

## Update on Hosting FIFA World Cup 2026

**Date:** February 26, 2024

**To:** Executive Committee

**From:** City Manager and Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026

**Wards:** All

### SUMMARY

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On February 4, 2024 FIFA announced that the City of Toronto will host six matches in the FIFA World Cup 2026 (FWC26), kicking off on June 12, 2026, with the first-ever FIFA World Cup™ men's match in Canada and featuring the opening match of Canada's Men's National Team. Toronto will also host a Round of 32 knockout game on July 2, 2026, adding to the excitement of hosting this event. This marks the first time Canada will host the FIFA World Cup™, and the event will engage millions of fans from around the world.

Toronto's hosting of the FWC26 will bring positive economic and cultural benefits for the city, particularly in the tourism, hospitality, and entertainment sectors. Based on hosting five matches, the total net economic activity<sup>1</sup> expected to be generated by the FWC26 in Toronto is:

- \$392 million GDP for the City of Toronto
- Tax revenues totaling \$118.9 million in the Toronto region
- \$456 million GDP for the province of Ontario
- Tax revenues totaling \$138.9 million within Ontario

Toronto's journey to hosting the FWC26 began in 2018 when FIFA awarded hosting the FIFA World Cup 2026 to a joint bid by Canada, Mexico and the United States, with matches to be staged across 16 cities in North America. On June 16, 2022, the City of Toronto was announced as an official Host City for the FWC26. Since that time, planning has actively been underway. This report provides an update on the work to date for Toronto's hosting of the FWC26 including: planning, financial status, economic and community benefits, and intergovernmental negotiations.

With the recent announcement of the match schedule and confirmation that Toronto will host six matches, planning assumptions, cost estimates, revenue and benefit opportunities are being reviewed by City staff. As planning requirements become more defined, current projections estimate the operations and capital costs to be incurred

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<sup>1</sup> Benefit projections as of October 2023 Sport Tourism Economic Assessment Model (STEAM)

locally in Toronto to be approximately \$380 million (gross). This represents an increase from budget estimates presented to City Council in July 2022 ([EX34.8](#)). The cost is expected to be shared between the City and the Governments of Ontario and Canada. The Province of Ontario has conditionally committed up to \$97 million to support Toronto's efforts to host the FWC26. The Government of Canada is committed to supporting Toronto in the successful delivery of the FWC26. Although specific federal financial commitments have not yet been confirmed, the Government of Canada continues to work with event parties to ensure that Canada delivers a successful, safe and secure event in 2026 in keeping with their funding policy for hosting International Sport Events (see Financial Impact Section).

The planning and delivery of a project of this size and scope and with specific timelines requires a significant number of contracts with third parties for a variety of goods and services (i.e. capital work, project management, mobility plans, ancillary event execution, venue rentals and services, etc.). To ensure efficiencies for the FWC26 Toronto Secretariat, City Divisions, and contractors and to maintain the required project timelines, this report recommends that Council authorize the City Manager and Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026, subject to the budget as approved by Council, to procure, negotiate, award and enter into necessary agreements related to FWC26 Toronto project deliverables.

This approach is similar to authorities authorized by Council in the past to facilitate the process for management of a large project with a significant number of third-party service provider agreements and critical inflexible timelines. Precedent therefore exists for this recommended approach. Approval of these recommendations will mitigate the risk of delay to the project to ensure the City meets FIFA timelines and requirements.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The City Manager and Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026 recommend that:

1. City Council authorize the City Manager and Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026, in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer to:

a) receive funds and to negotiate and enter into any contribution agreements, including any amendment, renewal or extension agreements and any ancillary documents with the Government of Canada, Government of Ontario, and/or agencies or corporations of the Federal and Provincial Governments in support of the FWC26 on terms and conditions satisfactory to the City Manager and Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor; and

b) enter into agreements with third party non profit and charitable organizations to distribute the funding in accordance with the provisions of those agreements, on terms and conditions satisfactory to the City Manager and Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026 and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

2. City Council authorize the City Manager and Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026, in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, to negotiate and enter into and/or amend or extend as required, any necessary agreements not subject to the procurement processes as set out in Municipal Code Chapter 195, Purchasing, for which Committee or City Council approval would normally be required, including agreements related to licencing / rental of venues, and venue services and operations as needed to plan and deliver FWC26, provided that:

- a) the agreement is necessary to meet the timelines of the FWC26; and
- b) the costs are eligible for, and will be funded through the approved FWC26 Toronto budget subject to the annual Budget Process; and
- c) the terms and conditions are satisfactory to the City Manager and Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026 and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

3. City Council authorize the City Manager and Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026, in consultation with the Chief Procurement Officer and Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, to procure, through either competitive or non-competitive procurement processes, including those with a value exceeding \$500,000 for which Committee or City Council approval would normally be required under City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 195, Purchasing, all goods and services required for the delivery of the FWC26, including construction and other services needed for the permanent and temporary upgrades at BMO Field, and negotiate and enter into and/or amend or extend as required, any necessary agreements for those goods and services, provided that:

- a) the procurement is necessary to meet the timelines of the FWC26; and
- b) the costs are eligible for, and will be funded through the approved FWC26 Toronto budget subject to the annual Budget Process; and
- c) the terms and conditions are satisfactory to the City Manager and Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026 and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

4. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to approve such increases to the current retainer agreement with Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP for the provision of legal services, including those for which Committee or City Council approval would normally be required under City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 195, Purchasing, as may be required for the support of FWC26, including for preparation, construction, operations and any resulting claims, funded through the approved FWC26 Toronto budget.

5. City Council authorize the City Manager and Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026, in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, to negotiate and enter into and/or amend or extend as required, any necessary agreements with the Greater Toronto Airport Authority and PortsToronto (Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport) reflecting the FIFA Host City Agreement obligations in support of Toronto's hosting of the FWC26 including but not limited to financing, event planning and coordination, and airport operations, on terms and conditions satisfactory to the City Manager and

Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026 and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

6. City Council authorize the City Manager and Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026, to administer the FWC26 Toronto Public Engagement and Communications Plan, as described in this report.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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In July 2022, [\(EX34.8\)](#) City Council was provided with an update on Hosting FIFA World Cup 2026, which estimated the projected expenditures of hosting in Toronto to be approximately \$300 million (gross). As planning and recent announcements about the number of matches Toronto will host further refines assumptions from the original bid business plan (Attachment 1), current projections estimate the operations and capital costs to be incurred locally in Toronto to be approximately \$380 million (gross) including services provided in-kind, see Table 1 below. The adjustment to cost estimates is based on a variety of factors including: further defined hosting requirements; the announcement of a total of six matches (versus the estimated five), including Canada’s opening match of the tournament; evaluation of price estimates/vendor quotes; safety and security requirements; and inflationary uncertainty. City staff are working to plan and deliver hosting requirements while managing cost estimates, inclusive of developing a robust revenue strategy to maximize commercial supporter sales and local donor opportunities delegated by FIFA to event organizers, such as the City of Toronto.

Table 1: Estimated FWC26 Hosting Costs, Total (\$000s), as of February 2024

General Operations	29,433
Tournament Operations	174,411
Commercial Rights expenses	6,521
Legacy + Indigenous Capacity Funding	7,500
Contingencies (Operating & Inflationary)	25,286
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>243,151</b>
Capital Improvements	118,514
Contingencies (Capital & Inflationary)	15,677
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL</b>	<b>134,191</b>
<b>TOTAL CASH BUDGET</b>	<b>377,342</b>
Value of In-Kind Operating Services	2,644
<b>TOTAL EVENT COSTS</b>	<b>379,986</b>

## Status on Intergovernmental Funding:

In a letter dated December 2023 the Province of Ontario confirmed a conditional commitment of up to \$97 million to support Toronto's efforts to host the FWC26. The investment to support the event is exclusively limited to investments that build lasting public infrastructure and benefits that will serve the community long after the games are over. The Province's support is conditional on the Federal Government matching the commitment and being responsible for any costs resulting from a federal determination of safety and security needs. Discussions between the Province and City staff to establish a contribution agreement in adherence with the funding conditions are in progress.

The Federal Government committed to supporting Toronto in the successful delivery of the FWC26. Extensive discussions with the Federal Government negotiating the detailed terms of the required agreements are on-going and they continue to work with Canadian parties to refine plans, ensuring the investments made will leave lasting benefits for sport, Canadians and communities. Although specific federal financial commitments have not yet been confirmed, the Government of Canada will continue to work with event parties to ensure that Canada will deliver a successful, safe and secure event in 2026. Federal contribution decisions will be in accordance with the Federal Policy for Hosting International Sport Events that includes contribution limits to a maximum of 35% of total event costs and a maximum of 50% of the total public sector contribution to the event. A financial contribution decision from the Government of Canada is expected in the coming months.

## 2024 Budget Implications:

As part of the 2024 Budget process, \$4.9 million gross and \$0 net has been included for planning work related to hosting FWC26, fully funded by the Major Special Event Reserve Fund (XR1218). The 2024 Operating Budget includes funding for the City Manager's Office, Toronto Emergency Management, Paramedic Services, and Toronto Police Service, for various project management and procurement activities including external expertise, security planning, as well as enhanced safety and emergency management.

To ensure sufficient funding for service delivery and operations during the event, the Major Special Event Reserve Fund will be replenished on an as-needed basis through the City's annual operating surplus at year-end.

The City's 10-Year Capital Budget and Plan for Exhibition Place and Parks, Forestry and Recreation, and Toronto Police Service currently includes cash flow funding of \$65.8 million towards design and upgrades to the City-owned stadium at the BMO Field, \$34.4 million towards the City-owned sports fields and facilities at Centennial Park for training purposes, and \$0.6 million towards enhanced security measures during the event, respectively. The project costs are expected to be shared with the provincial and federal governments. The City's share of the costs are funded from the Capital Financing Reserve (XQ0011), and the Debt Stabilization Reserve (XQ0709).

## Cost Mitigation:

With the City of Toronto's commitment to host the FWC26, city staff are actively assessing and managing all costs, including identifying opportunities for cost mitigation. In particular, opportunities for cost containment and strategies to maximize revenues are proactively being identified and reviewed. For example, staff are reviewing the potential to leverage and direct funding from the Municipal Accommodation Tax to offset the City's costs for FWC26 as well as exploring other potential sources of revenue opportunities. One of those sources is private sector sponsorship through the Commercial Rights Package available to host cities and the ability to further engage donors to FWC26 to offset the increased costs anticipated with the additional match and other capital and operating pressures.

Details regarding intergovernmental funding commitments and financial strategies will be included as part of future reports to City Council and updated operating and capital cost estimates will be submitted for considerations during the 2025 Budget process.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

## DECISION HISTORY

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On December 13, 2023, City Council adopted MM13.21, "Supporting Professional Women's Soccer in Toronto", requesting the FWC26 Secretariat to advance growing the participation of women in sport as a key legacy opportunity of hosting the FWC26 in Toronto. MM13.21 <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.MM13.21>

On July 19, 2023, City Council adopted EX6.25, "Non-competitive Contract with Gensler Architecture & Design Canada Inc. for Architectural Services for the FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto Capital Project at BMO Field", which included a request to report back to City Council on key aspects and plans of FWC26 as outlined in [EX34.8](#): <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.EX6.25>

At its meeting of July 19, 2022 City Council adopted Hosting FIFA World Cup 2026 which directed staff to enter into negotiations on funding agreements and stadium construction and to collaborate with other City Divisions on implementing the World Cup strategy and report back on community benefit opportunities, budget impacts, intergovernmental negotiations, financial strategy, community engagement and activation of the Secretariat and working groups, community benefits opportunities, and intergovernmental negotiations, <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.EX34.8>

## COMMENTS

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### **FWC26 Toronto Matches**

On February 4, 2024 FIFA announced that the City of Toronto will host six matches in the FWC26, kicking off on June 12, 2026. Toronto will have the distinction of hosting the first-ever FIFA World Cup™ men's match on Canadian soil and featuring the opening match of Canada's Men's National Team. Of the six matches, Toronto will host five Group Stage matches from June 12 to 26, 2026 and a Round of 32 match on July 2, 2026. The match schedule announcement confirms an additional match from the five matches initially expected to be held in Toronto.

### **FWC26 Toronto Secretariat and City Division/Agency Engagement**

In July 2022 ([EX34.8](#)), City Council approved the creation of a FWC26 Toronto Secretariat to centralize the oversight and coordination of the City's responsibilities as a Host City, leading all project planning and execution. The Secretariat, reporting to the City Manager, is accountable for all aspects of planning, budget management, stakeholder coordination, community engagement, and execution of hosting the FWC26 in Toronto. Led by an Executive Director, the Secretariat will reach its full staff complement of nine (9) staff in Q1 2024. The Secretariat provides corporate direction and coordination with City Divisions and Agency staff to ensure planned levels of municipal services meet FIFA requirements.

The Secretariat has commenced engagement with City Divisions and Agencies in addition to several external stakeholders to address FIFA requirements, launch capital projects, advance operational plans, and explore community benefit and legacy opportunities. With support from several City Divisions, the Secretariat has made significant progress on establishing a governance framework, creating strategies and plans for event delivery, negotiating and executing agreements, and setting the groundwork for community benefit and legacy initiatives.

The Secretariat will continue to engage with internal and external stakeholders, providing continuity and accountability across the various individuals and groups in order to meet FIFA requirements for hosting the FWC26.

### **Governance and Program Advisory Bodies**

Inclusive of Host City colleagues in Vancouver, the participating orders of Government have established a national governance structure and several committees to coordinate federal, provincial and municipal planning and funding. In development, a multi-party agreement (MPA) will outline roles and responsibilities of all parties and present a shared approach to many event planning and delivery functions. Contribution agreements will be negotiated to facilitate the distribution of funds through an agreed upon formula. Staff require the authority to enter into and execute these contribution agreements and disperse funds as negotiated.

Within the City of Toronto, the FWC26 Secretariat has established a governance structure to provide strategic direction and engage a wide range of community

stakeholders in the planning and delivery of the FWC26 and to identify and leverage opportunities for community and legacy benefits. Three groups are central to Toronto's governance structure:

1. City Councillor Liaison Group: The City Councillor Liaison Group meets regularly to receive status updates and provide input on preparations to host the FWC26 and discuss the legacy of the tournament for the City of Toronto.

2. Executive Steering Committee (ESC): The ESC is comprised of key stakeholders engaged in the delivery of services and operations and/or supporting the realization of FWC26 legacies and benefits in Toronto. The ESC acts as an advisory body to review progress on major delivery elements, address strategic priorities to maximize opportunities, and advise on issues and risks that are escalated by the City of Toronto FWC26 Secretariat. Terms of Reference are in place for the ESC and the committee meets regularly.

3. Indigenous Advisory Circle: On June 9, 2023, the City of Toronto issued letters of invitation to meet with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN) and the Toronto Aboriginal Social Services Committee (TASSC). Discussions between the City and Indigenous leaders related to establishing an Indigenous Advisory Circle, engaging the Indigenous communities in respect of event planning, and in defining community and legacy benefits are in the early stages. Ultimately, engagement will be undertaken through collaboration with our Indigenous partners and will be informed by the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), in particular, Call to Action 91 which states:

*91. We call upon the officials and host countries of international sporting events such as the Olympics, Pan Am, and Commonwealth games to ensure that Indigenous peoples' territorial protocols are respected, and local Indigenous communities are engaged in all aspects of planning and participating in such events.*

The transition from governance planning to establishing the Indigenous Advisory Circle and other Program Advisory Bodies is planned for Q1/Q2 2024. Staff will establish these time-limited advisory groups to consult and contribute to maximizing community engagement and leveraging opportunities for community benefit and legacy as a result of hosting the FWC26 in Toronto. As Council requested through [EX34.8](#), representation of equity-deserving groups, including youth, civil society organizations, labour, migrant and workers' rights organizations, academia, Indigenous rights holders and urban Indigenous communities will be critical to Program Advisory Body membership.

## **Community Benefit and Legacy Plans**

Toronto's Host City goals are driven by the positive benefits and legacies the successful hosting of the FWC26 will bring to the city and its residents. Toronto's position as a diverse global city presents a unique platform to realize benefits and legacy goals sought by FIFA and government partners. Led by the FWC26 Toronto Secretariat, the journey of developing strategies specific to targeted community benefit and legacy plans is just beginning. Initial research and consultation regarding the creation of the



community benefit and legacy plans is being guided and shaped by three foundational elements:

1. FIFA's five (5) community benefit and legacy themes will drive the planning and delivery of the FWC26 in each of the sixteen Host Cities:

1. Sport/Active Living
2. Environmental Sustainability
3. Human Rights / Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
4. Economic Impact & Tourism
5. Arts & Culture

2. Alignment with existing City of Toronto priorities and policies, including, but not limited to: the City's Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism, Reconciliation Action Plan, Community Benefits Framework, Parks, Forestry & Recreation Facilities Masterplan, TransformTO Net Zero Strategy, Social Procurement Policy (which includes supply chain diversity and workforce development components) and Fair Wage Policy.

3. Engagement and consultation through the creation of Program Advisory Bodies and an Indigenous Advisory Circle are required to inform and guide this work. Initial steps to establish these advisory groups is underway by the Secretariat with the aim to have the groups in place by Q2 2024.

Development of community benefit and legacy plans requires and depends on cooperation, coordination, and communication across a wide variety of partners, stakeholders and broader community input. Initial steps by the Secretariat to launch this work include:

- As directed by City Council in December 2023 (MM13.21), the FWC26 Secretariat and Parks, Forestry and Recreation and are in discussions regarding legacy opportunities to support the establishment of a professional women's soccer team in Toronto.
- Consultation with Purchasing and Materials Management Division (PMMD) and the Community Benefits Unit, within Social Development, Finance and Administration (SDFA) to ensure best practices and integration of policies related to fair wage and social procurement (supply chain diversity and workforce development) are used in all Host City goods and services contracts.
- Consultation with PMMD and SDFA to develop roadmaps on an Employment and Labour Market Plan.
- City staff have commenced sustainability planning in collaboration with FIFA and will contribute to creating a FWC26 Sustainability Strategy aligned with City initiatives, including but not limited to the TransformTO Net Zero Strategy.
- Plans for the FWC26 training sites will comply with the Toronto Green Standard, with the design/build construction tender calling for low carbon materials and methodologies to reduce energy usage on site. Additionally, consultation is underway with the Toronto Regional Conservation Authority (TRCA) to revitalize and re-naturalize the space. Training site plans align with existing facility needs and contribute to the acceleration of identified assets and amenities.

- Consultation with the Human Rights Office (HRO) to explore how the FWC26 can lead to positive human rights legacies for children and equity deserving groups in Toronto.
- Initial discussions with academia to ensure all community benefit and legacy plans are inclusive of measurement and evaluation best practices.

As per Council directive through [EX34.8](#), a comprehensive community benefits plan will be shared in future FWC26 status reports.

## **Delegation of Agreement Authorities**

The planning and delivery of a project of this size and scope and with specific timelines requires a significant number of contracts with third parties for a variety of goods and services (i.e. capital work, project management, mobility plans, ancillary event execution, venue rentals and services, etc.). The form of recommendations presented in this report are similar to other authorities provided by Council in the past to facilitate the process for management of a large project with a significant number of third-party service provider agreements and critical inflexible timelines. Recommendation 2 applies in "non-procurement" situations (e.g. venue rentals and services) and Recommendation 3 relates to situations where the procurement process would apply. Approval of these recommendations will mitigate the risk of delay to the project contrary to FIFA timelines and requirements. Required construction, goods and services will be procured in accordance with applicable City procurement policies and according to processes developed in conjunction with Purchasing & Material Management Division officials and the FWC26 Toronto Secretariat.

## **Increases for Legal Retainer**

Osler Hoskin & Harcourt LLP was retained in January 2023 as the result of a competitive RFP process to provide legal services as needed in respect of FWC26 Toronto. Those services have to date included assistance with the negotiation and drafting of the various agreements required, along with legal advice on procurement matters and other issues as needed. Significant legal work remains to be completed with respect to agreements with FIFA, MLSE, GTAA and the other levels of government, as well as the required procurement processes and contracts for various suppliers of goods and services (e.g. construction) to the event. The continued retention of Osler Hoskin & Harcourt LLP is therefore essential to provide the resources and expertise needed for the timely completion of these tasks in accordance with the event timelines. This report therefore recommends that the City Solicitor be authorized, subject to the approved FWC26 Toronto budget, to approve further increases in the value of the retainer (currently at \$750,000) as required for the support of the FWC26 in Toronto, including with respect to preparation, construction and operational activities, and any claims or other contract administration issues which may arise.

## **Public Engagement and Communications Plan**

The Secretariat, in consultation and collaboration with Strategic Public and Employee Communication (SPEC), will engage with the public to promote, deliver, and maximize aspects of the FWC26. As a Host City, the City will operate various forms of

communication with the public to promote the tournament and to maximize and drive community engagement with respect to the FWC26. This program of communication (the "FWC26 Toronto Public Engagement and Communications Plan") will result in engagement with the public through a variety of methods including the use of digital and social media platforms. The Secretariat may need to enter into agreements with third parties such as Destination Toronto, Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, FIFA, and other parties as appropriate to develop and conduct the FWC26 Toronto Public Engagement and Communications Plan.

All public engagement and communications activities will be conducted in a manner that ensures compliance with Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, as may be applicable, and best practices in privacy protection. The FWC26 Toronto Public Engagement and Communications Plan will utilize multiple methods of interaction with the public, including but not exclusively limited to, the City conducting event attendance registration, volunteer recruitment, purchase and sale of event tickets, and other items related to the operation of the FWC26; requests to receive digital, or physical communications in the form of newsletters; the distribution of promotional materials and information about commercial or other activities of entities related to FWC26; the production and distribution of user-generated or third party content, including advertising, marketing, promotion, social-media content; the collection of photographic and video images to create advertising, marketing, promotion, social-media as well as other public records.

## **Conclusion**

Significant progress has been made by the Secretariat, with the support of many internal and external stakeholders, and work continues to ensure the successful hosting of the FWC26 in Toronto. The City Manager and Executive Director, FIFA World Cup Hosting 2026 will provide biannual updates to Council on the implementation of FWC26.

## **CONTACT**

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Sharon Bollenbach, Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026  
Email: [Sharon.Bollenbach@toronto.ca](mailto:Sharon.Bollenbach@toronto.ca); Tel: 416-338-8779

## **SIGNATURE**

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Paul Johnson  
City Manager

Sharon Bollenbach  
Executive Director, World Cup Hosting 2026

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: Proposed Business Plan for Toronto's Participation in FIFA 2026 (March 2023)