

**City Council****Notice of Motion**

MM18.22	ACTION			Ward: 10
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**Advancement of Professional Women’s Soccer in Toronto, and Seeking Proposals for Lamport Stadium - by Deputy Mayor Ausma Malik, seconded by Councillor Jaye Robinson**

*\* Notice of this Motion has been given.  
\* This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

**Recommendations**

Deputy Mayor Ausma Malik, seconded by Councillor Jaye Robinson, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the General Manager, Parks, Forestry, and Recreation, in consultation with the Executive Director, FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto Secretariat and the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, to negotiate agreement terms with Association Football Club Toronto, in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor, for the use of the future Centennial Park soccer field and adjacent fieldhouse following FIFA 2026, ensuring future community access to the recreational amenities, and report back to City Council on recommended terms for an agreement.
2. City Council request the General Manager, Parks, Forestry, and Recreation and the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO, to seek proposals to select and enter negotiations for a strategic operating tenant for Lamport Stadium, seeking capital investment necessary to improve the stadium, field conditions, to bring the facility into a state of good repair, while ensuring community access to recreation opportunities is maintained, embedding protections for professional women’s sports teams, including soccer, to use the site as a game-day location, and respecting the existing agreement between the City and Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment for the operation of a seasonal winter sports bubble, and to report back to City Council on the results; such report should also:
  - a. examine how community benefits can be pursued at Lamport Stadium as a part of any redevelopment, in consultation with the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance, and Administration; and
  - b. detail alignment of any potential investment and leasing with the Liberty Village Public Realm Strategy, and upcoming regeneration study, in consultation with the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning.
3. City Council request the General Manager, Parks, Forestry, and Recreation to negotiate equitable public and community access as part of any terms for third-party use at Centennial

Park and/or Lamport Stadium resulting from recommendation 1 or 2, in close collaboration with the Ward Councillor.

## **Summary**

At its December 13, 14, and 15, 2023 meeting, City Council, through item 2023.MM13.21 Supporting Women's Professional Soccer in Toronto, expressed its support for the establishment of a professional women's sports league in Toronto and its commitment to championing gender equity in sport. City Council further directed staff in Parks, Forestry and Recreation, and the FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto Secretariat, to explore opportunities to support the establishment of a professional women's soccer team in Toronto, including helping identify potential sites, and to advance growing the participation of women in sport as a key legacy opportunity of hosting the FIFA World Cup in 2026 in Toronto.

Two sites are most suitable based on preliminary staff review – the future artificial turf field and clubhouse at Centennial Park, and Lamport Stadium. The City should advance work on both these sites to ensure the City is maximizing the potential of our facilities and supporting opportunities for women in sport.

Centennial Park provides an excellent opportunity for a legacy partnership and could serve as a practice centre for Association Football Club Toronto. Direct exploration and negotiations with the group should be undertaken to determine the feasibility of a partnership, reporting back to City Council on the terms of any potential agreement for the long-term programming of the space. Continued community use of the facilities must be embedded as a requirement, along with appropriate cost sharing.

An important recreational amenity in Liberty Village, Lamport Stadium serves a high-growth urban neighbourhood. As one of few premier class, all-season multipurpose fields in the Downtown that is accessible by transit, the stadium and surrounding greenspace currently serve community users and a variety of sports teams. A seasonal winter bubble is also operated under third party agreement, providing additional community recreation in the winter months. The site provides important community access to recreation opportunities and must continue to do so in the future. Unfortunately, these recreational opportunities are at risk, as the building continues to age and fall into disrepair.

Lamport Stadium would provide an excellent and exciting venue for Toronto Association Football Club, while delivering opportunities for animation and continued community use, but requires significant capital investment and is not fully usable in its current state. The City should seek proposals for an anchor tenant for Lamport Stadium, requiring the third party to bring the stadium to modern standards, protecting community access to recreational opportunities, and dedicating sufficient access to women's professional sport to use as a game day facility. Any proposal process for Lamport Stadium should embed and reflect the objectives and goals of the Liberty Village Public Realm Study and look to improve both stadium and surrounding parkland areas. Staff should report back on the results to City Council.

## **Background Information (City Council)**

Member Motion MM18.22