

November 10, 2022

Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy
MPP Laurie Scott, Chair
Whitney Block, Room 1405
Toronto, ON M7A 1A2

Submitted via email to: schicp@ola.org

RE: Submission of the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL) and the Ontario Library Association (OLA) regarding Bill 23, *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*

On behalf of Ontario's public libraries, the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL) and the Ontario Library Association (OLA) welcome the opportunity to provide this submission to the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy as the committee considers Bill 23, the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022*. In particular, we want to highlight the importance of development charges in supporting public library capital needs in growing communities across Ontario in the context of Bill 23.

In recent years, our members have increasingly expressed to us the important contribution that development charges make in ensuring that public libraries can continue to make the critical capital investments required to serve our growing population. This need will only continue to increase as the province achieves its ambitious target to build 1.5 million new homes over the next decade.

In addition to helping support the construction of new, modern public library facilities to serve expanding communities, development charges support a wide range of important public library capital needs, including:

- Expansion and retrofitting of existing public library facilities to fulfill new community needs or access to technology;
- Technology assets in new or significantly upgraded facilities for public use; and
- Day one lending collections for new public libraries.

The Ontario Government has recognized the vital importance of ensuring that public libraries can continue to meet growth-related capital needs. In 2020, the Ontario Government made the historic decision to amend the *Development Charges Act* to make public library capital costs a fully cost-recoverable eligible service. For the first time, municipalities and public libraries could work together to fully fund capital projects through development charges, without placing additional financial burdens on tight public library budgets to raise a portion of the capital funding required. FOPL and OLA strongly supported this important amendment as an unequivocal recognition of the role that public libraries perform as critical community infrastructure in municipalities of all sizes across the Ontario.

As the committee considers the proposed changes to the *Development Charges Act* included in Bill 23, FOPL and OLA urge the Ontario Government to ensure that any such changes not adversely undermine the much-needed contribution that development charges have made and

continue to make in helping to maintain strong, sustainable public libraries for current and future residents alike.

Sincerely,



Shelagh Paterson
Executive Director, Ontario Library
Association
spaterson@accessola.com
416-363-3388 ext. 224



Dina-Marie Stevens
Executive Director, Federation
of Ontario Public Libraries
dinastevens@fopl.ca
416-873-8139