

# Block Watch Society

Strategic Plan 2018-2021

---

DRAFT

## About the Block Watch Society of British Columbia

In 1992, the Lower Mainland Block Watch Committee decided to register as a non-profit society and proceeded to apply for a “charitable organization” status with Revenue Canada. The Block Watch Society of British Columbia (BWSBC) was officially registered in April 1993 and continues to administer all of the Block Watch Programs within B.C.

The main objective of the Block Watch Society of British Columbia is to partner with communities to build safer neighbourhoods by encouraging residents to take a proactive approach to crime prevention and safety. Block Watch member programs operate under the mandate of the Block Watch Society and, as members, shall uphold the Society Constitution & By-Laws, and comply with the rules & regulations, as set out from time to time, in the Operations Manual, Policies and Procedures section. Flexibility is provided to individual programs to develop initiatives, within the rules of the Society, to best serve their community.

The Block Watch Society of British Columbia:

Provides support, training, mentoring and materials to police agencies and community programs and coordinates the link of community programs to each other. The Society provides ongoing training and sharing of “best practices”. It works with police agencies to assist with problem solving, suggesting and supporting strategies for positive change as well as focuses on reducing the risk of property crime - particularly residential and auto crimes.

The Block Watch Society of B.C. holds its annual general meeting in the fall of each year. As of 2017, the Block Watch Society of B.C. consisted of 50 provincial programs.

Further information about Block Watch is available at <http://www.blockwatch.com>

### Why develop a strategic plan?

In early 2018, the volunteer Board of Directors of the BWSBC acted upon a key deliverable of their agreement with the Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General to develop and implement a strategic plan. Strategic planning is a process that helps guide an organization’s activity with a view to the future. This process, and eventual plan developed, is only successful if it is done collaboratively with all members engaged in providing input. A strategic plan can also be a living document, one that can be regularly reviewed and updated to meet the changing circumstances and priorities that may occur over the period of the plan.

### What should BWSBC do next with this plan?

The BWSBC Board must review this draft plan to see if it falls within their vision for the organization. As a living document, it can be adjusted, however, it will be up to the board to Champion this plan to the membership and stakeholders and report on progress regularly. It may even be necessary to identify specific leads in each priority area identified to ensure progress is made.

## SOAR Analysis

SOAR is an innovative, strength-based approach to strategic planning and invites the whole system into the process. It is designed to focus directly on elements that will give life energy to the organization's future rather than using the traditional SWOT model for planning. SOAR can be used whenever the strategic planning process is done to complete environmental scanning, revisit or create organizational values, vision, and mission; formulate strategy, strategic plans, and tactical plans; and bring about transformational change. It is composed of four components: Strengths, Opportunities, Actions, and Results. Each component will be briefly described. See Figure 1 for a description of each component.

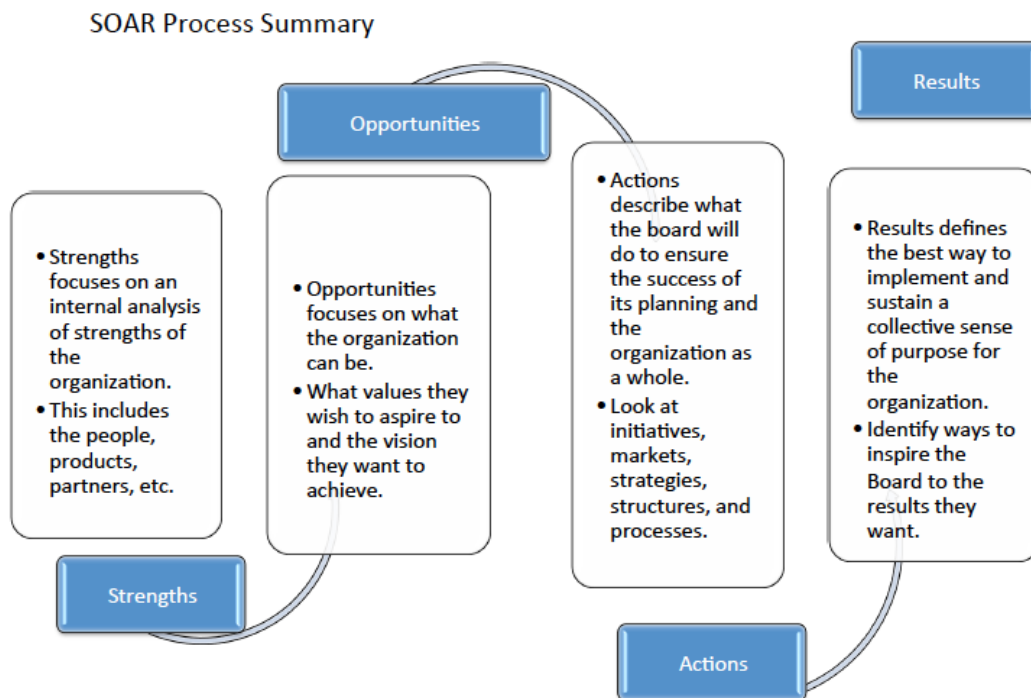


Figure 1: An outline of the SOAR process used to conduct an environmental scan for BWSBC.

The SOAR Process was used to help develop the details of the BWSBC strategic plan. The details of the SOAR Process can be found in Appendix 1.

## The Plan Moving Forward

### BWSBC Mission

The Mission of the Block Watch Society is to “Work together, building safer neighbourhoods throughout British Columbia by providing support, guidance, training, and resource materials to develop and operate Block Watch programs.”

## **BWSBC Vision**

The Block Watch Society Vision is “To be the best program for community engagement and crime prevention in Canada through innovation, accountable and effective program delivery, and the proactive pursuit of excellence”.

## **BWSBC Scope**

All rural and urban communities in British Columbia that have or can fund a Block Watch Coordinator.

## **BWSBC Guiding Principles**

All Block Watch Programs must be members of the BWSBC and abide by the rules, regulations, and by-laws of the Society. The Block Watch Program involves two commitments:

- A commitment to be aware of, and concerned about, your neighbour’s property as you would your own;
- A commitment to reporting suspicious or criminal activity to the police and to your neighbours.

## **Set Goals to move forward**

*Based on the information gathered in the SOAR analysis as well as keeping in mind the scope of the organization, the BWSBC Board will need to consider where they want to be in 2023. What follows are examples of possible goals, objectives and possible actions. Any goals and objectives would need to be discussed and finalized by the group before any actions can take place.*

## **Goals, Objectives, and Key Performance Indicators**

Identifying Goals, Objectives, and Key Performance Indicators will help the BWSBC to chart its pathway forward. To help facilitate discussion, four strategic goals and corresponding objectives have been provided. The goals identified are:

- Strengthen Governance
- Enhance Education
- Effective Marketing
- Improved Communications

The Goals are thematic in nature and the Objectives are written in the form of outcome statements. Within each Objective, a list of potential key performance indicators has been provided as well as a list of activities that can be undertaken within the annual operational planning cycle. One of the goals is inward looking to help the organization empower and sustain itself. Three of the goals are outward looking to help the organization strengthen its relationship with BWSBC partners and members and improve the benefits of membership.

In combination, these four areas of priority will help the BWSBC move towards being the best program for community engagement and programming.

A graphic of the framework is provided in Figure 2.

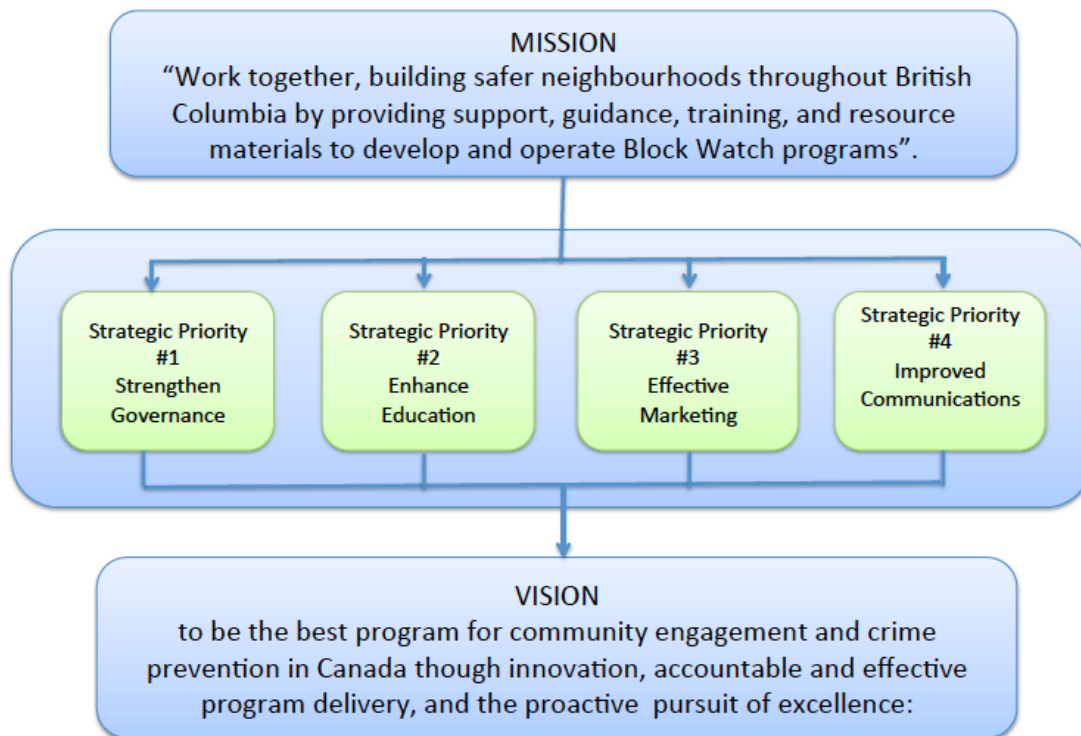


Figure 2: Block Watch Society of BC Strategic Goals that will lead to achieving its vision.

### Goal 1: Strengthen Governance

BWSBC has been in operation for a number of years. The board structure of BWSBC is that of a working board. This requires time and energy on the part of the volunteer members to accomplish specific tasks assigned to the society through its contractual obligations with the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General. Thus ensuring a board structure that can sustain itself under this current business model as well implement this strategic plan will be key to achieving the vision outlined.

#### Objective/Outcome Statement:

Block Watch has a governance structure that can sustainably support its Board, membership, and programming.

#### Performance Measure

By 2021, the Block Watch Society of British Columbia will be governed by a sustainable governance structure that includes effective leadership and membership. The performance measure will be the percentage of positive responses generated through annual evaluations.

#### Possible Actions to be taken:

- Implement board self-assessment.
- Review various governance structures to determine best fit.
- Review and revise bylaws.
- Implement strategic plan.

- Obtain funding to enhance capacity.

## Goal 2: Enhance Education

The BWSBC became an organization for the explicit purpose of providing educational programming associated with community safety. This programming continues to be a strength for the organization. However, given the changes taking place within both rural and urban communities (changing demographics, immigration, increase in homelessness & mental health, impacts of climate change, etc.) and the fact that resources have not changed to enhance B/W programming in recent years, steps need to be taken to ensure that B/W educational program expands to meet this increased need using innovative training methods.

### Objective/Outcome Statement:

Block Watch is using an educational model and tools that effectively reaches both rural and urban communities and coordinators.

### Performance Measure

1. By 2021, all coordinators within the Block Watch program will be trained and certified using the most up to date training materials and technologies. The performance measure will be the number of certified Block Watch coordinators.
2. By 2021, 20% of Block Watch groups will be using what they know to provide information on acts of criminality to their local detachment.

### Possible Actions to be taken:

- Evaluate current B/W program to identify successes and potential gaps where new information may be needed.
- Identify a priority list for new B/W virtual offerings and review what other offerings may already exist that could be linked to the B/W website to support B/W coordinators.
- Look at partnerships with other agencies that can support the delivery of additional multi-media B/W programming.
- Update manual with new information as needed.
- Build a business case for additional funding (investments) on how effective B/W is at preventing and reducing crime in the communities that have coordinators.

## Effective Marketing

To help the BWSNBC achieve its new vision, it will need to expand its membership and potential partners. To do this, B/W will need an effective marketing strategy and products.

### Objective/Outcome Statement:

The Block Watch Program is effectively marketed to all communities, municipalities, and policing organizations in BC.

### Performance Measure

By 2021, the provincial Block Watch Program will increase its membership by 75%. The performance measure will be the percentage of increase membership annually.

### Possible Actions to be taken:

- Assess existing B/W marketing materials and address any gaps that may exist (e.g., updated brochures, etc.)

- Prepare B/W Board packages to take to various events to market the BWSBC
- Identify key events that B/W Board members can attend to help expand the knowledge of B/W to policing organizations (e.g., Meeting of BC Chiefs of Police, RCMP) and perhaps to the broader community (e.g., UBCM, LGMS).

#### **Goal 4: Improved Communications**

Thanks to the core funding from the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, the BWSBC has had the opportunity to support some core communications products such as the province-wide toll free number, quarterly newsletter and a website. However, assessing the effectiveness of these tools will be needed to ensure that they are being as effective as possible.

##### **Objective/Outcome Statement:**

Block Watch has a communications system that will be known for keeping its members and partners regularly updated and informed while also soliciting feedback and making adjustments accordingly.

##### **Performance Measure**

By 2021, the provincial Block Watch Program will have an effective communications arm. The performance measure will be the feedback obtained through annual evaluations of products and services.

##### **Possible Actions to be taken:**

- Evaluate existing B/W communication mechanisms for their effectiveness.
- Continue B/W newsletter articles to ensure all partners are up to date on activities and direction of the BWSBC.
- Monitor and edit the B/W website – are there opportunities to post additional materials (e.g., links to YouTube video's from other B/W members???)

#### **Implementation and Monitoring**

To ensure that this strategic plan does not just reside on the shelf, it will be important to members of the BWSBC to work together to make this plan a living document as well as build support for it among the memberships. To achieve this the board may need to:

- Review the strategic plan and adjust where necessary;
- Designate a champion for each of the goals identified and commit to mutual support;
- Report on progress on a regular basis; and
- Acknowledge change.

While this draft strategic plan provides a roadmap for the board to help achieve their vision, it will be important to amend and revise based on resources and capacity. It will also be important to look at all annual commitments and to monitor them to ensure that they are not going against the intention of the plan or putting the organization at risk in terms of any of its resources.

## Appendix 1 – Outcomes from the SOAR Process

### Strengths

The BWSBC has a number of strengths. These include (but not limited to):

- A long history of service in programming around community safety.
- Community support for the program.
- People committed to the program at both the community (rural and urban) and provincial level.
- New Board that is engaged in delivering the program.
- Good partnerships with law enforcement organizations.

### Opportunities

There are a variety of opportunities that the BWSBC can take advantage of. These include (but not limited to):

- The priority of the current BC Provincial Government to focus on increased support for initiatives that are proven to prevent and reduce crime and improve public safety.
- The priority of the current BC Provincial Government to find ways to reduce the impact of climate change as it relates to emergency preparedness.
- BWSBC is now a stand-alone organization and as such can take steps to develop structures to evaluate its effectiveness and potential to grow.
- The BWSBC has a new board with a new vision and a new strategic plan that focuses on key priority areas.

### Actions

Some of the key actions that the BWSBC can take to ensure the success of the strategic plan and the organization as a whole include:

- BWSBC Board is a working board; as such strategies may need to be put in place to prevent burnout of current Board moving forward.
- Enhance the readiness of the organization to take advantage of lessons learned and embrace opportunities to grow and develop.
- Take advantage of the organizations market strengths.
- Test the waters of the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General to see how receptive they are in considering Block Watch as one of those proven initiative to prevent and reduce crime and increase public safety.
- Build strategic partnerships that may help support future program development.

### Results

The Results section of the SOAR analysis helps the current Board define the best way to implement and sustain a collective sense of purpose for the organization. This discussion help identify aspirations that help drive the Board to the results they want. – need to fill more in here