



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Community Safety Committee
From: Mark Corrado
Director, Community Bylaws & Licencing
Date: January 19, 2024
File: 12-8060-01/2024-Vol
01
Re: **Property Use and Parking Enforcement Activity Report – 2023 Year in Review**

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Property Use and Parking Enforcement Activity Report – 2023 Year in Review”, dated January 19, 2024, from the Director, Community Bylaws & Licencing, be received for information.

Mark Corrado
Director, Community Bylaws & Licencing
(604-204-8673)

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

Staff Report

Origin

This annual review report for Property Use and Parking Enforcement of Community Bylaws provides information and statistics on the calls for service and bylaw enforcement actions regarding to unsightly premises, land use, noise, soil deposit/removal, short-term rentals, parking permits and enforcement.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area # 3 A Safe and Prepared Community:

3.2 Leverage strategic partnerships and community-based approaches for comprehensive safety services.

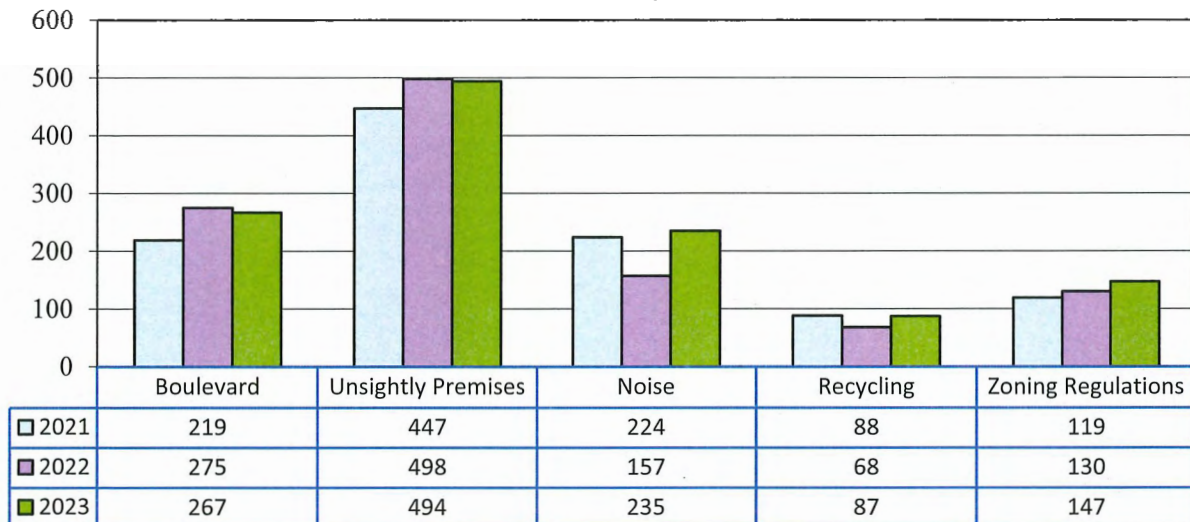
3.4 Ensure civic infrastructure, assets and resources are effectively maintained and continue to meet the needs of the community as it grows.

Analysis

Property Use Calls for Service

Figure 1 (below) highlights the top five most common calls for service received by staff. These five categories represent over half of the 2,241 property use calls for service received in 2023. Overall, property use calls for service increased by 38 percent (1618) when compared with total calls for service in 2022.

Figure 1: Property Use Calls For Service - December Year-To-Date Comparison



In 2023, calls related to unsightly premises and boulevard maintenance were consistent with the three year-average. Noise-related calls, however, were slightly above the three-year average of

205. This increase can be attributed to calls related to: mechanical noise, construction during prohibited hours and general complaints. Zoning related calls increased slightly driven by files regarding businesses operating contrary to permitted zoning. In all cases, staff investigate and seek to obtain compliance through education and/or bylaw enforcement action.

Other Community Bylaws Calls for Service

Figure 2 shows other Calls for Service, which are closely related to Property Use matters.

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

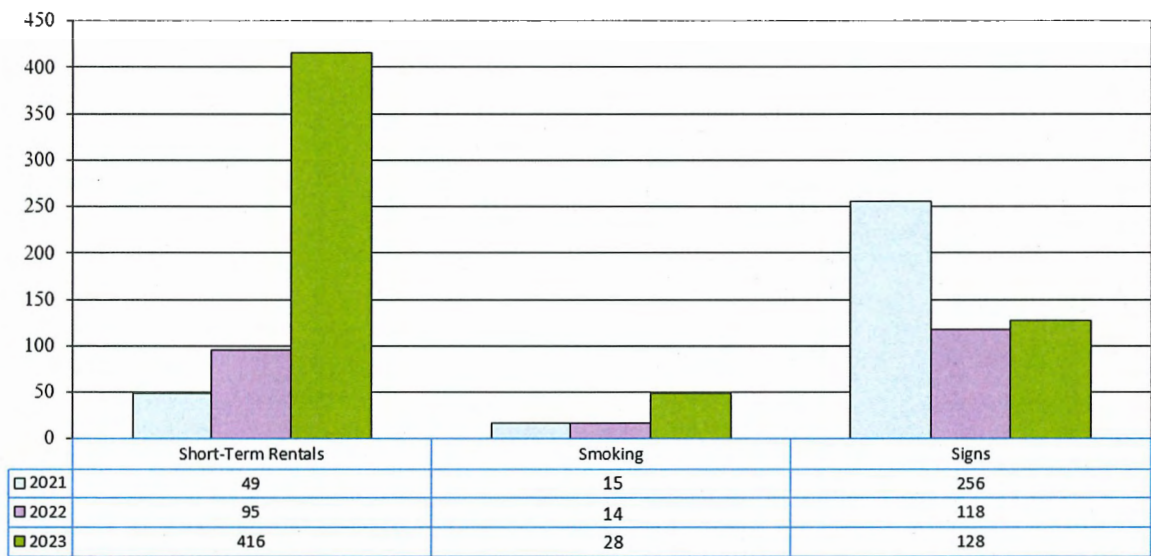


Table 1: Pre-pandemic Short-Term Rental Calls for Service

Year	Calls for Service
2018	282
2019	179
2020	65

*Figures represent the total calls received up to the end of December in the given year.

The above increases in short-term rental calls for service can be attributed to the work of two dedicated temporary full-time staffing resources. They respond to calls received from the public, as well as monitor short-term rental platforms to conduct proactive investigations for compliance. At the same time, the City has been an active participant in Provincial enforcement strategic and technical working groups related to short term rental enforcement. It is anticipated that by late spring to the summer of 2024 new information sharing systems between the Province and local governments will be available to assist enforcement efforts. Smoking-related calls increased slightly and were generally related to smoking on private property. Signage related calls cover a variety of potential non-compliance and, in 2023, the most common call was related to real estate signage.

Complex Files and Major Calls for Service

In 2023, there was a statistically significant increase in resource-intensive complex files and major calls for service as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Resources Intensive Calls for Service

Call Type	2023 Total	2022 Total
Encampments	129	61
Parking w/t nexus to housing insecurity	154	11

The files highlighted in Table 2 pertain to homeless encampments and parking-related calls that can be associated to those with insecure housing. Both types of files present complexities that are time-consuming and require unique investigative/monitoring measures. Various agencies and City departments are engaged in handling these files, which can encompass individual or temporary encampments as well as large-scale and entrenched ones. Due to the potential safety-related issues, multiple staff members must be dispatched to address these calls. Moreover, an elevated number of these encampments were located on Provincial or Federal government land, contributing to the jurisdictional and legal complexities associated with these files.

An example of successful efforts involving multi-departmental and jurisdictional coordination was an initiative addressing the encampment of 21 recreational vehicles located along the 13000 block of Vulcan Way. Staff from multiple departments and agencies initiated efforts in early January 2023, concluding the operation four months later in April, after 18 of the 21 vehicles voluntarily decamped from the location. The efforts to connect individuals residing in the area with social support systems required extensive background information gathering, numerous visits to build rapport and referrals to address a range of issues preventing the decamping of some of the RVs. Since the file concluded, this area was and will continue to be regularly monitored by staff until it is no longer deemed a hotspot. Preventative environmental design measures have been implemented including signage which has been refreshed or installed indicating the off-street parking regulations for the area.

When addressing files that involve engagement with individuals that may be experiencing mental health or addictions issues, staff work closely with the Richmond RCMP's Fox-80 Mental Health Unit and Vulnerable Persons Unit.

The City employs a "wrap-around" approach to the above complex files, which is overseen by the Joint Operations Team (JOT). This committee is comprised of various internal and external stakeholders from multiple departments and agencies. The JOT above all played a critical role in information sharing across a number of disparate secure systems.

In 2023, Council approved the addition of four new bylaw officer resources to assist with complex and resource-intensive calls for services related to individuals experiencing homelessness. These additional level resources approved by Council will supplement the City's comprehensive efforts to support individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of

experiencing homelessness without having to “de-prioritize” less pressing responses thereby resulting in an overall improvement of service levels across community safety concerns.

Grease

In December, staff conducted 27 grease trap inspections. These inspections are primarily proactive and serve to ensure the safe handling of grease products. In 2023, a total of 503 inspections took place. In 2021, the City hired additional temporary full-time staff to help catch-up on grease inspections that were impacted by the pandemic due to restaurant closures and adjusted business hours. As such, the number of grease inspections that were completed in 2021 and 2022 was significantly greater than the typical number of annual inspections. The number of grease inspections completed in 2023 is consistent with pre-pandemic levels, and positions the City well for future grease initiatives.

Future reporting in 2024 on information related to grease inspections will be provided to the Public Works and Transportation Committee for full reporting transparency and operational efficiency as the Engineering Planning department has provided funding and oversight of the grease management inspections program and staff since 2018.

Soil Activity

Staff are responsible for responding to public complaints and issues of non-compliance related to unauthorized filling; monitoring permitted soil deposits and removal sites; and inspecting properties that are undergoing remediation to come into compliance with applicable City bylaws. Staff conducted 42 site inspections in the month of December, a total of 565 site inspections occurred in 2023.

The past year was the second full year with the adoption of Soil Deposit and Removal Bylaw No. 10200. This bylaw strengthened the pre-existing regulatory framework related to soil movement in the City and increased fees and penalties. In April of 2023, Council approved the hire of a temporary full-time Soil Bylaw Officer. This additional resource contributed to a statistically significant increase in enforcement activity related to the Soil bylaw as reflected in Tables 3 and 4. Moreover, this new Soil Bylaw Officer contributed to an increase in the number of outstanding properties being brought into compliance.

As of the end of December 2023, there were 28 deposit proposals under various stages of the application process. Staff are monitoring 10 approved sites and are currently addressing 27 properties that are considered non-compliant.

Table 3: Regulation of Soil Deposit/Removal – 2023 and 2022 Permits

Applications and Permit Activity	2023 Total	2022 Total
Soil Deposit/Removal Applications Received	10	18
Permits Issued	13	10

Table 4: Soil Bylaw Enforcement for 2022 and 2023

Enforcement Activity	2023 Total	2022 Total
Non-Compliant Properties brought into Compliance	52	27
Number of Tickets Issued	132	60
Number of Stop Work Orders Issued	25	15
Number of Removal Orders Issued	41	33

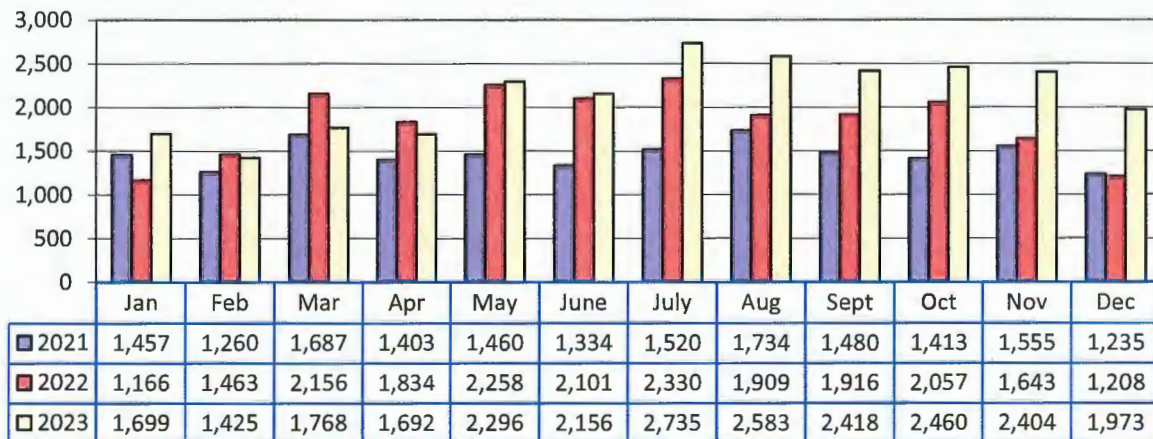
Parking Enforcement

For the month of December, staff received 269 calls for service for parking and traffic related concerns, a six per cent decrease (287) from the same period last year. In 2023, staff received 3,691 parking related calls for service, a 23 percent increase (3,013) from 2022. The aforementioned parking calls for service are concerns sent to Bylaw Enforcement and not to proactive patrols. Parking revenue and ticket issuance comparisons are listed in Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 3: Parking Enforcement Revenue Comparison (000's)



Figure 4: Parking Violation Issuance Comparison



When compared to 2022, annual parking revenue has increased by 21 percent, accompanied by a 17 percent increase in parking violation issuances. Multiple factors contribute to these increases in violation issuances and revenue. Significant contributors include the regular deployment of one license plate recognition vehicle (LPR), enhancing efficiency for staff to address proactive sites such as school patrol enforcement. The data generated by the LPR unit enables the creation of data-informed patrol routes.

With the increase in the volume and accuracy of this real enforcement data, staff can now identify enforcement hotspots and target these geographical areas for proactive patrols. In addition to increasing revenue, LPR has enabled efficient redeployment of Bylaw parking enforcement resources around priority safety areas such as increased school patrols. Lastly, the filling of vacancies and an overall increase in calls for services have contributed to the noted revenue and service response increases summarized in the charts above.

The annual figures from the past three years are highlighted in Table 5.

Table 5: Parking Enforcement Activity – Annual Figures

Year	Parking Violations	Parking Enforcement Revenue (000's)
2021	17,538	\$ 1,323
2022	22,047	\$ 1,635
2023	25,876	\$ 1,971

Ticketing

Bylaw ticket issuance by offence type for the month of December and year-to-date are highlighted in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Community Bylaw Violations

Ticket Issuance (BVN's & MTI's)	December	YTD
Short-Term Rental Offences	11	575
Soil Deposit and Removal Offences	0	132
Watercourse Protection Offences	0	1
Unightly Premises Offences	2	14
Noise Offences	1	20
Solid Waste and Recycling Offences	0	0
Parks Offences	0	5
Sign Offences	2	75
Watering Offences	0	65
Totals	16	887

Generally, violation issuance and other enforcement actions are reserved for files where there is a history of offences, or deadlines to come into compliance have lapsed. The increase in short-term rental (STR) violations underscores the efforts of two temporary full-time staff assigned to investigate this file type. As indicated in Table 4 above, the addition of a temporary soil bylaw

officer also contributed to the overall increase in inspections, resulting in a rise in soil-related violation notices as well as improved compliance. Among the violations reported in Table 5, issuances increased by 603% from 2022 (126). Together, these additional resources are having a significant impact on achieving compliance and addressing non-compliance to address a wide range of community bylaws. The past year represented the largest number of property use violations issued since the recording of this data.

Bylaw Adjudication

In 2023, 4 adjudication sessions were held. A total of 48 violation notices were reviewed by a provincial adjudication, with 39 upheld and nine were dismissed. The disputed violation notices span a range of violation types with the majority of disputes relating to parking offences. There were nine short term rental related violations disputed, all were upheld.

Revenue and Expenses

Revenue in Property Use is primarily derived from permits, tickets and court fines related to bylaw prosecutions. The actual amount collected each month can vary depending on the timing of court rulings and ticket payments.

The decrease in budgeted revenue generated from newspaper box permits is a result of a broader shift away from print media. In late 2023, the Richmond News ceased print publications and this vendor was a major subscriber for newspaper box permits. The positive variance for Bylaw fines can be attributed to short-term rental violations and other infractions referenced in Table 6.

Based on the analysis of the revenue trends, staff have made appropriate adjustments to the 2024 budget projections.

Table 7: Property Use Revenue by Source

Program Revenue	Budget Dec 2023	Actual Dec 2023	YTD Budget Dec 2023	YTD Actual Dec 2023*
False Alarm	4,750	132	57,000	25,776
Towing Permits	352	684	16,700	24,614
Newspaper Box Permits	0	0	7,362	5,616
Soil Permit Application and Volume Fees	2,194	1,024	96,938	40,000
Other Bylaw Fines	1,609	4,500	76,500	173,355
Total Revenue	8,905	6,340	254,500	269,361

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

Parking enforcement derives the majority of its revenue from meters, permits, and fines with additional income generated from filming and receivables. Individual revenue types are detailed in Table 8. Overall, total parking revenue closely aligns with the budgeted expectations. This can be attributed to an increase in overall calls for service, the adoption of new enforcement technologies and strategic staff deployment.

Table 8: Parking Revenue by Source

Program Revenue	Budget Dec 2023	Actual Dec 2023	YTD Budget Dec 2023	YTD Actual Dec 2023*
Contract Revenue ¹	5,000	5,000	60,000	60,000
Filming Revenue	0	0	0	12,503
Parking Revenue ²	170,675	185,436	2,048,100	1,971,455
Receivable Income ³	0	0	100,000	33,291
Other Bylaw Fines	0	0	0	200
Total Revenue	175,675	190,436	2,208,100	2,077,449

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

Table 9 outlines the net revenue and expenses for both Property Use and Parking.

Table 9: Property Use and Parking Revenue and Expenses

		YTD Budget December 2023	YTD Actual December 2023*
Property Use	Revenue	254,500	269,361
	Expenses	1,500,700	1,189,994
	Net Revenue (Expense)	(1,246,200)	(920,633)
Parking	Revenue	2,208,100	2,077,449
	Expenses	1,622,000	1,728,859
	Net Revenue (Expense)	586,100	348,590

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

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

Staff administer and enforce a wide range of bylaws related to land use, unsightly premises, short-term rentals, soil, noise, parking permit issuance and enforcement. This report provides a summary of activities and complex operations in 2023, including revenue and expenses. In 2023, through consistent fiscal management and operational oversight, the department was able to

¹ City Towing Contract with Rusty's towing

² Parking Revenue consists of Parking Meters, Monthly Parking Permits, and Parking Enforcement

³ Receivable Income consists of Night Market Recoveries

January 19, 2024

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achieve an overall reduction in expenses resulting in a net revenue of nearly \$350,000 in a year where the City experienced an unprecedented year for bylaw enforcement related activity.



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