

Vickery Bowles

From: MTCS Correspondence (MTCS) <MtrMcIco@ontario.ca>
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To: Vickery Bowles
Subject: Response from the Honourable Michael Coteau, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport

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January 8, 2016

Ms. Vickery Bowles
City Librarian
Toronto Public Library
vbowles@torontopubliclibrary.ca

Dear Ms. Bowles:

Thank you for your submission regarding the Culture Strategy consultations and for taking the time to share your organization's thoughts about the importance of Ontario's public libraries.

Our government recognizes the valuable contributions of public libraries in serving the needs of their communities. Since 2003, we have provided more than \$500 million in support to libraries through operating grants, capital funding and a series of targeted investments.

Over the last several months, we have heard from thousands of Ontarians about their values and priorities for culture. People have participated through 11 public Town Halls, community conversations, the Culture Talks digital platform, and through written submissions responding to the Discussion Paper. We held a separate engagement process developed in collaboration with First Nation, Métis and Inuit partners and communities.

We are now reviewing all of the comments and submissions that we have received, including the joint submission from the Ontario Library Association and the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries, as well as several other submissions noting the key role public libraries play in supporting Ontario's culture. In the coming year, we will release a report highlighting the key themes from the consultations, and we will post a draft Culture Strategy for public input before it is finalized. Comments received through submissions like yours will help us develop a vision and priorities for culture that truly reflect our province's diversity and vibrancy.

We will continue to work with our library branches, and with our municipal and First Nations partners to strengthen the public library system. Once again, thank you for sharing your views with us and for supporting Ontario's libraries.

Sincerely,

Michael Coteau
Minister