

**TO:** MAYOR & COUNCILLORS  
**FROM:** GENERAL MANAGER PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE  
**SUBJECT:** **FIFA EVENT AND PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**  
**PURPOSE:** To seek authorization to initiate planning and coordination in response to FIFA World Cup 2026.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT** staff be authorized to initiate planning and coordination in response to FIFA World Cup 2026, as outlined in the report “FIFA Event and Partnership Opportunities”, dated July 8, 2024; and

**THAT** funding and staff resource impacts identified through planning be brought forward within the 2025 and 2026 proposed operating budgets.

## **1.0 POLICY SECTION**

The advancement of this project aligns with and complements the following Council-adopted policies and strategies: Corporate Strategic Plan (2017), Health Community Strategy (1991), Burnaby Economic Strategy (2017), and Benefits Based Approach (2023).

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

The 2026 FIFA World Cup, an international men’s soccer championship, will take place from June 11 to July 19, 2026, and feature 48 national teams. It will be jointly hosted by 16 cities across three North American countries: Canada, Mexico, and the United States. Vancouver has been selected to host seven games from June 13 to July 2, 2026, and the only Canadian city to host a Group of 16 playoff game.

The 2026 FIFA World Cup is one of the largest sporting events in the world, bringing together millions of fans and generating significant global media coverage. The games in Vancouver will attract visitors from around the world, providing an opportunity for the neighbouring cities like Burnaby to showcase its culture, hospitality, and scenic beauty.

Potential impacts of Vancouver being a host city, and event and partnership opportunities, were presented to Parks, Recreation, and Culture Committee on June 11, 2024. The Committee expressed support for planning to ensure minimal disruption for residents and current facility users, and to seek opportunities to build community capacity and excitement around the event.

**3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION**

The event will have a significant regional impact, and prompt commencement of coordinated planning is crucial to ensure a smooth, safe World Cup experience for residents and visitors. A Core Planning Team will gather subject matter experts from RCMP, Fire, PRC, Engineering and other key departments, and a single point of contact will support coordination efforts across the City, with other municipalities and organizations, and with potential partners.

The Core Planning Team will be made up of current staff resources. However, depending on the scale of the City’s participation in the event, effective coordination may require a new temporary full-time role. Duties of the coordinator will include:

- Facilitating local and regional planning, information sharing and response by relevant departments (Community Safety, PRC, Engineering, Marketing);
- Assessing requests for practice space from visiting teams and options to mitigate impact on existing user groups; and,
- Programming of complementary events and activities, including supporting partnerships with non-profits and local businesses, to support a better resident experience.

**Activation ideas**

Planning complementary events in Burnaby can help residents feel part of the excitement, particularly those who might otherwise be excluded due to high ticket prices and limited availability. These are also opportunities for the City to build on existing partnerships and initiate new relationships with Tourism Burnaby, community organizations, amateur athletics, businesses and neighbouring municipalities, and to highlight the City’s reputation as a centre for both elite and recreational soccer. Examples of events and estimated costs are listed below.

**Indoor Viewing Parties** **\$40,000**

Viewing parties at the Rosemary Brown Recreation Centre. Cost is based on estimated expenses for equipment, promotion and staffing for seven games.

**Outdoor Viewing Parties** **\$100,000**

Watching parties at Civic Square or Central Park would allow a fun, festival atmosphere for fans to gather in a larger capacity than what can be accommodated at Rosemary Brown Recreation Centre. Anticipated costs include equipment rental and staffing including RCMP and Fire.

**Community Grants** **\$150,000**

A targeted community grant program would allow local soccer clubs and other athletics programs to plan special projects to build capacity or increase awareness of programming during or leading up to the FIFA World Cup. Examples could include

demonstration events with retired players, targeted outreach to underserved communities, or mentorship programs. Administration could be within the City or by a partner organization.

**Soccer Festival** **\$150,000**

An opportunity for fans of all ages to celebrate soccer, at Central Park or the Burnaby Lake Recreation Complex. Activities could include skill demonstrations, small-sided matches, food trucks, and other entertainment.

**4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

To involve residents and visitors, key community events and activities may include organizing a series leading up to and during the World Cup 2026. These initiatives can include programs that celebrate local culture and foster community involvement, ensuring that the festivities are inclusive and reflective of Burnaby's diverse heritage.

**5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Resource requirements are being evaluated and will be brought forward within the 2025 and 2026 proposed operating budgets.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Morrison-Clark, General Manager Parks, Recreation and Culture

**REPORT CONTRIBUTORS**

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