

FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto: Supplementary report in relation to draft terms of the Stadium Operating Service Agreement

Date: May 20, 2026
To: City Council
From: Executive Director, FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto Secretariat
Wards: All

SUMMARY

In January 2018 City Council authorized City staff to enter into an agreement with Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) for hosting of the FWC26 ([EX30.14](#)). Subsequently, in July 2022, City Council authorized City staff to negotiate and enter into an agreement with Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment Ltd. (MLSE) for activities in support of Toronto's hosting of the FWC26, including but not limited to management of temporary and permanent upgrades at BMO Field and maximization of the value of commercial rights, delegated to the City by FIFA, to help offset the City's costs of organizing the World Cup in Toronto ([EX34.8](#)). In February 2023, the City and MLSE finalized a Letter of Intent (LOI) that is binding and set a framework for terms of service arrangements specific to FWC26 hosting. The size, scope and level of expertise required to meet Toronto's contractual Host City requirements within the required timelines exceeded the City's standing capacity and necessitated contracted services external to the City. In consideration of their operational and entrepreneurial expertise, Council approved an agreement with MLSE to fulfill the services defined in the LOI. The City's decision to enter into agreement with MLSE was strategic and greatly reduced risks to the City in planning and hosting the FWC26. The LOI between the City and MLSE limits MLSE's ability to generate profit from the project while leveraging MLSE's strengths and puts public benefit at the heart of the agreement.

In response to direction from City Council in July 2025 ([AU9.9](#)) this report includes the draft terms of the Stadium Operating Service Agreement with respect to the operational framework of the services to be provided by MLSE, on behalf of the City, at Toronto Stadium in context of the City's obligations and responsibilities and as defined in the City's Hosting City Agreement and Stadium Agreement, as applicable, with FIFA, for the FWC26.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. City Council receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The recommendations in this report have no impact on the \$380 million overall budget for the FWC26 Toronto Secretariat. The financial implications associated with the Stadium Operating Service Agreement are fully incorporated within the FWC26 \$380 million overall budget for the FWC26 Toronto Secretariat. The figures represent current cost estimates for the agreement, which remain subject to finalization through ongoing negotiations. While the overall budget establishes the maximum funding envelope, allocations across the cost categories may vary.

The total estimated cost of the agreement is \$26.0 million, which provides stadium access and rental, event-day personnel and staffing, reimbursable operating expenses (including utilities, security, and other event-related services), and compensation for FIFA-related commercial impacts. Of this \$26.0 million in costs, \$14.8 million is expected to be recovered from FIFA, with the remaining amount already budgeted for within the existing \$380 million budget envelope.

Any variances from these estimates, including higher-than-anticipated costs, will be managed through increased recoveries from FIFA, where applicable, and/or through reallocations within the existing FWC26 Host City funding envelope, without increasing the overall budget.

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

DECISION HISTORY

On March 25, 2026, City Council adopted EX29.10, "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=2026.EX29.10>

On March 10, 2026, Executive Committee adopted EX29.9, "Updates on the Community Benefits Plan, Social Procurement and Workforce Development, Liberty Village and Fort York Neighbourhood Plan, Legacy Initiatives, Community Grants, and FIFA World Cup 2026 Budget and Revenue Status".

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2026.EX29.9>

On February 10, 2026, City Council considered the 2026 Operating Budget for the FIFA

World Cup 2026, with a total gross budget of \$189.9 million, and \$0 net. The budget includes \$7.9 million to support Toronto Paramedic Services for event-related services. The budget is now deemed adopted.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2026.MPB38.1>

At its meeting on September 15, 2025, the FIFA World Cup 2026 Subcommittee considered Item FWC6.1 which served to provide 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.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.FWC6.1>

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 July 23, 2025, City Council adopted AU9.9, "FIFA World Cup 2026 - Toronto, Governance Lessons Learned for Bidding and Planning to Host Future Mega Events" via which 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.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.AU9.9>

On June 25, 2025, City Council 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" directing City staff to negotiate and enter into an agreement with Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment Ltd. to receive a \$23 million funding contribution for the enhancement of capital work required for FIFA World Cup 2026 Toronto.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.EX24.12>

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 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 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 14, 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. Council also directed staff to provide a status update and any further recommendations on revenue opportunities to support hosting obligations by the fourth quarter of 2025.
<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 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>

On May 10, 2023, City Council adopted IA6.1 "Letter of Intent between the City and Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment regarding the 2026 World Cup"
<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.IA6.1>

On July 19, 2022, City Council adopted EX34.8, "Hosting FIFA World Cup 2026", via which City staff were authorized to negotiate and enter into an agreement with Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment for activities in support of Toronto's hosting of World Cup 2026.
<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.EX34.8>

On January 31, 2018, City Council adopted EX30.14, "Authority to Enter Into Bid Agreements for the 2026 FIFA World Cup", authorizing City staff to negotiate and execute the Bid Agreements for the 2026 Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup.
<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2018.EX30.14>

COMMENTS

Stadium Operating Services

With respect to hosting the FWC26, the City entered into an agreement with FIFA for the management and delivery of operational elements at Toronto Stadium (BMO Field). In furtherance of this, and consistent with the Letter of Intent (LOI) signed by the City and MLSE on February 10, 2023, MLSE will manage and deliver all Host City Stadium Obligations required, on behalf of the City, under the Hosting Agreements in respect of Toronto Stadium.

As the current operator and manager of BMO Field under the existing Management Agreement with the City and Exhibition Place, MLSE possesses the operational expertise, venue infrastructure knowledge, workforce management capabilities, and event delivery experience necessary to support a global event of this scale.

To fulfill the City's obligations, the City is entering into an agreement ("the Agreement") with MLSE, which establishes the operational, financial, legal, and governance framework required of the City to fulfill its obligations as a Host City and Stadium Authority under its agreement with FIFA. The financial implications associated with the Stadium Operating Service Agreement are fully incorporated within the FWC26 \$380 million overall budget for the FWC26 Toronto Secretariat.

The proposed Agreement formalizes MLSE's role as the City's operating partner for the FWC26 and defines the scope of services, operational authority, financial arrangements, indemnification structure, and risk allocation between the parties.

In order to fully identify and define the services necessary during the FWC26 tournament period, the May 09, 2026 match between Toronto FC and Inter Miami CF served as a test event. Learnings from this match are being incorporated, along with other relevant FIFA required processes and plans into the Stadium Operating Service Agreement. Oversight of Toronto Stadium was transferred to FIFA on May 13, 2026, marking the start of FIFA's exclusive use period.

Scope of Services within the Stadium Operating Service Agreement

Under the Agreement, MLSE will provide comprehensive stadium operating services across three phases, namely Pre-Tournament Services (Expiry of Project Management Agreement-Exclusive Use Period Start Date May 13, 2026); Exclusive Use Period Services (May 13-July 9, 2026); and Post-Tournament Services (July 9-Dec 31, 2026).

Pre-Tournament Services

MLSE will support all planning, coordination, testing, and operational readiness activities required before the commencement of the FIFA exclusive use period. Services include:

- Coordination with FIFA, City staff, Exhibition Place, emergency services, and regulatory authorities;
- Overlay construction coordination and stadium conversion planning;
- Temporary infrastructure installation support;

- Operational readiness testing and rehearsal events;
- Venue inspections and compliance activities;
- Security, safety, emergency planning, and tabletop exercises;
- Venue systems integration and operational planning; and
- Coordination of stakeholder visits and functional area planning.

Exclusive Use Period Services (May 13-July 9, 2026)

During FIFA's exclusive use period, MLSE will provide full stadium operations and venue management services, including:

- Integrated venue operations and command centre management;
- Workforce planning, staffing, and deployment;
- Security operations and crowd management;
- Venue technology and IT systems management;
- Match presentation and broadcast coordination;
- Medical and emergency response services;
- Facility maintenance and utilities management;
- Pitch management and field operations;
- Cleaning, waste management, and sustainability programs;
- Logistics, conversions, mobility, and freight coordination; and
- Ticketing operations, spectator services, accessibility, and fan management.

Consistent with FIFA requirements and the City Hosting Agreements, FIFA will maintain full operational control of the Stadium during the exclusive use period. MLSE will act as the City's authorized operating representative and will implement FIFA operational directives related to stadium management, event delivery, security, broadcast, technology, accreditation, and venue operations. The Agreement expressly recognizes that MLSE's performance obligations are subject to FIFA's operational authority and directives during the tournament period.

Post-Tournament Services (July 9-Dec 31, 2026)

MLSE will oversee the transition of the venue back to normal operations following FWC26, including:

- Overlay dismantling and site restoration;
- Coordination with contractors and FIFA vendors;
- Restoration of stadium branding and infrastructure;
- Final condition assessments and reporting;
- Financial reconciliation and vendor close-out; and
- Completion of final project settlement activities.

Consistent with the LOI, the Agreement will establish a cost recovery model designed to compensate MLSE for services, personnel, venue use, and event-related impacts associated with FWC26, with costs managed through increased recoveries from FIFA, where applicable, and/or through reallocations within the existing FWC26 Host City funding envelope. The Agreement further contemplates collaborative mitigation and reconciliation processes between the City and MLSE to minimize financial impacts where commercially reasonable.

The Agreement will establish a joint governance and coordination framework between the City and MLSE, including key governance provisions such as the appointment of a designated Stadium Lead by MLSE; the appointment of a designated City Representative; ongoing coordination with FIFA and Exhibition Place; integrated operational planning and decision-making; coordination of approvals and operational directives; and shared dispute resolution and escalation procedures. The Agreement acknowledges that FWC26 constitutes a “City Event” under the existing Management Agreement governing BMO Field.

The Agreement will contain customary legal protections and risk allocation provisions appropriate for a major international sporting event, including provisions for the mutual indemnification obligations; insurance requirements; limitation of liability provisions; confidentiality and MFIPPA compliance obligations; force majeure protections; dispute resolution procedures; anti-corruption and compliance requirements; and audit and record retention obligations. The Agreement also establishes procedures governing invoice review, payment disputes, operational continuity, and termination rights.

The FWC26 represents one of the largest international sporting events ever hosted in Canada and will position Toronto as a global destination for sport, tourism, and entertainment. Approval of the Stadium Operating Service Agreement is necessary to ensure operational readiness of Toronto Stadium; satisfy FIFA hosting obligations; establish clear operational authority and accountability; protect the City’s interests through defined governance and financial controls; enable coordinated planning among the City, MLSE, FIFA, Exhibition Place, emergency services, and event stakeholders; and mitigate operational and financial risks associated with tournament delivery. The Agreement leverages MLSE’s existing operational expertise and venue management capabilities while ensuring that the City retains oversight and accountability consistent with its obligations under the FIFA Hosting Agreements.

The Agreement supports the successful delivery of FIFA World Cup 2026 matches at Toronto Stadium.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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