



Winter Placemaking Toolkit

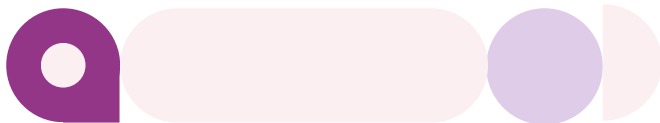
A guide to embracing the
winter months through the lens
of placemaking

Wintertime in Calgary is often seen as a challenging time for communities who want to create and program public spaces. As a result, placemaking projects tend to slow down or halt during the winter months. However, there are methods to create high-quality placemaking initiatives even during the colder months.

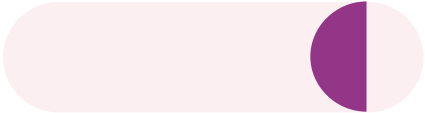
This guide is designed to provide you with a better understanding of how to assess the specific challenges winter provides and reviewing examples of outdoor and indoor winter placemaking initiatives. These examples range in complexity, providing your organization with a variety of options to choose from based on your capacity and resources. This guide also includes a variety of external resources for further learning.

Understandably, winter provides unique challenges to placemaking. These challenges include:

Reduced Time Outside + Reduced Mobility + Reduced Daylight + Negative Public Perception + Weather Fluctuation



TIPS & CONSIDERATIONS



It is important to consider how your community can navigate through these challenges. For example, a contingency and communication plan can help reduce confusion and stress when last minute changes are needed. When planning, consider activities that can easily be adjusted, changing up time or location. Create a plan to notify guests or participants should the time or location of your activity change.

Be sure to provide sufficient lighting, because lighting plays a large role in creating warmth, vibrancy, and a sense of comfort both indoors and outdoors during colder months.

Above all, prioritize opportunities for social connection. Remember that even small events that bring people together can have a meaningful impact on community well-being during winter.

IDEAS TO LEAN INTO: WARMTH, LIGHT, CONNECTION, PLAY

Contingency
Plans



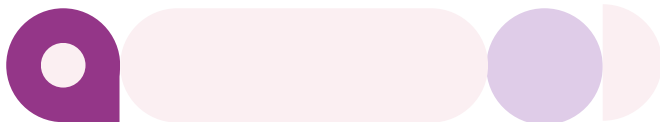
Inside or
Outside



Added
Lighting



Opportunities
for Connection



FROM POP UPS TO FESTIVALS

This toolkit is organized by how complex an idea might be to implement, and whether the initiative would be indoors or outdoors.



POP UPS

Think quick, easy, and fun! These projects should be the quickest to implement with the fewest barriers. Don't shy away from these projects - they can often be a great intro into placemaking for communities!



MODERATE PLANNING

These projects tend to require more planning, but are still within the realm of possibility for an individual or small group. The larger scale of these initiatives have the added benefit of allowing for greater capacity.



COMPLEX

Complex projects sit at the upper end of scale and effort, requiring larger teams and a substantial budget. Oftentimes, the most successful initiatives at this scale are recurring. This helps build identity for both the project and the community.

OUTDOOR: POP UPS

Placemaking doesn't have to be elaborate - oftentimes the quick & easy projects are the most memorable.



Tobogganing

Penetanguishene, Ontario



Tisdale Snow Fort Building Competition

Tisdale, Saskatchewan



Snowman Building Contest

Collingwood, Ontario

Ideas

- Snowball throw
- Snow obstacle course
- Community light walk
- Winter themed scavenger hunt
- String lighting

INDOOR: POP UPS

Placemaking can happen indoors too! These activities bring the joys of community without the challenges of the winter season.



Drop in Craft Nights

Somerville Public Library, New Jersey



Movie Night

Evergreen Brick Works



Deer Run Food Drive

Calgary, Alberta

Ideas

- Board game night
- Book club
- Indoor Scavenger hunt
- Fill Little Free Libraries with winter clothing

OUTDOOR: MODERATE EFFORT

These activities are a great way of showcasing the local area and engaging the community while still keeping the effort relatively low.



Community Campfires

Shawnee Evergreen Community Association, Calgary, Alberta



Community Skate Night

Banff, Alberta



Winter Light Walk

Calgary, Alberta

Ideas

- Holiday Light Competition
- Winter Bike Ride
- Crokicurl Rink/Tournament
- Soapbox Race
- Snowshoe Hike

INDOOR: MODERATE EFFORT

Like their outdoor counter-part, these events require more planning. However, the opportunity to bring more of the community together is well worth it!



Trivia Nights

Ned Smith Center For Nature & Art, Pennsylvania



Monthly Bingo

Airdrie, Alberta



Open Mic Nights

Door County, Wisconsin

Ideas

- Toboggan day
- Community snow mural
- Community themed mystery night
- Gear swap night

OUTDOOR: COMPLEX

These projects should be designed to attract the broader community. Keep the factors of successful winter placemaking in mind and think big!



Winter Festivals

Fire and Ice, Bracebridge, Ontario



Winter Markets

Edmonton Christmas Market, Edmonton, Alberta



Neighbourhood Winter Leagues

McCauley Community League, Edmonton

Ideas

- Winter Geocaching
- Outdoor concerts
- Holiday light competition

INDOOR: COMPLEX

The most complex indoor activations can be excellent opportunities to bring the community together in exciting and innovative ways.



Holiday Gift Making Studio

Roaring Mouse Creative Arts Studio, Seattle



Film Festival

Rocky Mountain Women in Film Festival, Colorado



Craft Fair

Bowness Holiday Craft Fair, Calgary, Alberta

Ideas

- Escape rooms
- Community arts residency
- Indoor winter market
- Repair cafe

RESOURCE CATALOGUE



Permits

Permits are project specific. If you have any questions about what permits are applicable for your project, please reach out to 311 or find more information at:

www.calgary.ca/development

Apply for permits:

apply.calgary.ca

Campfire Guidelines

This webpage outlines what you need to keep in mind to run a community campfire. Please reach out to your local fire hall with any questions regarding fire safety and mitigation.

<https://www.calgary.ca/events/winter-city/propane-fire-pits.html>

Bylaws

Bylaws are project specific. If you have any questions about bylaws affecting your project please reach out to 311 or contact a local bylaw officer. Find more information at:

www.calgary.ca/bylaws

Resources & Inspiration

- [Winter Placemaking Guide | 880 Cities](#)
- [For the Love of Winter | WinterCity Strategy](#)