

Appendix E: Other Notes and Observations related to LIP work

Underground/Surface Work Conflicts:

In some cases, there may be a conflict between surface work desired by property owners and underground work planned by the City of Regina (the “City”). The Act specifies that if work is to proceed as a local improvement, it must be completed within two years of the petitioning process. The *Local Improvements Act, 1993* (the “Act”) also states that the City is responsible for maintenance on any work completed as a local improvement for the duration of its life, where its life is defined by an engineering report before construction.

Perception of Ownership:

If a local improvement was completed and paid for by property owners, with a defined life, these owners would be particularly sensitive to any disturbance that would reduce the quality or shorten the functional life of the infrastructure. Owners may feel a sense of ownership over the asset they directly paid to improve, although the asset would remain public property. An important step in reviewing any local improvement petitions would be to determine the risk of a conflict with other proposed work during the lifetime of the proposed asset.

Road Class Differentiation:

Of the cities surveyed, only Edmonton treats different road classes differently for the purposes of the Local Improvement Program (LIP). Edmonton is also the only city surveyed where a LIP is used for the renewal of existing infrastructure. In Edmonton, the City funds 100 per cent of the cost of sidewalk rehabilitation on arterial roads. Sidewalk rehabilitation on collector and local streets is cost shared equally between adjacent owners and the City.

Equity Issues and Socioeconomic Trends:

The representatives of the four cities surveyed that use a LIP did not report that social equity issues were prominent in their communities with respect to the application of LIPs.

None of the cities provide financial assistance to individual low-income property owners specifically for local improvement charges, although each city had various options for deferral of municipal property taxes in general which would also cover special assessments for local improvements. Anecdotally, in many individual cases those who did not support proposed local improvements cited cost as the main reason for their objection.

None of the city representatives surveyed noted any apparent evidence linking the socioeconomic status of a neighbourhood and the popularity of local improvement programs.