

Regent Park Neighbourhood Association



Regent Park Neighbourhood Association Inc.

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November 4th 2025

Mayor Olivia Chow

Toronto City Hall, 2nd Floor
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Members of the Executive Committee

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Written Submission & Deputation to Mayor Olivia Chow and Members of the Executive Committee - Advancing Equity, Community Benefits, and Housing Stability through the FIFA World Cup 2026

Item: 2025.EC27.10 – *FIFA World Cup 2026: Operational Planning, Governance, and Community Engagement Framework*

Date: November 4, 2025

Submitted by: **Walied Khogali Ali**

Co-Chair, Regent Park Neighbourhood Association (RPNA) – <http://www.regentparkna.ca>

1. Introduction

The **Regent Park Neighbourhood Association (RPNA)** is a resident-led, volunteer-driven organization committed to advancing equity, inclusion, and community well-being in Toronto's downtown east. We represent residents – tenants and home-owners in Regent Park.

Our Request:

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of the Executive Committee,

As Council considers Item EX27.10, *FIFA World Cup 2026: Operational Planning, Governance, and Community Engagement Framework*, we write to express our support for ensuring that all City investments related to the FIFA World Cup 2026 advance equity, community benefits, and housing stability for Toronto's residents—particularly those in vulnerable and marginalized communities.

This global event offers Toronto a unique opportunity to showcase our diversity, civic pride, and love of sport. Yet, it also carries the responsibility to ensure that public investment yields public good — not displacement, exclusion, or inequity.

1. Advancing Equity and Community Benefits

We strongly urge that all legacy plans and investment decisions tied to the FIFA World Cup embed clear, accountable **Community Benefits Frameworks**. These frameworks should prioritize:

- **Local job creation and youth employment opportunities**, especially for racialized and low-income communities.
- **Investment in community spaces and recreation infrastructure** that will continue to serve residents long after the event ends.
- **Transparent public reporting and accountability measures** to track benefits and community impact.

2. Preventing Displacement and Gentrification

We are deeply concerned about reports that some refugees currently being sheltered in hotels are being displaced due to hotels securing World Cup bookings. The City must work with other levels of government to ensure no one loses shelter or housing due to World Cup-related pressures. Furthermore, it is essential that the City's planning approach includes **anti-displacement measures** to prevent gentrification pressures on low-income tenants, newcomers, and vulnerable communities—particularly in Toronto's downtown east.

3. Supporting Youth Access and Participation

Many young people across the downtown east and beyond have been mobilizing to collect petitions calling for **free or low-cost community tickets** for youth to attend the FIFA World Cup games. These youth-led petitions represent a heartfelt appeal for inclusion — to ensure that the very communities who have built Toronto's diverse soccer culture can experience this historic event firsthand.

We recall that **on June 12, 2025**, during the *Soccer Day in Toronto* community celebration hosted at City Hall, youth and community advocates directly appealed to Mayor Chow for her leadership in ensuring access for local youth. Providing free community tickets would not only inspire the next generation to engage in sports—both recreationally and professionally—but would also demonstrate the City's commitment to equity and youth empowerment.

We are also grateful for the ongoing outreach efforts by **Michael Brewer**, who has been actively engaging youth in Regent Park and surrounding neighbourhoods to discuss the World Cup and related community activities. His leadership exemplifies the kind of grassroots engagement that should be recognized and supported as part of the City’s legacy planning.

Conclusion

Toronto’s participation in hosting the FIFA World Cup 2026 is a historic moment. It must also be a **legacy of inclusion** — where equity, housing stability, and youth opportunity are as celebrated as the matches themselves.

We therefore urge City Council to ensure that:

- All FIFA-related investments and agreements explicitly include **Community Benefits Frameworks** with measurable outcomes.
- The City commits to **preventing displacement** of refugees and vulnerable residents impacted by hotel bookings and related pressures.
- The City partners with youth organizations to **allocate community-access tickets** so that local youth can participate in and be inspired by this global sporting event.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to ensuring that Toronto’s role as a host city reflects our shared values of fairness, inclusion, and community wellbeing.

Sincerely,

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cc: Members of the Executive Committee

About the Regent Park Neighbourhood Association

The RPNA seeks to foster an inclusive, diverse and healthy neighbourhood in which all residents feel at home. The RPNA also recognizes that Toronto Community Housing (TCH) residents had a vibrant community in Regent Park prior to the redevelopment and seeks to build on that history of grassroots initiatives, resident led ventures, and strong networks. To

ensure that this heritage is not lost, TCH residents serve in half of the RPNA Leadership Team positions. The RPNA's advocacy was central in negotiating and winning a commitment from TCHC to include a \$26.8M Community Benefits Agreement as part of Phase 4 and 5 of revitalization in Regent Park.

The RPNA seeks to foster an inclusive, diverse and healthy community through...

1. **ADVOCACY** - to provide a strong voice for residents on issues that will benefit our entire community.
2. **COMMUNITY BUILDING** - to bring our culturally diverse and mixed-income community together.
3. **COMMUNICATION** - So much is happening in Regent Park! It's important to keep residents informed.



Stronger Together!

**REGENT PARK
NEIGHBOURHOOD
ASSOCIATION**