



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Community Safety Committee **Date:** January 24, 2022
From: Cecilia Achiam **File:** 12-8060-00/Vol 02
General Manager, Community Safety
Re: **Property Use Activity Report – 2021 Year in Review**

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Property Use Activity Report – 2021 Year in Review”, dated January 24, 2022, from the General Manager, Community Safety, be received for information.

Cecilia Achiam
General Manager, Community Safety
(604-276-4122)

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
ROUTED To:	CONCURRENCE
Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS:
APPROVED BY CAO 	

Staff Report

Origin

This monthly report for the Property Use section of Community Bylaws provides information and statistics for enforcing bylaws related to noise, health, grease, soils, zoning and short-term rentals as well as education and public awareness initiatives. This report provides a summary of trends recorded in 2021.

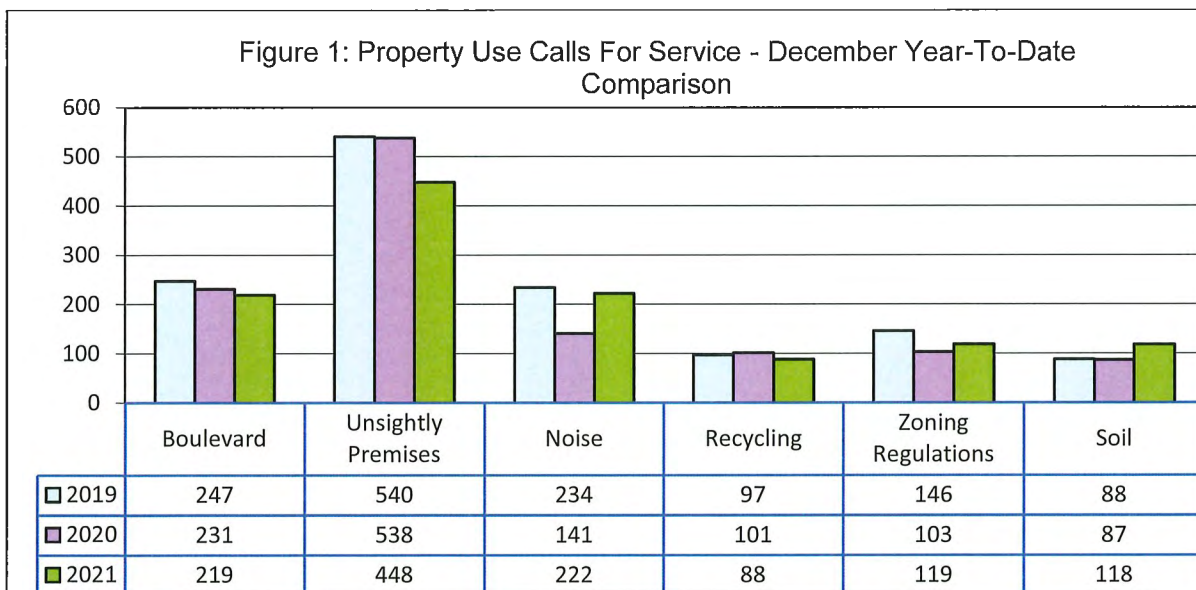
This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #1 A Safe and Resilient City:

1.1 Enhance safety services and strategies to meet community needs.

Analysis

Property Use Calls for Service

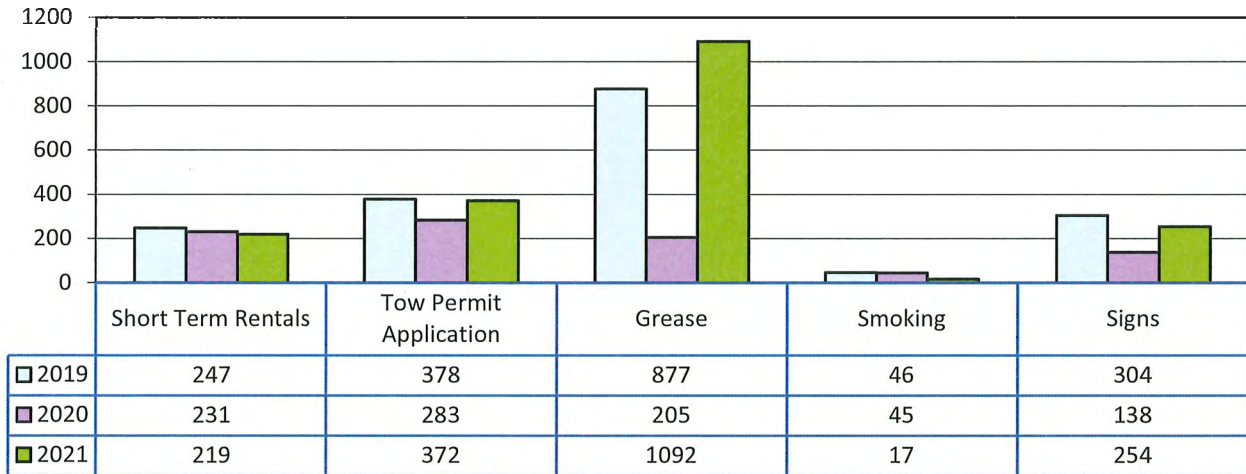
Property use enforcement matters are divided among several groups in Community Bylaws, Engineering and Business Licencing. Figure 1 shows the calls for service (files opened) by Property Use Inspectors. Figure 2 shows proactive and regulatory actions related to property use enforcement.



In 2021, the shared services agreement with Vancouver Coastal Health and the City related to outreach and enforcement services relating to the Public Health Protection Bylaw No. 6989 ended. As a result of this change, Property Use staff became the primary enforcement/outreach provider for noise-related and smoking calls. This necessitated new technical training for staff, the procurement of advance noise measurement equipment and the establishment of investigative procedures. For 2021, a total of 26 tickets related to noise violations were issued.

Calls related to short-term rentals are expected to return to levels seen in previous years once travel rates increase. Overall, the numbers remain low for 2021. In advance of this expected increase in short-term rental calls, staff are in the process of hiring additional temporary full-time bylaw officers that will focus on short-term rentals.

Figure 2: Other Calls For Service - December Year-To-Date Comparison



Grease

The Grease Officer remains focused on education and communication. During the month of December, the Grease Officer undertook 136 grease-trap inspections, which are reflected in the cumulative total shown in Figure 2. There were no violation notices issued for contraventions of the Drainage, Dike and Sanitary Sewer System Bylaw No.7511 in December.

While the closure of many food service establishments resulted in a decline in inspections in 2020. The trend in 2021 saw a return to pro-active inspections and education.

Smoking

On March 30, 2021, the City began providing smoking-related education and enforcement services previously provided by Vancouver Coastal Health. Starting in late 2021 and continuing into 2022, a social media campaign on the City’s social media networks has been implemented to make the public aware of Richmond’s smoking restrictions. Business have also been involved and received awareness materials including signage templates and links to the BC Lung Association.

Snow Clearing

During December, several large snowfall events were recorded and Community Bylaws received 322 calls for service. Bylaws engaged Corporate Communications to educate the public of the

City’s snow clearing requirements listed in Traffic Bylaw No. 5870. Property Use and Parking enforcement officers also pro-actively distributed hundreds of educational pamphlets to the public and businesses.

Ride Hailing

In 2021, staff partnered with the Metro Vancouver Transit Police and Passenger Transportation Branch (PTB) Officers, who are the lead law enforcement agency regarding ride-hailing issues, and undertook several joint operations targeting illegal ride hailing operators that resulted in significant fines. Staff will continue to work with partner law enforcement agencies in a pro-active manner to target illegal ride-hailing companies in 2022.

Soil Bylaw Enforcement

A key bylaw objective is the regulation of the movement of soil for all lands within the City including lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and outside the ALR. The 2021 year was a very busy year for the City’s Soil Bylaw Officer (the “Officer”) portfolio in terms of the files opened, the applications received and the number of properties managed for issues of non-compliance.

The Officer is responsible for coordinating the review of soil deposit and removal projects with City staff and staff from the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). Enforcement action is progressive and includes the issuance of stop work orders, removal orders, compliance orders and fines and/or court action should a property owner not comply with the bylaw.

This past year’s highlight was Council’s approval of Soil Deposit and Removal Bylaw No. 10200 (Soil Bylaw), which replaced Soil Removal and Fill Deposit Regulation Bylaw No. 8094. The Soil Bylaw strengthened the pre-existing regulatory framework related to soil movement in the City and increased fees and penalties. The enhanced regulations within the Soil Bylaw serve to better safeguard Council endorsed strategies such as the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Management Strategy, Agricultural Viability Strategy and the Invasive Species Action Plan.

Annual statistics are shown in the tables below.

Table 1: Regulation of Soil Deposit/Removal – 2021 Permits

Applications and Permit Activity	Annual Total
Permit Applications Received	20
Permits Issued	7

Table 2: Soil Bylaw Enforcement for 2021

Enforcement Activity	Annual Total
Non-Compliant Properties brought into Compliance	27
Number of Tickets issued	1
Number of Stop Work Orders	16
Number of Removal Orders Issued	20

Enforcement Activity	Annual Total
Number of Complaints Received	27

Ticketing

The following table reflects department violation issuance by file type for the month of December and year to date.

Table 1: Community Bylaw Violations

Ticket Issuance (BVN's & MTI's)	December	YTD
Short-Term Rental Offences	0	15
Soil Deposit and Removal Offences	0	0
Watercourse Protection Offences	0	1
Unightly Premises Offences	1	30
Noise Offences	0	26
Grease Trap Offences	0	2
Solid Waste and Recycling Offences	0	3
Sign Offences	1	15
Watering Offences	0	1
Totals	3	93

Bylaw Prosecutions

A total of \$39,000 in fines was awarded to the City by the Provincial Court in 2021. This was the result of several favorable court rulings on cases pertaining to property use violations such as unsightly premises, illegal secondary suites and zoning violations.

As the emphasis shifted from outreach regarding new Provincial Health Orders, Bylaw enforcement staff were able to issue 75 per cent more tickets in 2021 than in 2020.

Revenue and Expenses

Revenue in Property Use is derived from soil permit revenue, tickets and court fines from bylaw prosecutions. While the actual amount collected each month can vary depending on timing of court and ticket payments, overall Property Use revenue is ahead of budget. These results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Property Use Revenue by Source*

Program Revenue	Budget Dec 2021	Actual Dec 2021	YTD Budget Dec 2021	YTD Actual Dec 2021
Towing Permits	210	874	16,000	23,834
Soil Permit Applications	250	300	3,000	12,850
Bylaw Fines	1,004	2,075	76,500	114,560
Total Revenue	1,464	3,249	95,500	151,244

*Information may change subject to year-end adjustments and audit.

The favorable result on the revenue side is reflective of positive court outcomes and an increased scope of duties such as noise violation enforcement. At the same time, there are also savings on the expense side, this results in an expenditure amount which is favorable as it is lower than budgeted. The full results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Property Use Revenue and Expenses*

		YTD Budget Dec 2021	YTD Actual Dec 2021
Property Use	Revenue	95,500	151,244
	Expenses	1,436,900	859,909
	Net Revenue (Expense)	(1,341,400)	(708,665)

*Information may change subject to year-end adjustments and audit.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

The Property Use section administers a wide range of bylaws related to land use, unsightly premises, short-term rentals, soil, grease, and noise. This report provides a summary of annual enforcement activity for 2021, including revenue and expenses.



Mark Corrado
 Manager, Community Safety Policy and Programs
 (604-204-8673)