



FEDERATION OF ONTARIO PUBLIC LIBRARIES
Q3 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FRIDAY, SEP 11, 2026
[JOIN VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM](#)

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

DOC 1

3. REGRETS

4. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 22, 2026 Q2 BOARD MEETING

DOC 2

THAT this Board approve as circulated the minutes of the FOPL Board Meeting of May 22, 2026.

6. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

THAT this Board approve as circulated the FOPL Board Agenda for Sep 11, 2026.

7. CHAIR'S REPORT

W. GRECO

8. TREASURER'S REPORT

a. QUARTERLY TREASURER'S REPORT

C. MOSKAU

DOC 3

THAT this Board receive the Treasurer's report as information.

9. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

D. STEVENS

DOC 4

THAT this Board receive the Executive Director's report as information.

10. PREVIOUS BUSINESS

a. MEMBERSHIP FEE REVIEW COMMITTEE

D. STEVENS

DOC 5a/b

b. GOVERNANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

D. STEVENS

DOC 6

c. MEMBER ENGAGEMENT – NEW WEBSITE

D. STEVENS

11. NEW BUSINESS

a. SPATIAL REALITY DEMO WITH GUEST JOHN CLARK

J. CLARK

DOC 7

b. CFLA NOTICE

D. STEVENS

DOC 8

c. ODPL UPDATE

D. STEVENS

DOC 9

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

13. NEXT MEETING:

Q4 – DECEMBER 11, 2026
VIRTUAL

SUPERCONFERENCE MEETING – JANUARY 2027 (JAN 27 – 30)

14. ADJOURNMENT

WE, the public libraries of Ontario acknowledge that the lands now referred to as Ontario have been inhabited by many distinct Nations since time immemorial. The Original Peoples have been and continue to be the traditional custodians of this land. Ontarians, as well as Canadians, need to remember and reaffirm our accountability to these Indigenous Nations, and the lands, resources and waters which nourishes life. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work in the community, on this territory. FOPL acknowledges the lands and treaties upon which our public libraries across Ontario prosper.

Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

Meeting Date: May 22, 2026

Meeting Time: 10:00a.m.

Location: Virtual

Secretary: Dina Stevens, Executive Director/Secretary of the Board

In Attendance: **First Nations Caucus:** Feather Maracle

Large Urban Caucus: Laura Carter, Wayne Greco, Sarah Douglas-Murray, Sarah Vaisler

Small & Medium Caucus: Beverley King, Emma Kinsman, Nadine Williams

Northern Caucus: Chantal Gingras, Marianne LaBerge

Rural Caucus: Jennifer La Chapelle

Toronto Caucus: Paul Ainslie, Moe Hosseini-Ara, Lisa Radha Vohra

Former Library Leaders: Margie Singleton

Regrets: Catherina Moskau, Jodie Delgado, Kathy Fisher, Ben Liu, Susan McGibbon

Absent: None.

FOPL Team: Dina Stevens, Executive Director, Diana Chiavaroli, Administrative Assistant

Prepared By: Diana Chiavaroli, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

The Q2 Board Meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by the Chair.

New board members were welcomed and introductions were made.

2. Land Acknowledgement

3. Regrets

As noted above.

4. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

None.

5. Approval of the Minutes of the February 27, 2026 Board Meeting

Moved by Margie Singleton and seconded by Sarah Vaisler, THAT this Board approve, the minutes of the February 27, 2026 board meeting. CARRIED.

10:09 Paul Ainslie joined the meeting

6. Approval of the Minutes of the April 24, 2026 Post-Annual General Meeting

Moved by Margie Singleton and seconded by Beverley King, THAT this Board approve, the minutes of the FOPL Post-AGM Board Meeting of April 24, 2026. CARRIED.

7. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Lisa Radha Vohra and seconded by Jennifer La Chapelle, THAT this Board approve as circulated, the FOPL Board Agenda of May 22, 2026. CARRIED.

8. Chair's Report

The Chair provided a verbal report, outlining the role of the Chair, and requesting that if there are issues requiring communication with the ED, to raise those to the Chair so the Executive team can communicate with the ED, as per proper governance practices.

Remarks were made regarding the situation in Alberta.

Thanks were given to the ED for the work on this meeting's extensive board package.

Moved by Sarah Vaisler and seconded by Sarah Douglas-Murray, THAT this Board receive the Chair's Report as information. CARRIED.

9. Treasurer's Report

The ED provided a brief summary of the report, particularly noting the recommendations of the auditor on reporting of reserve funds, and reasons for deficits.

Moved by Beverley King and seconded by Lisa Radha Vohra, THAT this Board receive the Treasurer's Report as information. CARRIED.

10. Executive Director's Report

The ED highlighted a few areas of the report. The concerns regarding the situation in Alberta were again discussed, with the parallels to the education system noted.

Moved by Sarah Vaisler and seconded by Margie Singleton, THAT this Board receive the Executive Director's Report as information. CARRIED.

11. Committees and Working Groups

a. Government Relations Working Group

Recommendations for Action – Bill 28 Alberta

10:24 Emma Kinsman joined the meeting

10:31 Chantal Gingras joined the meeting

The ED and committee members summarized the report and recommendations. A brief supportive discussion was had regarding the recommendations.

Moved by Lisa Radha Vohra and seconded by Emma Kinsman THAT the Board support the recommendations recommended by the Government Relations Working Group. CARRIED.

12. Previous Business

a. Circular Materials Update

The ED provided an update on the issue and recommendations for possible options moving forward. The Board discussed the options and the priorities of FOPL. The ED suggested not to do anything on the matter for the time being, and the reissue the survey at the end of the year to reevaluate the situation. The Board was in agreement with this recommendation.

Moved by Margie Singleton and seconded by Sarah Vaisler THAT the Board thank the ED for the research and THAT the Board take no further action at this time. CARRIED.

b. Membership Fee Review

The ED noted a correction to the chart. The document will be revised with the correction, and to include the committee members.

The ED thanked the committee for the work put into these reports and provided a summary of the discussions, recommendations, potential changes to membership fees, and how members would be affected.

10:44 Laura Carter joined the meeting

The ED noted that the elimination of the FNPL sponsorship fees and how this may improve the execution of the partnerships program as partners would be location based rather than financially based. This aspect was supported by the Board. It was noted that the cost that would be incurred by FOPL should still be calculated and recorded in the financial statements. A letter for FNPLs should also be drafted and reviewed by the ILPWG to explain the changes to the fee structure and the partnership program.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the report. There was general consensus that the population data should be collected from the Annual Survey of Public Libraries rather than the Census, as it is more frequent, and more representative of First Nations communities, and that the source of population data be communicated to members. The intent of changing membership fee was also discussed with a request for clarity. There were also questions as to the policy on changing membership fees, how members are notified, and how the changes are rolled out. It was recommended that any members who would see a fee increase be provided with an advocacy package they could bring to their boards. It was also noted that the fourth recommendation regarding long term incremental increases be eliminated.

Overall, it was agreed that there is not currently enough information to approve any changes at this time. The ED noted this is not an urgent issue and can be revisited once more information is available. It was recommended that this return to the working group to restructure the changes using the ASPL data, with some alteration to fee changes, and with an effective date of implementation.

Moved by Sarah Vaisler and seconded by Margie Singleton THAT the matter is referred back to the Working Group. CARRIED.

c. Member Engagement Plan

The ED noted the document will be updated to include the committee members.

The ED provided a summary of the report, highlighting changes and improvements to the Member Engagement Plan.

The Board discussed concerns regarding duplicative work with other organisations, particularly regarding the policy database. It was noted that OLS already provides this service, and that policy databases are difficult to maintain and update.

Concerns regarding the financial impact of these changes were raised. The ED noted that all changes with financial costs would be implemented through a cost-recovery model.

The mentorship program was discussed and generally supported with the clarification that this program would be specifically focused on advocacy and only for library CEO's or equivalent.

Moved by Sarah Vaisler and seconded by Lisa Radha Vohra that the Member Engagement Plan be amended to remove the policy database. CARRIED.

Moved by Jennifer La Chapelle and seconded by Moe Hosseini-Ara THAT the Board approve the Member Engagement Plan, as amended. CARRIED.

Moved by Sarah Vaisler and seconded by Beverley King, THAT the Board approve the proposed Advocacy Mentorship Program for implementation in 2026.

It was requested to review 13b prior to 13a due to timing.

13. New Business

b. Safety and Security Campaign Feedback and Review

The ED summarized the report and recommendations.

There was a lengthy discussion focused on some of the phrasing in the messaging. The ED noted that the revised messaging has been distributed to certain groups and feedback was supportive. The ED also noted that the messaging was developed by Council Public Affairs and that this is their recommendation as well.

Further discussion focused on the role of the Board, and what level of approval is required.

12:15 Moe Hosseini-Ara left the meeting

Moved by Sarah Vaisler and seconded by Beverley King THAT the Board approve a Safety and Security campaign that prioritizes working with all levels of government to develop a province-wide strategy to address the growing crises of mental health challenges, addiction, and homelessness to alleviate its impacts on public libraries. CARRIED.

12:20 The meeting was paused for a break

12:44 The meeting resumed

a. Caucus Meetings Feedback

The ED reviewed how the caucus meetings were done differently this year and summarized the feedback and recommendations. A few suggestions were made for caucus meetings moving forward. It was noted that the First Nations Caucus meeting will occur at the Spring Gathering next week.

1:00 Feather Maracle left the meeting

Moved by Sarah Vaisler and seconded by Sarah Douglas-Murray THAT the Board receive the report as information. CARRIED.

c. Advocacy Priorities Review

The ED reviewed the report and recommendations. Advocacy priorities were discussed by the Board.

Moved by Beverley King and seconded by Lisa Radha Vohra THAT the Board support recommendations #1 and #2 in the report. CARRIED.

The ED made a request for Board Members to respond to a previous email regarding incident reports at libraries.

d. Advocacy Policy

The ED reviewed the previous FOPL Advocacy Policy, what other organizations do, and recommendations for FOPL. Questions were raised as to the need for such a policy. The ED clarified that some caucus feedback requested how advocacy is decided on and led to a need for a formal document. Examples were provided.

There was a request to defer this discussion to after 13e.

e. Governance Review

The ED summarized the need for a governance review and recommendations. The Board agreed the review is a good idea. It was noted that this would be a large project with a significant timeline and that an Advocacy document should be done as a part of the work. The ED identified the additional work will require an increase to the ED's working hours.

Moved by Beverley King and seconded by Sarah Vaisler THAT the Board approve the initiation of a comprehensive governance review process;
AND THAT the Board establish a Governance Review Committee comprised of Board members and admin support to oversee the review and development of a governance framework
AND THAT the Governance Review Committee report back to the Board with a proposed work plan, timeline, and identified governance priorities for consideration. CARRIED.

The consensus on the timeline of reporting back to the Board was an update at the Q3 meeting, and a report at the Q4 meeting.
The committee will be created via email.

13d was deferred to the Governance Review Committee with a discussion at the Q3 meeting specifically on the Advocacy Policy.

2:00 Emma Kinsman left the meeting

14. Announcements

The ED welcomed new Board members who joined after the earlier greeting.

15. Next Meeting

Q3 – Friday September 11, 2026, 10:00am

The Sept Q3 board meeting is hybrid with location TBD – Milton PL was offered. Confirmation will be provided by email.

16. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:06.

Wayne Greco, Chair

Dina Stevens, Board Secretary

Treasurer's Report

Report To: The FOPL Board
Prepared by: Dina Stevens on behalf of Catherina Moskau
Prepared on: August 26, 2026

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the FOPL Board receive this report as information for the period ending August 15, 2026

BACKGROUND

This report covers the period January 1, 2026 to August 15, 2026 to present finances to date within the current fiscal year. This reflects an unaudited representation of FOPL finances.

REPORT

Financial Reports (attached):

- Comparative Income Statement, known as “Budget vs. Actuals”: Provides FOPL’s operating revenue and expenditures from January 1, 2026 to August 15, 2026.
- Balance Sheet: Provides information on FOPL’s full financial situation as of August 15, 2026 including accounts and investments.

FINANCIAL UPDATES

- Budget is on track for Q3. Budget line 5205 CELUPL appears overspent but budget will be reallocated from 5730 as per conversation with FOPL Executive.

Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY26_P&L - FY26 P&L

January - December 2026

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Income				
4000 Revenue				
4010 Sponsorships		0.00	0.00	
4015 Gifts & Donations	2,078.33	0.00	2,078.33	
4020 Membership Fees	266,200.00	277,000.00	-10,800.00	96.10 %
4030 Grants		0.00	0.00	
4040 Sale of Material		0.00	0.00	
4050 Other Revenues	4,036.92	4,000.00	36.92	100.92 %
4051 Special Peer Comparisons Fees		0.00	0.00	
4061 Library Training & Development Fees		0.00	0.00	
4070 Interest Income	1,623.57	2,000.00	-376.43	81.18 %
Total 4000 Revenue	273,938.82	283,000.00	-9,061.18	96.80 %
Total Income	\$273,938.82	\$283,000.00	\$ -9,061.18	96.80 %
GROSS PROFIT	\$273,938.82	\$283,000.00	\$ -9,061.18	96.80 %
Expenses				
5050 Office Consultants				
5055 Executive Director	73,263.87	125,000.00	-51,736.13	58.61 %
5060 Administrative Assistant	15,372.90	31,500.00	-16,127.10	48.80 %
5065 Marketing & Social Media		0.00	0.00	
Total 5050 Office Consultants	88,636.77	156,500.00	-67,863.23	56.64 %
5100 Administrative Expenses				
5110 Admin Meeting		200.00	-200.00	
5115 Admin Travel	5,459.05	14,000.00	-8,540.95	38.99 %
5120 Admin Professional Development		0.00	0.00	
Total 5100 Administrative Expenses	5,459.05	14,200.00	-8,740.95	38.44 %
5155 Board Expenses				
5160 Board Travel	853.12	6,000.00	-5,146.88	14.22 %
5165 Board Meeting	553.60	2,500.00	-1,946.40	22.14 %
5170 Board Professional Development		0.00	0.00	
5175 Board Recruitment		0.00	0.00	
5180 Annual General Meeting		0.00	0.00	
5185 Legal		0.00	0.00	
5190 Board Appreciation	114.38	1,000.00	-885.62	11.44 %
Total 5155 Board Expenses	1,521.10	9,500.00	-7,978.90	16.01 %
5200 Committee Work				
5205 CELUPL	1,643.03	500.00	1,143.03	328.61 %
5210 Working Groups		0.00	0.00	
Total 5200 Committee Work	1,643.03	500.00	1,143.03	328.61 %
5250 Operational Expenses				
5255 General Office Supplies	105.78	250.00	-144.22	42.31 %
5260 Postage & Courier	650.67	1,200.00	-549.33	54.22 %
5265 Photocopying Supplies		0.00	0.00	
5270 Printing	1,358.58	2,000.00	-641.42	67.93 %
5275 Telephone	514.22	1,000.00	-485.78	51.42 %
5280 Telecommunication		0.00	0.00	
5285 Insurance (DS)	1,814.40	2,000.00	-185.60	90.72 %

Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY26_P&L - FY26 P&L

January - December 2026

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
5290 FOPL Memberships	2,400.00	3,700.00	-1,300.00	64.86 %
5295 Subscriptions		0.00	0.00	
Total 5250 Operational Expenses	6,843.65	10,150.00	-3,306.35	67.43 %
5300 Furniture and Equipment				
5310 Furniture		0.00	0.00	
5315 Equipment		500.00	-500.00	
5320 Information Technology Hardware	376.82	1,000.00	-623.18	37.68 %
5325 Information Technology Software	1,394.30	1,700.00	-305.70	82.02 %
Total 5300 Furniture and Equipment	1,771.12	3,200.00	-1,428.88	55.35 %
5500 Finance				
5510 Bank Charges & Interest	187.99	600.00	-412.01	31.33 %
5511 5511 QuickBooks Payments Fees	191.76	300.00	-108.24	63.92 %
5515 Credit Card Charges	75.00	100.00	-25.00	75.00 %
5520 Audit	8,475.00	8,200.00	275.00	103.35 %
5525 Services & Consultants		500.00	-500.00	
Total 5500 Finance	8,929.75	9,700.00	-770.25	92.06 %
5600 Marketing and Promotions				
5610 Conferences & Exhibitions	10,169.85	18,000.00	-7,830.15	56.50 %
5615 Advertising & Promotions	100.00	500.00	-400.00	20.00 %
5620 Special Events		0.00	0.00	
5625 Publications & Printing		500.00	-500.00	
5635 Presentation Supplies	435.94	500.00	-64.06	87.19 %
5640 Indigenous Language Translation		3,000.00	-3,000.00	
5641 French Language Translation		1,000.00	-1,000.00	
5645 Website	1,208.79	2,000.00	-791.21	60.44 %
Total 5600 Marketing and Promotions	11,914.58	25,500.00	-13,585.42	46.72 %
5700 Programs and Projects				
5710 Contract Services	10,297.13	20,000.00	-9,702.87	51.49 %
5715 Research & Development		600.00	-600.00	
5720 Statistician Fees		0.00	0.00	
5725 Library Member Training		0.00	0.00	
5730 Working Groups - 1	116.34	2,000.00	-1,883.66	5.82 %
5735 Legal Opinions		0.00	0.00	
5740 Public Relations Services	13,698.63	60,000.00	-46,301.37	22.83 %
5990 Write-off		0.00	0.00	
Total 5700 Programs and Projects	24,112.10	82,600.00	-58,487.90	29.19 %
5950 UNKOWN EXPENSE		0.00	0.00	
Meals and entertainment	6.83		6.83	
Total Expenses	\$150,837.98	\$311,850.00	\$ -161,012.02	48.37 %
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$123,100.84	\$ -28,850.00	\$151,950.84	-426.69 %
Other Expenses				
5000 Payroll Expenses				
5010 Part-Time Permanent Salaries		0.00	0.00	
5020 Contract & Temporary Staff		0.00	0.00	
5025 EI Expense		0.00	0.00	
5030 CPP Expense		0.00	0.00	

Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY26_P&L - FY26 P&L

January - December 2026

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Total 5000 Payroll Expenses		0.00	0.00	
Total Other Expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
NET OTHER INCOME	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
NET INCOME	\$123,100.84	\$ -28,850.00	\$151,950.84	-426.69 %

Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

Balance Sheet
As of Aug 15, 2026

	Total
Assets	
Current Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalent	
1010 Scotia Chequing Account	\$154,734.66
1011 Visa Holding Cash Investment Account Scotia	\$10,000.00
1020 Scotia Savings Account	\$148,897.02
Undeposited Funds	\$0.00
Total for Cash and Cash Equivalent	\$313,631.68
Accounts Receivable (A/R)	
Accounts Receivable	\$975.00
Total for Accounts Receivable (A/R)	\$975.00
1040 Payroll Clearing	\$0.00
1110 Investments	\$0.00
1200 Accounts Receivable - History	-\$75.00
1201 Accounts Receivable Adjustments	\$0.00
1210 Interest Receivable	\$0.00
1320 Prepaid Expenses - 1	\$4,499.58
Total for Current Assets	\$319,031.26
Total for Assets	\$319,031.26
Liabilities and Equity	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable (A/P)	
Accounts Payable	\$219.84
Total for Accounts Payable (A/P)	\$219.84
Credit Cards	
2021 Visa 9458	\$788.36
Total for Credit Cards	\$788.36
2011 Accounts Payable Adjustments	\$0.00
2015 Accrued Liabilities	\$6,999.74
2110 EI Payable	\$0.00
2120 CPP Payable	\$0.00
2130 Federal Income Tax Payable	\$0.00
2140 Federal Tax 2016 Adjustment	\$0.00
2210 Vacation Payable	\$0.00
2320 GST Paid on Purchases	\$0.00
2610 Deferred Revenue	\$450.00
Total for Current Liabilities	\$8,457.94
Total for Liabilities	\$8,457.94
Equity	
3500 Opening Balance	\$377.00
3550 Retained Earnings - Previous Year	-\$4,525.94
Retained Earnings	\$191,592.82
Profit for the year	\$123,129.44
Total for Equity	\$310,573.32
Total for Liabilities and Equity	\$319,031.26

Executive Director's Report

Report to: The FOPL Board
Prepared by: Dina Stevens, Executive Director
Prepared on: September 3, 2026

Recommendation

THAT the FOPL board receive this report as information.

Report

Since the last Board meeting, FOPL's work has focused heavily on advocacy, municipal engagement, intellectual freedom and local library governance. With Ontario's municipal elections approaching, increasing concern about the centralization of local decision-making, and developments surrounding Alberta's Bill 28, FOPL has adjusted its advocacy activities to respond to the changing political environment.

ADVOCACY & LOCAL GOVERNANCE

FOPL has launched a new 2026 advocacy campaign focused on the importance of strong local public library governance, local decision-making and intellectual freedom. A new advocacy postcard, "Local Libraries. Local Decisions.", was developed for municipal audiences and distributed at the AMO Conference. The resource emphasizes that local library boards and municipal leaders understand their communities best and that decisions about library services should remain local, transparent and accountable. It also connects strong library governance directly to intellectual freedom, access to diverse perspectives and the ability of libraries to respond to local community needs. This campaign will continue through the municipal election period and complements FOPL's municipal election resources, fall information sessions and Ontario Public Library Week activities.

AMO CONFERENCE

FOPL attended the 2026 AMO Conference in Ottawa with a booth in the tradeshow. A major feature of the booth was our "dotmocracy" exercise, asking delegates: *"What do you think is the most important library service to your community?"* The exercise generated significant engagement and became an effective conversation starter about how municipalities perceive the role of their libraries. Unexpectedly, the exercise was more difficult for some and required considerable deliberation as they only had 3 dots to distribute,

leading to insightful questions and discoveries. The results were particularly interesting. Rather than demonstrating that municipal leaders see one singular purpose for libraries, the exercise showed recognition of the breadth of services libraries provide and that they are all important.

More importantly, the activity created opportunities for substantive conversations about how libraries contribute to municipal priorities. Housing was overwhelmingly one of the dominant issues discussed throughout AMO, both in formal sessions and informal conversations. At the same time, municipal representatives expressed concerns about the erosion of local decision-making, Strong Mayor powers and increasing provincial intervention in municipal affairs. The approaching municipal election was also an important backdrop to the conference. FOPL's message was that libraries should not simply be viewed as another municipal service or budget line: libraries are community partners that can help municipalities achieve their goals and respond to the challenges they are facing. The election provides an important opportunity for libraries to build these relationships with both returning and prospective municipal leaders.





GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Following changes within the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming, FOPL and OLA jointly reached out to Hon. Doug Downey, who assumed responsibility for the Ministry on an interim basis, to congratulate him on the appointment and request an introductory meeting. The letter highlighted the reach of Ontario's public libraries and identified the Ontario Digital Public Library as a priority opportunity for collaboration with the Province. FOPL has also reached out to the new Assistant Deputy Minister to establish an early relationship and ensure continuity with Ministry staff.

We have decided to sunset the formal discussion phase and the bulk of the public-facing component of the Safety & Security campaign, having accomplished the majority of our goals with very successful stakeholder engagement meetings. The issues identified through this work—including homelessness, mental health, addictions, staff safety and the increasing social-service pressures being experienced by public libraries—remain significant. However, the political environment has changed considerably since the campaign was developed.



Increasing provincial centralization of governance, the rapidly evolving situation surrounding Alberta's Bill 28, concerns about intellectual freedom and local decision-making, and the approaching Ontario municipal elections have created a need to concentrate FOPL's immediate advocacy capacity on strong local governance, intellectual freedom and municipal engagement. Rather than continuing with a large public-facing campaign focused specifically on safety and security, FOPL has partnered with Toronto Public Library on a media initiative planned for the spring. This initiative will take a positive approach, focusing on the extraordinary work public libraries are doing to support their communities and the increasingly complex roles libraries are being asked to play. This approach allows FOPL to continue raising awareness of the underlying pressures identified through the Safety & Security campaign while positioning libraries positively as essential community infrastructure and partners in addressing broader social challenges.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS RESOURCE

FOPL and OLA have developed a new municipal elections advocacy resource to support Ontario public libraries in engaging candidates during the 2026 municipal election. The resource provides practical talking points and questions that library leaders, trustees, staff and supporters can use when speaking with candidates about the role and value of public libraries. The resource also incorporates national messaging developed by the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA). This alignment provides Ontario libraries with consistent messaging while connecting local advocacy to the broader Canadian library sector. FOPL will continue to encourage members to use these resources throughout the election period and to proactively build relationships with candidates before the election.

FALL INFORMATION SESSIONS

FOPL will host two information sessions this fall addressing issues that are becoming increasingly relevant to Ontario public libraries. The first will feature Jim Turk of the Centre for Free Expression and will examine Alberta's Bill 28, its implications for public libraries and, importantly, preventative measures Ontario libraries can take to protect intellectual freedom, strong governance and independent decision-making before similar challenges emerge in Ontario. The second session will feature Professor and Essex County Councillor Bill Irwin and will examine the broader erosion of local government and local decision-making in Ontario and what these trends could mean for public libraries and their governing boards.

ONTARIO PUBLIC LIBRARY WEEK ROADSHOW

FOPL will once again partner with OLA for an Ontario Public Library Week Roadshow in October. Taking place immediately before Ontario's municipal elections, the timing provides an important opportunity to celebrate public libraries while increasing their visibility with local candidates, elected officials and community leaders.



The Roadshow will visit Oakville, Guelph, Hamilton, Elgin County, St. Thomas, Bruce County, Brantford and Oxford County. Libraries will be encouraged to invite municipal candidates and use the events as opportunities to demonstrate firsthand the breadth of services libraries provide and their connection to municipal priorities.

NEW FOPL WEBSITE

FOPL's new website is now live! The redevelopment provides an opportunity to improve how members access FOPL resources, advocacy materials, research, news and organizational information. It will also strengthen FOPL's public-facing communications and provide a more effective platform for sharing the organization's advocacy work. We continue to work with the developer behind the scenes on the second phase of our plans; the newsletter function, payment processing and event registration. The new website will increasingly serve as the central location for FOPL advocacy resources, including materials related to municipal elections, local governance and intellectual freedom.

LOOKING AHEAD

The coming months represent an important period for FOPL's advocacy work. The municipal election provides an opportunity to strengthen relationships between libraries and their municipalities, while developments elsewhere in Canada demonstrate the importance of proactively protecting local library governance and intellectual freedom. FOPL's fall activities are therefore intentionally interconnected: the AMO Conference began conversations with municipal leaders; the municipal elections resource provides members with practical tools; the fall information sessions will build sector awareness and preparedness; and the Ontario Public Library Week Roadshow will bring the message directly into communities immediately before voters go to the polls.

Looking forward to seeing you all in Milton.

Kind Regards,

Dina Stevens, MLIS
Executive Director

LOCAL LIBRARIES. LOCAL DECISIONS.

YOUR COMMUNITY DESERVES A STRONG PUBLIC LIBRARY

As a municipal leader, you help ensure every resident has equitable access to literacy, knowledge, and lifelong learning.



Libraries help municipalities:

- ✓ Improve literacy & lifelong learning
- ✓ Support workforce development
- ✓ Welcome newcomers
- ✓ Bridge the digital divide
- ✓ Support children, youth & families
- ✓ Strengthen community well-being
- ✓ Connect residents to community services
- ✓ Preserve local history
- ✓ Strengthen local democracy

Local library boards and municipal leaders understand their communities best. Decisions about library services should remain **local, transparent, and accountable**.

Your support protects every resident's right to explore ideas freely.

STRONG LIBRARY BOARDS PROTECT STRONG LOCAL DEMOCRACY.

YOUR LIBRARY. YOUR CHOICE.

FREEDOM TO READ



COMMUNITIES ARE UNIQUE

The people who know your community best are the people who live and work in it.

LOCAL BOARDS KNOW LOCAL NEEDS

Governed by the Public Libraries Act (PLA), public library boards ensure services reflect community needs—not changing political priorities.

RESIDENTS BENEFIT FROM TRUSTED LIBRARIES

Collections are guided by policies that respond to the community and are developed by qualified library professionals.

ACCESS FOR ALL

Professional, policy-based library governance helps ensure that everyone in your community can access information, ideas, and diverse perspectives.

**PROTECT LOCAL DECISION-MAKING. PROTECT PUBLIC LIBRARIES.
PROTECT INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM.**

August 10, 2026

Hon. Doug Downey

Attorney General of Ontario

Responsible for the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming on an interim basis

McMurtry-Scott Building, 11th Floor, 720 Bay St.

Toronto, ON M7A 2S9

Sent by email: doug.downey@pc.ola.org

Dear Minister Downey,

**RE: Ontario Library Association & Federation of Ontario Public Libraries –
Congratulations & Meeting Request**

On behalf of the Ontario Library Association (OLA) and the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL), we would like to extend our sincere congratulations on your appointment as Ontario's Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming. Together, our associations have built a strong working relationship with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming and we look forward to the opportunity to work with you and your office to support Ontario's public libraries and the communities we serve.

OLA and FOPL represent Ontario's public library sector, including public library boards, library workers, and systems serving communities across the province. Public libraries are Ontario's farthest-reaching and most cost-effective public resource. They support Ontarians in communities of all sizes, including small, rural, northern, as well as in First Nations, providing access to information, technology, lifelong learning, workforce supports, and trusted public spaces.

We would like to request a meeting with you at your earliest availability to share more insight into the impact of public libraries across Ontario, and how OLA and FOPL can work with the Ontario Government to strengthen access to public library services across Ontario. Our priority initiative – the Ontario Digital Public Library (ODPL) – offers a powerful opportunity to give all Ontarians access to a consistent set of high-quality e-learning & online resources through their local public library, at a fraction of the cost, making these resources available to millions of Ontarians for the first time.

We have enclosed a briefing note for your prior review and look forward to an introductory meeting. We will follow-up with your office to coordinate and confirm availability.

Sincerely,



Michelle Arbuckle
Executive Director,
Ontario Library Association |
www.accessola.com
marbuckle@accessola.com



Dina Stevens
Executive Director,
Federation of Ontario Public Libraries |
www.fopl.ca
dinastevens@fopl.ca

Ontario Library Association / Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

The Ontario Library Association (OLA) is the oldest continually operating non-profit library association in Canada, with over 3,500 members comprised of library staff and supporters from public, school, academic, and special libraries.

The Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL) represents 237 public library systems in Ontario, including 37 Public Libraries on Reserves.

Together, OLA & FOPL are committed to ensuring that libraries can continue to play a critical role in the social, educational, cultural and economic success of our communities and schools.

Talking Points: Intellectual Freedom and Public Library Board Governance

2026 Ontario Municipal Elections

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA-FCAB) developed the following talking points on intellectual freedom and public library board governance, which the Ontario Library Association (OLA) and Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL) are sharing as a resource. These talking points are intended for library workers and allies to use in conversations with election candidates during the municipal election season.

Municipal elections are an important opportunity to reinforce:

- The role of public libraries in providing communities with access to a diversity of knowledge, perspectives, and viewpoints;
- The importance of library boards being able to fulfill their responsibilities independently; and
- The expertise of library staff in selecting, managing, and providing access to information.

Elevator Pitch

It's important that people in every community get to make their own choices about what they read and watch, and that those choices are private. I'm concerned about what the Alberta government is doing and don't want the same thing to happen here. There's no reason for the government to be involved in people's reading choices in Canada. Every censor calls themselves a protector, but make no mistake, this is censorship.

Key Talking Points

The Alberta government is interfering with how libraries operate by imposing province-wide restrictions on how people access library materials. We want to make sure this doesn't spread to other provinces and that individuals have the freedom to read what they choose.

Public libraries have local boards made up of community members, who decide with library staff on policy about what is available for borrowing and who can borrow it, thinking about their local community's diverse needs and interests and library ethics.



We want to make sure that in our province, public libraries continue to be locally governed and operated, and that people can make their own choices about what they read. Local library boards and municipal leaders know their communities best.

Public libraries have been enabling informed and engaged communities in Canada for more than 150 years through providing people with the freedom to read what they choose. Libraries are trusted organizations that support democracy.

If you are elected, we ask you to commit publicly to keeping public libraries local and to protecting every Canadian's freedom to read and watch what they choose.

Membership Fee Review

Report To: The FOPL Board
Prepared by: Dina Stevens
Prepared on: August 27, 2026
Members: Jodie Delgado
Sarah Douglas-Murray
Beverley King
Jennifer La Chapelle
Sarah Vaisler
Lisa Radha Vohra
Dina Stevens (Ex Officio)

BACKGROUND

At the February 27, 2026 Q1 Board Meeting, the Board directed a review of FOPL's membership fee structure in response to affordability concerns, membership retention and non-renewal trends, and the need to ensure that fees remain equitable and financially sustainable. A committee was established to review the fee model alongside broader membership engagement considerations.

At the May 2026 Board Meeting, the committee presented an initial redistributed fee-band model. The Board requested further refinement and clearer rationale for any changes in revenue. The committee subsequently reconvened to review the fee bands in greater detail, address significant jumps between population categories, consider treatment of county and donating libraries, and develop an implementation approach for Board consideration in September.

FURTHER COMMITTEE WORK

The committee confirmed that Annual Survey of Public Libraries (ASPL) population data will be the source used to assign libraries to fee bands. Because the Ministry pre-populates these figures, the data provides a consistent basis for membership fees. Fee bands will align with the existing ASPL population bands where practical and will be reviewed annually; when a library's population crosses a threshold, the applicable fee will change with the next membership year.

The most significant concerns in the previous model were large jumps between adjacent bands. In particular, the move from \$150 to \$900 for smaller libraries and from \$900 to approximately \$2,000 around the 30,000 population threshold were considered difficult to absorb within municipal budget cycles. The former 100,000–250,000 band was also considered too broad to fairly reflect the very different sizes and operating contexts of libraries within that range. Additional bands and revised rates were therefore introduced to create a more gradual progression.

The proposed redistributed fee band model and supporting analysis are attached for Board review and consideration. Please note that the revised fee structure results in an overall decrease in revenue by

\$3825. While a minimal budget increase was preferred by the committee the current recommendation is for the decrease to be reviewed again in two years with a current focus on increasing membership. A breakeven or minimal increase could be achieved by increasing the county library fee which sits outside of the bands and currently uses 2021 census population data for calculating fees.

PROPOSED REVISED FEE STRUCTURE

Population Band	Old Fee	New Fee	Variance
First Nations Public Libraries (sponsored)	50	0	-50
0 – 5000	75	75	0
5001 – 15,000	150	150	0
15,001 – 20,000	900	500	-400
20,001 – 30,000	900	900	0
30,001 – 40,000	2000	1600	-400
40,001 – 50,000	2000	2100	+100
50,001 – 75,000	3250	3000	-250
75,001 – 100,000	3250	3500	+250
100,001 – 150,000	5500	4500	-1000
150,001 – 175,000	5500	5250	-250
175,000 – 250, 000	5500	6000	+500
250,001 – 500,000	7500	7500	0
500,001 – 2,000,000	10,000	10,000	0
2 million +	17,500	17,500	0
County Libraries	Custom	No change	0
Former Library Leaders	50	50	0
Association Members	500	500	0

The committee agreed that the highest population bands should remain at their current fee levels rather than applying the increases included in the May proposal. The new \$500 tier for libraries between 10,000 and 20,000 population and the additional bands between 100,000 and 250,000 are intended to smooth the largest fee jumps and better reflect differences among library systems.

OTHER MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

County libraries: The existing county methodology will be retained. County fees will continue to be calculated by applying the fee bands to the individual municipalities served by the county, excluding municipalities with their own independent library systems. Staff will recalculate county fees using the new bands before final member communication. The committee did not support moving counties to a straight total-population calculation because of the significant retention risk and the distinct two-tier funding context of county systems.

Donating libraries: Libraries that currently make a donation rather than paying the full membership fee will continue to be accepted as part of FOPL's relationship-building approach. They will be shown within the Association Membership category on the membership list so that their status is clearly distinguished from full membership. Donating libraries receive general update communications but do not receive voting rights, AGM access, Board or working group eligibility, or access to member-only resources.

First Nations Public Libraries: The \$50 sponsorship fee currently paid by sponsoring libraries will be eliminated. First Nations Public Libraries will continue to receive FOPL membership at no charge. The approximately \$3,000 reduction in sponsorship revenue is incorporated into the overall financial impact of the revised model.

Association members: The current \$500 association membership fee has not changed in many years. The committee did not reach a final recommendation on changing this rate, and it is therefore not included in the proposed fee changes at this time.

IMPLEMENTATION

If approved, the revised fee structure will take effect for the 2028 membership year. The 2027 membership invoices will include advance notice of the change so libraries have sufficient time to incorporate the new rate into their municipal budget planning. Libraries whose fees decrease under the new structure will be offered the option to voluntarily maintain their current fee, with the difference directed to FOPL reserves.

Fee assignments will be updated annually using ASPL population data. Members will be advised that their own ASPL reporting determines the population figure used for the fee structure and that crossing a population threshold will result in the applicable fee band being used for the following membership year.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the board approve the revised fee structure as outlined in this report which includes additional fee band categories;

AND All FNPL are provided FOPL membership to align with both the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People.

AND Band placement is based on ASPL posted population and updated yearly. New band notices will be shared in 2027 and billed in 2028.

AND Libraries who choose to donate fees will be considered in the same class as Association Members and will not participate in FOPL meetings, governance, or receive member benefits.

AND Association membership fees will remain as is and will be reconsidered in a future review post governance review.

Governance Review Committee

Report To: The FOPL Board
Prepared by: Dina Stevens
Prepared on: August 27, 2026
Members: Laura Carter
Wayne Greco
Jennifer La Chapelle
Lisa Radha Vohra
Dina Stevens (Ex Officio)

BACKGROUND

As part of FOPL's ongoing work to strengthen organizational governance, the Board established a Governance Review Committee to examine FOPL's existing governance framework, identify gaps in current policies and procedures, and recommend areas for further development.

The Committee held an initial meeting to review FOPL's existing governance documents and discuss the appropriate scope of the review. The discussion identified that the work will include a combination of governance policies and operational procedures. The Governance Review Committee will focus primarily on policies requiring Board consideration and approval, while the Executive Director will develop and update operational procedures that support those policies.

A key principle guiding this work will be a clearer distinction between governance and operations. Board meetings should focus on governance, strategic oversight and organizational accountability, while committees and working groups may undertake more detailed operational, advisory or project-based work within mandates established by the Board. Given the breadth of the proposed review, the Committee recommends recruiting one or two additional members before work begins.

SCOPE OF GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Committee identified several areas requiring review, development or clarification.

A. Board Structure

The Committee recommends reviewing FOPL's current Board structure, including:

- the appropriate overall size of the Board;
- the number of representatives allocated to each caucus;
- whether Board representation should continue to be limited to trustees or whether CEOs may serve where trustee representatives cannot be recruited;
- Board quorum requirements;
- the appropriate number and frequency of Board meetings each year; and
- the distinction between matters appropriately addressed by the Board and matters delegated to committees, working groups or staff.

Any recommendations arising from this work that require amendments to FOPL's bylaws will be incorporated into a comprehensive bylaw review following completion of the governance review.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

FOPL has already developed individual Board member role descriptions, including conflict-of-interest expectations. Additional work is required to establish a collective statement defining the role, responsibilities and scope of the Board as a whole. This should clearly establish the Board's governance role and its responsibilities for strategic direction, oversight, organizational accountability and policy.

The governance framework also requires:

- a Board meeting management policy or framework;
- role descriptions for the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer; and
- a revised Executive Director performance evaluation process to detail responsibilities and timeline

C. Committees and Working Groups

FOPL currently has Terms of Reference for many individual committees and working groups, as well as a general Terms of Reference template. However, there is no overarching policy establishing the purpose, authority, accountability and operation of committees and working groups.

The Committee recommends developing an overall Committee and Working Group Policy that:

- defines the purpose and role of committees, working groups and task forces;
- establishes their relationship and accountability to the Board;
- distinguishes governance responsibilities from operational and project-based work;
- establishes expectations for Terms of Reference, membership, reporting and review;
- identifies FOPL's standing committees and working groups; and
- provides a process for creating or dissolving groups as organizational needs change.

As part of this work, the Committee will review the current list of committees and working groups to determine whether all existing groups remain necessary and whether additional groups should be established. Terms of Reference for the Executive Committee are also required.

GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The Committee reviewed the current governance framework and identified the following areas for completion or further development:

Governance Area	Current Status / Work Required
1. Strategic Direction	Strategic Plan – complete; ED Workplan/Action Plan – operational
2. Governance Framework	Collective Roles and Responsibilities of the Board – needed
	Individual Board Member Responsibilities/Conflict of Interest – complete
	Board Meeting Management – needed
	General Terms of Reference Template – complete
	Executive Committee Terms of Reference – needed
	Government Relations/Advocacy Working Group TOR – complete
	Marketing Working Group TOR – complete
	Research and Development Working Group TOR – complete
	CELUPL TOR – complete
	French Translation Working Group TOR – complete
	Indigenous Libraries Partnership Working Group TOR – complete
	Committee and Working Group Policy – needed
	Chair Role – needed
	Vice-Chair Role – needed
	Secretary Role – needed
	Treasurer Role – needed
	Board Member Recognition – complete
3. Financial Control	Finance Policy – complete
4. Management Oversight	Executive Director Job Description – complete
	Executive Director Performance Evaluation Process – revision needed
5. Member Services	Sharing Products/Resources with Non-Members Policy – needed
	Membership Fee Refund Policy – needed
	Donating Members Policy – needed
6. Advocacy, Engagement and External Relations	Advocacy Plan/Policy – needed
	Member Engagement Plan – complete
	Position Statements – existing statements to be catalogued and incorporated into framework
7. Governance Maintenance	Policy and Procedure Review Cycle – needed
	Comprehensive Bylaw Review – to follow completion of governance review

The governance framework should also establish a regular review cycle so that policies, procedures, Terms of Reference and related governance documents are reviewed and updated on a scheduled basis rather than only when an issue arises.

TIMELINE AND IMPLEMENTATION

Given the scope of the work and other organizational priorities, the Committee recommends that substantive governance review work begin in 2027. During Q4 2026, FOPL will recruit one or two additional members to join the Governance Review Committee. This will broaden participation in the review and provide additional capacity for the work ahead. Beginning in 2027, the Committee will work through the governance framework in stages, bringing proposed policies and recommendations to the Board for consideration as they are completed. The Executive Director will undertake the related operational procedure work concurrently.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the FOPL Board approve the scope and recommendations of the Governance Review Committee as outlined in this report;

AND THAT the Governance Review Committee recruit up to two additional members in Q4 2026 and commence substantive governance review work in 2027.

Spatial Reality Project Proposal

Report To: The FOPL Board
Prepared by: Dina Stevens
Prepared on: August 25, 2026

BACKGROUND: What is Spatial Reality?

[Spatial Reality](#) is an interactive 3D digital platform developed by Spatial Media that combines geographic information, real-world datasets and visual storytelling within a digital representation of a community. Rather than presenting information through conventional spreadsheets, reports or static maps, users can navigate a community visually and interact with different layers of information.

The platform supports GIS and real-world datasets and allows information to be displayed through customizable layers and overlays. It also includes analytics integration and can generate videos, 360-degree images and other visual assets.

For the public library sector, the opportunity would be to adapt this technology to answer a particularly important question: **What happens in the community around a public library, and how can we demonstrate the library's contribution to local economic and community activity?** Rather than looking only at traditional library measures such as circulation, visits, program attendance and computer use, Spatial Reality could potentially allow FOPL and its members to place library data alongside geographic, demographic, economic and community information.

A significant advantage of the platform is that it is bespoke. FOPL would not simply be purchasing access to an existing off-the-shelf product. Spatial Media would work with FOPL to build and tailor the platform around the needs of Ontario's public library sector. This would allow FOPL to determine which data points should be included, how information should be displayed, and what comparisons would be most useful to members and to FOPL's advocacy work.

PROPOSED INVESTMENT

Spatial Reality operates on a subscription model. The proposed cost to FOPL for a two-year subscription is \$25,088. A two-year commitment is recommended rather than a single-year trial because significant work will be required at the outset to determine what information should be included, develop the platform, test functionality and introduce it to members. The first year would focus heavily on development, testing and member rollout, while the second year would allow FOPL and its members to meaningfully use the platform and evaluate its value. At the end of the two-year period, FOPL would assess the platform's use, member feedback, advocacy value and overall return on investment before making any recommendation regarding continuation.

Following Board approval, FOPL would establish a

Spatial Reality Advisory Committee to guide development of the platform.

The committee would include members of FOPL's Research and Development Working Group, including library data analysts, as well as interested FOPL Board members.

The committee would work with FOPL staff and Spatial Reality to:

- identify the most valuable data points for inclusion;
- determine which library and community datasets should be incorporated;
- design useful comparison features;
- identify the questions libraries most want the platform to answer;
- test functionality and usability;
- ensure the platform works for libraries of different sizes and geographic contexts; and
- identify opportunities to use the resulting data for provincial and municipal advocacy.

This collaborative development process is particularly important because the software can be customized specifically for FOPL and Ontario public libraries. FOPL would have the opportunity to build a platform around the sector's needs rather than adapting library needs to an existing product.

One of the most valuable aspects of the proposed pilot is the ability to develop specific data points and comparison functionality. The committee could explore incorporating traditional library measures alongside broader community indicators such as population, demographics, local businesses, employment, transportation, community services, development and growth. This could allow a library to examine its own community and then compare selected indicators with similar libraries or communities.

VALUE PROPOSITION

One of the most promising applications of Spatial Reality is its potential to demonstrate the economic footprint of Ontario's public libraries. People travel to libraries, spend time in surrounding neighbourhoods, access technology, look for employment, develop new skills, operate small businesses, attend programs and connect with other community services. Spatial Reality could help FOPL examine and visualize those relationships. For example, the platform could potentially show a library location alongside surrounding businesses, commercial districts, transit connections, population characteristics, employment areas, community services and development activity. This creates an opportunity to move beyond simply saying: "This library had 200,000 visits last year."

Instead, FOPL could begin asking: **What does it mean to the surrounding community that 200,000 visits occurred at this location?** Where are libraries functioning as anchors for downtowns and main streets? How many businesses are located within walking distance of a library? How do libraries intersect with transit, community services and commercial activity? How does the role of a library differ in a rural community compared with a suburban or downtown environment? How does a visit to the library translate into more business for local stores?

The objective would not be to claim that every economic activity occurring near a library was caused by the library. Rather, the platform could help FOPL develop credible evidence about the relationship between library

locations, community activity and local economies.

That evidence could significantly strengthen the sector's ability to position libraries as economic and social infrastructure.

The Spatial Reality subscription would represent a tangible new benefit of FOPL membership. Following development and testing, FOPL would roll out the platform to members through a series of information and demonstration sessions explaining what Spatial Reality is, what data is available and how libraries can use it. Each participating member library would receive its own unique login to the platform. Members could then explore their own community data, use comparison functionality and identify information relevant to their local advocacy, planning and Board discussions. Importantly, members would not be expected to navigate the software without assistance. Spatial Reality staff would provide individual support to FOPL library members when required. Members would also have access to a live-chat support function staffed by a person rather than an AI chatbot. This level of support is particularly important for ensuring the platform is accessible to libraries that do not have dedicated research, GIS or data staff.

Spatial Reality can be made available in both English and French, allowing FOPL to provide a bilingual experience for members. The platform also has the capacity to incorporate First Nations languages, should FOPL and participating First Nations Public Libraries determine that this would be valuable. These capabilities could be explored during the development phase in consultation with the appropriate FOPL caucuses and members.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT AND ADVOCACY

The Spatial Reality trial directly supports FOPL's 2025–2029 Strategic Plan. The platform advances key priorities in Research & Data, Advocacy & Influence, Member Engagement & Capacity, and Communications & Visibility by giving FOPL and its members access to stronger data, customized comparison tools and compelling visualizations of library impact. It would build members' capacity to understand and communicate their local value while providing FOPL with stronger evidence to demonstrate the economic and community impact of libraries to municipal and provincial decision-makers. As a shared resource available across the membership, Spatial Reality also allows FOPL to leverage its collective capacity to provide a sophisticated data and advocacy tool that many individual libraries could not access independently.

Over the two-year trial, FOPL could use the platform to develop a much stronger provincial picture of libraries as community infrastructure. This could support FOPL's advocacy with the Province, municipalities, MPPs and sector partners. It could also provide a powerful tool for FOPL's presence at AMO, ROMA, FONOM and other municipal conferences. Instead of simply telling elected officials about the value of libraries, FOPL could use an interactive platform to show how libraries relate to the communities they represent. For example, an elected official could explore a library in their community and see its location relative to population, businesses, community services, transportation, development and other indicators.

Taken together, the proposed investment sits at the intersection of three particularly important FOPL objectives: **Better Data → Stronger Member Capacity → More Effective Advocacy**

GOALS AND BENCHMARKS

The two-year trial would be evaluated based on:

- number and diversity of member libraries using the platform;
- member satisfaction and feedback;
- frequency and nature of platform use;
- usefulness of the comparison functionality;
- ability to generate meaningful local economic and community insights;
- use of Spatial Reality data in local library advocacy;
- use of the platform in FOPL's provincial and municipal advocacy;
- value of the platform to libraries without internal data-analysis capacity; and
- overall value relative to the \$25,800 investment.

FOPL should also assess whether the platform provides capabilities and insights that members could not reasonably obtain through existing municipal GIS systems, open-data resources or other tools.

RECOMMEND MOTION

That the FOPL Board approve an expenditure of \$25,088 from the reserve fund for a two-year subscription and trial of Spatial Reality, and authorize the Executive Director to establish an advisory committee consisting of Research and Development Working Group members, library data analysts and Board representatives to guide development and implementation of the platform.



Interactive Member/Community Mapping

Prepared for: Dina Stevens
Executive Director

Date: 26th August 2026



BETTER ENGAGEMENT. BETTER PROJECT OUTCOMES.

Introduction

Dear Dina,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this proposal for a partnership with **SpatialEngage**. The following document will outline the details of the partnership, the services provided, complete costing and timelines. Our recommendation is based on your immediate needs, this will ensure an effective SpatialEngage Experience. The service offer includes white glove project building and full service 24/7 support and guidance including human (non-AI) live chat support with-in the system.

The proposed scope of work includes the SaaS mapping platform, **Business+** options features include:

- Public facing and Private member maps
- Interactive "Have your say" comment mapping tool
- Multi-Languages per map
- Unlimited users Unlimited stakeholder database, unlimited comments and engagements
- SSO, unlimited mapping QR codes iFrames and links to each map as needed
- Complete training, onboarding and product support
- ROI Tool/dashboard for members (Custom solution to be developed with FOPL team)

The following pages outline our proposed solution, examples and costings in more detail.

And again, thank you for the chance to quote and the prospect of working with you to deliver this leading solution to digital engagement.

Regards,



John Clark, VP Strategic Partnership Acquisition

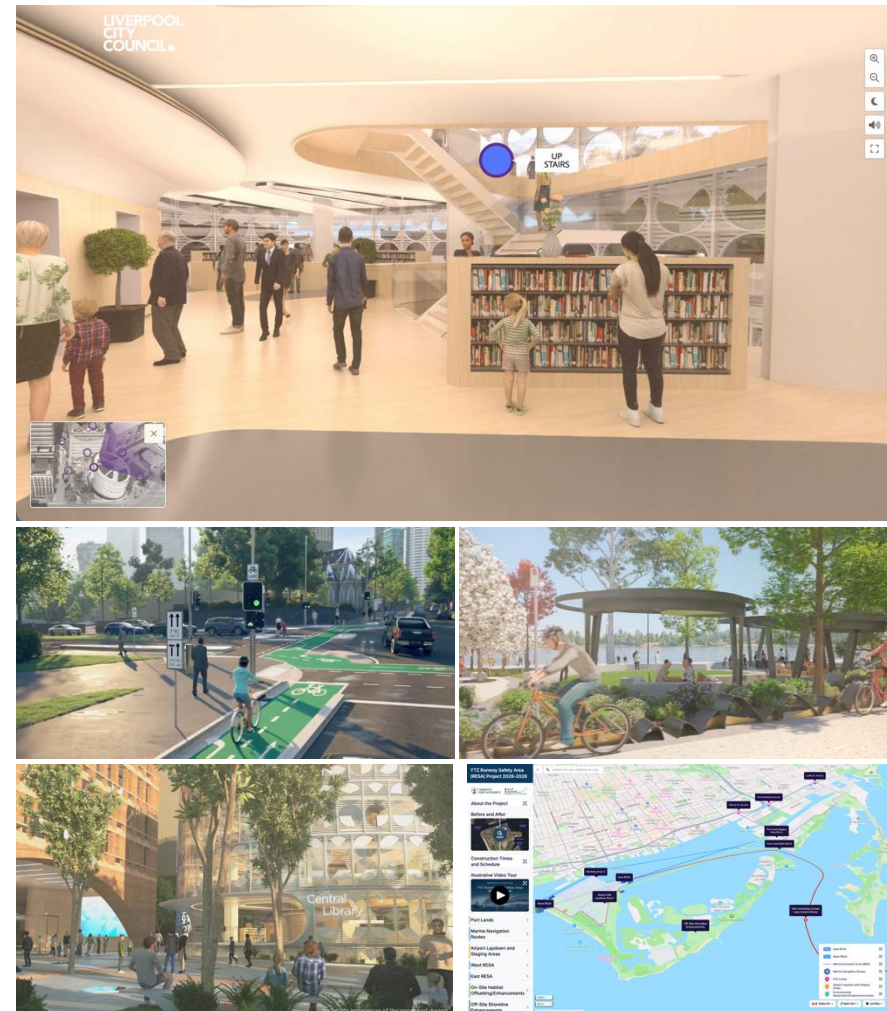
A decade of Experience

Spatial Media creates digital tools that help people engage with the future. Through digital engagement assets that articulate the story of a project, audiences are empowered to understand, interact and share the vision of their future place and environment.

Spatial Media has an enviable track record of delivering the highest quality outputs to on significant complex and major projects since 2014. This is proven by our industry leading images and videos for the [TTC's Waterfront East LRT](#), [the interactive map](#) for Metrolinx Ontario Line, the animation and mapping for Billy Bishop Airport [RESA Project](#), [virtual engagement](#) experiences and engaging with over seventeen million stakeholders globally. Our outputs are diverse and extend from early planning stages right through to construction and delivery.

We specialize in creating interactive digital tools to educate and engage stakeholders. Our tools help people better understand complex projects and tailor information that is relevant to the stakeholder. Our interactive and immersive experiences that we create are intuitive and easy to use, driving engagement and often improving acceptance and project sentiment.

Watch our 1 minute showreel here: [Spatial Media - 10 Years Strong](#)



Summary of Deliverables

The initial Scope of work will be the creating and supporting the baseline map(s) functionality and initial requirements for all members of which additional maps and/or future project phases can build upon as your needs evolve over time. The solution is flexible and scalable. To fit any size project, with unlimited feedback and unlimited users (Admin or editors).

- The SpatialEngage team can assist in Building out an interactive projects map which will house all materials as determined by the client, with an emphasis on re-using assets (videos, text, GIS data) wherever possible.
- The amount of public and private maps users can create will be determined on the plan chosen, this custom plan would include 1 map per library and 1 multi-map that combines all member maps together (for public/private use). **Cost will be locked for 2yrs and product/service will be reviewed on completion of the trial period.**
- The SpatialEngage team provides complete onboarding and training for all users consisting of 1 announcement webinar/training and up to 3x 1 hour map building and training sessions per member as needed. Our easy-to-use tools are designed to make community engagement easy for all levels of computer literacy. Online help is also available with our team at anytime once logged into the system.
- We understand that it is critical that users when visiting the map find the quickest path to the information that is most relevant to them. Your interactive map will have search functionality enabled, allowing residents and business owners within the local community to search for their address within the map.

- **Comment Mapping** – ask for internal or external stakeholders feedback by placing pins on the map, can also see who you've engaged with.
- Feedback form – included is a general feedback form for stakeholders to enquire about the library, or link to user created survey.
- All engagement (internal or external) is geo-referenced and stored in the system which can be exported (.csv) for adding to any internal or 3rd party database.

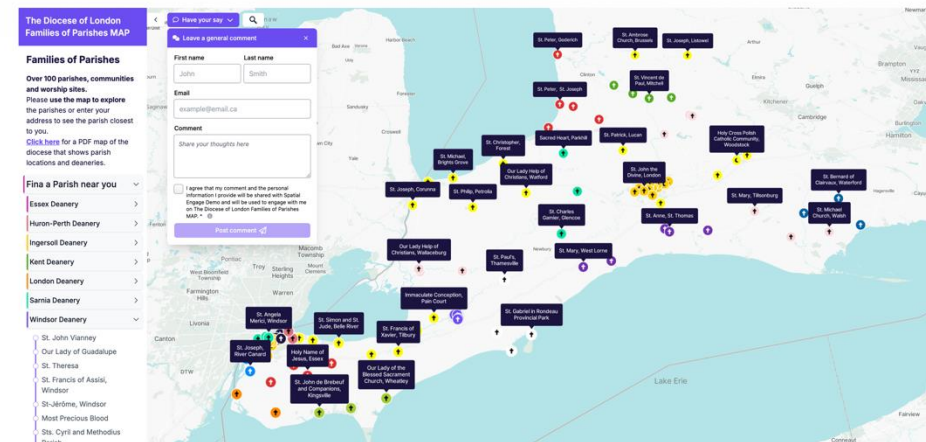
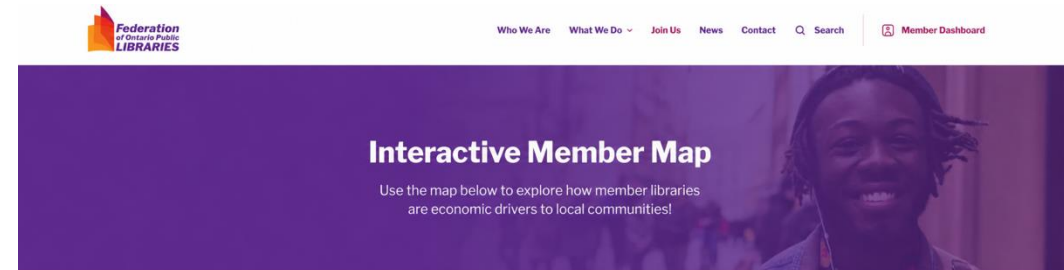


Interactive Engagement MAP/ROI

Engage, Educate, and Receive Public Opinion with a **SpatialEngage** map that enables a range of engagement tools for your project to deliver a rich experience that take stakeholders beyond video, text, and PDFs:

Engagement Tools include:

- 2D/3D Interactive Map
- Comment mapping tool (Internal & External feedback)
- “Have your say” form
- Address Lookup tool
- Mutli-Language
- Link to/embed 3rd party surveys
- Integrate unlimited digital media: images, videos, 360’s, before/after
- Multi-maps for large scale departments or projects
- QR Code, iFrame code and direct link for sharing
- Unlimited users & stakeholder feedback
- Bespoke Custom Tools, CMS & CRM ([enterprise](#) service only)



Increased ROI Understanding, Reduced Manual Engagement Admin

By giving stakeholders access to key information through engaging layout and intuitive functionality, Interactive Maps allow the community to better understand all facets of a project while reducing project confusion and negating misinformed complaints.

Case Studies / Examples

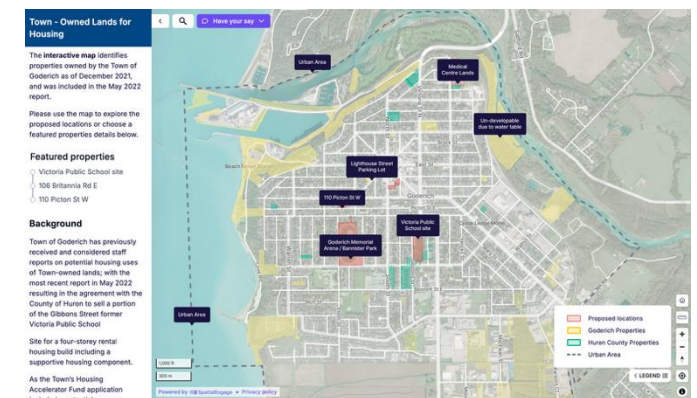
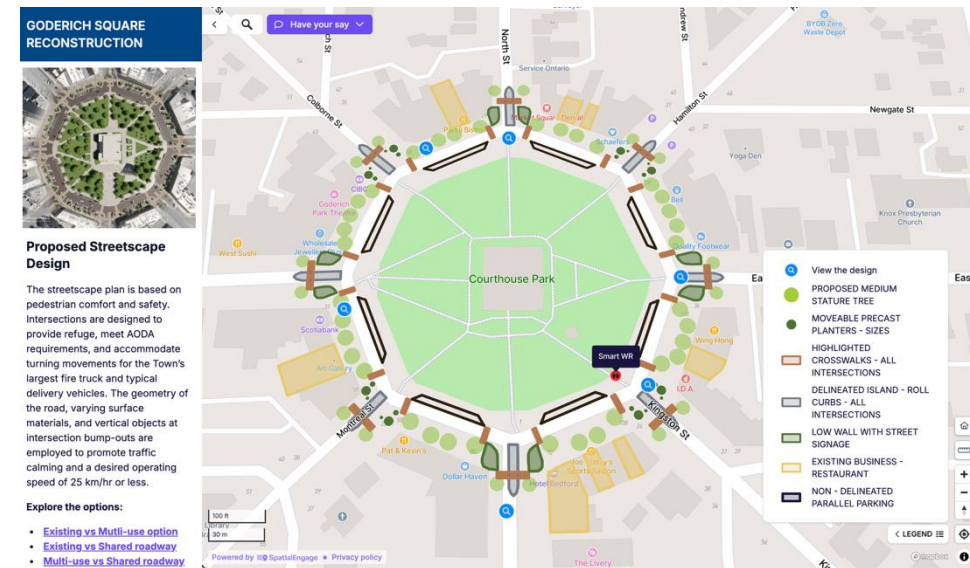
Examples of our SpatialEngage Enterprise and SaaS (Self-serve) solutions.

City of Goderich

Using the materials supplied by the City, the **SpatialEngage** tool was used to create several maps including:

- [Recommended Airport Development Plan](#)
- [Airport Constraints Analysis](#)
- [Lands for sale](#)
- [Town - Owned Lands for Housing](#)
- [Goderich Square Reconstruction](#)

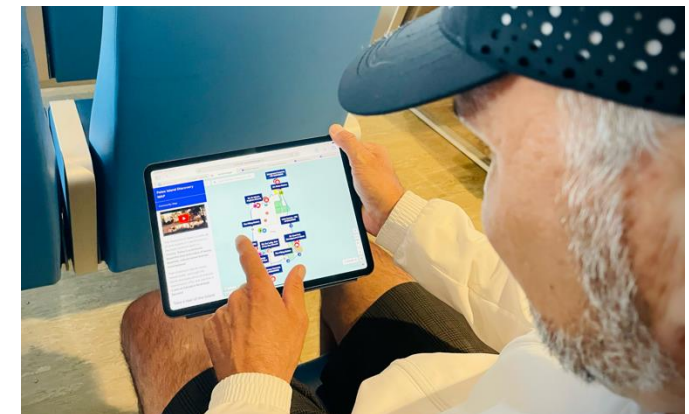
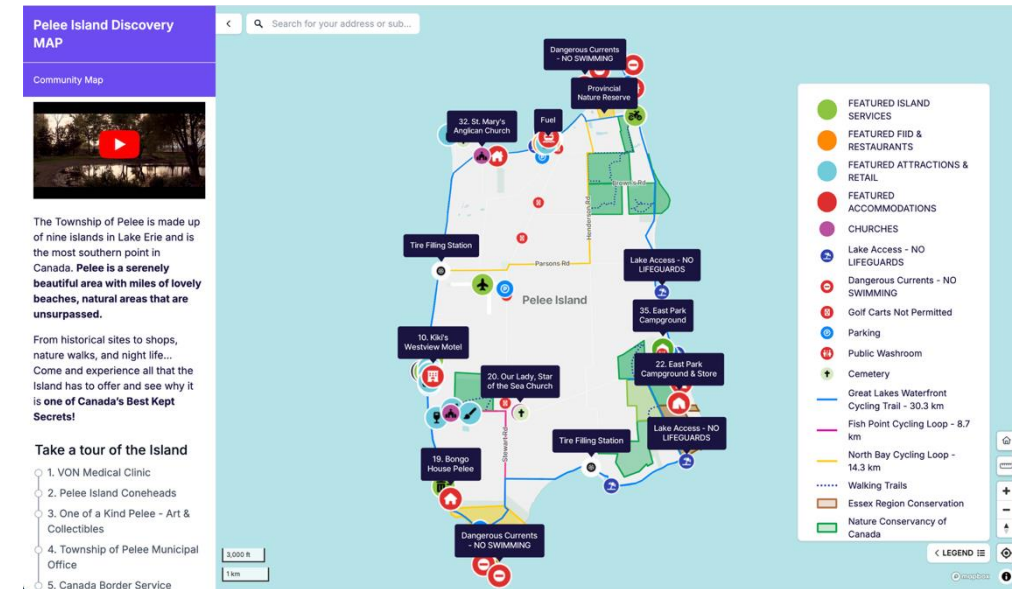
Please use the links above to to explore the maps, as an example of how the maps could be used to display Airport Masterplans, municipal data, supply transparency and gather internal or external stakeholder feedback.



Peele Island

Using the public materials supplied by the tourism board, the **SpatialEngage** tool was used to create an interactive one-stop, single source of truth map that is always accurate. The map is accessible via a QR Code and are cross platform to work on all devices including kiosks on the ferry. Additional maps are being created for special events on the island including the annual pheasant hunt and marathon.

[Explore the Island Map](#)



Our recommendation

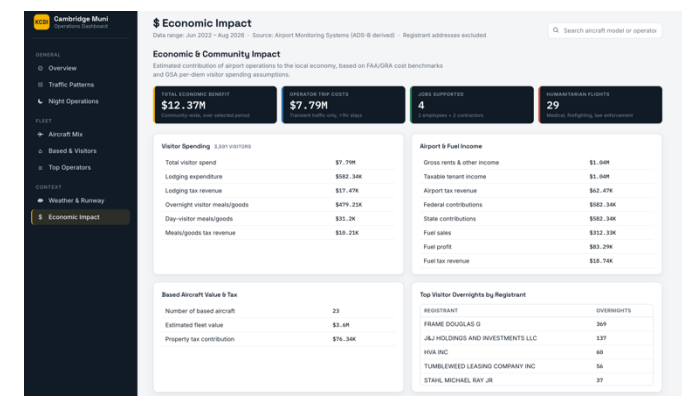
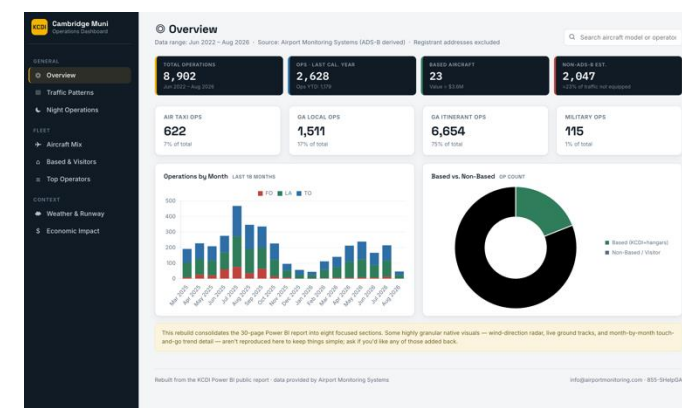
Mapping Communication Solution for the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

Following our recent meetings and discussions, we have carefully evaluated the FOPL's communication needs—particularly around understanding fostering community engagement, reviewing ROI, displaying engaging tools for MP/Council presentations, updating new library location progress and ensuring transparency. Based on this assessment, we recommend the **SpatialEngage Business+ Plan** as the most suitable and cost-effective option.

Per discussions the initial roll out will be a 2 year trial period of the software/service that will be reviewed at the completion for the period. Given the scope of your operations, in future you may eventually find it beneficial to upgrade the system or include advance visulas as needed. . It becomes relevant if your needs expand—such as requiring more than five public maps or advanced features like draft revisions, a custom domain, or SSO controls.

The SpatialEngage team will also work in close collaboration with the FOPL operations team to craft a bespoke ROI tool that can be use in conjunction and integrated with the mapping system. This is a unique product plug in that will be develop to fit your needs. The tool is planned to be an economic impact interactive dashboard with charts/graphs that can be exported for presentations as needed. And example of the concept (and tool in use for Canadian regional airports is on the right.

We're confident this solution will support both your immediate goals and future growth.



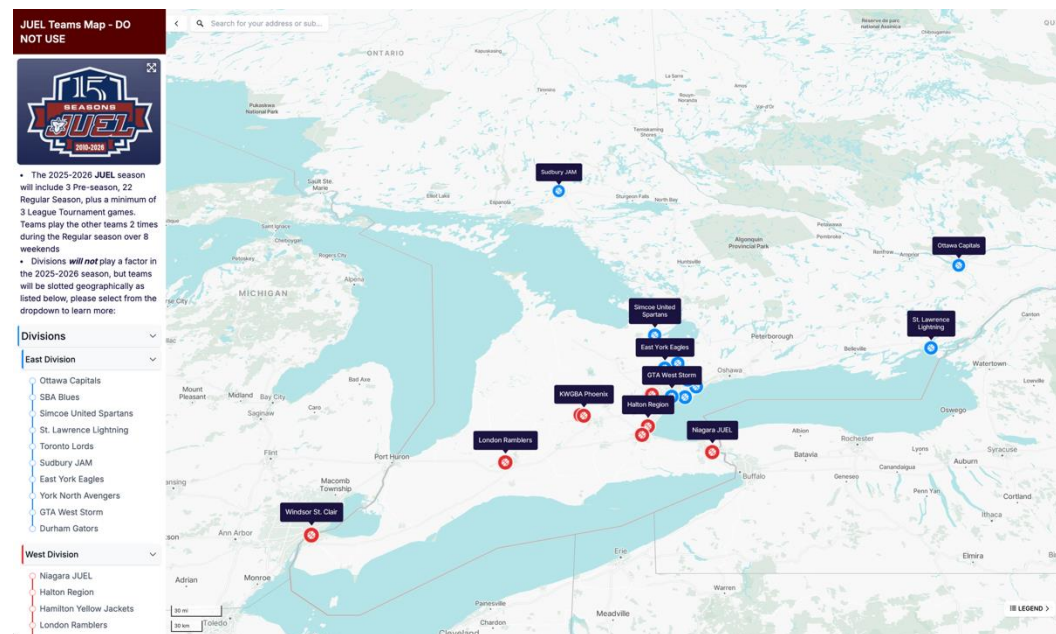
The Business+ Plan

\$990 CAD/month (Standard pricing. **NOTE: NFP Discount will apply** please see next page)

The Business+ plan is best suited for associations and organizations with multiple members/stakeholders. Allowing communications officers, community engagement experts and councils the ability to quickly engage and inform on connection to your community and upcoming infrastructure changes.

Benefits and features of this plan include:

- 1 public multi-project/member maps
- 1 public/private community map per member
- Unlimited users
- Full map editing
- Accept public feedback/map comments
- Unlimited Multiple languages
- Additional map settings including
 - Maximum Zoom Level
 - Custom Map Loading Position
- User publishing permissions
- Simple single sign-on with Google or Microsoft
- Onboarding and support
- QR Code, iframe and direct link for distribution



Cost Breakdown SpatialEngage

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Amount in CAD
SpatialEngage - Business+ plan 2 year term	24.00	990.00	23,760.00
- SaaS subscription (NFP discount price to be applied) - Trial period of 2 years, product will be reviewed for success following period before renewal. - 100 private/public member projects (maps) - 1 public/private multi-map pulling all member maps together - Unlimited Number of users free - Full map editing - Accept public feedback/map comments - Unlimited Multiple languages - Additional map settings including Maximum Zoom Level and custom Map Loading Position - Editor user roles - Publishing and draft revisions - Custom domain - GIS bulk project import - QR Codes and iFrame code for existing website integration - Complete training, onboarding and product support + New ROI Tool/dashboard for members (Custom solution to be developed with FOPL team)			
Custom Discount for Ontario based NFP	1.00	(1,760.00)	(1,760.00)
Subtotal			22,000.00
Total HST 13%			3,088.80
TOTAL CAD			25,088.80

Terms & Conditions

- Costing based on annual subscription, if Month-to-month is preferred rate is \$390 CAD/month
- This proposal has been based upon information and data provided to date.
- Once inclusions have been confirmed an agreed schedule will be finalized.
- Standard payment terms are 30 days from date of invoice.
- Fee Estimate is valid for 30 days from date of issue.

Commencement Approval

Terms of Service

- This proposal has been based upon information and data provided to date.
- Final design data may impact required hours for completion and final delivery dates.
- Project start and completion dates (for any/all deliverables) will require confirmation before commencement.
- Once inclusions have been confirmed an agreed schedule will be finalized.
- Standard payment terms are 30 days from date of invoice.
- Fee Estimate is valid for 30 days.

Production Assumptions

- Data supplied is accurate and will be made available at project start-up, included existing collateral, new copy, etc.
- Liaising and coordination of Subject Matter Experts (SME's) will be conducted by client if needed during creative processes and stages.
- Client reviews and feedback will be completed as requested within the production schedule.
- Any variation to the production schedule may require additional time and resources, which could incur additional costs.
- If required, Spatial Media will help coordinate any physical/digital assets purchased through the company.
- Once the client has signed-off on a milestone, such as delivery, requested changes may incur a variation.

Project Variations

- Variations outside the initial agreed scope will be assessed at the time of request and an estimate provided for the required works.
- Written acknowledgment/signed approval of the variation will be required for production to commence.

Conditions of Engagement

- All contextual data is required upon project commencement.
- Standard turn-around times for any change or variation require two working days as a minimum and are relative to the extent of change.
- Any change or variation will be assessed at the time of request and if accommodated will be charged accordingly.
- Additions or changes requiring overtime may attract a premium rate.
- If these conditions are not met this fee estimate may be subject to variation.
- By signing this document you hereby agree to the details, terms and conditions stated here and at this location: [Spatial Media's Terms and Conditions](#)

Sign:

Date:

Name:

Thank you

Contact: **John Clark**

VP Strategic Partnership Acquisition

1-800-986-9409

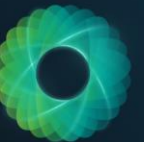
john@spatialengage.io



BETTER ENGAGEMENT. BETTER PROJECT OUTCOMES.

Other Products

In-house services not required in the scope that may be of value now or in the future that use the interactive 3D model.

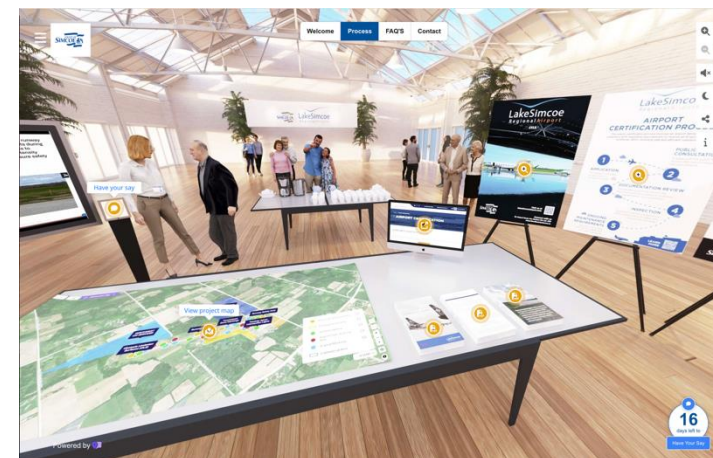


Virtual Engagement Space

A Virtual Engagement Room can be a more accessible option for engaging and reaching parts of our demographic and community, including those with reduced mobility, busy lifestyles, and the younger generation. Community events on a scheduled day and time can be a limiting factor for engagement. Today's community is used to consuming information when we want, whenever we want, right at our fingertips.

A Virtual Engagement Room makes participation easy and accessible in the way that a large demographic expect; enabling the community to communicate directly in the way that they want to communicate.

As with our interactive engagement portals, all Virtual Engagement Rooms are comprehensively tracked with Community Analytics. This allows detailed, quality stakeholder data to be viewed in real-time and accessed/exported easily; ensuring ROI and informed insight for future events.



3D Renders

With decades of experience in 3D modelling and rendering within our team, Spatial Media is able to produce the highest-quality visuals, from fully-3D images to photomontages - merging the limitless flexibility of 3D with photographs, for realistic images that can communicate all project elements effectively.

For completely new project designs, fully-3D images offer unprecedented customization. Once 3D assets are created and arranged in a 3D scene, any aspect of the view or its contents can be adjusted with ease.

If absolute realism is required, Spatial Media can create photomontage visuals for any project. Once a preferred photo is selected (or acquired by drone and/or camera), 3D assets are combined with the chosen photo to create an accurate, true-to-life visual.

Spatial Media can produce highly-detailed images from any supplied data; 2D/3D CAD, existing 3D assets, image references or sketched concepts and designs.

Images can be exported in any required formats - from large-scale print through to screen display. Finally, all 3D assets can be re-used to save on future costs.



Before / After Sliders

Create your own in seconds, the before-after sliders engagement tool allows you to display the before and after version of an image by simply sliding over them.

The tool can be embedded and is fully responsive to both horizontal and vertical orientations, custom labels and colours, and any survey can be added to the slider.

A hotspot can be added to the interactive map to host Before/After sliders. This interactive tool allows for a sliding function for side by side comparison. Surveys can also be attached to engage for stakeholder sentiment.



CFLA Update

Report To: The FOPL Board
Prepared by: Dina Stevens
Prepared on: September 1, 2026

BACKGROUND

The FOPL Board has previously discussed FOPL's membership in the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA-FCAB) and the role of the national association in representing Canada's library community. As part of that ongoing discussion, CFLA has circulated a Financial Sustainability Review to member associations outlining the organization's current financial position and proposed directions for strengthening its long-term sustainability.

CFLA has invited member association boards to review the proposed strategy and provide feedback through their representatives on the CFLA Board. Feedback is requested by the end of September 2026 so it can be considered when the CFLA Board discusses the review in October.

MEMO SUMMARY

At its June 2026 meeting, the CFLA Board approved the development of background analysis and recommendations concerning new and revised revenue streams. The CFLA Board is expected to consider a revenue strategy in October 2026 and identify any bylaw amendments required for consideration at the annual meeting in early 2027.

CFLA reports that its current annual revenue is approximately \$120,000 and is derived almost entirely from membership dues. The organization states that this funding is insufficient to maintain the leadership staffing required to fulfill its mandate as a national voice for libraries. CFLA considers a base level of funding sufficient to employ an executive director for 20 hours per week necessary for effective operations.

In its July 20 review, CFLA forecast a deficit of approximately \$30,000 by its year-end in August 2026. At current revenue and expenditure levels, it projects that it will be unable to continue operations by 2028, or sooner if revenue declines.

Proposed Four-Part Strategy

1. Revised membership dues: CFLA will model alternative dues structures and develop clearer guidelines for determining the revenue on which dues are calculated. Current posted dues are generally based on 1% of each member association's regular operating revenue, but historical arrangements have resulted in significant differences among members. Individual membership is not being considered.

2. Supporting members or affiliates: CFLA will model a new category for vendors and institutions, including college, private post-secondary and special libraries.

3. An affiliated charitable foundation: CFLA will

explore establishing a separate registered charity capable of receiving donations, issuing tax receipts, obtaining grants and supporting public-interest work related to areas such as copyright, intellectual freedom, accessibility and equitable access to information.

4. Nationally coordinated projects: CFLA will continue developing its capacity to secure and coordinate federally funded projects that benefit libraries across sectors, particularly smaller libraries that may not have the capacity to manage federal applications and reporting independently.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR FOPL

The review is relevant to FOPL because any revised dues structure could affect FOPL's future membership costs and because CFLA's financial capacity influences its ability to provide effective national leadership and advocacy. The proposed institutional and vendor categories may broaden CFLA's revenue base, while also requiring careful attention to member value, representation and safeguards for library-led policy positions. The attached CFLA Financial Sustainability Review provides the complete background and rationale for the proposed strategy. CFLA has asked member boards to provide feedback.

RECOMMEND MOTION

THAT the FOPL board receive this report as information.

Financial Sustainability Review

At its June 2026 meeting, the CFLA Board approved development of background and recommendations for new and revised revenue streams, including revised membership dues, supporting member categories for vendors and institutions, and exploring the concept of an affiliated charitable foundation. The Board will consider the recommendations for the revenue strategy in October 2026, and identify any bylaw changes required in preparation for the early 2027 annual meeting.

Feedback from member association boards on the revenue strategy is welcome and should be directed to the members of the CFLA Board. Please provide feedback prior to October 2026 when the Board will discuss the report.

Background

CFLA's current revenue is insufficient for the organization to operate with leadership staffing, which prevents CFLA from achieving its mandate to be a national voice of libraries, or from meeting its objectives of championing library values, advancing library excellence, and influencing national public policy. The Board has agreed that a base level of funding to employ an executive director at 20 hours per week is necessary to be successful.

In addition to staffing, CFLA has expenses for banking, software licences, translation, bookkeeping, membership in IFLA on behalf of Canadian library associations, travel, web hosting, and hosting member events.

CFLA's current revenue is approximately \$120,000 annually, almost entirely from membership dues. Membership dues are based on 1% of regular operating revenue of each member association, with a range from a minimum of \$300 for small associations to approximately \$25,000 from the Ontario Library Association. One association, the Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC), contributes \$60,000 annually based on historical decisions, representing 50% of CFLA's annual revenue and 20 times CULC's 1% revenue level of \$3,000. Until 2024, the Canadian Academic and Research Libraries (CARL) also contributed additional supporting funding at approximately 3 times their 1% revenue level.

CFLA attempted to operate without an executive director and with administrative staffing between 2020 and 2025 in an attempt to align expenses with revenue. In this period, while the volunteer leadership took on many operational responsibilities, the influence and impact of the association declined and the administration of the organization was deeply impacted. In 2025, the Board recognized that a part-time executive director was necessary for the organization to operate effectively, and engaged a consultant to fill the role. However, the operations of the organization at this time are predicted to result in a deficit of \$30K by year-end in August 2026, and the current revenue is not stable and likely to decline without a changed approach due to the imbalance in member fees. At current revenue and expenditure levels, the organization will be unable to continue operations as of 2028, or earlier if revenue declines.

The CFLA Board has approved exploring a four part strategy to ensure the association's sustainability, described in priority order below. The Executive Director will be undertaking modelling and supporting consultation for this strategy, and will provide a report to the Board in October 2026 with recommendations.

1. Model **revised membership dues**
2. Model a new category for **CFLA supporting members or affiliates** that includes library vendors and institutions
3. Explore steps to establish an **affiliated registered charitable foundation**
4. Continue to develop CFLA's capacity to **coordinate federally-funded projects**

1. Model Revised Membership Dues (Foundational)

If all CFLA members paid CFLA's current posted membership dues at 1% of member association revenue, it would produce revenue of approximately \$70,000 annually. For the first years of the association, CULC and CARL each paid additional dues, \$60,000 and \$52,700 respectively, which enabled the organization to operate with an executive director and administrative assistant. The original intention for CFLA included a higher rate for associations made up of institutions, like CULC, CARL, and consortia, however, this intent was lost over time. CARL phased out their higher payment in 2024, and now pays \$10,500, while CULC continued to pay \$60,000 in 2026. New member associations made up of institutions have had their rates set at 1% of revenue. Total CFLA revenue in 2025-2026 is approximately \$120,000.

CFLA's original concept was to avoid individual membership in order to not compete with provincial and territorial multi-sector library associations, identifying that individual membership in CFLA would be through a provincial association. This approach is being maintained and individual membership is not being explored in this review. It should be noted that some associations that were originally members of CFLA no longer appear to exist, e.g. in Canada's territories. CFLA membership revenue has declined since 2017 as professional associations have struggled in several regions.

It is also unclear what revenue is to be included in the calculation of 1%, as some associations' revenue fluctuates annually due to one-time grants or flow-through funds for disbursement to libraries. The revenue used to establish the membership fee should recognize that flow-through funds, e.g. for licensing, should not be included in the revenue calculation unless an administrative fee is applied. As part of the review, guidelines will be created for the revenue calculation.

CFLA's bylaws are flexible in defining members and do not specify libraries. Members are "associations, groups or corporations interested in furthering the Corporation's purposes and which have applied for and been accepted into membership in the Corporation."

The Financial Sustainability report will model revised approaches to dues and the revenue calculation guidelines for board consideration in October 2026.

2. Model a new Category for CFLA Supporting Members or Affiliates: Vendors and Institutions (Foundational)

Some individual institutions or libraries within institutions may have the capacity to support CFLA's work and benefit from its mandate. Some may not have another appropriate library association to join. These include college libraries, libraries in private post-secondary institutions, libraries in regions without associations, and special libraries, and may include others.

Some provincial associations include institutional members, and at CFLA's founding, these were intended to be included as a future direction for CFLA membership. Further information will be needed to understand the percentage of individual and institutional revenue of provincial and territorial multi-sector associations, and to construct a model that minimizes over-contribution by the largest institutions or draws members away from the multi-sector associations.

Library vendors also have an interest in CFLA's work and reason to support its mandate to benefit libraries as their customers. An appropriate supporting membership would enable them to be recognized and benefit CFLA. The value proposition for this membership category requires further consideration given CFLA does not have an annual event or broad communication that would provide clear value for vendors. Some associations create other revenue opportunities from vendors, such as co-branded awards, programs or advertising, however, this is not being explored by CFLA at this time. In addition, libraries' goals in certain policy areas may be in conflict with vendor goals, and it will be important that policy decisions prioritize libraries' goals on behalf of their users.

Both these groups fit the definition of eligible members in the existing bylaws. The CFLA Board has not requested consideration of voting eligibility or Board membership for these members, although individuals associated with this membership category could vote or hold office through membership in other library associations that are members.

3. Explore Steps to Establish an Affiliated Charitable Organization (Developmental)

As a non-profit member association, CFLA-FCAB cannot accept charitable donations and issue tax receipts. The current articles of incorporation do not align with a public interest purpose, and CFLA would not be eligible for charitable status under current rules.

There are activities CFLA should be undertaking to meet its mandate and that would have a public interest benefit that would meet charitable purposes. CFLA's work on copyright, intellectual freedom, accessibility and access to information generally is for the broad public purpose of advancing information literacy and equitable access to knowledge through Canada's library ecosystem. While direct lobbying to government could not be funded through a charity, other CFLA activities can be. Charitable donations could support some of CFLA's core activities, however, other work associated with donation-funded projects would be new.

The CFLA Board has agreed that CFLA should explore the steps and considerations related to creating and operating a separate affiliated foundation that can receive donations that would be directed to CFLA's public interest work, receive grants, and disburse funds to CFLA and others, including individual libraries. The considerations should include ways to ensure a clear relationship, including that the foundation board should have some overlapping members with the CFLA Board, that the necessary administration could be undertaken by CFLA staff/contractors, and that a formal agreement between the organizations could exist on how to handle disagreements and conflicts of interest.

The Board recognizes that as a revenue stream, supporting a charity and receiving donations would require taking on new work, therefore revenue from charitable donations must be supplemental to base membership revenue and is a lower priority than the review of membership dues and types described above.

4. Continue to Develop CFLA's Capacity to Coordinate National Projects (Developmental)

CFLA is the only national cross-sector library association in Canada, and is regularly contacted when organizations would like to reach or work with Canada's library community. Federal government departments provide grants for projects in specific areas that could be undertaken by libraries working together, however, for many small libraries, the application and reporting processes may be out of reach. CFLA has an opportunity to support Canada's libraries in all sectors, and particularly small libraries, by applying for funding that can be disbursed to individual libraries or used for projects that benefit many libraries. CFLA began to introduce this stream of work in 2023 when it received federal funding for the work of the Climate Action Task Force.

The Board supports continuing these efforts, and recognizes that as a revenue stream, this requires taking on new work, therefore it must be supplemental to base membership revenue.

Member Feedback

Members are welcome to discuss the strategy and financial review at their upcoming Board meetings, and to provide feedback through their representative on the CFLA Board. Board members are listed at <https://cfla-fcab.ca/en/about/board/>

Please provide feedback by the end of September to ensure it can be considered in the CFLA Board discussion.

Ontario Digital Public Library – Revised Advocacy Strategy

Report To: The FOPL Board
Prepared by: Dina Stevens
Prepared on: September 2, 2026

BACKGROUND

The Ontario Digital Public Library (ODPL) has been a longstanding advocacy priority for FOPL, dating back to provincial elections in 2019. The need for the ODPL remains significant. According to the 2024 Annual Survey of Public Libraries, only 137 of Ontario's 363 public library systems report subscriptions to five or more databases, while 71 report having no database subscriptions at all, the majority of which are First Nations public libraries on reserve.

FOPL has advocated for a substantial provincial investment in the ODPL over several years. As this advocacy has continued without a funding commitment, it was determined that the proposal required refinement to present government with a more targeted, evidence-based and financially achievable investment.

NEW RESEARCH

Over the past several months, the Executive Director and Board Member Lisa Radha Vohra undertook additional research to better understand the actual cost of delivering the ODPL. Several Ontario public libraries provided information regarding the databases they currently subscribe to and their actual subscription costs.

Collectively, the participating libraries serve approximately 70% of Ontario's population, providing a substantial sample from which costs could be extrapolated provincially. This work allowed FOPL to develop a much more defensible estimate based on actual 2025 subscription expenditures by Ontario public libraries. The resulting investment summary identifies actual subscription cost data from major Ontario public libraries as the basis for projecting province-wide costs. Importantly, while the overall provincial investment ask has been reduced, FOPL has remained steadfast to the parameters and principles of the original ODPL proposal approved by the FOPL Board and developed by the original ODPL Working Group. The 2023 proposal established that the ODPL should provide all Ontario public library systems and First Nations public libraries with a common suite of online databases and e-learning resources, unlimited 24/7 simultaneous access, centralized operational and technical support, and seamless delivery through local public libraries. The original Working Group also identified the types of resources that would deliver the greatest provincial impact, including language learning, health and small business information, legal resources, news, K–12 content, live tutoring, employment supports and online learning. The revised \$5.5 million model remains firmly within those parameters. The change is therefore not a reconsideration of what the ODPL is intended to accomplish, but a more precise calculation of what an effective initial ODPL investment could cost.

STRATEGIC SHIFT IN ADVOCACY

The revised figure presents a more palatable and achievable entry point for the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming, particularly given the length of time the ODPL has remained an advocacy priority without receiving a funding commitment. The immediate strategic objective is therefore to secure the Province's initial investment and establish the ODPL, rather than attempting to achieve its maximum potential scope at launch. Once the Province has invested in the project and the delivery infrastructure is established, FOPL will be better positioned to demonstrate usage, impact and demand and advocate for additional resources and investment over time. In this sense, the revised \$5.5 million ask should be understood as a starting point rather than a ceiling.

This approach also reflects the reality that FOPL has advocated for the ODPL for several years. FOPL views this as potentially the sunset phase of the current ODPL advocacy ask. The revised strategy puts forward what we believe is the strongest and most financially credible version of the proposal: grounded in actual Ontario library costs, aligned with the original Board-approved framework, and structured to make it as easy as possible for government to say yes. Messaging will focus on the ODPL as a practical and relatively modest provincial investment that:

- builds upon infrastructure and connectivity investments the Province has already made;
- uses provincial purchasing power to reduce duplication and achieve better value;
- addresses significant inequities in access between large urban systems and smaller, rural, Northern and First Nations libraries;
- provides direct supports for provincial priorities such as employment, skills development, education, entrepreneurship and digital access; and
- can be implemented using existing public library infrastructure without creating significant new provincial bureaucracy.
- EVERY MPP can deliver as a good news investment to their constituents.

Preliminary discussions with the Minister's staff regarding the revised ODPL approach have been very encouraging. Staff and Deputy Minister Kennedy have demonstrated significant interest in the new, evidence-based costing model and the concept of establishing the ODPL through a more modest initial provincial investment that could be expanded over time. Member Lauren Jessop, CEO of Barrie Public Library, was able to meet with Interim Minister Doug Downey in his constituency to extend FOPL's congratulations in their new role and discuss the ODPL at length, as Lauren has a long standing relationship with Minister Downey. The Minister was very engaged in the discussion and expressed strong interest in the revised approach.

While these discussions are preliminary and should not be interpreted as a commitment to fund the ODPL, the level of interest is encouraging. The Executive Director will be meeting with The Assistant Deputy Minister and other MTCG internal staff and Minister's Staff in the coming weeks to discuss the ODPL at length. Given the length of time FOPL has advocated for the ODPL, this response provides an important opportunity to make a focused final push with a proposal that remains true to the original Board-approved vision while presenting government with a more attainable entry point.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the FOPL Board receive this report as information.

ONTARIO DIGITAL PUBLIC LIBRARY – BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

August 2026

Public libraries are critical infrastructure for successful, thriving communities across Ontario.

- Public libraries are Ontario's farthest-reaching, most cost-effective public resource and vital community infrastructure.
- It's much more than books: in most communities across the province, public libraries are either the most flexible – or the only – local resource with the capability to adapt and support emerging local needs and priorities.
- Millions of Ontarians rely on local public libraries in their communities: to work, to learn, to connect to community and government services, and to find or train for a job.

Fair access for all Ontarians to digital resources is the next step in the Building a Digital Ontario plan.

- Ontario's public libraries are essential to give Ontarians access to reliable broadband internet, computers and digital resources.
- With access to many necessary resources, services and learning supports now primarily or entirely accessible online, Ontario's public libraries are essential to equitable, reliable access to broadband internet and computers.
- These digital resources are important contributors to student success and life-long learning, entrepreneurship and job readiness, and include:
 - in-depth job and career skills training;
 - language learning;
 - live tutoring and homework help; and
 - health information.
- Access through public libraries is especially vital for many First Nations, rural and Northern communities where at-home connectivity is limited, and for hundreds of thousands of Ontarians that cannot afford in-home internet services.
- However, these resources are expensive, especially when purchased on a patchwork, library-by-library basis - and many struggle to pay for or are unable to pay for these high-quality resources
- For a well-resourced urban or suburban public library, these subscriptions cost many tens – or even hundreds – of thousands of dollars each year.

Ontarians Living in Small, Rural and Northern Communities Lack Access

Across Ontario, access to powerful digital resources through local public libraries is very uneven. While Ontarians living in cities and major suburban communities may have excellent access, the picture is very different in other part of Ontario. People living in communities of less than 5,000 have access to less than a third of the online resources as those living in Toronto – despite accessing them twice as often per capita as people in large urban communities.

- According to the 2024 Annual Survey of Public Libraries, only 137 of our 363 library systems can afford subscriptions to five (5) or more resources.
- Meanwhile, 71 public libraries reported having zero (0) database subscriptions; the majority of which are First Nations public libraries on reserve.

The Ontario Digital Public Library: expanding access & cost savings – without more bureaucracy.

- With the infrastructure and operating support in place, there is a logical opportunity to level the playing field.
- Ontario's public libraries are proposing the creation of an **Ontario Digital Public Library (ODPL)**.
- By following the well-established approach used in Alberta and Saskatchewan and leveraging the province's significant purchasing power, Ontario can give all Ontarians access to a universal set of high-quality e-learning & online resources through their local public library.
- The Ontario Digital Public Library, through volume purchasing, can provide digital resources at a cost **savings of up to 40%** when compared to a direct subscription by an average Ontario public library.
- A provincial investment in an Ontario Digital Public Library would **save costs for all public libraries** and help improve consistency of service delivery. This is an investment directly in the quality of supports that libraries can deliver – with the overwhelming majority of the investment going directly into digital resources for regular Ontarians to access.
- This is a red tape reduction-friendly approach that modernizes access to digital resources by making them available to all Ontario municipalities – and millions of Ontarians – for the first time.
- The Ontario Digital Public Library **will seamlessly integrate with existing public library infrastructure and operations**, without the need to significantly expand provincial bureaucracy to deliver it.
- **Recommended Annual Investment:** \$5.5 million annually

Building the Foundation for the Ontario Digital Public Library

Since 2021, the Ontario Government has made the necessary targeted structural investments to ensure that all Ontarians can benefit from an Ontario Digital Public Library and the valuable learning, job skills and training resources it will provide.

These infrastructure and connectivity investments have built the necessary foundation to now take the next step to empower all Ontarians with the online resources they need to succeed – no matter where they live in Ontario.

- **Broadband Infrastructure:** \$4.8 million investment to install or upgrade high-speed broadband internet connections at over 100 public libraries across rural, Northern and First Nations communities in Ontario.
- **Connectivity:** \$582,000 annually – including a \$122,000 increase in 2024 – to ensure that up to 155 eligible public libraries in small, rural and First Nation communities receive full funding to cover the ongoing costs of broadband subscriptions.
- **First Nations Public Libraries:** Through the 2024 Ontario Budget, \$1.25 million in additional ongoing funding to help stabilize staffing and operations of First Nations Public Libraries on reserve in Ontario.

How Would an Ontario Digital Public Library Work?

- Based on an annual provincial investment, Ontario's public library sector would work closely with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming and agency partners to determine the appropriate mix of resources to deliver the greatest impact across the province.
- The designated delivery partner—such as the Ontario Library Service, the Toronto Public Library, or another designated entity—would negotiate to secure and maintain province-wide access to a universal set of resources.
- Access to these resources will ideally be connected directly through local public library websites, providing a seamless experience for local users.
- Ontarians will be able to access the complete resource set either in-person at their local library, from home, or through their personal devices wherever they are.
- For those public libraries without an online presence, the Ontario Digital Public Library will maintain a direct online portal to provide access.

Ontario Library Association / Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

The Ontario Library Association (OLA) is the oldest continually-operating non-profit library association in Canada, with over 3,500 members comprised of library staff and supporters from public, school, academic, and special libraries.

The Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL) represents 280 public library systems in Ontario, including 37 Public Libraries on Reserves.

Together, OLA & FOPL are committed to ensuring that libraries can continue to play a critical role in the social, education, cultural and economic success of our communities and schools.

BUILDING AN ONTARIO DIGITAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

August 2026

An estimated **\$5.5 million/year investment in the Ontario Digital Public Library** will provide all Ontarians with equitable access to a transformative collection of high-impact digital resources through their local public libraries.

Delivered and maintained through the designated operating entity (e.g. the Ontario Library Service, Toronto Public Library, etc.), **the Ontario Digital Public Library will provide all 310 Ontario public library systems and all First Nations public libraries in Ontario with unlimited, 24/7 access to digital resources** for student success, job readiness, entrepreneurship and self-improvement.

Beyond expanding access, the Ontario Digital Public Library will deliver new digital services and learning opportunities to small and medium-sized public libraries that currently lack the resources and purchasing power of larger public libraries. By making a shared suite of premium digital resources available province-wide, it would help close geographic and economic gaps in access to information, education, and skills development.

Using actual 2025 subscription cost data from major Ontario public libraries, we can reasonably project the cost of delivering this powerful resource to every Ontarian – no matter where they live.

Ontario Digital Public Library Proposed Resource Set & Budget		
Resource	Example Vendor(s)	Projected Annual Cost
Live tutoring and homework help	Brainfuse	\$1,700,000
In-depth job and career skills training	LinkedIn Learning / Gale Courses	\$550,000
Child & student literacy support	PebbleGo	\$160,000
Career and post-secondary planning & navigation	Career Cruising	\$315,000
Language Learning	Mango	\$300,000
English Language Learner (ELL) tests	IELTS	\$24,000
Local, national and international newspapers	PressReader	\$435,000
Legal forms for business	Law Depot	\$560,000
Business directory	Scotts	\$125,000
Up-to-date encyclopedia	Encyclopedia Brittanica	\$110,000
Prescription drug information	Compendium of Drugs	\$55,000
Operating and staff costs for delivery, technical support and resource management	<i>Designated operating partner</i>	\$900,000
Contingency for subscription costs		\$250,000
Total Projected Annual Cost		\$5,484,000