

Ontario Party Platform Analysis and Library Commitments

May 19, 2022

OLA and FOPL have spent the last 6 months engaging with all political parties to discuss the importance of strong provincial support for public libraries. Locally, OLA and FOPL members are communicating with candidates and incumbents using the [Joint Libraries Elections Brief for 2022](#). With the NDP and Green Party platforms released this week, almost all parties have now included support for libraries in their platforms.

Here's the analysis as of May 19, 2022.

	Operational Funding for Public Libraries	Funding for First Nation Public Libraries	Funding for Digital Public Libraries	Other Commitment
PC Party of Ontario				Supporting broadband upgrades at approximately 50 libraries with a provincial investment through the Connecting Public Libraries initiative (2021)
				\$4.85 M
Ontario NDP	Increase provincial funding for brick-and-mortar libraries	Support First Nations libraries	Increase provincial funding for digital library services	
	\$14M in 2022-23; \$21M in 2023-24 and 2024-25	\$2M in 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25	\$6M in 2022-23; \$9M in 2023-24 and 2024-25	
Ontario Liberal Party:		Invest \$2 million in First Nations Public Libraries since only 30% of First Nations reserves have libraries.	Invest in digitizing Ontario's public libraries – giving all Ontarians access to free e-learning, online resources and more e-books.	Menstrual products in libraries. Rural Development Fund to build or repair crucial community rural infrastructure like libraries.
		\$2M/year	\$2M in 2022; \$9M in 2023	\$50M starting in 2023
Green Party of Ontario:	Increase funding for local libraries and ramp up publicity around the important community programming that they offer.			
	\$15M/year (2022-23 to 2025-26)			

Details

PC Party of Ontario:

The Ontario government released their [2022 Budget on April 28, 2022](#). No new library commitments are mentioned in this budget, and OLA is working to confirm whether existing provincial funding in support of public libraries is maintained at the previous level. The budget does highlight the previously announced investments in broadband upgrades at libraries:

Details:

- “Supporting broadband upgrades at approximately 50 libraries with a provincial investment of \$4.85 million through the Connecting Public Libraries initiative.” (p. 45)

Ontario NDP:

The [NDP platform](#) was released on April 25, 2022. Their [costed platform](#) was released on May 16, 2022. The NDP have included the following commitments regarding libraries in their platform:

Details:

- **"COMMITMENT Increase provincial funding for brick-and-mortar libraries and digital library services**, recognizing the vital role local public libraries play in our communities." (p. 41)
 - Estimated Costing: \$14 million in 2022-23; \$21 million in 2023-24 and 2024-25
- Create an Ontario digital public library
 - Estimated Costing: \$6 million in 2022-23; \$9 million in 2023-24 and 2024-25
- Support First Nations libraries
 - Estimate Costing: \$2 million in 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25

Ontario Liberal Party:

The Ontario [Liberal Party costed platform](#) was released on May 9, 2022. The Liberal Party has included the following commitments regarding public libraries in their platform:

Details:

- **"We'll invest in digitizing Ontario's public libraries – giving all Ontarians access to free e-learning, online resources and more e-books."** (p. 78)
 - Estimated Costing: \$2 million in 2022; \$9 million/year starting in 2023
- **"We'll also partner to expand and strengthen Ontario's Indigenous Institutes to increase opportunities for diplomas, certificates and degrees in culturally enriched settings with permanent funding and invest \$2 million in First Nations Public Libraries since only 30% of First Nations reserves have libraries."** (p. 76)
 - Estimated Costing: \$2 million/year starting in 2023

- **“We’ll build or repair crucial community rural infrastructure like libraries, arenas and other community spaces through a new \$50 million Rural Development Fund – using it to also encourage the co-location of schools and community services.”** (p. 79)
 - Estimated Costing: \$50 million/year starting in 2023

Green Party of Ontario:

The [Green Party](#) released their costed platform on May 12, 2022. The Green Party has included the following commitments regarding public libraries in their platform:

Details:

- Increase funding for local libraries and ramp up publicity around the important community programming that they offer. (p. 36)
 - Estimated Costing: \$15 million over the next 4 fiscal years (2022-23 to 2025-26)