



DC2026 Conducts Key Next Step in FIFA World Cup Selection Process

Washington, DC 2026 Bid Team Hosts Virtual Workshop with FIFA and Presents Legacy Commitments

Washington, DC – (July 22, 2020) – Today, DC2026, Washington, DC’s official bid team to host the 2026 FIFA World Cup, conducted a virtual one-on-one workshop with FIFA and U.S. Soccer as a key next step in the host city selection process. Mayor Bowser and Greg O’Dell, Events DC president and chief executive officer and DC2026 Advisory Board Member, led the presentation with support from DC SCORES/America SCORES, Destination DC, D.C. United and FedExField. The virtual workshop concluded with a 45-minute Q&A conducted by FIFA.

“Bringing the 2026 FIFA World Cup to Washington, DC makes sense for many reasons. As we look forward to 2026, we know that people are eager to have these shared experiences. And not only is DC a city that has something for everyone, we are the best in the business at bringing people together from around the world,” said Mayor Bowser. “We are a diverse and inclusive city that understands that this is bigger than any one game or tournament – it is about bringing people together and celebrating soccer as a common language, spoken and understood by people around the world. Through programs in our schools and with playing fields across the city, we have worked hard to grow the game and create a lasting soccer legacy in Washington, DC – a legacy we hope to build on in 2026.”

“After a strong virtual presentation to FIFA and U.S. Soccer by our team, led by our Mayor Muriel Bowser, we are already preparing for the next step in this exciting and important journey: the FIFA and U.S. Soccer visit to our great city. In the short time since, we’ve announced our brand and vision, and the excitement, passion, and engagement we’ve seen from soccer fans across our city and region has been inspiring. We are committed to ensuring that soccer remains part of the fabric of our region and culture and that we all are united by the game,” stated Max Brown, Co-Chair, DC2026 Advisory Board.

As part of the workshop, DC2026 showcased the National Mall as the premier location for the FIFA Fan Fest™ with a sustainable commitment to execute the first zero waste FIFA Fan Fest™. With this iconic backdrop that cannot be replicated in any other city, DC2026 provided a vision for a united international celebration of the world’s most beautiful game featuring activations by the more than 190 embassies and cultural centers based in Washington, DC. Additional ideas presented include a collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution to create interactive soccer exhibits, an esports pavilion, and a culinary festival experience, “A Taste of FIFA”, which will highlight match-day cuisine from around the globe. On July 4, 2026, America will celebrate its 250th birthday – and DC2026 aims to have the world join the nation’s capital to celebrate this momentous occasion.

“As part of the soccer community in DC, I am proud to say that the greater Washington, DC region’s commitment to soccer over the years has been incredible. DC continues to set the standard from youth soccer, university soccer, co-ed leagues, to our fantastic professional clubs, the Washington Spirit and

D.C. United. We take pride in our long history of hosting international matches and it stems from our infrastructure as well as the extremely passionate base of domestic and international soccer fans that call our region home! DC is dedicated to soccer and soccer's future. This commitment will only be bolstered by hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup, allowing soccer to have a greater impact leading up to 2026 and beyond," stated Bill Hamid, Co-Chair DC2026 Advisory Board and D.C. United.

During the presentation, DC2026 also outlined an ambitious legacy plan to further grow interest in the game, including the enhancement of free after-school youth programming, development of fields and mini-pitches, and the creation of a center for coaching excellence and hosting other international competitions.

"From hosting the FIFA Fan Fest on the America's stage, the National Mall to showcasing our amazing venues, hotels, restaurants and infrastructure, Washington DC is uniquely poised to welcome FIFA, US Soccer and the world for the FIFA 2026 World Cup. We host more than 20M annual visitors from across the globe and have become a top sports destination in the United States. Washington, DC is a world-class city with a rich history in hosting global and iconic events – and I have no doubt that DC will excel as a host city for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Thank you to FIFA and U.S. Soccer, together, we look forward to creating a last legacy in our nation's capital," said Greg O'Dell, president and chief executive officer of Events DC and DC2026 Advisory Board Member.

As part of their legacy efforts to grow the game, DC2026 will make a commitment to the continued evolution and expansion of America SCORES, a locally-based national non-profit, that provides our most vulnerable youth population with free year-round best-in-class programming that combines soccer, poetry and service learning to give kids the confidence and the skills to succeed on the playing field, in the classroom and in life. Through this legacy investment, America SCORES will increase their outreach by 20% annually at their 12 existing locations, expand into new markets, and serve more than 200,000 youth by 2030. DC SCORES, the local flagship affiliate of America SCORES and born out of the 1994 FIFA World Cup will be able to increase their program capacity by 2,000 youth in DC by 2026 and expand the program into the greater region with the goal of serving 15,000 kids annually by 2030.

With steadfast dedication to reducing the barriers preventing youth from participating in soccer, DC2026 aims to implement opportunities for all to play. To achieve this goal, and in partnership with the U.S. Soccer Foundation, DC is committed to rehabilitating and developing fields and mini-pitches around the city. In collaboration with both of Washington, DC's professional soccer clubs, DC2026 will also engage FIFA and U.S. Soccer to create a center for coaching excellence focused on technical excellence and teaching the whole person. Additionally, the continued attraction of men's and women's international competitions to DC from elite youth tournaments to professional matches will also support the growth of the game around the region.

These workshops provide an opportunity for FIFA to ask more details about the final venue and city selection process. There are currently 17 cities across the United States competing to be a part of the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The 2026 FIFA World Cup will be the first to feature 48 teams and 80 matches. As a next step in the selection process, FIFA will conduct site visits to each candidate host city. The timeline for the site visits are still unknown due the COVID-19 pandemic and will be planned when it is safe to do so, based on recommendations of health officials.

To learn more about DC's bid to be a host city for the 2026 FIFA World Cup and to sign up for news, events and information on being a supporter, visit DC2026.org. Follow @DC2026 on social ([Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)) and text DC2026 to 40649 to join the movement.

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Events DC, the official convention and sports authority for the District of Columbia, delivers premier event services and flexible venues across the nation's capital. Leveraging the power of a world-class destination and creating amazing attendee experiences, Events DC generates economic and community benefits through the attraction and promotion of business, athletic, entertainment and cultural activities. Events DC oversees the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, an anchor of the District's hospitality and tourism economy that hosts more than 1.7 million visitors and generates more than \$400 million annually in total economic impact, and the historic Carnegie Library at Mt. Vernon Square. Events DC manages the RFK Stadium-Armory Campus (RFK Campus), including Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium, Festival Grounds at RFK Campus, the non-military functions of the DC Armory and the Skate Park at RFK Stadium. Stay current on the 190-acre RFK Campus Redevelopment Project at www.RFKCampus.com. Events DC also built and serves as landlord for Nationals Park, the first LEED-certified major professional sports stadium in the United States. Events DC manages Gateway DC, R.I.S.E. Demonstration Center and the Entertainment and Sports Arena (www.ESAontheRise.com), all conveniently located in the Congress Heights neighborhood of Washington, DC. For more information, please visit www.eventsdc.com and find us on social media – Facebook, Instagram and YouTube (Events DC), and Twitter (@TheEventsDC).