



Q: What Are Local Improvements & Local Improvement Charges?

A: A local improvement is a new or an extension to an existing municipal water, sewer, or street improvement. A Local Improvement Charge (LIC) is the cost to the property owner receiving benefit from the improvement. Victoria County Council is pursuing an interest in charges to these types of costs and has passed a DRAFT Bylaw.

Q: Who pays a LIC?

A: As drafted, all properties which front a road on which a municipal service would be installed or extended would be levied a LIC. If a new lot is created after the service is installed on that same road in the municipal service, it too would be levied a LIC.

Q: How is a LIC calculated?

A: The LIC can be calculated in several ways: uniform amount for each property, property frontage, property use, area, assessed value, or any combination of two or more methods. In each instance the Municipality would try to calculate the charge in a manner most appropriate for the location.

Q: How are local improvements identified?

A: Local improvements are identified in multiple ways:

- Residents can identify a local improvement they would like the Municipality to consider by petition.
- Municipal councillors have identified several local improvements in previous years that are being considered.
- Municipal staff may also identify local improvements necessary for improved public health and safety or critical for the controlled management of residential or commercial/industrial growth.

Q: Why do I have to pay a LIC when they weren't charged in the past?

A: Municipal systems are becoming more expensive to construct, maintain, operate, and replace. While most of the capital expense is still borne by the Municipality, a relatively small contribution from the property owner who will directly benefit from the improvement is also required. Many municipalities across Nova Scotia have similar requirements.

Q: In a LIC bylaw, would I get an opportunity to comment on a proposed local improvement?

A: Yes. All property owners affected by a local improvement have an opportunity to comment on the proposal, either through a petition or direct communication with the Municipality.



Q: What level of support is required for the Municipality to consider a local improvement?

A: The Municipality would require two-thirds (2/3) of the property owners affected by a proposed local improvement to express support before it will be considered.

Q: If I am in the 1/3 of property owners who do not support the local improvement, would I still have to pay the LIC?

A: Yes. If the Municipality completes a local improvement supported by 2/3 or more of the property owners, all pay the LIC even if they did not support it. The LIC constitutes a first lien on property in the same manner as property taxes under the Assessment Act.

Q: How long would I have to pay a LIC?

A: You can pay the LIC in one lump sum or in equal installments over ten years in the case of water or sewer, and five years in the case of storm water or street improvements. The LIC would be added to your annual tax bill and carries the same 18% interest calculation.

Q: Is the Municipality seeking grants from other levels of government for local improvements?

A: Yes. The Municipality actively monitors and works with its provincial and federal counterparts to identify and secure infrastructure funding.

Q: If a local improvement is completed am I responsible for any other charges or costs associated with the municipal service?

A: Yes. In the case of water services, the property owner is also responsible for a connection fee, the cost of the lateral to the main, a quarterly water bill and an annual fire hydrant charge. If pumping or pressure systems are required to bring the service to any specific location on the property, those costs are also the responsibility of the property owner.

Q: My property doesn't have road frontage, but I would like to connect to municipal water or sewer extended because of a local improvement. Do I have to pay the LIC?

A: Yes. You would also be required to pay the other associated costs mentioned above.

Q: If I subdivide my property after the LIC has been calculated and billed, do I have to pay the LIC on the subdivided properties?

A: Yes. The same LIC is levied on new properties created after the fact.

Q: What happens if I sell my property while still making payments on the LIC?

A: If you sell a property subject to a LIC prior to paying the full amount, just like outstanding property taxes, the entire balance becomes due prior to closing of the sale.