



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake

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Mayor Rawlings-Blake Celebrates the World Cup and Baltimore's Time to Shine

Urges regional soccer fans to support the City's bid to be a host city for 2018/2022 World Cup

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK. (June 11, 2010)—On the first day of the FIFA World Cup, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake urged Baltimore region soccer fans to support bringing the most iconic sporting event in the world to our hometown. Baltimore is one of 18 U.S. cities being considered as World Cup venues as part of the nation's bid to host the 2018 or 2022 FIFA World Cup.

“We have the opportunity to parlay the energy of the local soccer community into a powerful show of support for bringing the World Cup to Baltimore,” said Mayor Rawlings-Blake. “Baltimore is a perfect location to host one of the premier international sporting events. I urge everyone in the region who would like to see the best international soccer players in person to sign the online petition at www.gousabid.com/Baltimore”

Baltimore is an appealing city for the World Cup. The City boasts proximity to an international airport, a transit-friendly downtown stadium complex, numerous practice facilities in the area, a dynamic restaurant and entertainment scene, and world class accommodations.

Baltimore has very strong support for soccer, boasting many youth leagues and very competitive high school soccer programs. It is also home to the Baltimore Blast, a successful Major Indoor Soccer League team. Last year, the ‘friendly’ match between Chelsea FC and AC Milan sold out M&T Bank Stadium.

This weekend, Mayor Rawlings-Blake is attending the U.S. Conference of Mayors Annual Meeting in Oklahoma City, OK. She will take time from the busy weekend schedule to join other mayors to watch USA play England on Saturday, June 12th at 2:30 p.m.

“Let the matches be your reminder,” Mayor Rawlings-Blake added. “When you see the action and feel the excitement, remember that this could be here in your own hometown. Then go sign the online petition. If you have, ask everyone around you to do the same. Be an advocate for bringing this event to Baltimore.”

Currently there are eight other candidates bidding for the 2018 or 2022 FIFA World Cup—Australia, England, Japan, Qatar, Russia, South Korea, Belgium and Netherlands, Portugal and Spain: it should be noted that Belgium and Netherlands have a joint bid, as well as Portugal and Spain.

FIFA will announce which two countries will have the distinguished honor of hosting the 2018 and 2022 FIFA World Cup this December. Electronic signatures must be collected by November 20th, 2010.

The English have publicly proclaimed that they will deliver to FIFA 2 million petition signatures, so Mayor Rawlings-Blake says, “Get out there and vote Baltimore!”

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