



North America Regional Impact

**Strong Cities
Network**

10 Years
Stronger Together

Unleashing the Potential of Cities in Preventing and Strengthening Social Cohesion in North America

How Bringing Local Governments Together is Catalyzing Action

Introduction

Since before its formal [launch](#) in August 2024, the Strong Cities North America Regional Hub has been fostering city-led efforts to prevent hate and strengthen social cohesion across Canada and the United States. The Hub's work, driven by priorities and needs of the cities themselves, has included:

- **Building Local Government:** Multi-actor coordination and local stakeholder convenings encourage increased cooperation and coordination within cities to advance local prevention efforts and bring in new relevant stakeholders to prevention efforts, in line with the [public health approach](#) to prevention.
- **Promoting City-to-City and Peer-to-Peer Learning:** Regional and transatlantic peer-to-peer learning opportunities serve as a platform for sharing practical city-led approaches and strategies for addressing shared challenges while bringing global learnings to the local level.
- **Operating Sustained Technical Assistance Initiatives:** Sustained engagement with select cities combine peer learning with technical assistance, informed by practices of cities around the globe, to help cities build on existing and/or develop new prevention policies, programs and practices.

Leveraging the Hub's strategic partnerships in both Canada and the United States, Strong Cities has expanded its global engagement to include more than 290 cities with 38 in the United States, 12 in Canada and dozens of other cities that are not yet members.

The Strong Cities North America Hub's impact results, in part, from its ability to provide support that is tailored to the needs and priorities of individual cities in the region, working with them to increase their prevention capacity and from connecting these cities with each other and the broader, global Strong Cities Network to provide access to a wealth of promising practices, lessons learned and shared experiences.

30+ local, regional, and virtual convenings across continents, including Transatlantic Dialogues, since August 2024



50 member cities across North America since 2015, with membership *doubling* between June 2023 and November 2025

Building Local Government Capacity

Working directly with local officials, Strong Cities delivers city-specific support to build local government capacity to prevent and respond to threats to social cohesion and enhance public safety through convenings with local stakeholders and offering insights into both the local hate and targeted violence landscapes and approaches to prevention. Strong Cities convenings are often the first-time assembled government and community-based stakeholders have gathered to discuss hate prevention and social cohesion. This helps catalyse city-wide action and collaboration that would likely not exist without Strong Cities' involvement.

Local Convenings

Strengthening Community Cohesion and Countering Online Hate – Operationalizing Local Prevention Efforts in Edmonton

To help the city of Edmonton (Alberta, Canada) develop new tools to manage the rapidly evolving hate landscape, Strong Cities hosted a [workshop](#) in October 2024 that brought together Edmonton city leaders, community-based organizations, law enforcement, and practitioners to examine Edmonton's hate landscape and discuss community-based solutions for strengthening cohesion across the city. This marked the first time such a diverse range of anti-hate actors across Edmonton had been gathered. City officials left this event with concrete recommendations on how to build a whole-of-society approach to prevention, including how to refine a draft strategy for a data-driven online early warning system for online hate monitoring that the Mayor's office has developed.

Boise Community Cohesion Roundtable

The February 2025 Strong Cities Community Cohesion Roundtable in Boise (Idaho, USA) was the first time that the heads of the different local government departments – from community engagement to parks and recreation to libraries – along with the chief of police, had gathered for the expressed purpose of discussing how to prevent hate and maintain social cohesion in the midst of a series of cascading local, national and global crises. From that meeting alone, intra-city partnerships began to form with departments sharing ideas on how to collaborate on new prevention and social cohesion initiatives.

“During a time of increased national polarization and division, Cincinnati is grateful for the opportunity to join the Strong Cities Network to focus on addressing hate and extremism at the local level. We look forward to engaging with subject matter experts, peer cities and local community partners to collectively engage in this important work.”

Anna Albi, City Councilmember, Cincinnati, Ohio

City-Led Hate Prevention in Times of Global Crises – The Brampton Experience

To help municipalities across the Peel Region navigate the challenges to social cohesion arising from ongoing global crises, Strong Cities hosted a [two-day workshop](#) in June 2025 in **Brampton (Ontario, Canada)** that brought together municipal officials and staff, civil society organizations, and prevention practitioners from Brampton and the wider Peel Region in Ontario, Canada. The event explored how each level of government, alongside community-based partners, can operationalize a multi-level, whole-of-society approach to preventing hate, extremism and social polarization, and given Brampton's large and diverse religious communities, particular emphasis was placed on the critical role of municipality-led efforts in reducing tensions between faith groups through sustained relationships with faith leaders and communities in both times of stability and crisis.

Local Insights

Leveraging Threat Analysis from the Institute of Strategic Dialogue (ISD)

The Hub is leveraging the capabilities of ISD, its host organisation, to provide city-specific, real-time threat detection, monitoring and analysis in order to create and deliver contextualized threat briefings for individual cities. More than 20 in North America have so far received individual briefings and many more have benefited from threat overviews presented at webinars and in-person events.

Introduction to Prevention Webinar Series

In November 2024, Strong Cities launched a [webinar series](#), An Introduction to City-Led Prevention of Hate and Targeted Violence, focused on how local governments in the United States and Canada can get more involved in approaches to address hate and polarization. To date, the webinar series has reached over 600 attendees, including mayors, city officials and subject matter experts. The success of this series inspired the launch of a Canada-specific webinar series in December 2025 to draw attention to new research and/or practical tools that may have relevance for local governments and their partners across Canada.

Promoting City-to-City and Peer Learning

Cities across North America have repeatedly emphasised the value they find in peer-to-peer engagements and learning and other engagements with fellow cities. Accordingly, the North America Regional Hub has provided city-to-city learning opportunities, including regional and transatlantic, to foster an environment of collaboration and sharing among local leaders and government officials from different cities, regions and countries. With a unique focus on addressing global threats at the local level, Strong Cities brings insights from around the world that cities would otherwise not have access to. Mayors and other officials from more than 50 cities across North America have so far participated in and benefited from the numerous in-person opportunities the Hub has facilitated.

Network Convenings

Preventing Hate & Building Social Cohesion Amid Global Crises – Unleashing the Potential of Cities in Western Canada & the Western United States

In October 2024, in the City of Victoria, British Columbia, [Strong Cities hosted](#) more than 65 mayors, council members, officials, and experts from cities across the western United States and Canada for the first exchange of its kind. Meeting topics ranged from addressing underreporting of hate crimes to building trust with and across communities and to strengthening prevention-related cooperation between federal, state/provincial, municipal and community-based stakeholders. Ideas generated at convenings like this one are vital to the development of new resources for all members of the Strong Cities Network.

Global Crises, Local Impacts: A Roundtable for Mayors and other Local Government Officials on Threats to Social Cohesion & How Cities Can Respond

In April 2024, [the Hub assembled](#) more than 20 mayors and other local government leaders in New York City to share experiences, lessons learned and good practices for maintaining social cohesion in the midst of the Israel-Gaza conflict and other global crises. Cities at this convening spanned all sizes, geographies and demographics. Learning from both shared and differing experiences at events like these is an invaluable way for city officials and local leaders to navigate the impacts of global crises on their communities and to feel like they are not alone in facing these challenges.

Countering Online Harms in British Columbia – The Role of Municipalities in Preventing and Responding to Online Threats to Social Cohesion

To support municipalities across British Columbia in addressing the evolving landscape of online harms threatening social cohesion, Strong Cities hosted a [workshop](#) in September 2025 in Vancouver (BC, Canada) that brought together elected leaders and community-based partners from across the province with civil society and provincial practitioners to explore how digital threats manifest in local communities and explore municipality-led solutions mitigating the offline impacts of online harms. Panels focused on steps and approaches that are being implemented across communities, exposing participants to a range of options that may work in their local contexts and unique needs. The event served as the launch of Strong Cities' Prevention Academy for British Columbia Municipalities on Countering Online Harms, which seeks to operationalize these insights and practices across the province.

Impact Highlight – Honouring survivors of tragedy

The July 4, 2022, Highland Park shooting sent shockwaves through the local community. In the years since as the City looks toward healing, the mayor drew upon her experiences traveling with the Strong Cities Network and witnessing memorials in other cities like the Utoya Memorial in Norway first hand. These experiences shaped and guided her as she undertook the process of memorializing tragedy in her own city.

“[Strong Cities] has been a great opportunity for us to learn, and I think the peer-to-peer aspect of this is obviously one of the most basic components of learning... we’ve really seen some extraordinary examples of how to do this work and how we can adapt it to a local Victoria, BC key perspective.”

Marianne Alto, Mayor of Victoria, British Columbia

Global Insights

Global Crises, Local Impacts Webinar Series

In the absence of an existing playbook for mayors and cities, Strong Cities launched the [Global Crises, Local Impacts initiative](#) in November 2023 to provide guidance and opportunities to share and learn from other cities as they navigate the local impacts of global crises. With a new webinar each month, the series has convened more than 1,200 mayors, local leaders, city officials, and subject matter experts, covering topics relating to social cohesion such as the impacts of Israel-Gaza crisis, using urban design for violence prevention and city-university collaborations in prevention. City leaders and elected officials leave these webinars with concrete practices they can implement in their own cities to foster social cohesion and prevent hate and social polarization.

As Strong Cities continues to deepen and expand its engagement with municipalities across Canada and the United States, it is committed to ensuring local governments and community-based partners have access not only to the latest research and analysis of the evolving hate and extremist trends impacting them, but to the tools and other resources needed to address these threats most effectively.

A Toolkit for Manitoba Municipalities: Addressing Anti-Government Hate and Harassment

Responding to a request from the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) to assist their members with the rise in anti-government hate targeting both local elected officials and municipal staff, Strong Cities leveraged its global network of promising practices to produce a toolkit of 130 practical recommendations for steps individuals and councils can take to prevent, counter and respond to anti-government hate and harassment. Designed for use by Manitoba municipalities, it nonetheless would not have been possible without the insights drawn from Strong Cities’ members and partners around the world.

Sustained Technical Assistance Initiatives

Leveraging both Strong Cities local capacity building and network information sharing approaches, the North America Hub works with cities to deepen their understanding of and commitment to hate and violence prevention. Through sustained interaction with cities, the Hub is able to assist with policy and programme development and rollout while charting progress over time. These initiatives allow cities to enhance whole-of-city coordination and collaboration and develop policies and programs tailored to the unique needs and priorities in each city as threats evolve.

Impact Highlight – Supporting Council Members

When a city council member from a Strong Cities member was doxed by a neo-Nazi group, the Hub provided support and guidance on how to respond and began monitoring online spaces for any future violations. When another Strong Cities member city council was struggling with how to maintain social cohesion in the face of a divisive resolution calling for an Israel-Gaza ceasefire, city council members were able to reach out to the Strong Cities North America help desk to for guidance on how to respond and manage tensions.

“As a proud member city of the Strong Cities Network since 2016 which knows all too well the impact that targeted violence can have on our residents, we are excited to partner with Strong Cities to develop and implement a comprehensive prevention hate and extremism framework that responds to the needs and concerns of our communities.”

Tim Kelly, Mayor of Chattanooga, (Tennessee, USA)

Developing Multi-Actor Local Prevention Frameworks

In October 2023, the Strong Cities Network, in partnership with [Boston Children's Hospital](#), the [University of Illinois Chicago](#) and the [Prevention Practitioners Network](#), launched a two-year project to develop local [local multi-actor prevention frameworks](#) in several small and mid-sized cities across the United States. The process began with recruiting diverse, multi-actor working groups that include a wide range of stakeholders, including government, education, law enforcement, non-profits, social service providers, faith leaders, community groups, and others. The Hub then conducted 'needs and vulnerabilities assessments' tailored for each city – including community surveys – and collaborated with the working group to identify state and local resources that can be leveraged in the furtherance of prevention efforts. The Hub worked with each city to identify prevention priorities and begin development and implementation of local prevention frameworks and action plans. The project concluded in July 2025, and lessons learned from this work have been captured in a series of [Policy Briefs](#). In October 2025, the Hub published [A Toolkit for Cities: Building a Multi-Actor Local Prevention Framework](#), a step-by-step guide for cities interested in developing and implementing a Local Prevention Framework that is grounded in public health principles.

Prevention Academies

In October 2024, together with the [National League of Cities](#), the Hub launched the [Prevention Academy US](#) to help city leaders and other local government officials better understand and identify threats, needs and vulnerabilities related to hate and targeted violence in their communities and operationalize a public health approach to prevent and respond to them. Through the Academy, Strong Cities engaged, eight cities offering learning modules, one-on-one technical support with prevention subject matter experts to advance the city's work in developing and operationalizing a whole-of-city approach to promoting social cohesion and preventing hate-motivated violence. Technical support included Peer Dialogue sessions, access to the Strong Cities' crisis help desk, a living library of online resources, network member cities and subject matter experts for support in the application of learnings. In its first iteration, the Academy directly engaged 38 city officials including mayors, city managers, council members, law enforcement, and emergency management personnel as well as city staff working in public health, communications and community engagement departments. The second iteration of the Prevention Academy US launched in Fall 2025 featured a ten-week virtual course with learning modules and technical support to over 50 city officials across 37 cities.

In April 2025, the Hub launched [Prevention Academy Canada](#) to assist Canadian Municipalities to address the rising levels of hate, social polarization and discrimination their communities are experiencing. With funding from Public Safety Canada and in collaboration with the Foundation for a Path Forward and Canadian Centre for Safer Communities, Prevention Academy Canada engages nine-municipalities across four provinces to train municipal officials and civil society leaders on whole-of-society approaches to hate, extremism and social polarization prevention and the benefits of a public health approach to prevent and respond to hate and extremism-related threats. Like Prevention Academy US, it offers monthly peer-to-peer dialogue opportunities and webinars that deliver innovative prevention practices across a range of topics and access to a Help Desk and local subject-matter experts to receive rapid advice on emerging crises. In response to participant feedback, this Prevention Academy has taken a particular interest in rising levels of incivility directed at local government officials and how it impacts effective local governance.

In October 2025, the Hub launched its third academy in North America, the [Prevention Academy for British Columbia Municipalities on Countering Online Harms](#). Prevention Academy BC, with financial support from the Roadburg Foundation, uniquely offers two tracks: a General Track open to all municipalities, as well as relevant federal, provincial and community partners across the province, and a Deep Dive Track that offers customized training, unique peer-learning opportunities and support to eight British Columbia municipalities over 20 months. The General Track has reached over 25 municipalities across the province thus far with its bimonthly webinars and online resources. The Deep Dive Track also features a technical support fund to deliver capacity-building resources directly to municipalities and support new deliverables and in-person convenings.

Impact Highlight – Mayoral Retreat

Strong Cities partners with the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary to host an annual Mayoral Retreat, which in 2024 and 2025 gathered more than 100 mayors and other city leaders from around the country to share and learn from each other. For the mayor of Forest Park, Illinois – a Strong Cities member – their experience participating in the crisis response tabletop exercise at the 2024 retreat helped them lead their city's response to a mass shooting mere weeks later.

Expanding Reach Through Partnership

In order to further its mission of assisting cities interested in addressing hate and promoting social cohesion, Strong Cities, through its North America Regional Hub, has entered into strategic partnerships with key networks and organizations in both the United States and Canada. Strategic partnerships with organizations like the [Association of Manitoba Municipalities](#), the Foundation for a Path Forward, the [Muhammad Ali Center](#), the [National League of Cities](#), and the [Pittsburgh Theological Seminary](#) (PTS), allow Strong Cities to combine the reach of its global network and experience in catalyzing city-led action with the local knowledge and subject area expertise of city networks and educational and other non-profits

For example, in 2024, Strong Cities and PTS formed a strategic partnership to combine the former's strength in equipping local governments and their elected leaders to build cohesive, resilient, and inclusive cities with the latter's legacy of neighborhood-based theology and moral leadership. This partnership has produced two mayoral retreats on the PTS campus, gatherings which have generated three key insights, which underscore the importance of this collaboration in times of increased division and social polarization.

In early 2026, Strong Cities will expand its partnership with PTS to launch a webinar series on Faith & Civic Leadership for Healing and Cohesion, designed to equip mayors and city leaders to better understand the vital role faith communities and faith-based institutions can play in addressing hatred, polarization, and division in their cities. Across three webinars, participants will explore how faith communities can serve as essential collaborators in rebuilding civic trust, fostering belonging, and promoting shared values across diverse communities.

About Strong Cities

Strong Cities is an independent global network of more than 290 cities and other local governments dedicated to addressing all forms of hate, extremism and polarization, while promoting a human rights-based prevention framework. Through in-person and online convenings, exchanges and trainings, Strong Cities facilitates sharing and learning among mayors, other local leaders and municipal-level practitioners. By doing so, it helps local authorities leverage their full potential in prevention, while complementing national, regional and global efforts. Learn more:

www.strongcitiesnetwork.org.




For more information about the Strong Cities North America Regional Hub, or to connect with the Hub team, email:

na.regionalhub@strongcitiesnetwork.org.

**Strong Cities
Network**

10 Years
Stronger Together

info@strongcitiesnetwork.org
strongcitiesnetwork.org

 Strong_Cities
 Strong Cities Network
 Strong Cities Network