



# Committee Report to Council

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Date: October 17, 2024

To: **Mayor and Council.**

Name and title: Garth Frizzell, Chair, Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs

Subject: Strong Cities Membership

Attachment(s): Strong Cities 2024 Information Guide

## Recommendation(s):

THAT Council DIRECT staff to apply for membership in the Strong Cities Network as described in the report titled, "Strong Cities Membership", from the Chair of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs, dated October 17, 2024.

## Purpose:

At the October 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs a resolution was made to recommend Council consider joining the Strong Cities Network. This report is intended to communicate that recommendation and to provide additional background. This recommendation is made, in part as, the City of Prince George is a signatory to a Canadian Commission for UNESCO's program called the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities and joining the Strong Cities Network is believed to help the City of Prince George meet its commitments under that program.

## Background:

Launched in 2015, the Strong Cities Network is an independent global network of more than 220 cities and other local governments dedicated to addressing all forms of hate, extremism and polarization at a local level.

Membership is open to all cities: a term used to refer to and encompass any sub-regional authorities, including counties, districts, boroughs, towns, villages and municipalities as examples. Membership in the network is free of charge.

Benefits of membership, as advertised by the network, include:

1. **Connecting and interacting** with mayors and other city leaders and practitioners within and across different national and regional contexts; opportunities for cities to learn from each other.

2. **Elevating the voices of mayors and other local leaders at regional and international levels**, so that national and multilateral approaches are connected to and better reflect local realities.
3. **Supporting cities to develop or strengthen programmes** to prevent and respond to extremism, hate and polarization, which leverage the range of local services, interests, networks and skills that exist within cities.
4. **Enhancing engagement between cities and young people**, so that youth have the skills, confidence and opportunity to engage with local governments and that cities in turn have the frameworks, understanding and tools for policy and practice that is participatory and representative.
5. **Priority invitations and access** to Strong Cities Network Global Summits and events, targeted capacity-building support and the Network's Technical Support Fund.
6. **Eligibility to serve on the International Steering Committee** and drive the Network forward.

If Council supports the recommendation, staff will connect with the Strong Cities Network to begin the process. Details of the process are not known; however, it is anticipated that the process will not be onerous on resources.

#### Strategic Priorities:

Membership in the Strong Cities Network may be considered under multiple strategic pillars pending how membership is leveraged by the City.

#### Summary and conclusion:

This report communicates the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs recommendation to Council to join the Strong Cities Network.

#### Respectfully submitted:

Councillor Garth Frizzell, Chair, Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs

Prepared by Eric Depenau, Director, Administrative Services

#### Approved:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting date: 2024 / 11 / 04