



CORPORATE SERVICES

Oxford County Library

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April 16, 2018

The Honourable Daiene Vernile
Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport

The Honourable Charles Sousa
Minister of Finance

The Honourable Eleanor McMahon
President of the Treasury Board & Minister Responsible for Digital Government

Dear Ministers;

On behalf of the Oxford County Library Board and the over 67,000 Oxford County residents we serve, we take this opportunity to thank the Province for the funding increases to public libraries that have been included in the 2018 Ontario Budget: A Plan for Care and Opportunity.

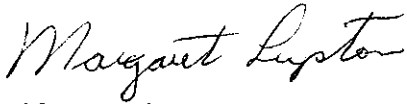
Oxford County Library is an accredited county library system, delivering library services through its 14 branch locations.

Our Board wishes to commend the Province for responding so positively to the OLA/FOPL pre-budget submission and for recognizing the role the public library plays as a community hub. In many of our small rural branch communities, the library is one of the few, if not the only, neutral gathering space. Over the past 10 to 15 years, Oxford County Library has been grateful for the one-time funding opportunities the Province has provided. Those funds have allowed us to introduce new products and services to help address the rapidly evolving needs of our communities, particularly in the area of technology. However, one-time funding cannot create new programs and services that require resources that may prove to be unsustainable through core funding.

We are particularly grateful for the increase to the annual operating grant (PLOG), as this will help ensure the sustainability of innovative programs and services. Funding to support a Provincial Digital Public Library will go a long way towards ensuring that regardless of where one lives in the province, they will have equal access to a core suite of e-resources. Not only does this recognize and address the challenges that rural, northern and First Nations libraries have faced in trying to provide access to electronic resources now so critical to information access and lifelong learning, and thus reduce the digital divide, but it also provides libraries with the ability to move beyond the basics and truly strive to explore innovative resources and services to meet the needs of our many unique communities.

We sincerely thank the Province for these funding increases and the recognition you have thus given of the value and work of the public libraries of Ontario.

Yours sincerely,



Margaret Lupton
Chair, Oxford County Library Board



Lisa Miettinen
CEO/Chief Librarian

cc: Ernie Hardeman, MPP, Oxford