

By-law Enforcement Services

2023 Year-End Activity Summary

Summary of Initiatives, Activities & Issues



1. Overview

A. Objective

The objective of the Township’s By-law Enforcement Service is to champion a collaborative approach to by-law compliance that reflects the overall safety and wellbeing of the community.

Guided by our strategic priorities and goals, the Township By-law Services Program is focused on values that promote a safe and enjoyable environment throughout the Township. There is a strong focus in delivering by-law education and awareness to both residents and visitors that is standardized, transparent, consistent, and accountable.

The Township, primarily through its Municipal Law Enforcement Officer, strives to achieve a high degree of interaction with its residents and visitors to address an “education over enforcement” approach to by-law compliance and community well being. Engagement with the public is also a proactive means to gauge the effectiveness of existing by-laws, build rapport, and evaluate the potential need for any new by-laws.

B. Quick Links

ToA By-law webpage, information & documents:

www.thearchipelago.ca > Township Services > Departments
or
www.thearchipelago.ca/p/by-law-enforcement

ToA Bylaw phone extension, 705.7464243 x325

Township Staff (Coordinator of By-law activities and Enforcement Services):

Joe Villeneuve, Manager of Corporate Services
jvilleneuve@thearchipelago.ca
705.746.4243 x320

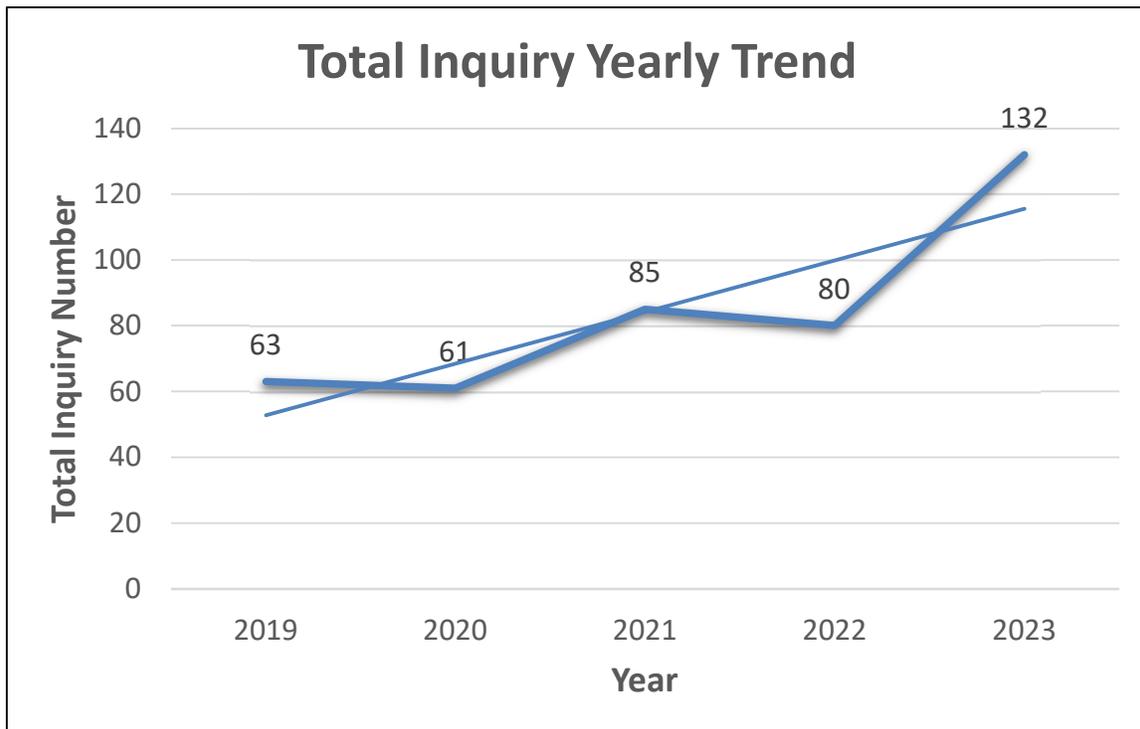
Enforcement Officer:

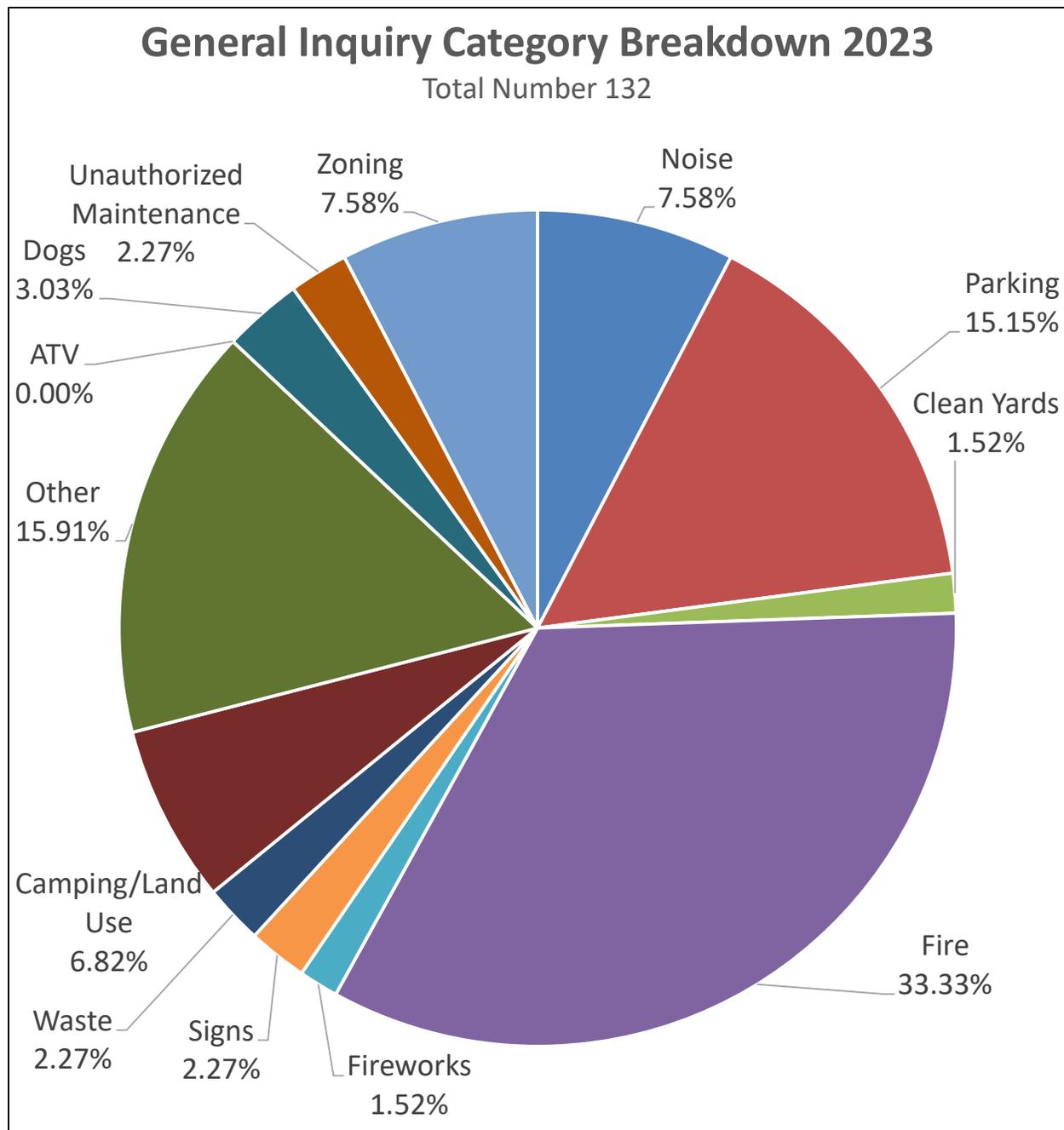
Liam Thompson, MLEO
bylaw@thearchipelago.ca
705.746.4243 x325

C. 2022 Activity Data and Overview

Total Inquiries and Calls for Service

Month	2022	2023	2023 Variance
JAN	2	2	0.00%
FEB	2	5	150.00%
MAR	4	5	25.00%
APR	2	4	100.00%
MAY	1	6	500.00%
JUN	10	22	120.00%
JUL	13	40	207.69%
AUG	28	14	-50.00%
SEP	10	19	90.00%
OCT	1	6	500.00%
NOV	2	4	100.00%
DEC	5	5	0.00%
TOTAL	80	132	65.00%





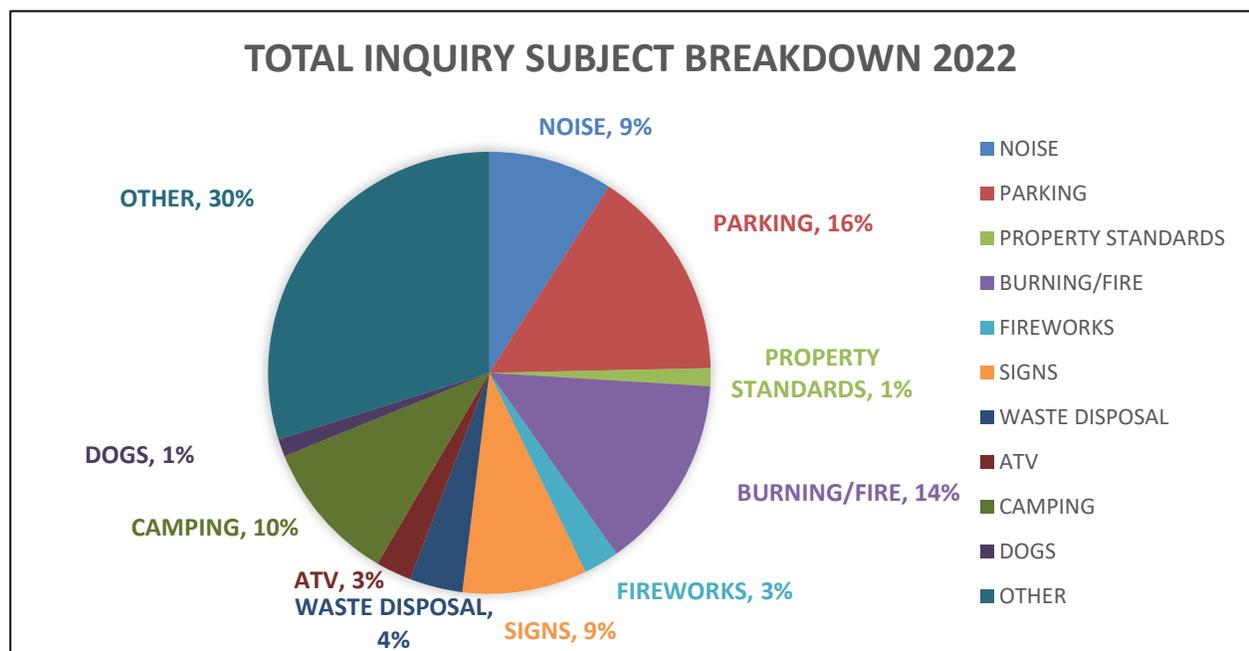
Notes:

- Similar to 2021 and 2022, much staff time went into conveying information about existing by-laws and helping visitors and ratepayers with inquiries not relating to a specific by-law. The restricted fire zone contributed to a large call volume with many inquiries into what activities were prohibited.

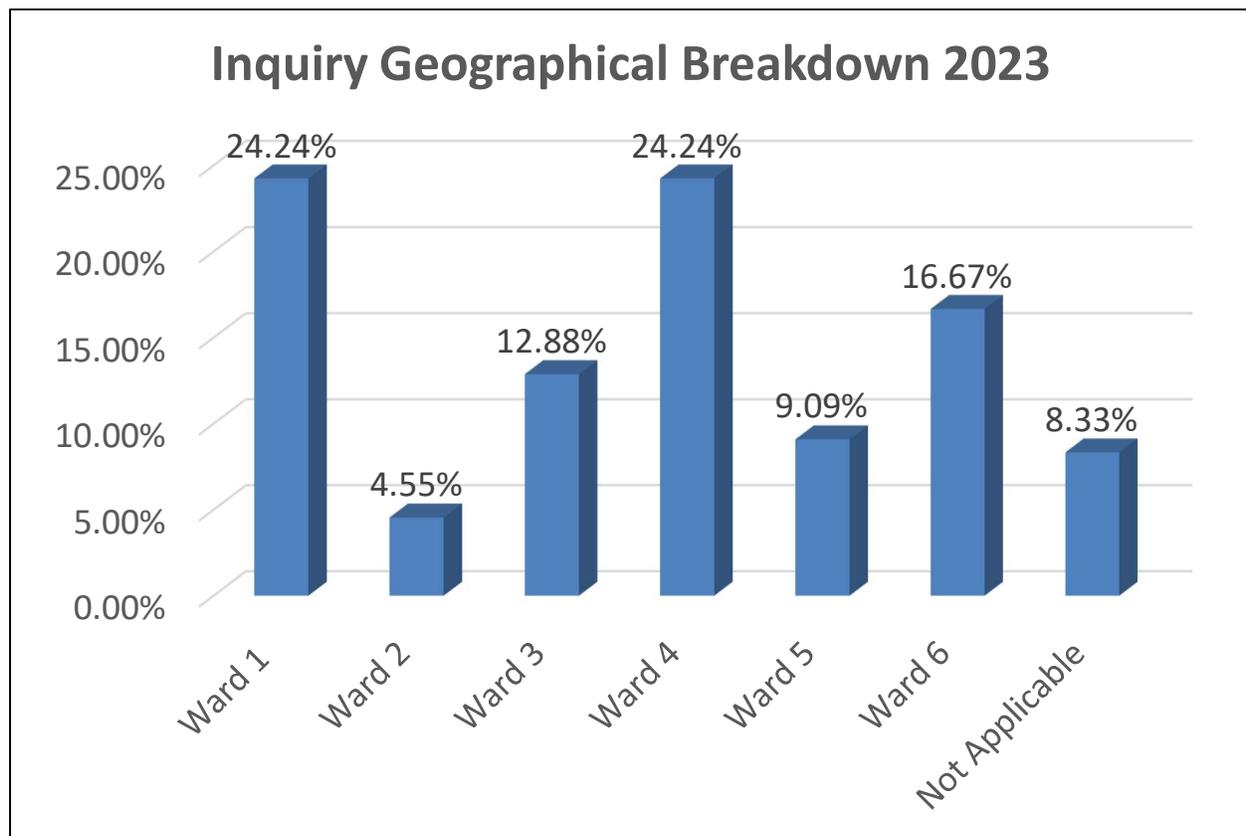
2023 YEAR-END REVIEW

- Overall, the number of total inquiries was significantly elevated with every month observing increased or similar inquiry volume with the exception of August.
- 2023 saw an increase of 65% total inquiry volume when compared to 2022.
- The 'top 3' issue list for 2023 followed a similar trend to the previous year with fire, parking, and other making up the majority of inquiries (64.39%).
- The Other category includes a wide range of concerns including STR information, transient boaters, lighting, drone usage, road obstructions, hunting, 911 signs, discharge of firearm, and several other one-off items.
- Many by-law enforcement inquiries and calls for service stem from not enough awareness of one's activities and impacts to neighbours or the broader community.
- Through an education over enforcement approach, over 91% of interests were resolved through general dialogue with Bylaw Services.
- Twelve (12) Notices of Violation (NOV) were issued as formal warnings for more serious matters. The remainder of incidents were resolved through verbal cautions, education, and enforcement letters.

For reference and comparison below is chart for 2022 Activity Summary/Overview



Geographical Comparisons



	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 6	NA
2022	10	8	23	9	10	9	11
2023	32	6	17	32	12	22	11
Variance	220.00%	-25.00%	-26.09	255.56%	20.00%	144.44%	0.00%
Property Count	620	371	989	1,436	465	465	NA
Inq. Per Prop. %	5.16%	1.62%	1.72%	2.23%	2.58%	4.73%	NA

*Property Count is derived from 2023 MPAC data totalling 4,346

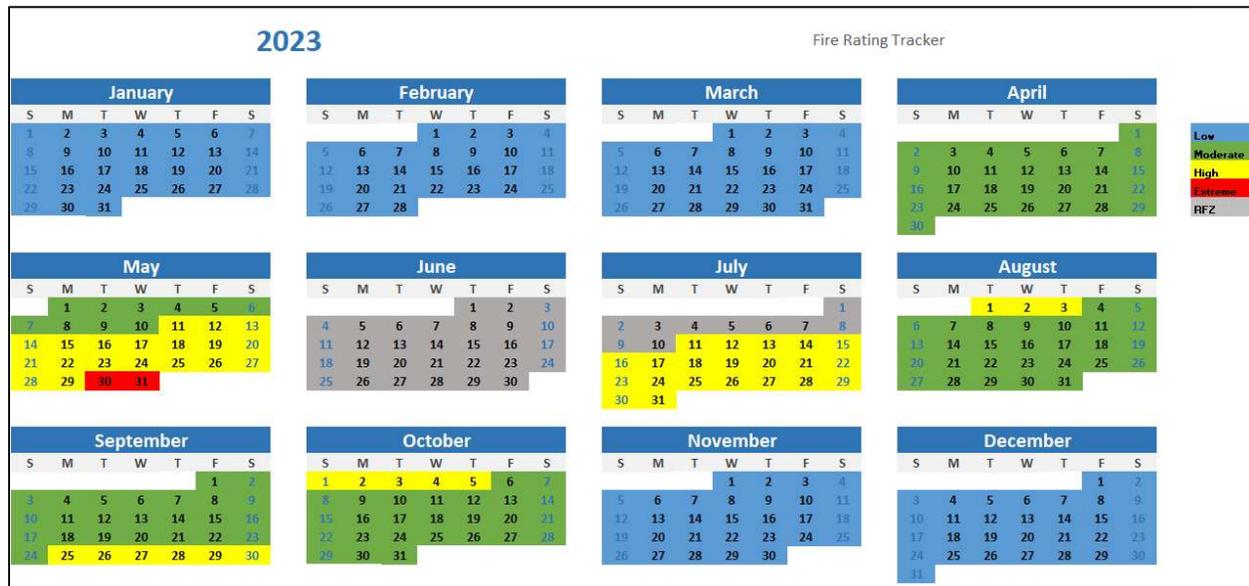
Notes:

- Both Ward 2 and 3 saw a decrease in their overall occurrences compared to 2022. Focus patrols were conducted in Ward 3 beginning in early 2023 lasting until early summer to increase presence.
- Fire and parking occurrences account for the majority of Ward 1’s activity.
- Ward 4 and Ward 6 experienced a mix of occurrences that varied widely by category, however, fire was still prevalent.
- Ward 1 saw the highest percentage of inquiries when compared to 2023 property count.

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Fire Danger Rating Reference Calander

As illustrated above, fire concerns remain a high priority and make up the majority of By-law calls for service. With the fire season being April 1st to October 30th annually, the weather largely dictates the fire risk during this time. Higher fire risk generally correlates with an increase in fire related calls for service. The following calendar provides context into the large increase in calls received over the 2023 season.



Notes:

- Open air burning (including campfires) was prohibited starting on 11MAY2023 and continued until 03AUG2023 with a 40-day long Restricted Fire Zone implemented and enforced by the province.
- A brief HIGH fire danger rating period was observed from 25SEPT2023 and continued until 05SEPT2023 making open fires and campfires prohibited during this period. During this time there was one (1) fire occurrence that resulted in no violation due to exemptions met.

Level of Service Data

The new Level of Service (LOS) Policy was initiated 01JAN2023 and with it came new reporting methods, internal occurrence tracking, hours of operation, and standardized response times/methods. Of the one-hundred and thirty-two (132) total inquiries received over the course of 2023, over 75% occurred during the hours of operation. In addition, all of the inquiries were actioned upon *within the five (5) day maximum response time with calls for service being actioned on within 24 hours.

*Calls for service means an incident, which causes the officer to initiate contact for investigative purposes, made by a member of the public.

Reporting a MUNICIPAL Incident or Concern

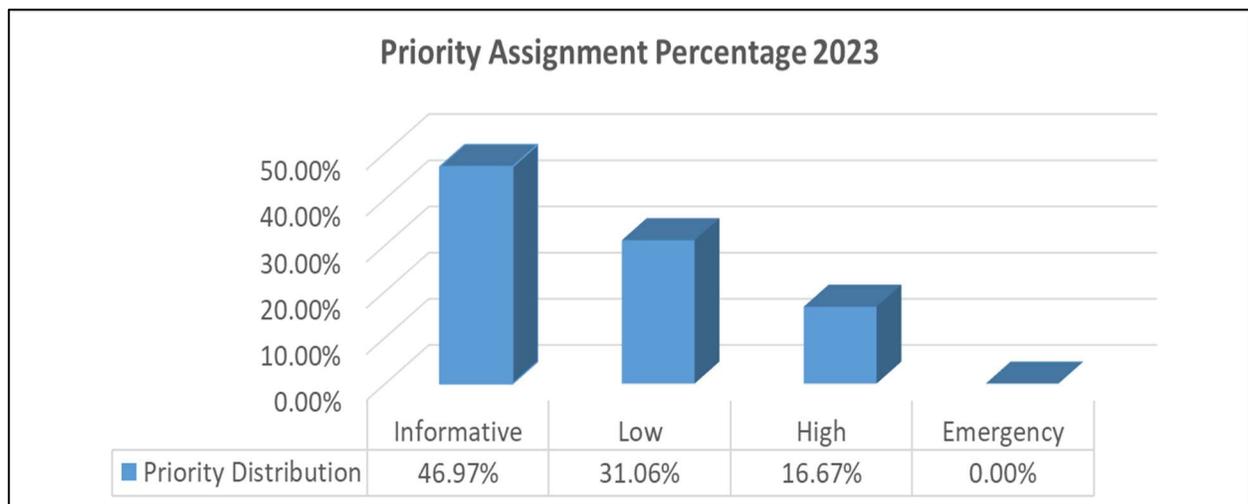
The By-Law Enforcement Service summer hours of operation are as follows: **Monday to Sunday 9:00am - 6:00pm.**

The By-Law Enforcement Service winter hours of operation are as follows: **Monday to Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm.**

Priority

All inquiries and calls for service are initially assessed based on the priority scale and are assigned a priority. The four levels ascending in severity are informative, low, high, and emergency. Each priority is assigned the following definitions:

- Emergency – this category involves matters of public safety needing immediate action from an *Officer*. *Officers* will respond as soon as possible;
- High – this category involves time sensitive issues or matters that have a high potential for aggravation impacting multiple residents. Repeat offences are included in this category. *Officers* will respond at the first available opportunity based on call load and *operational days*. Other factors may impact response times as indicated in subsection 7.4;
- Low – this category involves routine or long-term issues that are not time sensitive. *Officers* will respond within the five (5) day response period and action will be initiated based on call load. Other factors may impact response times as indicated in subsection 7.4;
- Informative – this category involves inquiries and non-*call for service* related concerns. *Officers* will respond within the five (5) day response period and action will be initiated based on call load. Other factors may impact response times as indicated in subsection 7.4.



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Notes:

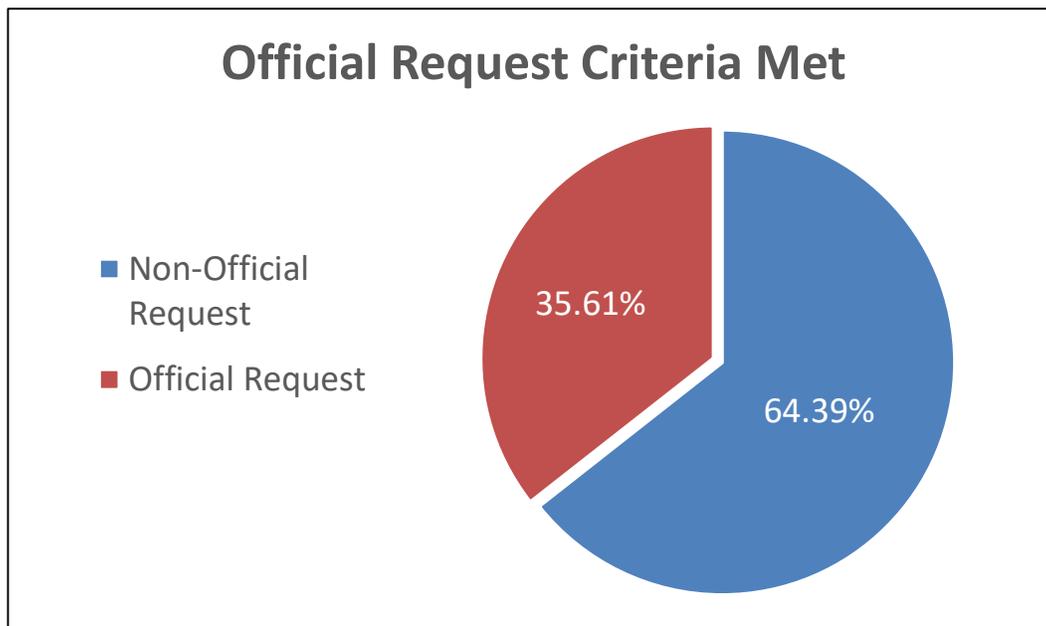
- Of the twenty-two (22) HIGH priority calls for service, nine-teen (19) fell under the fire category.
- Of the remaining three (3) HIGH priority calls for service, the category breakdown includes one (1) parking, one (1) unauthorized maintenance, and one (1) camping/land use.

Official Requests

Another aspect built upon in the LOS Policy is the official request requirement. In order for a member of the public to submit a request, a certain amount of information is required to initiate MLEO action. The requirements include;

- Name of *requestor*;
- Address of *requestor*;
- Contact information of *requestor* (e.g., phone number or email);
- Details regarding the issue (e.g., who, what, when, why and how);
- Issue location (e.g., where).

These basic details are crucial for MLEO follow-up and help to reduce the number of unfounded calls for service.



Notes:

- Non-Official requests include simple inquires or questions that do not require investigation or imply a violation has taken place.
- **Official request information is kept confidential and not provided to the respondent.**

2. By-laws and Administrative Improvements

A. Goal: Review by-laws and information handouts associated with major by-law activity issues and new/emerging trends and legislation. Establish and monitor Level of Service Policy for areas of improvement moving forward.

B. Resultant Items from 2023 Issues:

	Key Deliverables	Status
i.	Level of Service/General By-law Enforcement Policy *including recording and analyzing time of initial call for service and whether response time falls within proposed time frame	Completed – Continue Monitoring
ii.	Maintain continuous MLEO coverage throughout the year to compliment level of service policy	Completed
iii.	Short-Term Rental research – Trends	Started – Ongoing
iv.	Site Alteration and Tree Preservation research and review	Started – Ongoing
v.	Reporting issues appropriately and disseminating new contact information for reaching out to appropriate departments and officers	More engagement required on proper reporting procedures
vi.	Parking notice procedure (vehicles along road) – tagging and notice provision. Towing upon repeat violation or road maintenance hazard *No repeat parking violations present	Collaboration with Operations’ staff – increase in enforcement
vii.	Winter use of seasonal roads	Collaboration with Operations’ staff – active reporting established
viii.	Body Worn Camera Use Policy – Continuation	Completed
ix.	Renter Information Package	Completed – Distributed to all STR occurrences
x.	Hours of Service Review – Enforcement	Completed – Continue Monitoring
xi.	Updated Notice of Violation form – Addition of Order within new form and copies of Great Neighbour Document to be distributed simultaneously	Completed
xii.	Continued monitoring of short-term rental properties *two occurrences identified in 2023	Ongoing

3. Communication & Program Development

A. Goal: Engage in regular and clear communication with ToA residents and other stakeholders. Promote awareness of the By-law enforcement program and actively engage with community members.

B. Deliverable Status:

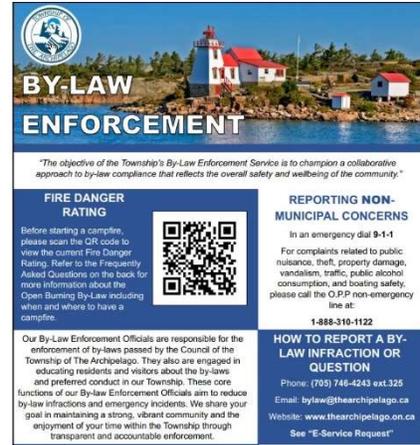
	Key Deliverables	Status
i.	Create additional webpage and content to reflect proposed new level of service policy to become more transparent on the enforcement process	Completed – New By-law Enforcement Service webpage with hours of service
ii.	Develop educational materials to disseminate on various matters	13 documents *See education notes
iii.	Disseminate information during seasons	In-person via enforcement officer Newsletter, social media, website, front counter handouts
iv.	Promote official request process	Handout information packages and increase webpage presence
v.	Be active and visible from time to time	Patrols and incident follow up completed throughout the Township ~3000km *despite posted hours of service, officers still participated in patrols and activities after hours and on weekends
vi.	Work to align/partner with others in Township where activities & interests overlap.	Engaged many groups/individuals *See engagement notes
vii.	Regular reporting and documentation of activities	ongoing
viii.	RFZ information dissemination and coordination *in conjunction with the Clerks Department	Completed

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Highlights:

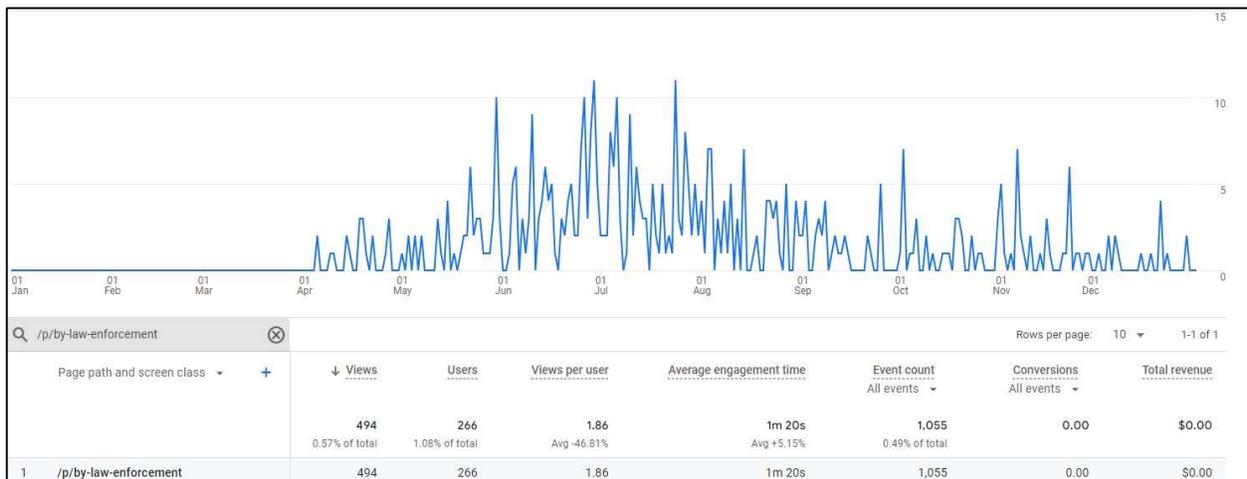
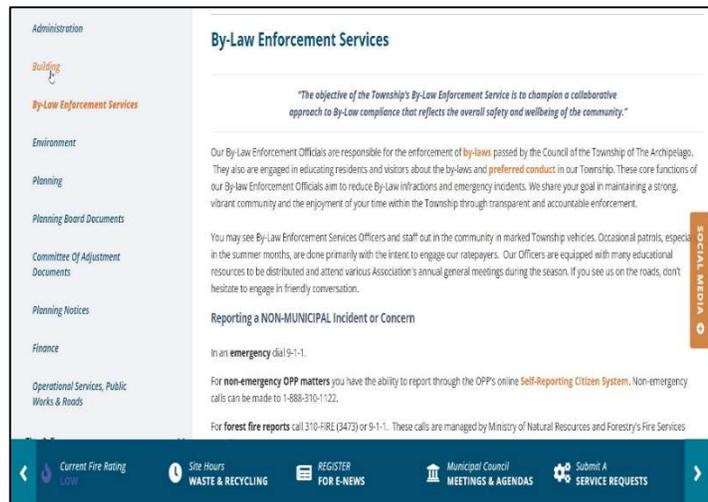
Communications:

- **New literature:** Renter Information Package, By-law Enforcement Services Handout
- **Webpage** content updated recognizing LOS and establishing reporting procedures and methods. Increased emphasis on different agency roles when reporting concerns.
- **In-person** MLEO and the Manger of Corporate Services answer by-law calls and engage in dialogue through office calls/walk-ins, AGM presentations, patrols and field operations.
- Patrol presence (incl – identified ‘hotspots’, weekend runs, hunting season, winter plowing season & HIGH/EXTREME fire rating)
- Ratepayer assists (office, field response, phone calls, emails)



website usage **BY-LAW Enforcement page:**

2023 Year = 494 page views @ average of 00:01:20 time on page. *up 19 views (475 page views in 2022).



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Education materials:

- Noise by-law highlights
- Camping information reference sheet
- By-law Enforcement Service contact page
- Great Neighbour Code
- Renter Information Package and Letter
- Reference sheet "By-Law Enforcement Contact and FAQs"
- *Question and Answer response sheet for staff usage*
- Poster - support to businesses (quick reference to common by-laws)
- *Mapping - support to responders (maps and index sheets for referencing issues)*
- Info sheet - animal related noise
- Info sheets - open burning guidelines, fireworks guidelines
- *Email distribution lists (fire rating info groups for Associations, Marinas, Businesses and Contractors)*
- Newsletter articles via Archipelago Express (digital newsletter, * also available in print by request)
- Info sheet – aggressive dogs

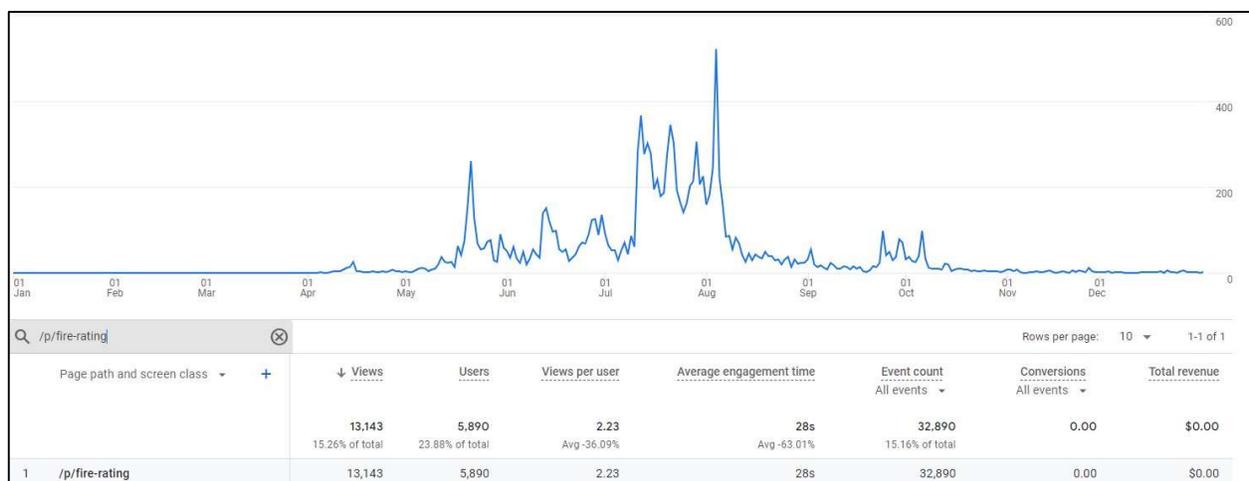
Engagement with other stakeholder groups:

- Associations
- various individuals on water access areas (GB water north and south, Healey Lake, Naiscoot Lake, and Bayfield)
- First Responders and Patrol groups
- Commercial operators (marinas, resorts)
- OPP and MNRF Conservation Officers

Website usage **FIRE RATING** page:

2023 year = 13,143 page views @ average of 00:00:28 time on page. *up 6,283 (6,860 page views in 2022).

Fire Rating Legends			
Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
FIRE RATING	FIRE RATING	FIRE RATING	FIRE RATING
			



4. Observe & Report on Activities, Interests & Emerging Issues

A. Goal: During the year, through interactions and observations, identify topics to address immediately or in the work plan for the next year.

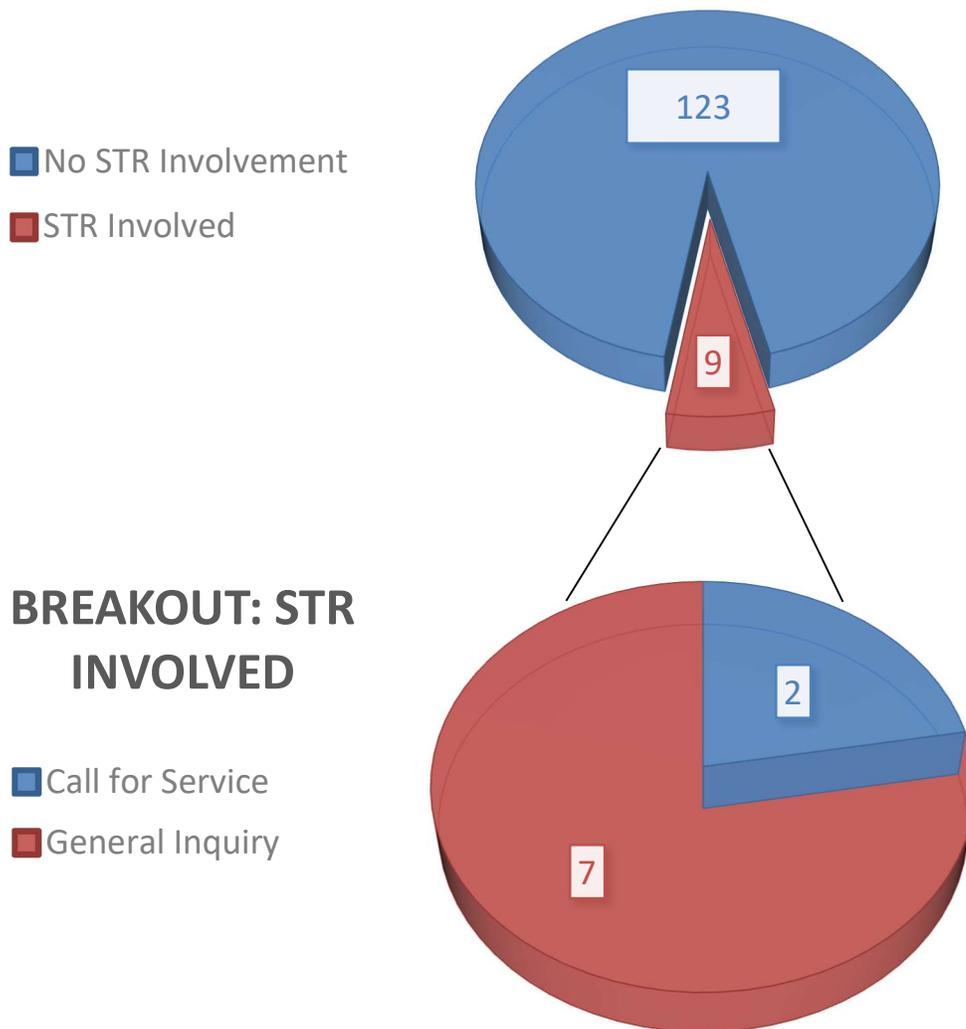
B. Findings and Actions:

	Issue	Action
i.	Cottage rentals / cottage users & visitors	-Quantify concern and review finding with Council *Details presented at Council meeting through visual. -Continue to address any relevant issues (Noise, Open Burning and Fireworks) through appropriate existing by-laws and property owner engagement. *Rental Information Package
ii.	Camping on Crown Land/Water	Collaborate with operations department to physically restrict access to common issue areas. *Kapikog South Rd *Engagement with marinas
iii.	Noise issues	New Noise By-law created covering appropriate noise types and time period. Part I ticketing incorporated to increase enforcement options. *Noise issues were significantly decreased compared to previous years
iv.	Winter use of seasonal roads	Reporting by Operations staff and correspondence/compliance with road users. *Generally one-off encounters
v.	Parking	Work with Associations and Operations Dept to address hotspots & incorporate new signage or physically restrict parking through ditching. New violation stickers to deal with illegally parked vehicles. More work required to establish reporting of boat hotspots.
vi.	Site Alteration and Tree Preservation	Continue to work with Planning Department and consultant on by-law review.
vii.	Reporting issues appropriately (municipal vs non municipal)	Address activities through appropriate by-laws and property owner engagement. Work with partners including MNRF on Crown Land issues and O.P.P reporting through their online tools.

Short Term Rental Interest

As a result of increasing interest towards the subject of Short-Term Rental (STR) properties, By-law Services monitored any interactions with locations identified or suspected as being STR's. The following graphs depict the total number of identified STR occurrences in bylaw inquiries and the further breakdown of the "STR Involved" category into "Call for Service" and "General Inquiry" categories.

TOTAL SHORT-TERM RENTAL ACTIVITY



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Notes:

- Of the nine (9) properties identified as STR's, two (2) were involved in calls for service. One occurrence involved setting off fireworks during prohibited time periods and resulted in enforcement action taken. The other involved a fire reported on crown land (location unknown) and was referred to the MNR.
- The remaining seven (7) inquiries involved STR owners and prospective owners initiating contact first. Their interests included establishing rental best practices for their guests, regulations surrounding rentals, and general questions.

*All STR identified properties were sent the renter information package.

END OF BY-LAW SERVICES 2023 ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Questions and general discussion period with Council to follow.