

The Strong Cities Network is an independent global network of 240+ cities dedicated to supporting local government-led efforts to prevent hate, extremism, and polarization within a human rights framework.

Strong Cities facilitates the development and exchange of good practices and sustainable city-led prevention policies, programs, and practices. Through the Network, local government leaders and practitioners collaborate nationally, regionally, and globally through exchanges, workshops, and dialogues, sharing their knowledge and accessing expertise and resources to support them in taking steps to increase social cohesion and community resilience. Strong Cities is committed to ensuring its activities are driven by and tailored to the needs and priorities of cities and the communities within them.

North America Regional Hub

Launched in August 2024 during a US Mayoral Retreat in Pittsburgh, the North America Regional Hub is building and deepening the Network's engagement with more than 30 current member cities, and many more in the membership pipeline, in the Hub's initial focus areas of Canada and the United States. By channeling support through Regional Hubs, Strong Cities is able to offer local government leaders and practitioners a consistent and sustained resource to advance their prevention efforts and leverage the benefits of the global network.

Coordinated by the Strong Cities Management Unit, the Regional Hubs are operated by small, dynamic teams of local staff in each region, harnessing the Network's global resources and expertise at the local level, accessing local perspectives, responding to specific city needs, and engaging often overlooked local prevention stakeholders.

Five Pillars of Activity

Our North American Regional Hub works across five pillars, with activities informed by the needs and priorities of member cities across the region.

Empowering Mayors and Elected Local Leaders

Sharing of good practices, decision points, and actions city leaders can take to proactively build socially cohesive, strong and resilient cities, and respond to threats, tensions, and violence.

City-Led Action in Prevention

Identifying city needs and the crucial roles local government can play in prevention, including as a foundation for building trust and reducing inter-communal tensions.

Peer-to-Peer Learning

Exchanges of city-led prevention models, strategies, and experiences from across the region, and the broader global network, to inspire local action.

Partnerships for Prevention and Response

Models and approaches through which local governments can build trusted relationships and strengthen cooperation with civil society and private sector actors to become co-producers in prevention and response.

Data-Driven Threat Analysis and Mitigation

Approaches that can support cities in taking a data-driven approach to understanding and addressing local challenges, risks, vulnerabilities, and needs in both online and offline contexts.

Strong Cities works with all sub-national authorities, from cities to rural towns, states, provinces, county and other regional governments. 'Cities' is used as a broad term for all variations of sub-national authorities.

The Strong Cities Network Management Unit is hosted by the Institute for Strategic Dialogue. Copyright © Institute for Strategic Dialogue 2024.

Catalyzing City-led Prevention & Response in North America

Informed by the priority themes and concerns identified by cities across the region, with a particular focus on leveraging existing city-level frameworks, resources, and structures, and informed by the practices and experiences of cities across the Network, the North America Regional Hub's initial focus areas will include:

- **Mayoral leadership** in preventing and responding to hate, extremism, and polarization, strengthening social cohesion, and promoting civil discourse and compassion.
- **Strengthening local government capacities** through three levels of engagement: 1. tools and guidance for mayors and city leaders; 2. capacity-building for city practitioners; and 3. sharing of city-led, multidisciplinary prevention models that leverage existing service delivery for violence prevention and public safety.
- **Threat analysis and monitoring** across the online and offline environments, leveraging expertise of the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD), which hosts the Strong Cities Management Unit.
- Identifying and sharing **good practices** across the Strong Cities Network.
- **Building trust between cities and local communities** – the foundation of sustainable prevention and social cohesion – through the design and delivery of discrete programs that engage faith communities, young people, overlooked communities, and civil society organizations.
- **Navigating local impacts of global crises**, such as conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East, migration, and mis/disinformation and conspiracy narratives, including those related to elections, which can fuel offline hate, polarization, and political violence.

How the Hub Operates

The Hub provides support, resources, and access to:

- **Mayoral and city-focused** events and convenings
- **Capacity-building/training** activities, including developing local prevention models for small- and mid-sized cities
- **Mapping cities'** evolving needs and priorities
- Identifying and sharing **good practices and lessons learned** across the Strong Cities Network, including from our Transatlantic Dialogue Initiative
- **Thematic** briefings and webinars, including under our Global Crises, Local Impacts Initiative
- **Help Desk** function to provide timely, targeted support for cities



Donors & Partners

Strong Cities prioritizes partnerships across all its initiatives and programs. In North America, in addition to our engagement with member cities and engaged non-member cities, we are proud to partner with and receive financial and/or in-kind support from organizations such as: Boston Children's Hospital, Canadian Heritage, Canadian Centre for Safer Communities, Eradicate Hate Global Summit, Excelerate Foundation, Foundation for a Path Forward, ISD United States, JewishColumbus, Joyce and Irving Goldman Family Foundation, National League of Cities, Office of the Attorney General of British Columbia, Ohio State University, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh Penguins Foundation, Prevention Practitioners Network, Public Safety Canada, US Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and University of Illinois-Chicago School of Medicine. Cities and government/NGOs interested in supporting this work at a local, state/provincial, national, and/or regional level are encouraged to contact the North America Regional Hub.

Connect with the Hub

For more information about the Strong Cities North America Regional Hub, or to connect with the Hub team, email: na.hub@strongcitiesnetwork.org.