



8 80 Cities  
372-401 Richmond St W (416) 591 7404  
Toronto, Ontario 880cities.org  
Canada M5V 3A8 @880citiesorg

8 80 Cities announces winning Wintermission Cities – Buffalo (NY), Eau Claire (WI), and Leadville (CO) positioned to lead the charge to improve public life and social engagement in winter.

*Embargoed until 9:00 AM EST, Thursday, January 24*

8 80 Cities is pleased to announce the three cities that will participate in the ground breaking two-year Wintermission program: Buffalo, NY, Eau Claire, WI, and Leadville, CO.

All three cities have assembled multidisciplinary teams of city leaders committed to reducing social isolation and improving public life in winter. Representing diverse geographic locations and population sizes, these three cities will set new standards and precedents for winter friendly cities in the United States.

Wintermission aims to combat social isolation and increase levels of physical activity in winter for all residents, no matter their age, ability, socio-economic, or ethnocultural backgrounds. Each city will undertake a process of community engagement, pilot projects, and the development of a unique winter city strategy. The program is led by 8 80 Cities, a non-profit organization based in Toronto, Canada. Wintermission is supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Global Ideas Fund at CAF America.

“We are ecstatic to be working with such fantastic teams in Buffalo, Eau Claire, and Leadville,” says Amanda O’Rourke, Executive Director of 8 80 Cities. “The impressive project teams these cities assembled demonstrate their passion and commitment to being national leaders in combating social isolation and improving public health through strategic investments in winter friendly public spaces.”

In November 2018, 8 80 Cities launched a call for program partners, and challenged U.S cities to assemble diverse teams that would advance the goals of Wintermission. The response was astounding, and 62 cities of all sizes submitted applications. Although only three cities were selected, Wintermission will establish a national network for cities across the country to learn from the actions and strategies of these pilot cities.

Wintermission kicks off with delegates from the pilot cities attending the [Winter Cities Shake-Up 2019](#) currently underway in Saskatoon, Canada. In February 8 80 Cities will begin working with each team to collect feedback and ideas from the community on how public life could be improved in winter. These ideas will inspire a series of winter pilot projects to enliven public spaces, which will be launched in winter 2019-2020.

“Winter is a time when people tend to cut back on social and physical activity, and community life dries up; feelings of isolation are especially acute for people who are new to a community and not indoctrinated to winter sports and activities. That can have a negative impact on health and well-being,”



**8 80 Cities**  
372-401 Richmond St W (416) 591 7404  
Toronto, Ontario 880cities.org  
Canada M5V 3A8 @880citiesorg

said Sharon Roerty, senior program officer at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. “Cities around the world are rolling out some really exciting and creative solutions to turn public spaces into places to gather, socialize and exercise during the cold weather months, and I’m thrilled that these three cities will be bringing some of those promising approaches to the United States.”

Wintermission project partners include the [Children & Nature Network](#), [National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education, and Families](#), [Winter Cities Institute](#), [City of Edmonton](#) and research and public sector advisors from Canada, Sweden, and Denmark.

More information about the project at [www.wintermission.org](http://www.wintermission.org)

#### *About 8 80 Cities*

8 80 Cities is a non-profit organization based in Toronto, Canada. We are dedicated to contributing to the transformation of cities into places where people can walk, bike, access public transit and visit vibrant parks and public places. Our approach is to engage people and communities across multiple sectors to inspire the creation of cities that are easily accessible, safe and enjoyable for all. We achieve our mission through grant projects, advocacy work and our innovative services.

#### *Contact:*

Ryan O’Connor, Director of Programs, 8 80 Cities, 416-591-7404 x2, [roconnor@880cities.org](mailto:roconnor@880cities.org)

###