



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND**

**AB 6930
May 19, 2026
Regular Business**

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6930: City Planning for the 2026 FIFA World Cup	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Receive report. No action necessary.	

DEPARTMENT:	City Manager
STAFF:	Amanda Keverkamp, Emergency Manager Mike Seifert, Police Commander David Sandler, Communications Manager Ryan Daly, Interim Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Director Amelia Tjaden, Management Analyst II
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	n/a
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	n/a

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an overview of the City’s planning for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

- Seattle will host six FIFA World Cup (FWC26) matches on June 15, 19, 24, and 26 and July 1 and 6.
- The opening of the Sound Transit Light Rail Station, two stops away from the stadium, in March 2026 places Mercer Island in a unique position relative to the games.
- The Mercer Island Police Department (MIPD) will implement enhanced staffing levels during each of FWC26 matches to proactively address potential safety and security gaps associated with increased activity across the region.
- The City’s EOC will be activated at an enhanced monitoring capacity and will be ready to expand the response if needed.
- There will be several construction projects underway on the north end of Mercer Island that may create traffic impacts on match days. Staff are working to minimize road closures during matchdays, when possible. On match days at the Town Center Parking Area, staff plan to offer the first two hours of parking for free with registration and then charge a \$25 daily rate for all parking over two hours. The Mercer Island Community and Event Center (MICEC) will operate in a limited capacity accommodating summer camps and restroom access. The parking lot will offer free parking for

Mercer Island residents and a \$25 daily rate for non-residents. The parking lot will be staffed during match days.

- Leading up to and during FWC26, the City will conduct a robust public outreach campaign that includes a landing page on the City’s website, a weekly section in the MI Weekly, and regular updates on the City’s social media channels.

BACKGROUND

FWC26 is anticipated to be a very large tourism draw, bringing an estimated 400,000 to 750,000 visitors to the greater Seattle region over the course of four weeks from mid-June to early July. Outside of the six tournament matches at Lumen Field, Seattle and the region will host ongoing fan festivals and celebrations, fan zones, and team base camps. The match date, times, and teams are included in the table below. Importantly, all matches are weekday matches and most start around lunchtime, creating unique challenges for the region.

FIFA World Cup 2026 Match Schedule					
Date	Day	Kick Off	Gates Open	Gates Close	Teams
June 15	Mon	12pm	9am	4pm	Belgium VS. Egypt
June 19	Fri	12pm	9am	4pm	USA VS. Australia
June 24	Wed	12pm	9am	4pm	Qatar VS. Bosnia & Herzegovina
June 26	Fri	8pm	5pm	12am	Egypt VS. Iran
July 11	Wed	1pm	10am	5pm	Group G Winner vs. Group A/E/H/I/J Third Place
July 6	Mon	5pm	2pm	9pm	TBD VS. TBD

Vancouver, BC will host seven FWC26 matches, with many back-to-back matches between Seattle and Vancouver. It is expected that match-goers will travel back and forth between Washington and British Columbia.

The City of Mercer Island is in a unique position relative to the games. The City is one of the jurisdictions closest to the tournament stadium, located just seven miles from Lumen Field. The Sound Transit Light Rail Station opened on Mercer Island on March 28, 2026, connecting Bellevue to Seattle. Mercer Island is two light rail stops – approximately 10 minutes – from the International District/Chinatown Station and the center of FWC26 activities.

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

City staff, in collaboration with regional partners, began preparing for the arrival of the FIFA World Cup tournament in early 2025. The following is a high-level overview of the City’s plans for FWC26.

Public Safety

The Mercer Island Police Department (MIPD) will implement enhanced staffing levels during each of FWC26 matches to proactively address potential safety and security gaps associated with increased activity across the region. This upstaffing effort will include the deployment of two Marine Patrol vessels to support maritime safety and security operations, as well as a dedicated land-based police presence and response

team, led by Town Center Officers, scheduled to operate before, during, and after each event. These measures are intended to ensure continued public safety, maintain operational readiness, and provide a timely and effective response to any emerging issues impacting the Mercer Island community.

Emergency Management

The Emergency Manager and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) team has been preparing for FWC26 for well over a year. Among some of the highlights, staff have participated in regular (quarterly, monthly, and now weekly) planning meetings with partners across the region and state on topics ranging from emergency management, public safety, communications, transportation, and more.

In March 2026, several staff attended a planning symposium hosted by the King County Office of Emergency Management, Washington Emergency Management Division, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) partners, and the City of Seattle. Staff have also participated in regional and state-wide exercises and trainings. Internally, staff have conducted an EOC training and exercise to review emergency response roles, as well as “See Something, Say Something” trainings with frontline staff and volunteers.

On game days during FWC26, the City’s EOC will be activated at an enhanced monitoring capacity and will be ready to expand if needed.

Traffic and Construction Management

An estimated 400,000 to 750,000 visitors will arrive and depart the Greater Seattle area throughout the course of nearly four weeks from mid-June to early July. Staff are anticipating extraordinarily high volumes of traffic on I-90 during match days and anticipate on-island traffic will be impacted as well.

WSDOT Revive I-5 Project

WSDOT started the Revive I-5 Ship Canal Bridge Preservation project in 2025 to repair and resurface the upper bridge deck, replace concrete and aging bridge expansion joints and address other maintenance issues. Currently, northbound I-5 is reduced to two lanes across the Ship Canal Bridge. From June 5 to 8, WSDOT will fully close northbound I-5 to remove the work zone, and re-open all traffic lanes for use during FWC26. On July 10, WSDOT will again fully close northbound I-5 to reestablish the work zone and resume work on the Revive I-5 Project.

Active Construction Projects on Mercer Island

Water Supply Line Replacement (Gallagher Hill)

The City Council recently awarded a contract to install a new 10-inch water main on Gallagher Hill Road, which is the project that precedes the Water Supply Pipeline replacement project. Staff are coordinating with the contractor to maintain two-lanes of travel on Gallagher Hill Road during match days.

King County Sewer Project (SE 36th Street)

The [North Mercer Island/Enatai Sewer Upgrade Project](#), managed by King County, replaces aging sewer pipes serving areas in North Mercer Island. Work on this sewer project has recently moved to SE 36th Street, immediately adjacent to City Hall, resulting in the closure of the turn lane. Travel on SE 36th Street is reduced to two-lanes, and this is likely to continue through the FWC26. King County is aware of the match schedule and the regional impacts and is working with their contractor to minimize impacts.

Road Projects (Town Center)

Work on the 76th Ave Mid-Block Crossing (near Starbuck's) will be paused during match days to mitigate traffic impacts. Additionally, work on sidewalk curb ramp replacements will also be paused on match days.

Xing Hua Mixed-Use Development (Town Center)

The Xing Hua mixed-use development at 7750 SE 29th Street remains under construction, with intermittent one-lane traffic reductions currently in place along SE 29th Street, 77th Avenue SE, and 78th Avenue SE. These existing reductions may remain throughout the World Cup period to allow completion of required frontage improvements, including sidewalks, fire hydrants, the relocation of PSE infrastructure, and restoration of the travel lanes, all of which are critical to maintaining the project schedule. Xing Hua is not permitted to expand its current traffic impact footprint beyond what is already authorized.

Parking

Staff anticipate the Park & Ride will reach 100% occupancy on weekdays throughout the FWC26 tournament. All of the FWC26 Seattle matches are weekday matches and four of the six are daytime matches with start times at noon and 1:00pm. Staff anticipate an increase in demand for parking in and around Town Center on match days. Staff have been working on solutions that balance the parking needs of commuters and match-goers and provide flexibility in the City's response.

Considering the unprecedented nature of this event in the region and the relatively new and emerging impacts of the light rail station on the City's parking and transportation system, staff plan to conduct a post-match review after the June 15 game and adjust parking strategies, enforcement, and parking rates for future matches. Additionally, staff anticipate that specific team matchups will likely drive more demand for parking and will be prepared to adjust as necessary.

Town Center Parking Area

On match days, staff plan to maintain the first two hours of parking for free with registration and then charge a \$25 daily rate for all parking over two hours at the Town Center Parking Area. The \$25 rate is regionally comparable for event pricing. Staff will monitor usage of the Town Center Parking Area throughout the tournament and adjust rates based on demand.

Mercer Island Community and Event Center

On FWC26 match days, MICEC will be open in a limited capacity for restroom access and summer camp offerings. Rentals and drop-in programs at MICEC will not be offered on match days. In addition, park permits and special event permits for Luther Burbank Park will not be issued on match days.

A portion of the MICEC parking lot will be available for game day parking on a first come first served basis. Parking will be free for Mercer Island residents. Non-residents will pay a fee of \$25 per day using the [ParkMobile](#) app. Community Center staff will verify the residency of vehicles as they enter the parking lot using driver's license verification, the same verification method used for Community Center drop-in passes. Revenue generated from parking fees will be used to offset the additional expenses incurred by the City during the World Cup, namely police and EOC operations expenses.

Communications

Earlier this month, staff began a robust outreach campaign to inform residents and businesses of the anticipated impact during FWC26 match days. The goals of this campaign are to inform Islanders of impacts, to encourage Islanders to plan accordingly, and to promote the new Sound Transit Light Rail Station as the primary way to reach matches at Lumen Field or to travel to off-Island destinations. The outreach campaign will include:

- Social media posts, beginning in May, to communicate potential impacts to the Island and the region. Additionally, staff will post updates and reminders on social media at least two days before each match.
- A dedicated section in the MI Weekly from May through July, called the World Cup Corner, that will provide information and updates on a regular basis.
- A landing page on the City website with match dates and links to transit and parking resources.

Messaging and communications will be modified and adapted to address changing conditions during the World Cup tournament.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will continue preparations for FWC26 and provide the City Council with periodic updates as planning continues. Staff will also continue to distribute information about the games across all City channels. The City remains engaged with the region on emergency management planning work and that will continue through the conclusion of the event.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive report. No action necessary.