

FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto: Updates on the Community Benefits Plan, Social Procurement and Workforce Development, Liberty Village and Fort York Neighbourhood Plan, Community Activation Plan, FIFA Fan Festival and Volunteer Program

Date: August 29, 2025
To: FIFA World Cup 2026 Subcommittee
From: Executive Director, FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto Secretariat
Wards: All

SUMMARY

The FIFA World Cup 2026 (FWC26) represents an unprecedented opportunity for the City of Toronto to showcase its global reputation as a diverse, inclusive, and vibrant city. As preparations advance, this report provides an update on several key initiatives supporting Toronto's role as a Host City. It includes the latest progress on the Community Benefits Plan, Social Procurement and Workforce Development, the Liberty Village and Fort York Neighbourhood Plan, the Community Activation Plan, FIFA Fan Festival and the Volunteer Program.

Together, these updates reflect the City's commitment to ensuring that the benefits of hosting the FWC26 are felt widely across communities, support local economic growth, enhance civic engagement, and strengthen Toronto's position as a world-class destination for major international events. This integrated approach ensures that equity, economic inclusion, and community vibrancy remain at the core of preparations and legacy planning for 2026 and beyond.

This report is a coordinated response, led by the FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto Secretariat (FWC26 Secretariat), in collaboration with Social Development, Purchasing & Materials Management, Parks and Recreation, and Financial Planning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director, FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto Secretariat recommends that:

1. FIFA World Cup 2026 Subcommittee receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The updates provided in this report are consistent with the approved FWC26 Toronto budget.

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

DECISION HISTORY

On July 23, 2025, based on the Report from the Auditor General on FIFA World Cup 2026 - "Toronto, Governance Lessons Learned for Bidding and Planning to Host Future Mega Events", City Council directed the City Manager and Executive Director, FIFA World Cup 2026 Secretariat to report to Executive Committee with the draft terms of the remaining one agreement with Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment Ltd., once the necessary information is available to finalize the agreement but before executing that agreement. <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.AU9.9>

On July 23, 2025, City Council adopted MM32.26, "CityServeTO - A Youth-based Community Service Initiatives", which authorized funding to community agencies for the Youth Community Service Initiative. <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.MM32.36>

On June 17, 2025, Executive Committee adopted EX24.12, "FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto: Community Benefits Plan Update, Social Procurement and Workforce Development Status, Community Activation Plan, Marketing and Communications Overview, Support for Concurrent Special Events, Principles of Bidding on International Events, and Purchase Order Amendment". <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.FWC5.1>

On May 22, 2025, City Council adopted EX23.16, "FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto: Procurement Plan Update", updating the procurement plan to procure the goods and services required for the delivery of the FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto. <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.EX23.16>

On May 22, 2025, City Council adopted EX23.17, "Status update of funding from the Federal and Provincial Governments for FIFA World Cup 2026", providing details around negotiations with the provincial government related to service costs for hosting the FIFA World Cup 2026. <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.EX23.17>

On April 23, 2025, City Council adopted CC29.1, "Ensuring Toronto's local summer festivals benefit from the World Cup", reaffirming the expectation that existing festivals

and special events will continue with special consideration including traffic operations, transit accessibility, and safety.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.CC29.1>

On April 23, 2025, City Council adopted CC29.3, "Procurement to Support Activities Funded by the Soccer for All Legacy Fund", authorizing staff to negotiate and enter into agreements for the provision of construction and professional services required to deliver up to 12 mini-pitches across Toronto.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.CC29.3>

On February 26, 2025, Economic and Community Development Committee adopted EC18.6, "Investing In Youth, Empowering Our City's Potential: Creation of a Toronto Youth Employment Program", which requested staff to consider opportunities to achieve a target of up to 10,000 additional summer jobs for young people by 2026.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.EC18.6>

On February 5, 2025, City Council adopted EX20.19, "Authorization to Enter into Agreements to Deliver a Successful FIFA World Cup 2026", granting staff the ability to execute agreements with FIFA's exclusive vendors in a timely manner is essential to staying on track and delivering an event that meets both FIFA's standards and our city's expectations.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.EX20.19>

On December 17, 2024, City Council adopted EC17.2, "A Partnered Approach to Inclusive Economic Development", which requested divisions to apply the principles of Inclusive Economic Development in relevant plans, strategies and programs.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.EC17.2>

On November 4, 2024, City Council adopted EX18.17, "FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto: Revenue Opportunities to Support Hosting Obligations, Procurement Plan Revisions, and Social Procurement and Community Workforce Development Updates", which reflected changes to the procurement plan and goals for social procurement.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.EX18.17>

On July 24, 2024, City Council adopted EX16.21, "Governance, Community Benefits Plan, Legacy and Program Advisory Framework, FIFA Fan Festival", which provided a general overview of planning, granted authority to enter in agreements with third party groups to receive funds, and accelerate RapidTO transit priorities, all associated with supporting the FIFA World Cup 2026 in Toronto.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.EX16.21>

On July 24, 2024, City Council adopted EX16.32, "FIFA World Cup 2026: Toronto Host City Procurement Plan", which provided approval to proceed in accordance with the procurement plan to procure the goods and services required for the delivery of FIFA World Cup 2026 set out in Confidential Attachment 1.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.EX16.32>

At its meeting on July 5, 2024, the FIFA World Cup 2026 Subcommittee considered Item FWC1.3 which directed the Executive Director, FIFA World Cup Hosting 2026 to

conduct a line-by-line review of the City of Toronto's FIFA World Cup 2026 budget, in consultation with the FIFA Subcommittee Chair, City Divisions and Agencies engaged in delivering the games, and other relevant stakeholders, to identify opportunities to reduce the impact of the games on the City's property tax base and report back to the Subcommittee on the results of this review by October 2024.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.FWC1.1>

On June 18, 2024, Executive Committee adopted EX15.13, "Amending FIFA World Cup 2026 Subcommittee Mandate", which renamed the subcommittee as "FIFA World Cup 2026 Subcommittee" to broaden its mandate to consider all FIFA related matters including the oversight of the budget, and further consider and make recommendations on procurement plans.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.EX15.13>

At its meeting on May 22, 2024, City Council approved the 2022 and 2023 Economic Development and Culture (EDC) grants allocation and delegated authority to General Manager, Economic Development and Culture to allocate directed grants up to a value of \$500,000.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.EC12.3>

On March 20, 2024, City Council adopted EX12.2, "Update on Hosting FIFA World Cup 2026", which authorized staff to negotiate and enter into contribution agreements with the Governments of Canada and Ontario in support of FWC26 as well as agreements with the Greater Toronto Airport Authority and Ports Toronto (Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport) reflecting Host City Agreement obligations in support of Toronto's hosting of the FWC26. Through this report City Council also directed report backs on a number of items including revenue plans, children and youth soccer facilities and programs, community benefits, human rights plans and climate strategy.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.EX12.2>

COMMENTS

Community Benefits Plan Updates

Community Workforce Development through FWC26 Procurement

Further to 2025.EX24.12, six procurements with workforce development requirements have been awarded. They include:

- The Centennial Park Soccer Facilities Refresh, awarded to Mopal Construction Limited.
- The Centennial Venue Specific Training Site Building for FIFA World Cup 2026, awarded to BDA Inc.
- The "Soccer-for-All" Legacy Mini-Pitches Program, awarded to Govan Brown.
- Construction Management Services at Toronto Stadium in Support of the FIFA World Cup 2026 Hosting, awarded to PCL Constructors Canada Inc.

- Temporary Seating Expansion at Toronto Stadium, awarded to Arena Event Services.
- Temporary Hospitality Structures at Toronto, awarded to Arena Event Services.

To date, across all contracts the following workforce development achievements have been reported:

- 4 (four) new non-construction related hires;
- 10 (ten) co-op student placements or mentorship opportunities;
- 10,627 Apprenticeship hours;
- 46,952 Journeyperson hours; and
- Participation by suppliers in 8 (eight) networking sessions, learning forums or job fairs that benefit participants from various communities including Indigenous, Black and Equity-deserving community members.

Two additional procurements will include workforce development requirements:

- The procurement for event management services for the FIFA Fan Festival is currently being evaluated.
- The procurement for security guard services is currently being evaluated.

As contracts are awarded, City staff work with the successful supplier to support the achievement of workforce development requirements. Achievements to-date are progressing well relative to targets set through the procurement process. Recognizing challenges with target-setting at the bid stage, and suppliers' increasing familiarity with the Social Procurement Program, targets are now being reviewed and updated in quarterly meetings to ensure they remain ambitious and reflect the work as it progresses.

Business Opportunities for Local and Diverse Suppliers through FWC26 Procurement

For solicitations valued under \$133,800, the Social Procurement Policy requires staff to include a quotation from a minimum of one Indigenous, Black or Diverse Supplier or Social Enterprise, where feasible. Award is to the supplier with the lowest quote meeting specifications. In addition to the requirements of the Social Procurement Policy, for FWC26 invitational solicitations, when three or more Indigenous, Black or Diverse Suppliers or Social Enterprises are identified, these solicitations are set aside and only those suppliers are invited to quote. If the second lowest quote meeting specifications is within 10% of the lowest quote and the supplier is an Indigenous, Black or Diverse Supplier or Social Enterprise, the award is made to the Indigenous, Black or Diverse Supplier or Social Enterprise.

For all open competitive procurements, staff identify Indigenous, Black and Diverse Suppliers and Social Enterprise that can be invited to bid.

Staff have also identified Indigenous, Black and Diverse Suppliers and Social Enterprises for potential subcontracting opportunities and will continue to work with

suppliers to help support the advancement of supply chain diversity as part of the workforce development process.

Through August 28, 2025, 33 bids or quotes have been received from Indigenous, Black and Diverse Suppliers and Social Enterprises through invitational and open, competitive procurement processes, low-value purchasing processes and direct purchases. Eleven awards have been made to Indigenous, Black and Diverse Suppliers and Social Enterprises for a combined spend to date of \$266,127. There are four subcontracting procurements anticipated to close in the coming weeks, with 21 bids submitted by Indigenous, Black and Diverse Suppliers and Social Enterprises being evaluated for these opportunities.

In addition to the City's procurements, the FWC26 team have launched their Local Impact Supplier Program. This program identifies local and diverse suppliers for potential subcontracting opportunities with FWC26's Tier 1 suppliers. Leveraging the City's Community Benefits and Social Procurement Program Advisory Body, the FWC26 Secretariat are assembling lists of suppliers to support this FWC26 Program.

Going Beyond FWC26 Procurement to achieve Community Workforce Development, Skills Training and Employment Readiness

The Community Workforce Development Program is designed to ensure that Indigenous, Black and equity-deserving youth gain access to training and workforce development pathways connected to Toronto's hosting of FWC26. It is a core component of the City's FWC26 Community Benefits Plan. The activities reported below provide an update on the program's implementation progress.

Community Workforce Development Program alignment with City Council Youth Priorities

The Community Workforce Development Program contributes directly to the fulfilment of recent Council directions that prioritize youth training (see [MM32.36, CityServeTO Initiative](#)) and employment (see [EC18.6, Creation of a Toronto Youth Employment Program](#)). By creating access to workforce development pathways connected to FWC26-related sectors such as tourism, event operations, and hospitality, the Community Workforce Development Program is set up to achieve City Council commitments to both inclusive economic development (see [EC17.2, A Partnered Approach to Inclusive Economic Development](#)) and youth training outcomes.

The Community Benefits Workforce Intermediary role being played by staff from the Social Development Division is essential in achieving workforce development outcomes. The Workforce Intermediary is facilitating meaningful connections between employers, employment service providers (ESPs), and community partners, to ensure youth job seekers get equitable and inclusive access to opportunities. In addition, the City's collaboration with WCG Services creates streamlined connections between community benefits hiring opportunities and Employment Ontario service providers.

Community Benefits for Youth in receipt of Ontario Works

In partnership with Toronto Employment & Social Services (TESS), the Social Development division is advancing an Intensive Case Management initiative to support 60 youth in receipt of Ontario Works through customized wraparound services, workforce development opportunities, and networking supports, with an increased emphasis on stabilizing life circumstances. One of the first opportunities available to participants is a Pathway to the FIFA Volunteer Program. Delivered in collaboration with the FWC26 Secretariat, this pathway offers youth receiving Ontario Works access to skills training, networking opportunities, and hands-on professional experience. The pathway is designed to provide exposure, information, and preparation to help youth pursue this unique opportunity to contribute to the FIFA tournament.

Community Benefits Employer Champions

Employer Champions are pivotal in supporting the Community Workforce Development Program by creating workforce development opportunities for Indigenous, Black and equity-deserving youth. Three recently confirmed Employer Champions for this quarter are:

- Little Canada: Toronto attraction showcasing miniature Canadian landmarks
- Wasserman Sports & Entertainment: Global agency that connects fans/guests/consumers through Sports, Music, Entertainment & Culture.
- Ontario Power Generation: Ontario's primary electricity producer

Immediate next steps with the confirmed Employer Champions include finalizing Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs), identifying targeted collaboration opportunities, and completing labour forecasting to guide workforce planning. City staff are in discussion with a number of pending Employer Champions. In addition, employer engagement efforts actively continue and includes broad outreach to associations, sector groups and City Divisions to extend program reach and connections with potential Employer Champions. Recent engagement activities include:

- Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas (TABIA)
- Workforce Funders Collaborative
- Ontario Tourism Education Corporation (OTEC)
- Greater Toronto Hotel Association
- Toronto Attractions Council
- United Way Greater Toronto's Inclusive Local Economic Opportunity Initiative

Toronto Leads Community Benefits Community of Practice with FWC26 Host Cities across Canada, Mexico and US

In August 2025, the FWC26 Secretariat and Social Development division's Community Benefits Unit convened the first FWC26 Host Cities Community of Practice gathering. This event brought together community benefits and legacy program leaders from other FIFA World Cup 2026 Host Cities including Atlanta, Boston, Dallas, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Miami, Monterrey, New York/New Jersey, Philadelphia, San Francisco-Bay Area, Seattle, and Vancouver. The goals of the Host Cities Community of Practice are

to build strategic relationships across host cities, share community impact and legacy best practice models, and ultimately create a strong legacy of community-focused inter-city collaboration across the three countries.

Preparation underway for Youth Career Development Summit in late-Fall 2025

Preparations are underway for a late-Fall 2025 Youth Career Development Summit to focus on highlighting career pathways in FWC26-related sectors such as tourism, event operations, and hospitality. The Summit will connect Indigenous, Black and equity-deserving youth with Employer Champions, sector leaders, training providers, and community-based organizations in order to promote increased awareness of career pathways, mentorship opportunities, and networking. Planning is led through a collaboration between the Social Development division's Community Benefits and Youth Development teams. The partnership works to leverage community and employment networks through the Youth Employment Partnerships (YEP) and Toronto Youth Job Corps (TYJC) programs.

Community Activation Toolkit

Launched on August 27, 2025, the Toronto FIFA World Cup 26 Community Activation Toolkit is a comprehensive guide developed by the FWC26 Secretariat to help local businesses, organizations, and residents safely and creatively engage with the tournament while respecting FIFA's brand protection rules.

The first edition includes practical information on how communities can participate through themed events, cultural programming, and public viewing activities, all while complying with usage restrictions related to FIFA's intellectual property.

The toolkit outlines key tournament dates, brand guidelines, event planning tips, and provides ideas for community celebrations that align with the city's inclusive "The World in a City" branding. It also details the process for obtaining FIFA public viewing licenses, explains commercial restrictions within a 2km radius around the stadium, and highlights grant opportunities, including the Community Celebration Support Fund and Local Leadership Grant, to help fund grassroots initiatives. Updated editions of the toolkit will be released as new information becomes available and tournament planning evolves. Community members are encouraged to stay informed through the City's official channels and be part of showcasing Toronto's diversity, energy, and pride on the global stage.

On August 27, 2025 the Community Activation Toolkit was shared widely across businesses and community organizations and is available on the Toronto FWC26 website: [FIFA World Cup 26 Toronto - Community Activation Toolkit](#)

Local Neighbourhood Preparations with Liberty Village and Fort York

In June 2025, City Council directed the City Manager and the Executive Director, FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto Secretariat, in consultation with all relevant divisions, to report back to the next FIFA World Cup 2026 Subcommittee meeting on how neighbourhood-specific preparations for Liberty Village and Fort York are being incorporated into planning underway for the FIFA World Cup 2026.

In response, staff have implemented a FIFA World Cup 2026 Neighbourhood Planning Interdivisional Table to coordinate event management, communications, community activation, legacy community improvements and other preparations for the area around the event venues.

The Neighbourhood Table includes representatives from key divisions including Transportation Services, City Planning, TTC, Solid Waste Management, Social Development, Parks & Recreation, Economic Development & Culture, Emergency Management through the Integrated Safety and Securing Unit (ISSU), and the Strategic Public and Employee Communication team, along with the local Councillor.

The goal of the Neighbourhood Table is for Liberty Village and Fort York stakeholders and residents to be well-prepared and experience neighbourhood improvements from Toronto hosting the FIFA World Cup 2026 and FIFA Fan Festival in their neighbourhoods, before, during and after the games. Key outcomes include ensuring residents and stakeholders are well-informed throughout 2025/26 about how their neighbourhoods are being prepared for the event.

Deliverables to support this goal include the development of localized event management plans that residents can easily understand and feel confident in, and comprehensive engagement efforts. This engagement will be supported by dedicated contacts and accessible channels for sharing and receiving information. Neighbourhood improvements such as in the public realm will be implemented through responsible Divisions including Transportation Services.

Key milestones have been identified to guide planning efforts. These include the summer release of the Community Activation Toolkit, the September 15 FWC26 Subcommittee meeting, the December release of the tournament draw and schedule, and the May 2026 takeover of FIFA Fan Festival and Toronto stadium venues. Additional milestones will be identified by staff as planning progresses.

A number of updates and inputs will be required over the coming months, including a Community Engagement Plan that identifies a point person, engagement tactics, and communication cadence. A Transportation Plan briefing will be necessary, particularly addressing parking mitigation measures. Other planning considerations will include neighbourhood activation strategies, event management (covering noise, waste, security, and crowd management), and the integration of legacy projects.

Internally, planning efforts will be supported by a regularly meeting multi-Division staff working group with the local Councillor. The Neighbourhood Table met for the first time

on July 29th and further updates will be provided to the FIFA World Cup 2026 Subcommittee.

FIFA Fan Festival

The FIFA Fan Festival is a global celebration of soccer, culture and community, designed for fans to enjoy free live broadcasts of FWC26 matches while experiencing the excitement of an official FIFA World Cup atmosphere.

Fort York National Historic Site and The Bentway are the official sites for the FIFA Fan Festival Toronto, which will run between Thursday, June 11 and Sunday, July 19, 2026, and will feature live match broadcasts on large screens, diverse cultural performances, interactive art installations and a wide variety of local food experiences. Specific operating days and hours will be available at a later date. This celebration will highlight Toronto's unmatched diversity, talent and global appeal, reinforcing the city's reputation as being "The World in a City."

The City is committed to keeping the community, including residents, businesses and Indigenous groups well-informed and actively engaged throughout the planning process for the FIFA Fan Festival. The City will continue collaborating closely with these groups to ensure meaningful participation and dialogue. An information session for area residents and businesses is planned in the coming months.

The nRFP for the provision of Programming and Site Production services has closed and proposal evaluations will conclude shortly. Contract negotiations will commence shortly thereafter targeting conclusion by mid to end of September.

Volunteer Program

On August 11, 2025 volunteer recruitment for the FIFA World Cup 2026 officially kicked off, inviting residents to apply to be part of the team to help deliver the world's biggest sporting event.

In Toronto a team of more than 3,000 volunteers will be needed to support fan experiences, accessibility services, media operations and event logistics. This is a unique opportunity to contribute to a global event, demonstrate civic pride and help showcase the city's diversity and hospitality on the world stage.

Volunteers will have the chance to gain practical experience, develop new skills and make lasting memories. Grounded in the values of inclusion, community pride and legacy, the volunteer program offers a rare opportunity to contribute to a historic moment for Toronto.

To support those interested in volunteering, the FWC26 Secretariat hosted four on-line information sessions between August 11 to 21. The information sessions provided more details on the volunteer application process, the different volunteer roles and what to

expect as a volunteer with the FIFA World Cup 26 in Toronto. More than 1300 people attended the information sessions.

Of the 16 Host Cities, Toronto is currently leading the way with the highest number of people having submitted volunteer applications. The portal is planned to close in mid-September and early submissions are strongly encouraged. To be eligible, volunteers must be 18 years or older when they submit their application.

To apply or learn more, information is available on FIFA's website:
www.fifa.com/en/tournaments/mens/worldcup/canadamexicousa2026/volunteers.

Conclusion

With the support of both internal and external delivery partners, significant progress continues to be made in preparation for Toronto's hosting of the FIFA World Cup 2026. Following the successful and very well attended public 'One Year to Kick-off' celebration, excitement and momentum continue to build as we look to welcome the world next summer.

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