



:. ontario library association

Municipal Legislation Review
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
777 Bay St., 13th Floor, Toronto, ON M5G 2E5
municipalreview@ontario.ca

July 24, 2015

Attn: Municipal Legislation Review Committee:

The Ontario Library Association (OLA) represents more than 5,000 members who work in Ontario’s libraries and of these, more than fifty percent are Board members and staff who govern and operate Ontario’s public libraries. On behalf of the membership, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to respond to the consultation on Ontario’s Municipal Legislation Review.

It is the OLA’s mission to support the democratic right of all individuals in Ontario to have free and equitable access to information and as such, we are strongly committed to the fundamental rights of intellectual freedom. We recognize that while there is no intent to modify the Public Libraries Act, we are very aware that the Municipal Act and the Public Libraries Act intersect and connect on various levels. OLA wishes to recommend to the Review Committee that the powers provided for in Public Libraries Act be preserved and any changes as a result of a review of the Municipal Act that may diminish these responsibilities be avoided. The overarching library legislation provides for a consistent standard of service across the province that is flexible and reflective of the individual community it serves.

Specifically, we are recommending that no revisions or changes be made to the inclusion of the powers granted to the public library board as a ‘local board’ in the Municipal Act, including section 216 (3) which stipulates that “a municipality shall not, in accordance with subsection (1), dissolve or change a local board that is, (e) a board as defined in section 1 of the *Public Libraries Act* “

Ontario’s Libraries have been successfully governed and despite economic difficulties have developed innovative strategies to the meet the needs of its residents. We continue to maintain a high level of transparency and accountability to all stakeholders given that libraries are community-driven entities led by impartial and non-partisan boards. The current legislation enables the provision of an exemplary public library service that has a positive impact on the public of Ontario and provides value to the community while ensuring provincial oversight.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Hilton, President

CC: The Hon. Michael Coteau, Minister Tourism, Culture and Sport.

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