



July 15, 2024

Mayor Chow and City of Toronto Executive Committee
Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. West
Toronto, ON, M5H 2N2

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of the Executive Committee,

Re: Report from FIFA World Cup Hosting 2026 Toronto Secretariat

We are a group of community non-profits, labour organizations and advocates who are working together to contribute community perspectives to hosting an equitable, green and transparent FIFA World Cup tournament in our city in 2026.

The report prepared by the FWC26 Toronto Secretariat for the July meeting of the City of Toronto Executive Council has promising updates, especially as it pertains to the potential acceleration of the two RapidTO surface transit priority projects on Dufferin St and Bathurst St. The work of the Secretariat is largely in line with motions passed by City Council and the direction you provided around transparency and accountability. Questions remain, however, in regard to unmentioned but critical items and implementation.

A recent City of Toronto Auditor General report noted the dire situation in Toronto Paramedic Services – with significant increases to wait time for the most critical cases and serious retention issues in the city’s Central Ambulance Call Centre. A series of large sporting events with an influx of tourism to our city is likely to add more strain on our already taxed ambulance services. At this stage the Secretariat has yet to address this concern.

Similarly, there is a lack of clarity around the role the Toronto Police Service will play in this event and what costs may be associated with policing and law enforcement within the overall FWC2026 budget. In recent months, questions have arisen about the use of costly technology to monitor security incidents and as we understand staying within the general FWC2026 budget is a priority for City Council we ask that this line item be given special consideration.

While the inclusion of the five legacy themes for FWC2026 is a helpful way to narrow down the focus of the proposed program advisory bodies, we would encourage an approach that prioritizes aspects of human rights, equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism across the other four themes. Program advisory bodies would benefit from sharing their work and input amongst themselves.

Importantly, the work of convening these community advisory bodies, and carrying out the work they advocate for, cannot become “side-of-desk” work for the City, and should remain at the top of its priority list. Too often, the City’s ambitious community benefits and legacy plans are interrupted by the day-to-day pressures of administrative work, and community voices and priorities are pushed aside by corporate interests who use their regular contact with the City, alongside considerable power, to keep targets purely aspirational.

As the report notes, clear targets and well thought out implementation plans with strong community support are the key to success, particularly in ensuring there are long lasting benefits like good jobs.

Further to this, while the report mentions a goal of convening a meeting of the program advisory bodies by the end of September 2024, no information has been made available as it pertains to the groups and individuals who will be tasked with sitting at these tables.

We remain optimistic that community perspectives will be included in FWC2026 and look forward to providing feedback in the coming months.

CUPE Local 79
Progress Toronto
Toronto Environmental Alliance
Toronto Community Benefits Network
Toronto and York Region Labour Council
TTC Riders
Social Planning Toronto

