



NICK MANTAS | CITY COUNCILLOR

WARD 22, SCARBOROUGH-AGINCOURT

November 24, 2025

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of Executive Committee,

RE: Report from the Mayor's Designate to the Metropolis World Congress in Seoul, Korea

In September 2025, I attended the Metropolis World Congress in Seoul, Korea as the Mayor's Designate. The Congress marked Metropolis's 40th anniversary and highlighted the importance of strengthening global collaboration between cities to meet common challenges.

As part of my participation, I attended sessions, activities and site visits organized by Metropolis, on topics related to the role of cities in addressing shared challenges, as well as championing more inclusive, sustainable, and future-ready urban centres.

A report of these engagements, a program for the Metropolis World Congress and the list of participants are attached to this letter.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. City Council receive the report from Councillor Nick Mantas in Attachment 1 for information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Mantas".

Councillor Nick Mantas

Mayor's Designate to Metropolis World Congress

Attachments

Attachment 1 — Report from the Mayor's Designate to the Metropolis World Congress

Attachment 2 — Metropolis World Congress Program

Attachment 3 — Metropolis World Congress List of Participants

...2

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Attachment 1 – Report from Mayor’s Designate to Metropolis World Congress

In September 2025, I attended the Metropolis World Congress in Seoul, Korea as the Mayor’s Designate. The Congress marked Metropolis’s 40th anniversary and highlighted the importance of strengthening global collaboration between cities to meet common challenges.

The City has been a member of the Metropolis network for over three decades. It brings together over 160 of the largest cities in the world, encompassing over 700 million inhabitants worldwide and spanning various regions including Africa, Asia, Europe, North and Latin America. The network, which is the metropolitan section of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), serves as a hub where cities can engage on issues related to sustainability, social cohesion, governance, future planning and gender equality, among other topics.

As part of the City’s coordinated actions to engage more actively on municipal multilateral forums, concerted efforts have been made to leverage the City’s membership on the network more fulsomely. For the first time in several years, City officials participated at this year’s World Congress, and last year’s annual meeting in São Paulo, Brazil.

Beyond the triannual Congress and annual meetings, Metropolis provides a forum and sharing platform through its Solutions Labs programs, which bring together small cohorts of municipal subject matter experts to analyze common challenges, identify best practices and establish a global community of practice. Since the beginning of this year, the City has participated in four Labs which explored topics including: Place-Based Innovation, Stray Cats and Dogs, Gender Equality and, Foresight. The latter took place concurrently with the World Congress in Seoul, and was attended by the City’s Chief Planner, Jason Thorne.

Participation at the World Congress provided an opportunity for Toronto representatives to engage in discussions with several international counterparts on sustainable, inclusive and resilient urban development. Additionally, events were held in collaboration with the Seoul Smart Life Week which highlighted Seoul’s vision of the future of inclusiveness and innovation through smart technologies. Cutting-edge technologies such as AI-based services, robotics, and mobility were showcased.

Toronto’s international activities, including its participation in Metropolis and its associated activities, are guided by the International Policy Framework (IPF) adopted by City Council in 2002. The IPF aims to position Toronto as a diverse, economically dynamic, creative and caring global urban centre which respects human rights and champions local democratic government. Additionally, the updated International Alliance Program places an emphasis on engagement through membership organizations, or networks, as a forum to build relationships, exchange knowledge, promote City values and priorities, and support business development.



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Metropolis World Congress – Seoul, South Korea

September 29 to October 1, 2025

Participation

- Attended various sessions addressing topics such as the role of cities and governance models to promote transparency, accountability, inclusion and gender equality and ensuring a balanced urban ecosystem and improving social cohesion. Also joined a site visit on AI Transit Solutions which showcased Smart Stations.
- Participated in the Metropolis Annual Board of Directors meeting to see what opportunities are being offered to Toronto to leverage its network membership.
- Leveraged joint program offering to attend the Seoul Smart Life Week, as well as a site visit to the 5th Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism, which explored how architecture and urban environments can be made more enjoyable and engaging.

Bilateral Meetings

- Meeting with Laia Bonet, Deputy Mayor for the 2030 Agenda, the Digital Transition and International Relations, City of Barcelona
- Meeting with Maciej Fijałkowski, City Clerk, City of Warsaw
- Meeting with Hugh Lim, Executive Director, Centre for Liveable Cities, Singapore
- Meeting with Jordi Vaquer, Secretary General, Metropolis
- Additionally, interactions took place with representatives from the following cities: Doha, Qatar; Dublin, Ireland; Guangzhou, China; Istanbul, Türkiye; Madrid, Spain; Rabat, Morocco; Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; Seoul, Korea; and, Turin, Italy, among others.

Opportunities & Outcomes

- Consider whether the City should explore securing a Board member seat for 2027-onward to help shape and guide the direction of future network initiatives.
- Continue engaging with representatives that the City interacted with throughout the Congress to identify opportunities for exchange of best practices on topics including: seniors programs, initiatives to tackle loneliness, mobility, cyber security, fifteen minute cities, as well as designing inclusive and innovative public spaces.

...4

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Next Steps

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- Identify a City participant for the Metropolis General Assembly which will take place on June 26, 2026, in Rabat, Morocco. The Assembly will aim to approve a new Strategic Action Plan and elect the members of the Board of Directors, who will in turn elect the President and other governing positions for the 2027–2029 period.
- Staff from the City Clerk's Office – Strategic Protocol and External Relations will continue to engage with Metropolis representatives to identify future knowledge exchange opportunities through Solutions Labs and other initiatives.

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