

Key Messages – Provincial Outreach

2026 FIFA World Cup

In 2026 Canada will host the FIFA World Cup for the first time, as part of a United Bid between Canada, the United States and Mexico. Now, work has turned to determining which cities in each country will host matches. Edmonton is one of two Canadian cities officially under consideration and has been working on its host city bid since 2018. Toronto is the other city in contention. Canada Soccer's goal is to have at least two cities host, so Edmonton is not competing with Toronto. Rather, both cities are working on meeting FIFA's rigorous requirements to be selected.

Context

We know that the provincial treasury board received a formal presentation from senior officials in Culture on the FIFA opportunity. Our understanding is that a decision on the funding commitment was deferred to March. Between now and the end of March, it is vitally important that many voices communicate the same message to our provincial government: FIFA in Alberta in 2026 is a huge win!

Key Messages

Economic Impact/Benefits:

- *Hosting FIFA World Cup matches as part of the 2026 joint North American games presents Alberta with a pan-provincial, once-in-a-generation opportunity to elevate our place brand, unite communities across Alberta to play host to the world, and generate economic and social benefits that will be felt by all Albertans, south to north, east to west.*
- *The event has the potential to provide a massive contribution to the economic recovery of Alberta. A third party (Sport Tourism Canada) was contracted by Canada Soccer to perform an economic impact analysis for the event based on five games and used the updated budget numbers we recently provided them.*
- *It will expose the province to nearly one billion national and international viewers across five games, bringing more than 250,000 visitors into Alberta. This will create opportunities and benefits for the Calgary and Edmonton International Airports, boost hotel occupancy, and inject major financial stimulus into restaurants, bars, and event spaces across Alberta.*
- *It is estimated to generate more than \$750 million in economic impact across the province, and boost Alberta's GDP by \$377 million. The event is expected to support \$227 million in wages and 3,100 Equivalent Full-Year jobs within Alberta. This also*

translates into the support of over 100,000 jobs for just the duration of the tournament in hard hit sectors like the tourism and hospitality.

- *As part of the host city commitment, a 34-day festival will run concurrently with the full games, highlighting Alberta’s diversity, culture, and arts community. This is truly a pan-provincial opportunity to engage and excite communities across the province, with communities planning and hosting their own local events along with the games.*
- *Leveraging the five matches and the 34-day festival, and Alberta’s natural assets, like the Rocky Mountains, the host city candidate committee has activated an economic development task force that is developing business events and investment forums with partners like Invest Alberta, Edmonton Global, and the Calgary Chamber of Commerce.*
- *The appeal of World Cup soccer will entice corporations and investors to Alberta, creating an opportunity to sell the province as the best place to build headquarters or invest. Sample investment tour itineraries will be developed that will create multi-day familiarization tours to communities throughout Alberta, highlighting different key economic sectors.*
- *From a tourism perspective, this is a once in a lifetime opportunity to attract visitors from around the world to take in the matches in Edmonton and then explore the rest of the province. I also want to note that this extended stay for travelers has not been taken into consideration in this economic impact, but it is very likely that long haul travelers will plan to visit other tourist destinations within our province.*
- *And finally, because this mega event is so attractive for international visitation, it directly aligns with one of the key legacy buckets identified in the national hosting concept discussion -- Economic Development and Tourism Recovery – allowing us to leverage federal funding dollars.*

FIFA Advocacy Letter Template

Dear _____,

In 2026 Canada will host the FIFA World Cup for the first time, as part of a United Bid between Canada, the United States and Mexico. Over the last year, FIFA’s work has turned to determining which cities in each country will host matches. Alberta has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to welcome the world. Edmonton, alongside Toronto, is officially under consideration to host matches. Canada Soccer’s goal was to have at least two Canadian cities host, so Edmonton is not competing with Toronto. Rather, both cities are working collaboratively on meeting FIFA’s rigorous requirements to be selected.



Over the last 20 years, Edmonton has hosted the 2002 FIFA U19 Women’s World Championships, 2007 FIFA U20 World Cup, 2014 FIFA U20 Women’s World Cup and the 2015 FIFA Women’s World Cup. With each FIFA event we saw greater success, set higher attendance records, brought greater economic impact, and fostered more pride from fans across the province. Hosting FIFA World Cup matches will expose the entire province to nearly a billion viewers from around the world. It will bring more than 250,000 visitors into Alberta, generating \$750 million in economic impact across the province, and boosting Alberta’s GDP by over \$370 million. The event is expected to support \$227 million in wages and create 3,100 Equivalent Full-Year jobs within Alberta, supporting 100,000 more jobs in the tourism and hospitality sector.

As part of the host city commitment, a 34-day festival will run concurrently with the full games, highlighting Alberta’s diversity, culture, and arts community. These 34-days will allow us to activate communities across the entire province to share in the excitement, the energy, and the benefits of this MEGA-level event.

By leveraging the monumental size and impact of the opportunity, we can showcase Alberta’s natural assets, like the Rocky Mountains, vast woodlands, and unique access to the north. The host city committee has created an economic development task force that will develop business events and investment forums with partners like Invest Alberta, Calgary Economic Development, Wood Buffalo Economic Development, the Alberta Business Council, and Edmonton Global. The appeal of World Cup soccer will entice corporations and investors to Alberta, creating an opportunity to sell the province as the best place to build headquarters, create jobs, and invest.

When all things are considered, the Government of Alberta must support this once-in-a-generation opportunity for Alberta and the Edmonton region. The 2026 World Cup will create huge positive impact against a provincial investment that can be spread across four years. Particularly now, we need to commit to opportunities that will give Albertans and Canadians something to look forward to, while serving as a major catalyst for economic recovery and growth over the next decade. We strongly support Edmonton’s bid and urge you to do the same.

Sincerely,

<Name & Title>

Provincial Official Contact Emails

Premier Jason Kenney	premier@gov.ab.ca
Minister of Finance Travis Toews	tbf.minister@gov.ab.ca
Minister of Culture Ron Orr	culturetourism.minister@gov.ab.ca
Minister of JEI Doug Schweitzer	edt.ministeroffice@gov.ab.ca

Please forward your outreach letters to dstpierre@exploreedmonton.ca once they’ve been sent.