

The Strong Cities Network and the Association of Manitoba Municipalities Launch a New Toolkit Supporting Manitoba Municipalities to Address Anti-Government Hate and Harassment

TORONTO, ONTARIO – The Strong Cities Network and the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) today launched [*A Toolkit for Manitoba Municipalities: Addressing Anti-Government Hate and Harassment*](#) to support local elected officials and municipal staff across Manitoba as they respond to rising forms of anti-government and anti-establishment hate and harassment. The announcement was made by Kathy Valentino, AMM President and City of Thompson Councillor, during a keynote at the Strong Cities Network Sixth Global Summit, which brings together over 400 mayors, local government officials, civil society organizations, national governments, private sector stakeholders and practitioners from over 130 cities worldwide, including nearly 40 across Canada.

This toolkit comes at a critical time when local elected officials and municipal staff in Manitoba and across Canada are facing increased incivility, hate and harassment. Denys Volkov, AMM Executive Director and Kathy Valentino, AMM President and City of Thompson Councillor, report that their members are experiencing disrupted council meetings, hate-filled comment sections on municipal social media pages, and threatening language directed at council and staff serving their communities. These experiences mirror a global rise in anti-government sentiment and extremism that Strong Cities has observed across its 290+ member cities.

The Toolkit provides 130 concrete and practical recommendations for mayors, reeves, councillors, chief administrative officers, city managers, department directors, and other local elected officials and staff, most of which serve small or rural populations with limited administrative capacity. Recommendations are organised into thematic sections, with dedicated guidance for elected officials and for municipal staff, enabling users to identify guidance relevant to their roles and local circumstances. Topics include:

- The Causes of Anti-Government Sentiment
- Protecting Candidates for Local Office, Harassment of Municipal Officials
- Online Harassment
- Online Misinformation and Disinformation
- Meeting Disruptions
- Identity-Based Hate

The Toolkit was informed by in-person convenings during AMM's Spring Convention in April 2025; an online survey of AMM members conducted by the University of Manitoba's Centre for Social Science Research and Policy; an online survey of Strong Cities Network North American and European members; subject-matter experts consultations; effective practices from municipalities and networks across Canada and internationally; and original research from the Institute of Strategic Dialogue. The development of this Toolkit was supported by the Association of Manitoba Municipalities and CSSRP, and the final product has been endorsed by the Winnipeg Metropolitan Region, Manitoba Municipal Administrators and the Association of Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities.

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Association of Manitoba Municipalities

The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) is an organization of municipal governments in the province of Manitoba, Canada. Representing all of Manitoba's incorporated municipalities, including the City of Winnipeg. The association provides the support and leadership needed to promote strong, functional councils that truly represent the order of government 'closest to the people'.

Strong Cities Network

The Strong Cities Network is an independent global network of 290+ cities and other local governments from across 70 countries dedicated to addressing all forms of hate, extremism, and polarisation, 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 and other local leaders, as well as municipal-level practitioners. By doing so, it helps local authorities leverage their full potential in prevention, while complementing national, regional, and global efforts.