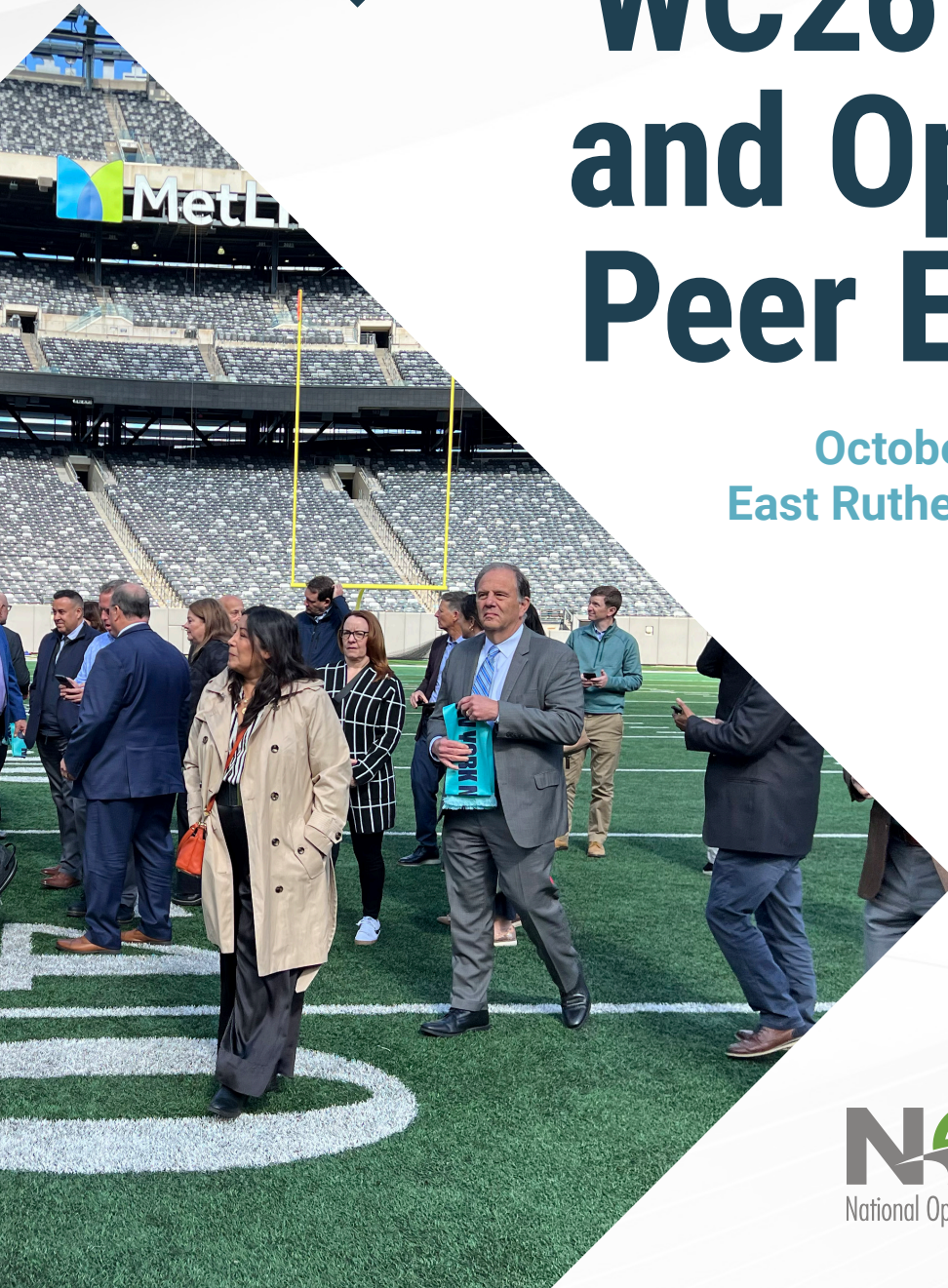




# WC26 Mobility and Operations Peer Exchange

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## Map of Sites



# Overview

The goal of this peer exchange was for 2026 World Cup host cities to learn from each other's experiences hosting planned special events and to identify effective strategies for their World Cup mobility and operations planning.

The peer exchange was designed to strengthen regional collaboration among host cities by aligning operational strategies and event planning with industry best practices.

The intended outcome of the exchange is to enhance the ability of host cities to effectively manage the unique mobility challenges presented by the FIFA World Cup, ensuring a successful and well-coordinated event.



## ATTENDEES

NOCoE invited two attendees from each World Cup site to attend as well as the FIFA World Cup Mobility Planning team and the FHWA Office of Operations. Given the location in New Jersey, many of the New Jersey-New York stakeholders also contributed to the event.

[\(See full attendee list\)](#)

## LOCATION

Met Life Stadium and New Jersey DOT hosted the two-day event, under the leadership of Sal Cowan, New Jersey DOT. Attendees met in the press lounge of the stadium and received a tour of the stadium and its surrounding areas to discuss their event management strategies and operations. Additionally, Francis O'Connor, Commissioner of New Jersey DOT, opened the event with a discussion on the importance of partnerships in planning for special events.



## AGENDA

The agenda was structured to both learn from each of the World Cup sites and their specific needs while also identifying key industry practices that sites can consider as they build their operations and mobility plans for 2026. Below is the list of presentations and discussions topics, grouped by the focus areas of identifying practices, lessons learned, and resource development.

Table 1: Agenda by Focus and Topic Area

Focus Area	Topic	Lead
Identifying Practices	FIFA Mobility Planning Overview	Tahia Mahan, FIFA
	Seamless Multiagency Coordination for Global Events	Sal Cowan, NJ DOT WC26 NY/NJ Hosts
	Community Involvement, TDM, and Parking Management	Mike Kodama, U.S. Soccer
	Scenario Based Toolkit Development	Ahnaf Morshed, AASHTO
Lessons Learned	Copa America 2024	Paola Baez, Miami-Dade County
	Super Bowl LIII	Justin Hatch, Georgia DOT
	2015 Pope Visit and the City plus Philadelphia's Summer of 2026	Rich Montanez, City of Philadelphia
	Managed Lanes for Special Events	Natalie Bettger, NCTCOG
	Major Events at Seattle's Downtown Stadium	Mike Swires, WSDOT
Resources	NOCoe World Cup Planning Committee	Matt Volz, Chair, Kansas DOT
	FHWA Special Event Program	Vaishali Shah, AEM



# Presentation and Discussion Highlights

The following learnings were specifically provided during this peer exchange. They have become the starting point of a WC26 Mobility Planning Toolkit ([available here](#)) which has additional planned special event resources collected in previous years.

## Identifying Practices

### FIFA MOBILITY PLANNING OVERVIEW

The following points were communicated by FIFA during the peer exchange. Table 2 captures the planning, coordination, and mobility approach in working with the sites. Table 3 identifies FIFA insights into parking, transit and ride share needs. Table 4 lists the various responsibilities between FIFA and the host sites.

Table 2: Planning, Coordination, and Approach

Planning Area	Insights
FIFA Mobility Team Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The FIFA Transport and Mobility Team will operate as a hub and spoke model with one contact in each regional office.</li><li>• The FIFA structure has west, central, and east US clusters, as well as a Canada and Mexico cluster.</li><li>• FIFA will be opening Los Angeles and Dallas offices, in addition to the event headquarters in Miami, and existing offices in Toronto and Mexico.</li></ul>
Concept to Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2024 is the FIFA concept year, and the organization is developing the general formulations for crowds, client numbers, parking allocations, and other detailed information.</li><li>• 2025 will be the Plan year.</li></ul>
Event Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This is the largest ever FIFA event as it has expanded from 32 to 48 teams.</li><li>• FIFA wants a consistent level of service across every host city.</li></ul>
Match Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No match will begin before noon.</li><li>• FIFA will optimize viewership to balance home country and Europe, and to ensure suitable game time air temperatures at each venue.</li><li>• The first events will begin on the East Coast.</li><li>• 4 pm and 7 pm match times will pose an issue for peak ingress to venues.</li><li>• The times to pay most attention will be the 4 pm, 7 pm, and 9 pm matches.</li><li>• In the FIFA Euros tournament in Germany, the 9 pm matches had the greatest disruption to traffic and transit services.</li></ul>

Table 2 cont.

Planning Area	Insights
<p><b>Match Draw and Team Cultures</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The draw is in Dec 2025, which is when match assignments and timing will be defined.</li> <li>• Final plans are due in Jan 2026 and simulation testing will begin for WC.</li> <li>• FIFA’s core mission is to ensure reliable travel time for VVIP, VIP, WC Teams, and others.</li> <li>• FIFA is taking on the mobility planning for its core groups.</li> <li>• This is a first and is a learning experience for FIFA, in collaborating with the host cities. FIFA wants to collaborate with host cities to ensure spectators will also have a reliable experience.</li> <li>• What countries may bring in the most fans? This depends on the draw (who is playing whom). FIFA has done detailed analysis of the host city’s ethnic population to predictively identify local activities, events, and expected crowds. They will have this information post-draw for ticket sales.</li> <li>• Athletes and VIP hotels will be determined by December 2024; there is negotiation on rate structure and requirements.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mobility Plan for Each Venue</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial Mobility Plans are due in March 2025. Finalized plans will be due in January 2026 after the draw is completed and matches are assigned.</li> <li>• FIFA will also offer greater details by March 2025 on parking allocations, client group numbers, and hotels –all of which will drive routing.</li> <li>• FIFA will begin route planning in January and will share a preliminary inventory and work with the host city to offer route options for navigation.</li> <li>• Traffic management plans need to be geared towards bus prioritization and optimizations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Host City Workstream Reporting to FIFA</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FIFA hosts a monthly call with each location</li> <li>• Local Stadium Traffic Management Plan, FIFA Fan fest, Airports, Team Hotels.</li> <li>• Micromobility, accessibility, last mile will roll up from each host city to the FIFA Master Plan.</li> <li>• FIFA wants to understand City Plans and will test these to confirm effectiveness.</li> <li>• TDM will be crucial for host cities to reduce demand to carve out capacity for the FIFA traffic.</li> <li>• Host cities will come with an anticipated mode split; we want to validate this.</li> <li>• We will have a FIFA fan fest topline messaging and a link to the host city TDM messaging.</li> <li>• A city planner app to incorporate into the FIFA app that offers transit planning and ticketing is desired.</li> </ul>

Table 3: Parking, Transit, and Ride Share

Planning Area	Insights
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only 5-6 US venues will have the opportunity for onsite parking: Kansas City, Houston, Dallas, Boston, Miami, and Philadelphia. There will be offsite parking at the other venues.</li> <li>• Most onsite parking will be built for client groups (teams, referees, hospitality, media broadcast, workforce).</li> <li>• <b>Which stadiums may have public parking available?</b> All parking will be presold, if there is any available.</li> <li>• <b>Some Stadiums will not have spectator parking.</b> FIFA Fan Fest and last mile need to consider the entire trip including: Fan Fest to the stadium, airport to Fan Fest venue, And Fan Fest venue to hotels.</li> </ul>
Transit and Ride Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Nearly all US venues should have bus mobility.</b> Regarding the Club World Cup, locations have been announced, but schedules are still TBD. It is not technically a test event, but many cities can treat it as a pre-FIFA readying event. FIFA does not require host cities to stand this up as a technical test event, yet FIFA is pleased to support this testing if desired, and FIFA can activate support. The Club World Cup will mostly take place on the East Coast to accommodate the Gold Cup which is taking place on the West Coast.</li> <li>• Could transit ticket costs be integrated into the event ticket cost?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This is challenging to implement and exploring it on the FIFA side for feasibility. FIFA will have a response on this within the next 90 days.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If you have a disruption to transit, how do you handle the FIFA Fan Fest volume.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Need to do traffic demand management (TDM) messaging to promote telework and flexible work hours.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Table 4: Host City v FIFA Responsibilities

Planning or Execution Need	Responsibility
Wayfinding and Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The FIFA Brand Team is working on a guideline and concept for a brand toolkit which will include signage. FIFA will produce some signage. It is the purview of the host city regarding how much signage to include.</li> <li>• <i>What will the toolkit look and feel be, QR codes, etc.?</i> FIFA is leaning heavily on iconography. Color coding of routes will also be instrumental.</li> <li>• <i>With wayfinding messaging, will it be the same model at each venue?</i> Yes it will, and FIFA's approach will be consistent.</li> <li>• A Copa lesson learned was that there was very little exit wayfinding signage. FIFA notes that once you exit the venue, FIFA intends to extend the signage to transit. FIFA will offer the correct exit point from the venue that aligns with the next mode options (e.g., the right bus area).</li> </ul>
FIFA Bus Depots and VIP Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus depots will typically be at a different location than spectator park and rides.</li> <li>• The FIFA VIP cars are also housed/serviced from the FIFA bus depot.</li> <li>• FIFA's commercial affiliates and hospitality sponsors get a parking permit (valet app parking) – either bus or car. They provide their own private vehicle or bus, and FIFA provides routes and parking pass. They get a parking allocation.</li> <li>• Car and bus allocations are approximately 200 per city. Opening and closing will be a different number.</li> </ul>
People Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Volunteers</b> fall within the host city responsibility and will use transit or park and ride.</li> <li>• FIFA handles <b>match officials, broadcasting media.</b></li> </ul>
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FIFA will have vehicle screening checkpoints. Unpermitted vehicles will not access the venue.</li> <li>• Routing and traffic management plan and traffic control and permit checkpoints will be deployed.</li> <li>• The majority of vehicle traffic will use digital, paper, or will include a placard that will be validated by someone. This will affect throughput times and staging, offramps across the board.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are looking at presort lanes, offramp configuration, etc.</li> <li>▪ FIFA manages the allocation, and will work with stadiums on who is placed where.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



## SEAMLESS MULTIAGENCY COORDINATION FOR GLOBAL EVENTS IN NEW JERSEY

Sal Cowan of New Jersey DOT shared three goals they have when approaching a global event:

### Administrative readiness

- We have a standing Monday meeting for connecting with NJ Transit to make sure our staff is ready.
- **Infrastructure Readiness**
- Landscaping, drainage, signage
- Bridge and pavement – Rt. 120 and Rt. 3 around the stadium will be paved next season. We are lower than sea level and want to be sure the drainage system is ready.

### Coordination Readiness

- Troopers were waiting to be dispatched to quell social unrest.
- There are Law Enforcement personnel waiting to retire until after the World Cup because they have specialized experience.



## APPROACH FOR WORLD CUP GAMES AT METLIFE

- We want to be sure we're not on the news with regards to transportation issues.
- The main work group will be the State of New Jersey, NJ Transit, Port Authority of NY and NJ, The State Police of New Jersey, The Port Authority of NY & NJ, and others = 8 entities
- 9 other transit related agencies will also be included in planning: PATH, PATCO, TRANSCOM, SEPTA, MTA, NYC DOT, AMTRACK, COACHUSA, NJ TRANSIT.
- Roadway Bridge agencies for FIFA Event includes the Atlantic City Expressway, Camden Waterfront where the battleship NJ is docked, Dept of Environmental Protection (Liberty State Park), NY City DOT, Bridges, Path Trains, PennDOT, City of Philadelphia, NJ Port Authority that manages traffic signals (ATSPM).
- Government Entities: City of NY, City of Philadelphia, State of NJ, USDOT, State of Pennsylvania, NYC Economic Development Council, NJ Department of Environmental Protection.
- Law Enforcement agencies: NJ State Police
  - There are escorts and dignitaries
  - National Special Security Event (NSSE) – might have FIFA be declared as such.
- NJDOT FIFA Operations
  - NJ has movable bridges (drawbridges) whose schedules need to be coordinated.
  - Planning for evacuation needs to be coordinated.
- NY/NJ Host Committee
  - Some groups have not been stood up, some have already had multiple meetings.
  - FirstNet will be used as wireless communications if/when regular cellular is overcommitted.
- We reduced the traffic around the area by 19% when the Copa America event occurred.



## 2014 SUPERBOWL LESSONS LEARNED

- Demand modeling and forecasting is an estimate
- Planning should aim to maximize and exceed capacity to respond to variable fan behavior
- Align communications and strategy to capacity and solutions available.
- Competitive ticket pricing for rail/bus to equalize decision
- Flexible ticketing times to allow for unexpected fan behavior; match timings – no timed tickets.
- Spectators will show up early to be a part of the experience; fans showed up at 9am for the first Meadowlands Train (1:41 pm).
- Dedicated bus service with designated routes through Lincoln tunnel is effective.
- Crowd management on egress is critical for efficiency and safety.



## CONSIDERATIONS FOR NEW JERSEY PLANNING

- The NE Corridor has received \$26B in funds for improvements. We need to decide what we want to advance and what we want to pause.
- Buses are critical to this event.
- MView uses the Clarus Platform. You can provide your video feed to your website and you can push the video wall to any location.
  - LE, Security, and Parking want access to your cameras.
  - NY and Philly Secret Service wanted access to the cameras with the papal visit.
  - If we all have a consolidated platform, we can watch each other.
- The NY/NJ/Philly geography supports multi-game participation; will scheduling allow for visitors to attend two games in one day?
  - FIFA notes that the timing of games will be driven by broadcast times.
- We have as a nation 104 “SuperBowls” with 5M+ global visitors, but 30% of total match plays will happen in the northeast.
- 50K visitors per day to FIFA Fan Festivals
- There will be hundreds if not thousands of “pop up” events.
- Jersey City Liberty Park will host the main Fan Fest - The waterfront is iconic and allows for water access. We have landside transit systems.
  - 20M local populations. Navy will extend Fleet Week
  - July 4 will feature a game. 100 dignitaries and 2000 VIPs along with the workforce.
- The July 4 Fireworks is the 3rd largest in America in terms of the duration of the show.
- We have 11 subgroups: aviation, wayfinding, etc. We don’t want to scare people away. Local merchants want everyone (locals and visitors) to stay.
- It’s NYC’s 250th anniversary, NY may choose to expand their events footprint.
- NYC has become comfortable dealing with uncertainty.
- Taylor Swift had a 25% increase in air travel demand.
- NJ is looking at using a GIS-base platform for integrated events platform. This was used/ built in Birmingham for construction, safety, and security.
- Soccer fans behave differently. NJ will do simulation modeling for crowd management.
- Simulation Tools to be considered: AimSum, VISSIM, Crowd movement – legion or mass motion. The specific modeling tool will depend on team coordination.

## **FOCUS IN ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND FAN EXPERIENCE**

Mike Kodama presented on his experiences with soccer specific events and the value of TDM and parking management to ensure smooth mobility. His learnings were as follows:

### **Mobility Approaches for Local and Underserved Communities**

- Eight and eighty-year-olds should be able to use the transportation system, for a safe and secure environment.
- Signage for multiple languages and particularly those that show it pictorially.
- Bike and pedestrian programs are a great channel to get people engaged.
- Work with local communities to ask how the locals want to participate:
  - There is a rich opportunity to meet and engage locals to enjoy the World Cup.
  - Partner with theatres, local schools, and other event venues.
  - Consider an ADA issue and the value of radio-level descriptions rather than television subtitles.

### **Attendee Point-of-View**

- Parking – when you park your vehicle, there is a sign of relief that they have made it to the event. After parking you want them to focus on the event not the remainder of the travel.
  - In LA in 1994, people parked at Dodgers stadium and 20K were bused to the event. There was no parking, yet it was immensely easy to access. There was a special line for people with mobility needs.
- Transit system – sometimes they work well, others not so much.
  - In 2014 in Rio and your ticket to the game gave access to subway systems. Volunteers in the subway had their spoken language all over their clothing so individuals may connect and ask.

## **SCENARIO BASED TOOLKIT DEVELOPMENT**

On Day 2, attendees worked in small groups to address four potential scenarios that may affect the World Cup host cities. The groups then shared their approaches and collected the following findings. The results from this, along with the knowledge shared during the peer exchange, helped to build the [NOCoE WC26 Resource Toolkit](#).

## Scenario 1: High Volume Transit Management on Match Days

In this scenario, the primary transit line to the stadium fails a routine maintenance test, requiring its temporary shutdown. The plan outlines strategies for managing high transit volumes and mitigating disruptions on match days.

### Regional Responses:

- **Kansas City (KC):** Developing a new bus route, with plans to deploy multiple buses per route and additional buses as overflow in case rail service fails.
- **Miami:** Experiences with shuttle buses provide backup during train maintenance issues. The recent switch to an electric bus fleet offers flexibility, with older buses available as backups.

### Coordination and Mutual Aid:

- Jurisdiction and authority over transit lines must be clarified, with mutual aid agreements in place between rail and bus services. Bus operators should have additional vehicles on standby, ready to run routes similar to the rail line to prevent overcrowding.
- A point of contact (POC) hierarchy must be established to ensure quick activation of alternative transit structures.

### Passenger Strategy:

- To prevent overcrowding, ticket sales should be capped at 80% capacity, ensuring overflow room.

### Technology Integration:

- Integration between the FIFA app and local transit apps is essential. A single transit pass covering train, bus, etc., should be offered to ticket holders. Existing technologies like Google Maps can provide real-time updates on train delays, while coordination with transit agencies ensures that people are informed.

### Negotiation with Transportation Network Companies (TNCs):

- Work with TNCs like Uber and Lyft to prevent surge pricing. Transit operators may reimburse rides along specific routes within a mile of a transit stop. Incentives should be created to encourage higher occupancy rides.

### Micromobility and Geofencing:

- Micromobility options (e.g., bikes, scooters) should be integrated within Lyft and Uber apps, with temporary and permanent docking stations set up in transportation corridors.
- Work with apps like Waze for background traffic management and geofencing around emergency areas.

### Mass Transit Operations Standby and Parallel Routes:

- Agreements between multiple agencies ensure that mass transit operations can quickly respond to disruptions, with proper coordination between transit management centers (TMC's) and technology platforms like Uber and Google Maps.

## Scenario 2: Coordinated Response to a Traffic Incident Near a Stadium

This scenario addresses a coordinated multi-agency response to a traffic incident occurring near a FIFA World Cup stadium. The approach focuses on ensuring smooth communication, strategic resource deployment, and jurisdictional clarity.

### Centralized Command and Control:

- **A Highway Operation Center (HOC)** centrally located will house representatives from all relevant agencies, including FIFA, to streamline communication and incident management.
- Messaging through the event app will provide real-time, multilingual information to attendees, ensuring clear communication regardless of language barriers.

### Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Program:

- A strong TIM program, modeled after Massachusetts' tabletop exercises, will bring together fire, police, tow trucks, and other emergency services to handle various scenarios such as fatalities, hazmat incidents, or parking emergencies.
- Plans should include strategic placement of emergency response vehicles and ensuring law enforcement escorts for VIPs to expedite their movement through incident areas.

### Incident Ownership and Multi-Jurisdiction Coordination:

- **A clear incident owner** will oversee coordination, even if multiple jurisdictions are involved in reaching the scene. This clarity ensures faster and more efficient response.
- Proper understanding of the responsible agencies for different jurisdictions is key to managing transitions and ensuring no gaps in response efforts.

### Pedestrian Management and Strategic Law Enforcement:

- Law enforcement will be strategically placed along key routes to prevent abandoned vehicles and unauthorized pedestrian movement in critical areas.
- **Contra-flow lanes** may be identified to support better traffic flow and incident management.

### Utility Equipment and Structural Evaluation:

- Arterial routes will be equipped with additional utility assets, and **structural evaluation teams** will be on hand at the command center for Subject Matter Expert (SME) input when necessary.

### Preparedness and Tabletop Exercises:

- Multi-agency task forces will conduct tabletop exercises for various scenarios, ensuring all parties are prepared for different emergencies. These exercises will simulate real-world incidents to fine-tune response strategies.

### VIP and VVIP Coordination:

- VIPs and VVIPs will have police escorts, ensuring quick and secure passage through the area, avoiding delays caused by traffic incidents.



### Scenario 3: Influx of International Fans Arriving Late Due to Flight Cancellations Before Match Day

This scenario addresses the challenges of handling a surge of international fans arriving late due to flight cancellations just before a match, with an emphasis on airport coordination, situational awareness, and transit logistics.

#### **Airport Coordination and Multi-Agency Relationships:**

- Many host cities have multiple airports, complicating logistics. Establishing strong relationships with airport authorities well in advance is crucial for managing these complexities.
- Regular planning meetings involving responsible airport officials, TSA, and Homeland Security will ensure a coordinated approach to expediting fan arrivals and providing security oversight.

#### **Contingency Planning for Late Arrivals:**

- **Shuttle Dispatch on Demand:** Transit agencies must prepare contingency plans, including dispatching shuttles as needed to accommodate the influx of fans arriving from different airports.
- **Airport Employee Shuttles and Hotel Shuttles:** Leverage existing shuttles from airports, hotels, and potentially extra buses used by airport employees to manage transport between airports and stadiums.

#### **Traffic Engineering and Priority Lanes:**

- **Priority Lanes** should be considered for late-arriving fans, with careful planning to avoid adding to congestion. Traffic engineers will need to be involved in the design and deployment of these lanes well before the event.

#### **Communication with Fans:**

- The **FIFA app** will be invaluable for distributing real-time information to international fans. This app should include **multilingual capabilities** and utilize **geofencing** to provide location-specific information.

#### **Situational Awareness:**

- Gather **flight data** to understand where fans are coming from, which flights are delayed, and how to coordinate transit accordingly.
- **CCTV footage** and other monitoring tools will provide situational awareness of traffic conditions around airports and transit hubs.

#### **Security and Expedited Processing:**

- Collaborate with **TSA and Homeland Security** to explore ways to expedite security processing for late-arriving fans and minimize delays at the airport.

## Scenario 4: Adjusting Fan Fest Due to an Underdog Team's Unexpected Popularity

This scenario explores how to adjust and scale a Fan Fest event when an underdog team suddenly gains a large fan following, creating logistical and operational challenges. The focus is on expanding capacity, enhancing fan mobility, and addressing communication and cultural needs.

### **Fan Fest Logistics and Expansion:**

- Relocation or Expansion: Depending on the scale of the fan influx, there may be a need to expand the current Fan Fest setup. However, relocation might not be feasible. In New Jersey, the Fan Fest will be hosted at Liberty State Park and is expected to be a key event throughout the FIFA World Cup, running from Day 1 to Day 39.
- The Fan Fest is open to the broader community rather than a specific team's fan base, so it will need to accommodate a general rise in attendance while maintaining its scheduled hours and location.

### **Increased Fan Mobility:**

- Walking, Transit, and Micromobility: As crowds swell, additional mobility options should be considered. This includes increasing bike-sharing stations, ferry services, and promoting walking routes from transit hubs to the event.
- Since the Fan Fest will be open for the entire duration of the World Cup, special attention is needed to accommodate fans arriving for late-night events, especially those timed to coincide with matches held on the West Coast (past midnight on the East Coast).

### **Communication and Technology:**

- Bilingual Messaging and Ethnic Presence: Given the diverse crowd, law enforcement and event staff will need to be trained in cultural sensitivity. Signage, placards, and public service announcements (PSAs) must be multi-lingual to ensure inclusivity.
- The FIFA app and other event-related digital platforms will play a key role in delivering real-time updates and language support, helping fans navigate and engage with the event seamlessly.

### **Cellular Network and Connectivity:**

- With an increased fan presence, the cellular network capacity may need to be bolstered to handle the volume of attendees. Adequate infrastructure should be in place to prevent network congestion and maintain smooth communication across the venue.

### **Cultural Sensitivity and Law Enforcement Training:**

- Law enforcement officers will need specialized training in cultural sensitivity to effectively manage crowds from diverse backgrounds. PSAs and cultural awareness campaigns can be delivered through hotel venues, airports, and transit stations to create an inclusive environment for international visitors.

### **Challenges with Extended Operating Hours:**

- In places like Philadelphia, the local SEPTA union contracts may limit public transportation support for late-night operations, particularly during West Coast matches that extend past midnight. This is an operational constraint that could affect how Fan Fest is managed in certain regions, and potential alternative transit options should be considered.

# Lessons Learned from Past Events

## COPA AMERICA 2024

Miami-Dade County presented on lessons learned from a 2024 Copa America event.

### Copa America 2024

3 games played at the Hard Rock Stadium. The final match caused an issue due to ticketing, crowd control, and safety/security.

- It used the same events plan for 11 super bowls, Formula One, and similar events.
- Miami is not new to big events; it had a Formula 1 Race, Miami Open, College Football and University of Miami

### Events leading to the match

People were warned they cannot enter without a ticket, but it was not regulated.

- Fans began arriving at 3pm and gates opened at 6pm; kickoff delayed from 8:15 to 9:22 pm.
- Some fans could not enter until the second half; only access was through the owner tunnel.
- We only had 2 bus routes, and they were not used by spectators; they only served employees.
- Fans without tickets broke into the stadium, fought with police, and destroyed walls, barricades, and escalators. People were trying to get in through the air conditioning vents.
- Miami-Dade County had provided more than 550 officers; 27 were arrested and 5 fans were ejected from the game.
- Overcrowded stadium with fans waiting in 88F heat.

## FIFA2026

First time and equivalent to 7 Super Bowls in the span of 30 days at the Hard Rock Stadium with over 500K spectators.

### About Miami

- 54% are foreign born; many Hispanic and huge soccer fans.
- Typically receive 26M annual tourists as a baseline
- Creole, Spanish, and English for all signage.
- We only have 2 lightly used bus routes and we hope to improve on this.
- For a recent marathon, the transit ticket could be purchased via app. But the marathon was downtown.

### WC26 Miami Mobility Plan

Includes five pillars:

- a. **Technology** – create a mobility app
- b. **Network enhancements and connectivity** - complete several pilot projects focusing on first/last mile connectivity.
- c. **Transportation demand management** – includes parking management, traffic preliminary zones, TIM, safety, and security.



d. **Collaboration** – working with law enforcement, Resiliency Office, transportation agencies. Miami wants to provide a seamless customer experience. Internet may fail, so it will be important to keep hard copies of products. Includes 8-12 agencies including Miami-Dade County DOT and Public Works (DTPW), Aviation Department (MDAD), South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA), FDOT, Greater Miami Expressway Agency, Broward County Transit (BCT) and BC Aviation Dept.

### **Additional Points from Attendees**

- Miami has a huge fan base from Columbia, and Columbia was not expected to make it to the final; thus this presented an unexpected surge of interest.
- Many walked far away to unsafe areas because Uber could not access the area.
- It's difficult to walk to the MetLife Stadium, so have some protection. Philly has a walkable stadium. Response from Miami, our stadium is not walkable either, but it still happened.
- We may have to provide a bus only lane or shuttle services for drop-off/pickup.
- Normally not a surge of unticketed spectators in US, but in Miami there were 7K unticketed spectators at the Copa America event.
- Extending perimeter and soft ticket checks before boarding park and ride shuttles.
- Paid 3K to get employee wristbands to use the employee shuttle.
- People were printing counterfeit badges at the venue.

### **Inclement Weather/Hurricane Contingency Planning**

- With summer heat, we have seen more flooding. We typically have 3 to 4 storms as the first winter storm; now we have massive flooding and winter storms are 12-14.
- Every stadium has a lightning policy.
- FIFA has a meteorology team to better understand the most advantageous host city times.

## **SUPER BOWL LIII**

Justin Hatch of Georgia DOT presented on the lessons learned from Super Bowl LIII, held at the Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta, GA while also outlining Atlanta's World Cup set-up.

### **Super Bowl Planning and Readiness**

- Dry Run: College Football National Championship.
- 2nd Dry Run: 10K marathon.
- The most critical improvement was pushing on the partnerships.
  - During dry-runs, officers sometimes went back to old habits.
  - Using data, we were more successful in having individuals follow plans.
  - We went from an approximately 3-hour to 1.5 hour egress.
- Multiple ingress and egress plans
- Worked with police officers on when they take over intersections. Our goal was to keep officers out of intersections.
- 20+ media events managed
- Sharing SOPs with all stakeholders.



- We never spoke to what happens if someone becomes incapacitated.
- Developed plans for the entire week as well as day of traffic with focus on directionality and throughput –to push traffic.
- Super Bowl Ops Team – stand up from the TMC. There was intra-agency coordination.
  - We had 50+ participants in preplanning.
  - We wanted to be sure everyone understood their role. We wanted to emphasize that as we go through the event, people may want to “make adjustments” but discussed how to use data rather than “old habits.”

### **WC26 – Atlanta Set-up**

- 8 FIFA matches of which 5 are group stage matches, 2 knockout matches, and 1 semifinal.
- 2 potential base camps and may become up to 5 base camps.

## **2015 POPE VISIT AND THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA’S SUMMER OF 2026**

Richard Montanez of the City of Philadelphia discussed their lessons learned from the 2015 Pope Visit and some of the challenges they’ll face hosting multiple large scale special events in the summer of 2026.

### **Philadelphia Overview and Approach for 2026**

- In planning for WC26, they’ll carry the lessons from the Papal visit (7M planned visitors). They closed Franklin Bridge, I95, I76 – and Philly became a pedestrian city.
- Papal visit, we had plan A, B, C all through K. But once Secret Service came in, it went to plan AA and beyond.
- Right now have plans A through F for WC26, but we know that will grow.
- We had Germany play Mexico in a soccer friendly match and there were 115K people in the area.
- Philadelphia has 3 stadiums and the port next to it.
  - Port traffic has 18K trucks per day.
  - During a Luke Bryan music concert, people could not get to the venue due to commercial vehicle demand.
- We move 40% of people on Cross Street transit line where we provide discount parking.
- Its 1.5 mi to the train stations and people can walk. It overlooks the Philadelphia Art museum.
- The subway is 2,500 ft from the stadium. In a wheelchair, this path does not work.
- Planning alternate lots while keeping other sporting events happy
- Moving the 4th of July parade away from the 4th of July.
- Fan Fest will be at Historic Lemon Hill – its parkland with soccer and baseball fields. Planning for 20K spectators. We will work on lighting. This is in neighborhoods, so individuals are concerned with effects.



## MANAGED LANES FOR SPECIAL EVENTS

Natalie Bettger of North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) discussed the approach in Dallas and what they've learned from hosting college football championships and other planned special events.

### The ingredients for success are:

- We will do dry runs (e.g., police motorcycles, transit route adherence)
- Build on strengths
- Strategic partnerships and communications.
- What we do every day with partners sets the role of what we do for these PSEs.
- Dallas will have 9 games during the World Cup: one on a Saturday, one Sunday, and the rest on weekdays. With this many events we can improve from one to the next event.

### Managed Lanes and Supply Side Redundancy:

- We use the reversible managed lanes for special events
- Parking pass and routing to stadium – based on where you park, you have a different route for that parking space.
- Arlington may close lanes to direct traffic.
- Charter bus managed lanes/shuttle bus maps: we have a bus shuttle from the commuter rail line and will have backup commuter service.
- Passenger rail charter feeder bus
- For World Cup we may change the hours of operations for the reversible lane. We normally do not change this except on weekends.
  - NCTCOG offers transit and rideshare
  - We stage wreckers on major throughways.



## MAJOR EVENTS AT SEATTLE'S DOWNTOWN STADIUM

Mike Swires outlined Seattle's approach to the World Cup, based on hosting numerous special events at their downtown stadiums:

- Seattle and Vancouver will host 13 games total.
- 6 matches with 60K attendance each, 30K expected for Fan Festival.
- Very transit accessible (rail, bus, and ferry) Amtrack to Vancouver.
- There have been 200 closures over the years for the bridge. It is now getting rehabilitated, 2 lanes closed at a time for 9-months at a time. During FIFA this will all be reopened to maintain capacity and throughput.
- Ferries are expecting surge activities and will need to consider funding to support surge.
- WSDOT Virtual Coordination Center includes an interactive map, an integrated dispatch feed, and an incident model for shared incident awareness.
- Including language in RFPs that accommodate FIFA during construction/closure efforts. Still enable overnight opportunities or ramp closures for paving.
  - Implemented weekend closures to facilitate construction but limit this within a day of the event.
- Seattle Center will be the Fan Fest area, about 2 miles away and a scenic walkway with a north end sculpture walk and ferry terminal.

# Resources

## NOCOE WC26 RESOURCE COORDINATION COMMITTEE

The planning for this event and for the resources shared on the NOCoE website is a product of the NOCoE WC26 Resource Coordination Committee, which formed in early 2024 and developed to have TSMO and mobility representatives from each of the 11 U.S. host cities. This invite only committee is chaired by Matt Volz of Kansas Infrastructure Hub and it has one goal: to share resources with each other. This is accomplished through a monthly resource sharing and coordination call, where each city discusses their mobility planning challenges and shares ideas and information to assist their mobility and operations teams. Additionally, this peer exchange includes select members of that coordination committee and on Day 2, members conducted their normal sharing activities. What follows is a selection of those updates, by city, on select that were of interest during the two-day peer exchange such as parking, transit, Fan Fest locations, and the management of Ride Share.

## WC26 CITY-BY-CITY STATUS REPORT



### Seattle

- No onsite **parking**.
- Creates a concern is with where the **Ride Shares** will be going.
- Stadium and **Fan Fest** linkage: Fan Fest is at Seattle Center, 2 miles away with a decent walk, good scenery. Monorail gets you ½ way from Seattle Center, then a short walk to the next transit.
- Finalizing the current funding package request to legislature that includes graffiti cleaning and shifting unhoused encampments.
- From a previous event we had 300 or so **buses**.



### San Francisco Bay Area

- **Fan Fest** site is far from Santa Clara. Mission Rock is near the waterfront w/Giants.
- There are several **transit** operators in play (4-6) including Bay Rapid Transit, CalTrans and Valley Transit Authority (VTA) Light Rail.
- Activities at waypoints are beeing planned and the goal will be to keep fanbases away from each other.



### Los Angeles

- The Venue is the SoFi stadium.
- Not sure about the location of the Fan Fest site.
- SCAG is working to ensure the freight movement is maintained during these significant events.
- Looking for this to become a **Transit Only event**.

- Transit
  - In the process of interlinking two light rail routes (C and K line). Getting a bus bridge between the two so you will have NB and SB access to the stadium.
  - The LAX People Mover will be ready by 2026.
  - Planning some platform extensions to support the LAX but they may not be ready; thus, they can only run 3 and not 4 cars. This will be ready for 2028 Olympics.
  - METRO and SCAG will pilot during the WC in readying for the Olympics
- We are shutting major arterials and message for roadways. They produce maps for pedestrians, park and walk, and park and ride.
  - Hotels around SoFi may run shuttles.
  - For the Olympics, countries coming in will have their own base camps outside the Olympic Village. Cities are reaching out to countries to offer base camps.
  - Still working on the games route network to limit access to SoFi with dedicated event lanes. They are modeling for workforce, athletes, and spectators.

### **Houston**

- Houston is one of the few venues that will have spectator parking (about 2500 spots).
- They will activate a transit hub in the back of their stadium space.
- They prefer not to have a closure for curb use.

### **Boston**

- Undecided on a Fan Fest location yet. Could be one of two locations within Boston. Fans will be maneuvering through narrow winding roads of Boston so neither is a great option.
- There is one platform/track for the Foxboro station next to the Stadium.
- Fans will have to buy a ticket in advance to use the Station.
- It's not certain how many buses are needed and we may be late to acquire these contracts for Coach buses. School buses are not airconditioned so not a good alternative for June/ July.
- To access Gillette stadium it's two lanes in each direction and one road in and one road out.

### **Kansas City**

- Fan Fest will be at the downtown WWII Museum (was host for a super bowl parade and in 2023 held the NFL Draft there) Its adjacent to a streetcar line that runs 2 miles downtown. This offers an option to get to downtown and to Country Club Plaza which is the shopping/hotel mecca.
- The stadium is the Arrowhead Stadium, east of downtown with 23K parking spaces. Looking at park-and-ride for shuttles and buses. Trying to procure buses.



- Will be supplemented by KC Area Bus Services, but they intend to keep the normal routes going.
- Planning will be crucial as the DOT has some big projects in the works including:
  - I-70 Route to Downtown is a \$2.3B to replace bridges and widen the road from KC to St. Louis.
  - The contractor has to keep 3 lanes open in each direction during the WC.
  - A bigger project to add a 3rd lane to I70 and the contract stipulates keeping 2 lanes in each direction open.
  - Kansas City has a grand proposal to put a park over an interstate downtown loop. This would propose closing I-670. This would be a very tight timeframe to open for WC.
  - Expected use of safety service patrol for the area.
- Making sure we have graffiti removal, trash clean up, and unhoused movement.
  - Working with the State emergency management office to get plans together.

### **Dallas – Fort Worth**

- Natalie released an RFP for a homeland security exercise for a terrorist attack with a transportation component and a consultant has been selected.
- The WC26 transportation committee asked for an RFP for a local area transportation plan
- Daniel Burham notes we have many private parking lots.
  - We will need a bus bridge from a transit (train) site to the event venue. The airport is 10-15 miles.
  - The bus bridge will complement the train.
- The city has sidewalks, access, and city improvements.

### **Miami**

- Fan Fest has 4 sites – downtown where we had the Ultra Festival, and at the beach.
- 23K stadium parking and also have 1748 at a close transit park and ride that connects to the regional train.
- Planning for transit includes a shuttle bus from Brightline Station and Golden Gates.
- Parking ops analysis, connectivity and other assessments are being conducted.
- Bus services may be along 27th Avenue.
- We have a future expansion for rail but will do a temporary bus service.

### **Parking Discussion with Host Cities**

- Dallas, Houston, and Kansas City expect to sell advanced purchase parking.
- LA has significant offsite parking, a few others have the same.
- Boston: Gillette stadium has a limited access highway (2 lanes in, 2 lanes out) and then all residential. How do you protect the community that lives there, and the fans that can't get there, and the bus lets them out to walk to the stadium?
- Some stadiums have 40% offsite parking. Appropriate TDM messaging will be required.

## FHWA SPECIAL EVENT PROGRAM

Vaishali Shah presented how the FHWA can support WC Cities noting activities such as the existing informal community of practice as well as webinars, training, peer exchanges, and print resources.

She asked what webinar topics may be of value to WC City transportation/mobility staff? Responses included:

- Safety and Venue Security
- Multiagency coordination best practices
- ICS Structures Supporting PSEs
- Conversion of managed lanes to bus-only for events
- Crowd Control
- Shared ride ops
- Collaborative training with law enforcement
- Planning alignment and structures
- Planning
- Security operations planning
- Peer Presentations
- Multimodal Planning
- Traffic Models
- How to manage traffic when transit is limited
- Communication to event attendees
- Managed Lanes

## NEXT STEPS

This peer exchange, hosted by the National Operations Center of Excellence (NOCoE) prompted the following actions:

- NOCoE will provide a web portal on planned special events, WC26 planning, and a toolkit of resources. This will be maintained throughout the World Cup and updated for future planned special event planning.
- The NOCoE WC26 Resource Coordination Committee will incorporate peer exchange attendees not previously involved and will continue to host monthly meetings to share resources in the same format.
- NOCoE's yearly student program, The Transportation Technology Tournament, will focus on planned special events in 2025, including specific challenges that relate to WC26 mobility and operations issues.
- NOCoE will hold a peer exchange in Atlanta, GA on August 27-28, 2025, hosted by the Georgia Department of Transportation. Invitees will include active TSMO and mobility representatives from the 11 cities, plus the FIFA Mobility team.
- FHWA will hold a peer exchange in spring of 2025 to continue the conversation and select specific topic areas, as outlined above.

For questions about this report or NOCoE's planned special event program, please contact the NOCoE Director, Nicholas Ramfos at [nramfos@aaashto.org](mailto:nramfos@aaashto.org).

# World Cup 2026 Mobility Planning Peer Exchange

**DATE: 15TH OCT-16TH OCT | LOCATION: METLIFE STADIUM PRESS BOX**

Appendix 1: Final Agenda

AGENDA: Tuesday, October 15, 2024 (all times listed below are ET)		
Time	Topic	Speakers
8:45 – 9:30am	<b>Welcome and Introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitator Welcome</li> <li>Host Welcome</li> <li>Summary of expectations for this peer exchange</li> <li>Ice-Breaker (Engaging Poll Questions)</li> </ul>	Nick Ramfos, NOCoE Francis O'Connor, Commissioner NJ DOT Adam, NOCoE & Ahnaf, AASHTO
9:30 – 10:45am	<b>Segment 1: Kickoff to Planning, Insights &amp; Updates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>World Club Planning Committee Overview</li> <li>FIFA Update</li> <li>FHWA Perspective</li> <li>Q/A Sessions</li> </ul>	Matt Voltz, Kansas City (10 min) Tania Mohan, FIFA (20) Paul Jodoin, FHWA (20-30)
10:45 - 11:00am	<b>BREAK</b>	
11:00 - 12:00 pm	<b>Segment 2: Teamwork: Multiagency Coordination</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seamless Multiagency Coordination for Global Events: Insights from the NY/NJ Host Committee for the 2026 World Cup</li> <li>Multiagency Coordination NJ</li> </ul>	Lauren LaRouso, NJ Commissioner Office and Bruce Remnan, NYC Mayor's Office Sal Cowan, NJ DOT
12:00 - 1:30pm	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>	American Dream
1:30 - 3:15pm	<b>Segment 3: From the Sidelines: Lessons Learned</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lessons Learned from Copa America</li> <li>Superbowl or other sporting event</li> <li>Managed Lanes in Special Events</li> <li>Q/A</li> </ul>	Omar Meitin and John Easterling, FL DOT Justin Hatch, Georgia DOT Natalie Bettger, NCTCOG Mike Swires, WSDOT
3:15 - 3:30pm	<b>BREAK</b>	
3:30 - 4:30pm	<b>Segment 4: Leveling the Playing Field and Crowd Control</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Underserved populations &amp; community involvement</li> <li>Crowd Management</li> <li>Q&amp;A and conversation</li> </ul>	Mike Kodama, United Soccer Coaches community relations manager Richard Montanez, City of Philadelphia LA Metro
4:30 - 5:00pm	<b>Day Wrap Up</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summary and what to expect next</li> <li>Day closing remarks</li> </ul>	Ahnaf Morshed, AASHTO Nick, NOCoE

AGENDA: Wednesday, October 16, 2024 (all times listed below are ET)		
Time	Topic	Speakers
8:45 - 9:30am	<b>Tour of Stadium</b>	Matt Surabian, VP of Events MetLife Stadium
9:30 - 10:15pm	<b>Segment 5 – Team Talk (Roll Call)</b> <i>Host Sites Update (Reactions from day before/feedback)</i>	Matt Voltz, Kansas DOT
10:15 - 11:30am	<b>Segment 6 – Back to Drawing Board</b> <i>Scenario based Toolkit Development**</i>	Ahnaf, AASHTO
11:30 - 12:00pm	<b>Day Wrap Up</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gaps, Potential Actions, and Next Steps</li> <li>Closing remarks</li> </ul>	Adam Hopps, NOCoE Sal Cowan, NJDOT Nick, NOCoE



Appendix 2: Attendees


<b>World Cup City or Partner</b>	<b>Attendee</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Atlanta	Justin Hatch	Georgia DOT
Boston	Amy Getchell	MassDOT
Dallas	Natalie Bettger	NCTCOG
	Daniel Burnham	City of Arlington
Dallas and Houston	Joaquin Artigas	TxDOT
Kansas City	Matt Volz	Kansas DOT
	Matthew Killion	Missouri DOT
	Jill Bruss	Missouri DOT
	Jason Sims	Kansas Sporting Commission
Los Angeles	Jonathan Raspa	SCAG
Miami	Paola Baez	Miami Dade County
New Jersey/New York	Sal Cowan	New Jersey DOT
	Commissioner Francis O'Connor	New Jersey DOT
	Jack Longworth	New Jersey DOT
	Steve Levine	TRANSCOM
	Nathalie Martinez	PANYNJ
	Kumar Patel	PANYNJ
	Jose Tirado	NJ Transit
	Kevin Dunn	NJ Turnpike
Philadelphia	Dave Adams	PennDOT
	Richard Montanez	City of Philadelphia
	Megan Clarkin	City of Philadelphia
San Francisco	Jason Weinstein	MTC/ Bay Area Host Committee
Seattle	Tony Leingang	WSDOT
	Mike Swires	WSDOT
US DOT	Ricki Wells	US DOT OST
	Vaishali Shah	AEM
	Beth Boehlert	Federal Railway Administration
NECC	Jaclyn Kerrigan	Northeast Corridor Commission
Amtrak	Lee O'Brien	Amtrak
US Soccer	Mike Kodama	US Soccer Coaches
FIFA	Tania Mahan	FIFA
NOCoE Team	Nick Ramfos	AASHTO
	Ahnaf Morshed	AASHTO
	Adam Hopps	NOCoE



### Appendix 3: Select Presentation Graphics


#### Dates & Sites

##### Base Camps




**Up to 5 Camps?**

FIFTH THIRD STADIUM AT KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY & INTERCONTINENTAL BUCKHEAD ATLANTA




ATLANTA UNITED FC TRAINING GROUND & JW MARRIOTT ATLANTA BUCKHEAD







#### Dates & Sites

##### We're Just Getting Started

- Match Practice Sites
- Team Hotels
- Security perimeter
- Fan Hotels
- Fan Fest – Centennial Olympic Park

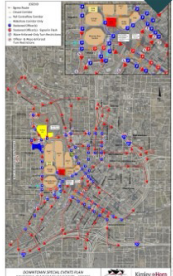




#### How We Got Here - 2017


- Special Events Playbook
- Traffic Plan Development




#### Transportation Plan

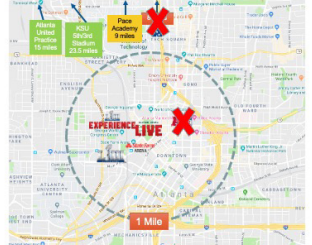

- Campus Map / Secure Perimeter



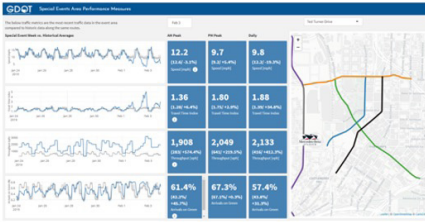

World Cup Fan Festival



#### SB Transportation Plan (Atlanta)



#### Transportation Plan

#### Copa América

##### Lessons Learned

- Passionate fans
- Secondary events/locations
- Unplanned events
- Various Partners
- Shifting priorities

#### Looking forward

##### Central Management

