

We, the undersigned local elected officials from FIFA World Cup host cities and surrounding regions, write together to state plainly what experience and history have already made clear: mega-events without enforceable accountability expose our cities and surrounding areas to serious social, fiscal, and democratic risks that fall disproportionately on the people who live here. FIFA must ensure that the games are a celebration of our communities, rather than a threat to them. In planning against these harms, FIFA has run out the clock. FIFA's human rights framework has only led to the publication of a fraction of host cities' non-binding Human Rights Action Plans. Despite the risks implied by the failure of this process, FIFA has not publicly shared its alternative plan to safeguard against violations of human rights for fans, workers, and players alike.

The 2026 World Cup will impose extraordinary stressors on the places we live in, love, and lead. For many residents, the tournament carries real excitement and pride. Soccer is not an imported corporate spectacle for FIFA and the White House alone to dictate; it has been sustained by everyday people for generations by immigrant leagues, neighborhood clubs, schoolyards, and public parks. Long before FIFA arrived, the game already belonged to the people in a tapestry of cultures and nationalities.

But when FIFA comes to town, our communities are at risk. In city after city, prior mega-events have triggered [spikes in displacement](#) and rent inflation, housing shortages, [poor sanitation readiness](#), [expanded policing and surveillance](#) that remain long after games conclude, documented labor abuses across construction and hospitality sectors, [heightened immigration enforcement](#) activity near event sites, [exclusionary ticketing that prices out local fans](#), and public cost overruns that [leave cities absorbing debt](#). These outcomes are not accidental. They are the predictable result of a top down racket which hoards control, slows [human rights planning](#), limits transparency, and shifts risk onto cities, workers, tenants, and marginalized communities, while FIFA evades accountability. And as [Immigration and Customs Enforcement occupies our cities](#), shreds civil liberties, expands its detention capacity to incarcerate our neighbors, and executes people, [the close partnership](#) between FIFA and the White House demands an explicit challenge from all of us.

As local elected officials, our obligation is not to facilitate harm in exchange for prestige or sit idly by while it happens. It is to protect the stability, safety, and democratic integrity of the places we serve. Our obligations do not pause for a tournament, nor do they yield to secrecy, contractual imbalances, or claims of inevitability. We understand the benefit of the games to our local businesses and the civic pride that comes with hosting them, but we also know that our people, our economy, and our infrastructure are what make these games possible.

FIFA's ability to host matches in our cities without moral stain depends on its willingness to address these risks directly and publicly. Absent that, the World Cup risks becoming not a celebration, but a case study in corporate abuse. The gaps left by FIFA's human rights framework must be filled.

To that end, we, local elected officials representing host cities and the surrounding regions, are united in calling on FIFA to meet the following demands ahead of kick off:

- **Full transparency:** FIFA must commit to publicly disclosing all host agreements, planning documents, and human rights commitments, and cease the use of nondisclosure provisions that prevent public oversight and informed consent.
- **Addressing housing impacts:** FIFA must ensure the tournament does not incentivize evictions, rent spikes, speculative short-term rental conversion, or the removal of unhoused residents. FIFA must call on Airbnb to publicly present a plan to avoid these harms.
- **Rejection of lingering militarization and permanent surveillance:** FIFA must use its leverage within the White House's World Cup Task Force to push back against expanded policing, surveillance technologies, or security infrastructure which outlasts the duration of the tournament and disproportionately targets Black, immigrant, and working class communities.
- **Enforceable labor protections:** FIFA must publicly state its support for labor peace and guarantee binding labor standards across construction, hospitality, transportation, and event operations, including protections against wage theft, unsafe conditions, and retaliation for organizing.
- **Protection for immigrant communities and foreign visitors:** FIFA must use its leverage with the White House to ensure that World Cup venues, fan zones, and celebrations are not used as sites of immigration enforcement or intimidation, and must publicly oppose practices that hinder participation and civic life. To make this real, FIFA must call for the games to be ICE free zones.
- **Accountability for public costs:** FIFA must present a financial plan to support host cities and address the social and financial costs of hosting the games and stop externalizing the costs onto cities while retaining the vast majority of tournament revenue, a pattern that has repeatedly left host jurisdictions with deficits and long-term fiscal strain.

We recognize that our cities differ in size, legal authority, and political context. But the risks outlined above remain real for every one of our jurisdictions.

FIFA's tournament rests on access to our infrastructure, our public institutions, our labor, and our communities. That access must be conditional. As the World Cup takes place in our cities, what is left behind remains a matter of choice. FIFA can choose displacement, secrecy, and permanent surveillance, or they can choose transparency, accountability, and respect for the cities where the games will be played.

If FIFA wishes to claim the World Cup as the world's game, it must demonstrate that commitment not simply through branding or superficial rhetoric, but through binding public action.

We local elected officials stand united in this demand.

Signed,

Nicolas O'Rourke, Councilmember At-Large, City of Philadelphia

Kendra Brooks, City Councilmember, Philadelphia

Crystal Chism, Mayor Pro Tem, City of DeSoto

Nigel Herbig, Mayor, City of Kenmore, WA

Freddy Puza, Mayor, Culver City

Rocio Rivas, School Board Member, Los Angeles

Olgy Diaz, City Councilmember, City of Tacoma

Amanda Dodd, Councilmember, Bothell, Washington

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