program is designed to help apartment owners, managers, residents, police and other agencies work collaboratively to reduce crime and nuisance activities in and around residential rental properties.

The RCMP have considered the costs, benefits and resources required to implement a Crime-Free Hotel/Motel program. Based on the relatively low number of calls for service from Burnaby hotels and motels, it is felt that implementation of a Crime Free Hotel/Motel program should not be pursued at this time.

2.3 Communications/Public Education

Action: Extend the Committee’s external communications/public education plan.

The 2014 Workplan action involves developing educational materials for dissemination through the City website, publications and other methods, and continuing to work with community

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partners and community news providers to communicate community safety and crime prevention information.

In 2014, the Communications Subcommittee continued to meet on a quarterly basis. The primary vehicles it has used for communicating crime prevention and safety information to the public have been the City's quarterly newsletter, *InfoBurnaby*, and the City's website. Each edition of *InfoBurnaby* included a quarter page article on a topical safety theme including fraud and identity theft prevention, graffiti prevention, safety tips for seniors, and firework safety and regulations. Each *InfoBurnaby* article was also forwarded to representatives from a number of ethnic newspapers for possible inclusion in their newspapers, as well as to the Burnaby Board of Trade for distribution to its membership.

In addition to the work of the Communications Subcommittee, the RCMP's Crime Prevention Unit hosted a number of Safe Communities seminars at venues across the city and targeted at different communities (e.g., seniors, Korean community, English language learners) in 2014. The seminars inform people on ways of preventing and identifying crime in their neighbourhoods and in their homes. On average, 40 to 65 people turn out for the events. The seminars are free and cover topics such as how to spot a drug house, apartment security, online safety, and the negative impacts of graffiti. Topics are selected according to current crime trends or from community requests.

The CPU also produces Crime Reduction bulletins for Block Watch participants and fans out its electronic "Digital Tips" newsletter through its email networks. The publication includes safety and security tips as well as relevant Burnaby detachment news.

2.4 RCMP Mental Health Intervention Program

Action: Monitor the implementation of the RCMP's Mental Health Intervention Program and, as appropriate, request Council to advocate to senior governments for enhanced mental health services.

The Burnaby RCMP implemented a Mental Health Intervention Program in 2012 to develop alternative approaches for interacting with people with mental illness while maintaining community safety. The goal of the program is to reduce repeat calls for service related to people with mental illness and the impacts associated with these calls (e.g., hours and resources used when police escort mental health patients to the hospital). The program has been developed as a partnership with Fraser Health which has designated a psychiatric nurse to work in the program. The program involves weekly outreach calls to high-risk mental health clients, proactive identification of high risk clients, joint problem-solving, and RCMP participation in community care plans. The program is still very active and has resulted in reduced calls for service.

Intervention programs related to mental health calls for service are currently being reviewed at the RCMP Lower Mainland District level as well as by Lower Mainland mayors. It is anticipated that the outcome of these reviews will be reported to the Committee when they become available.

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2.5 Traffic Enforcement and Pedestrian Safety in School Zones

Action: Work with the RCMP and Speed Watch program to promote increased traffic enforcement and pedestrian safety in school zones.

The Speed Watch program is a partnership between community policing volunteers, the Burnaby RCMP and ICBC that aims to reduce speed-related crashes. Speed Watch volunteers use portable radar and an electronic display board to monitor speeds in neighbourhoods, particularly around schools and playgrounds. The display boards tell drivers the speed at which they are travelling as they pass. Experience has shown that drivers who are exceeding the speed limit slow down when they see a speed-reader board.

In 2014, community policing volunteers organized a number of Speed Watch patrols in or near school zones. RCMP officers attended Speed Watch exercises where possible.

2.6 Taxi Watch

Action: Work with the RCMP to determine the viability and feasibility of implementing a “Taxi Watch” program similar to CUPE’s City Watch program.

Similar to CUPE’s City Watch program, a Taxi Watch program would involve working with taxi drivers to provide extra eyes and ears on the street. During the course of a shift, if a taxi driver observed any unusual or suspicious activity, the taxi driver would report it to the police.

The Burnaby RCMP have consulted with neighbouring municipalities and have determined that the Taxi Watch program should not be pursued. Instead, the RCMP would recommend focusing resources on existing crime prevention programs including a revised Business Watch program.

3.0 PROPOSED 2015 WORKPLAN

At its 2015 March meeting, the Public Safety Committee reviewed the 2014 Workplan and discussed potential new actions for the coming year. The Committee recognized that the 2014 Workplan consisted of actions and associated tasks requiring considerable time and effort on the part of both staff and citizen volunteers. As such, the Committee felt that implementation of many of the 2014 actions should take place over a two to three year time span. In this regard, the proposed 2015 Workplan consists of four continuing actions from the 2014 Workplan and one new action.

The actions proposed for the 2015 Workplan are outlined below. Further details, including tasks associated with each action, can be found in the proposed 2015 Workplan provided in **Appendix 1, attached.**

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Continuing Actions

Action #1: Work with the RCMP to revise the “Business Watch” program.

- The PSC will provide feedback on a revised Business Watch program as it transforms to an internet-based program similar to other crime prevention programs.

Action #2: Continue to extend the Committee’s external communications/public education plan.

- The PSC will continue to work with the RCMP to prepare and disseminate crime prevention information through the City’s website and publications; create presentations and educational materials on topics of interest for delivery to targeted audiences such as members of different cultural communities and youth; reach out to community news providers including those geared to different cultural groups; and pursue the use of social media to disseminate crime prevention information.

Action #3: Monitor the implementation of the RCMP’s Mental Health Intervention Program.

- The PSC will seek updates from the RCMP on the implementation of the Mental Health Intervention Program.

Action #4: Work with the RCMP and Speed Watch program to promote increased traffic enforcement and pedestrian safety in school zones.

- The PSC will work with the RCMP and Speed Watch program to increase Speed Watch in school zones, and where possible, have RCMP officers attend Speed Watch exercises. In addition the PSC’s Communications Subcommittee will include pedestrian safety information, particularly information geared to students, in its public education efforts.

New Action

Action #5: Work with the RCMP, ICBC, City representatives and community policing volunteers to implement a Cell Watch program to promote awareness of the dangers of distracted driving.

Similar to the Speed Watch program, ICBC has launched a Cell Watch program aimed at reducing distracted driving. Community policing volunteers work with the RCMP and ICBC to set up "leave the phone alone" sandwich boards and conduct road-side surveys observing drivers and their behaviours. Information is used to help the police and ICBC to better understand the issue at a local level and to develop initiatives to reduce distracted driving.

- As **Action #5** in the 2015 Workplan, it is proposed that the PSC work with RCMP, ICBC and community policing volunteers to explore the possibility of increasing education about and enforcement of distracted driving laws. In addition, it is proposed that the PSC

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Communications Subcommittee develop appropriate materials to educate the public on the dangers of distracted driving and explore methods of disseminating this information via different media.

In addition, the Committee will continue to act on its objective to provide input into the development of police service strategies through the procedural means of regular Committee meetings and the discussion of RCMP and CPAC reports. This input is intended to support the continuing work of the Burnaby RCMP detachment.

It is expected that execution of the proposed 2015 PSC Workplan can be undertaken with existing staff resources and within existing budgets. Council approval for any strategies developed as a result of the proposed Workplan, and any expenditure associated with those strategies would be sought, as appropriate, through subsequent reports. Given the complexity of the issues addressed in the plan, it is anticipated that implementation of the Workplan could extend into 2016.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The Terms of Reference for the Public Safety Committee require the Committee to establish an annual Workplan to be forwarded to Council for endorsement. This report outlines progress to date with implementing the Committee's 2014 Workplan and proposes a Workplan for 2015 consisting of five actions. Work on some of the items in the proposed Workplan may be extended into 2016 as necessary.

It is recommended that the Committee request Council to endorse its proposed 2015 Workplan, **attached as Appendix 1.**


Lou Pelletier, Director
PLANNING AND BUILDING


D. Critchley, Chief Superintendent
OIC – BURNABY RCMP

MM/sa
Attachment

Copied to: City Manager
Deputy City Managers
Director Engineering
Director Finance
Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
Acting City Clerk

**CITY OF BURNABY
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
PROPOSED 2015 WORKPLAN**

ACTIONS:

1. Work with the RCMP to revise the “Business Watch” program.

Possible Tasks:

- a. Provide feedback to the RCMP on a revised Business Watch program as it transforms to an internet-based program similar to other crime prevention programs.
- b. Work with the Burnaby Board of Trade and Business Improvement Areas in the implementation of the revised program.

2. Continue to extend the Committee’s external communications/public education plan.

Possible Tasks:

- a. Continue to disseminate community safety and crime prevention information through *InfoBurnaby*, the City website and other publications.
- b. Create presentations on topics of interest for delivery to targeted audiences such as members of different cultural communities and youth. Consider using BCIT’s journalism program and/or SFU’s communication program to develop approaches for engaging with youth.
- c. Work with partners such as the Board of Trade and community newspapers to disseminate information on community policing and crime prevention.
- d. Examine the use of social media to disseminate community safety and crime prevention information.
- e. Develop user-friendly, educational materials (e.g., pamphlets, handouts, electronic messages) and develop methods of disseminating these materials to the public (e.g., distribution at community events, schools, or to non-profit organizations).

3. Monitor the implementation of the RCMP’s Mental Health Intervention Program

Possible Task:

- a. Request updates on the implementation of the RCMP’s Mental Health Intervention Program and identify possible gaps in service for people experiencing mental illness.

4. Work with the RCMP and Speed Watch program to promote increased traffic enforcement and pedestrian safety in school zones.

Possible Tasks:

- a. Work with Speed Watch volunteers, the RCMP and City representatives to explore the possibility of increasing Speed Watch in school zones and explore the possibility of RCMP officers attending Speed Watch exercises, where possible.

- b. Work with the PSC Communications Subcommittee to develop age appropriate educational materials geared to students to promote pedestrian safety and explore methods of disseminating this information.

5. Work with the RCMP, ICBC, City representatives and community policing volunteers to implement a Cell Watch program to promote awareness of the dangers of distracted driving.

Possible Tasks:

- a. Work with community policing volunteers, RCMP, ICBC and City representatives to explore the possibility of increasing education about and enforcement of distracted driving laws.
- b. Work with the PSC Communications Subcommittee to develop public education materials on the dangers of distracted driving and explore methods of disseminating this information via different media.