From: "Levitt, Karen" <karen.levitt@vancouver.ca>
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
Date: 6/10/2026 10:16:15 AM
Subject: EMBARGOED: News release: Vancouver officially kicks off FIFA World Cup 2026™ celebrations

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Dear Mayor and Council,

This morning we're reaching out to share the embargoed news release to kick-off the FIFA World Cup 2026™ and highlight key updates that fans, visitors and residents should know before the tournament begins.

This release is embargoed until 1 pm , following the end of today's tournament kick-off and FIFA Fan Festival preview media event which you would have all received an invite for. Please note, it will also be translated in French.

Additionally, for awareness, in the coming weeks, you will also receive the FWC26 Van Update report at regular intervals, which will provide for your information a recap of key highlights, media coverage, photo selects for use, and any emerging issues, along with a look ahead. It will be distributed the day after each of Vancouver's seven match days, as well as on Mondays, summarizing the previous week at the FIFA Fan Festival™ as well as what's coming up next.

Thanks,

Karen

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CONFIDENTIAL, EMBARGOED UNTIL 1 PM TODAY

June 10, 2026

Vancouver officially kicks off FIFA World Cup 2026™ celebrations

The wait is over. FIFA World Cup 2026™ officially begins tomorrow, marking the start of the biggest

single sporting event in history and Vancouver's moment on the world stage as one of 16 Host Cities across Canada, Mexico and the United States.

Over the next six weeks, Vancouver is ready to welcome the world with seven matches at BC Place Vancouver, the opening of the free, 28-day FIFA Fan Festival™ Vancouver at Hastings Park, and a city-wide welcome experience connecting fans, residents and visitors throughout the tournament.

"Sport has the power to bring people together and the FIFA World Cup 2026™ will do that on a global scale," said Adam van Koeverden, Secretary of State (Sport) and Canada's FIFA Sherpa. "Vancouver is ready to welcome fans, teams and visitors as well as deliver a safe, exciting and unforgettable tournament experience. As Canada prepares to host the world, this is a moment for Canadians to celebrate soccer, community and the pride of being part of the world's biggest sporting event."

"After years of planning, the FIFA World Cup 2026™ is finally here and we are ready to welcome the world to our province and feel the incredible energy in B.C.," said Anne Kang, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport. "Hosting the FIFA World Cup™ is an opportunity to showcase the best of B.C., create jobs, bring lasting economic and community benefits, and inspire young athletes throughout the province. From community events throughout B.C., to the FIFA Fan Festival™ in Vancouver, we want to make sure that everyone has the chance to take part, get excited and celebrate the beautiful game."

"This summer, Vancouver is ready to set the stage for an unforgettable celebration of the beautiful game," said Ken Sim, Mayor of Vancouver. "From FIFA Fan Festival™ Vancouver at Hastings Park to the Match Day Spectator Route and BC Place Vancouver in the downtown core, and throughout our vibrant and diverse neighborhoods, we can't wait to show the world what makes Vancouver a world-class city to visit, live, work and play. The kick-off of FIFA World Cup 2026 marks the start of an iconic journey for our city, one that will showcase Vancouver's energy, hospitality, and global spirit every step of the way."

Match Days

Vancouver will host five group stage matches featuring Australia, Belgium, Canada, Egypt, New Zealand, Qatar and Switzerland, in addition to two knockout round games for a total of seven matches. Fans with match tickets can experience the energy of match days along the Match Day Spectator Route, featuring exciting activations and programming on the way to BC Place Vancouver, and a spectacular installation onsite for epic selfies, open for all. See the match schedule details at: www.vancouverfwc26.ca/match-centre/match-schedule

FIFA Fan Festival™ Vancouver

Everyone can be part of the excitement at the FIFA Fan Festival™ Vancouver, a free, accessible and family-friendly destination featuring live match viewing on large screens throughout the site, more than 60 free performances and two signature concert series. Learn more: www.vancouverfwc26.ca/fifa-fan-festival

Celebrate across the city and region

Beyond official Host City programming, residents and visitors can experience the tournament's energy across the region. From taking in the largest Canadian flag on Grouse Mountain to snapping selfies with the giant Trionda soccer ball at Science World, there are countless ways to get involved. Watch parties, fan marches and community celebrations will be happening throughout the tournament. Learn more: www.destinationvancouver.com/world-cup-events

The excitement extends well beyond Vancouver, with restaurants, bars and venues throughout British Columbia hosting community events, public match viewings and soccer-themed activities. Learn more: https://www.supernaturalbc.com/same-day-game-day/

Know Before You Go

From the FIFA Fan Festival™ Vancouver to match days, residents and visitors alike will have opportunities to experience the excitement of FIFA World Cup 2026™ both inside and outside the stadium. With an estimated 350,000 spectators expected to move through downtown Vancouver for matches, and up to 25,000 daily visitors over 28 days at the FIFA Fan Festival™ Vancouver, planning ahead will help ensure the best possible experience.

Essential information for match-goers, festival attendees and residents is available online, supporting an enjoyable and safe tournament experience, while introducing visitors from around the world to Vancouver and BC as an inclusive, welcoming and world-class host city. Learn what to bring/not bring on your travels, how to get there and more here: www.vancouverfwc26.ca/know-before-you-go.

Covering the action

Throughout the tournament, the Vancouver Host Committee will issue media advisories in advance of each match day, providing key information, media opportunities, and details on the availability of a Host Committee spokesperson at a designated time and location. Additional curated media moments are also being planned, with further details to come.

Media are also reminded to complete accreditation for the FIFA Fan Festival™ Vancouver if they have not already done so. Stay updated through the FIFA World Cup 2026 Vancouver™ media hub which includes news releases, accreditation information and assets such as photos and B-roll for use. Key

links below:

- News Releases: www.vancouverfwc26.ca/media-hub/news
- Accreditation: www.vancouverfwc26.ca/media-hub/accreditation
- Media Resources: www.vancouverfwc26.ca/media-hub/media-resources

About FIFA World Cup 2026 Vancouver™
FIFA World Cup 2026™ will be the biggest sporting event ever, with three Host Countries, 16 Host Cities, 48 teams and 104 matches uniting an entire continent to showcase a momentous new tournament format. With more countries, cities, teams and games, FIFA World Cup 2026™ will be the most inclusive tournament ever, engaging millions of fans across 16 unique stadiums and billions worldwide. The tournament will take place from June 11 to July 19, 2026. To learn more or sign up for our newsletter, please visit our website at www.vancouverFWC26.ca and follow our Instagram, X and Facebook accounts @FWC26Vancouver.

Additional Quotes

Jessie Adcock, FIFA World Cup 2026 Vancouver™ Host Committee Lead and Chief Delivery Officer

“Today marks the beginning of an extraordinary moment for Vancouver—one we are incredibly proud to host. You can feel it across the city: the buzz is everywhere, streets are coming alive, and around every corner there’s something bringing people together. In the weeks ahead, we will welcome the world as we celebrate the beautiful game and showcase the people, culture, creativity and spirit that make our city and province truly exceptional.”

Tom Digby, Chair, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
“I’m delighted to see our beautiful parks play a vital role this summer as we welcome the world for the FIFA World Cup 2026™. From the training site at Killarney Park to the FIFA Fan Festival™ Vancouver at Hastings Park, and from our neighbourhood parks to our spectacular destination sites like Stanley Park and English Bay, Vancouver’s parks will set the backdrop for an unforgettable summer of sport and entertainment for community and visitors alike.”

yəχʷyaχʷələq Chief Wayne Sparrow, Musqueam Indian Band

"As we welcome the world to our traditional territory, Musqueam is proud to be a Host City Supporter for FIFA World Cup 2026™. Soccer has a unique ability to bring people together across cultures, languages and borders, reflecting values of connection, respect and community that have guided our people since time immemorial. The FIFA Fan Festival™ Vancouver will create a space where visitors and residents can celebrate the beautiful game as well as the rich cultures and histories of these lands, which have welcomed visitors for generations. We look forward to sharing our territory, our

culture and our hospitality with fans from around the world."

Chief Justin George, səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation)

“The FIFA World Cup 2026™ is upon us, and the excitement is in the air. The səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation) could not be more excited about welcoming the world to our shared territory alongside our relatives at xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) and Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish Nation). The beautiful game of soccer unites the world and reminds us we are all human as we cheer on our teams. Come see us at FIFA Fan Festival™ Vancouver to learn more about our connection to the beautiful game and our culture as we share it with the world."

Sxwíxwtn Wilson Williams, Chairperson, Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation)
"We can't believe FIFA World Cup 2026™ finally starts tomorrow! It has been such a privilege for Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) to partner on this historic tournament — and the excitement within our Nation — and the city — has reached a fever pitch! We welcome the world to our Territory with open arms and open hearts and are honoured to share our home and our history on a global stage."

Rehana Din, President and CEO of PavCo
“As we approach opening day of FIFA World Cup 2026™, this moment signifies more than the start of the tournament, but the culmination of years of hard work and collaboration with so many partners across the City and Province. We are ready to deliver an exceptional match-day experience at BC Place Vancouver that reflects the energy, hospitality and spirit of British Columbia, and we look forward to celebrating alongside fans, partners and communities near and far.”

Kevin Quinn, CEO at TransLink

“Metro Vancouver knows how to host the world, and transit will play a critical role in connecting people to the FIFA Fan Festival™ action. Our dedicated #11 shuttle will run every five minutes, linking the PNE directly with the Expo and Millennium lines throughout the tournament. With increased service across our system, transit will be the best way to get where you need to go with confidence.”

Andy Margolis, Chief Operating Officer and Vice President, Operations at Vancouver International Airport (YVR)
“With the FIFA World Cup 2026™ just days away, we look forward to welcoming the world to Vancouver and sharing in the excitement as fans come together to celebrate the game at venues across the city. As the primary gateway for fans, teams, officials, and media travelling to and from the tournament, YVR is ready to deliver continued resilient and reliable operations with the region’s signature hospitality for a leading passenger experience.”

Maya Lange, Vice President of Global Marketing, Destination BC

"The FIFA Fan Festival™ Vancouver will be the heartbeat of the celebration, bringing together thousands of residents and visitors from around the world to share in the excitement of FIFA World Cup 2026™. We're proud to be part of that incredible experience through Home Pitch, where fans can step onto the field and immerse themselves in some of the most iconic landscapes and destinations in British Columbia. It's a unique opportunity to celebrate the beautiful game while showcasing the beauty, diversity, and welcoming spirit of BC, inspiring visitors to explore more of our province and creating connections that will last long after the final whistle."

Royce Chwin, President and CEO, Destination Vancouver

“FIFA World Cup 2026™ is almost here, and throughout the buildup it’s been fantastic to see the FIFA Fan Festival™ Vancouver taking shape. Having had the chance to tour the site, I was impressed by the thoughtfulness of the design and by what a great home ground it will be for fans, families, and visitors to come together and celebrate the spirit of the tournament. The FIFA Fan Festival™ isn't just a place to watch the games. It brings together soccer, culture, food, and music in a way that reflects the diversity of Vancouver. If you haven't got a ticket to one of the matches, it's the next best place to catch all the action."

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Media Contacts:

For FIFA World Cup 2026™ Vancouver media inquiries, please contact:
media@vancouver.ca

For FIFA Fan Festival™ Vancouver and artist line up inquiries, please contact:
Media.FIFAFF.VAN@neighbourhoodagency.com