

DENVER 2026 HUMAN RIGHTS ANNEX

December 31, 2021

Presented To:







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Figure 1: Red Rocks Amphitheatre, Denver Parks and Recreation







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December 31, 2021

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DENVER 2026 HUMAN RIGHTS VISION STATEMENT

The DENVER 2026 Bid Committee is dedicated to producing a safe, welcoming, inclusive, and accessible FIFA World Cup that will raise the bar for the advancement of human rights in our community – and set a positive example for the world.

Our approach will be transparent and will dignify the needs of all visitors and residents while developing innovative, community-led solutions that are human-centered and equitable. Sports culture, respectful engagement and the celebration of diversity is in our DNA. It is our lived experience.

We are ready FOR THE WORLD.

I. Executive Summary

On Thursday, December 9, 2021, leaders from the DENVER 2026 Bid Committee and its partner consultancy for public engagement and human rights, GRAVES CIVIC SOLUTIONS, met with representatives from FIFA and its human rights consultancy Ergon Associates, Ltd. to provide an overview of Denver's public engagement process, hear from local stakeholders who participated in human rights focus groups, and preview the DENVER 2026 100-Point Human Rights Strategy.

This annex offers a summary of the discussion and addresses new questions posed by Ergon/FIFA about the DENVER 2026 plan to address potential human rights risks. The DENVER 2026 Bid Committee is proud to reaffirm Denver's commitment to elevate human rights and do everything within our sphere of influence to create a safe, welcoming, inclusive, and accessible FIFA World Cup. Here in Denver, human rights are in our DNA. We are ready FOR THE WORLD.





Attendees from the Denver community at the December 9th presentation included:

DENVER 2026 Bid Committee Members:

Anthony E. Graves
DENVER 2026 Bid Strategy Committee & Human Rights Strategy Lead
Principal, GRAVES CIVIC SOLUTIONS

Dr. Bob Contiguglia
DENVER 2026 Bid Co-Chair

Matthew Payne
DENVER 2026 Bid Strategy Committee
& Executive Director, Denver Sports Commission

Temi Osifodunrin
Founder, International Heritage Cup – Denver
& Co-Chair, DENVER 2026 Sports Community Engagement Sub-Committee
and Human Rights Sub-Committee

Tatiana Arguello
President & General Manager
Telemundo Denver
Co-Chair, DENVER 2026 Media & Communications

Community Stakeholders:

Special Agent Kerri Reifel
Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

Michael Pearl
Commissioner
Denver Mayor's Commission for People with Disabilities

Dewey Jackson
President, Denver Area Labor Federation / AFL-CIO

Nadine Bridges
Executive Director, One Colorado
LGBTQIA+ Representative







Figure 2: Dancer's at The Dragon Boat Festival at Sloan's Lake in Denver.

Planning and Public Engagement Process II.

DENVER 2026's efforts included ten months of sub-committee work, extensive research of local, state, federal, and international policies; best practices affecting the human rights environment; trainings facilitated by the Centre for Sport and Human Rights; dozens of conversations with community leaders at all levels of Denver's ecosystem; and the facilitation of nine focus groups and committee projects covering:

- Children's Safety, Security and Human Trafficking
- Equitable Policing Strategies (Communities of Color)
- **Housing Rights and Homelessness**
- Wages and Workers' Rights
- **Disability Access**
- Culture, Environment & Legacy
- Women's Rights, Safety and Gender Equity
- LGBTQIA+ Rights
- COVID-19 Risk Mitigation and Pandemic Response
- Third Party Vendor/Supplier Labor Rights Compliance





- Project Management of the DENVER 2026 Human Rights Strategy
- Low-Income Community Participation and Economic Equity
- Senior Citizen Access / Participation
- Freedom of Expression and Assembly
- Protection of Journalists
- Freedom of Movement and Travel
- Grievance and Access to Remedies
- Procurement Practices, Anti-Corruption and Minority Contracting Opportunities
- Cross-Cultural Competence and Language Access
- Asylees and Consul General Support
- Neighborhood Impacts
- Privacy and Personal Data



Figure 3: Summer Concert at Denver's Civic Center Park





The end-result of our cumulative efforts is a 100-Point Human Rights Strategy shaped by the Denver community and supported by a broad coalition of stakeholders committed to the highest standards for human rights. Through this process, the Denver community has recommitted itself to dignifying the needs of all visitors and residents. Together, we will use this new human rights framework to continue developing innovative, community-led solutions that are human-centered and equitable for future citywide events in Denver.

Start to finish, our total process for public engagement and architecting the 100-Point Human Rights Strategy included seven stages of development:

- **1. SEATED HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE:** After we received FIFA's Human Rights requirements and the initial human rights assessment from Ergon, DENVER 2026 seated a Human Rights Sub-Committee composed of community leaders who are committed to a safer, more inclusive, and equitable world.
- **2. SELECTED CONSULTANT:** Once seated, our Human Rights Committee agreed that we should engage professional consulting services to organize our committee and lead targeted community engagement to solicit feedback about human rights risks and desired outcomes, and architect a cohesive strategy reflective of community needs. As a result, we engaged GRAVES CIVIC SOLUTIONS to lead our efforts.
- **3. REVIEWED ERGON ANALYSIS, PRIORITIZED ACTIONS:** Our committee thoughtfully reviewed the human rights risks analysis provided by Ergon and used it to frame several working sessions for our committee to discuss our aspirational values and desired future state for human rights. We fully accepted the critique without being defensive. We saw this as an opportunity to enhance our community's commitment to human rights and build best-practices for future citywide events. In fact, we expanded our study of human rights risks beyond Ergon's critique.
- **4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/CONVENED FOCUS GROUPS:** Based on the Ergon assessment, input from FIFA, research into human rights risks that are pervasive in Mega-Sporting Events, and consultations by our committee we had our consulting team lead nine focus groups covering a broad spectrum of human-rights risks and sought feedback from numerous at-risk or minoritized communities. We also invited activists, advocates, nonprofit leaders, politicians, law enforcement personnel, business leaders, and numerous other stakeholders to the table. Focused community engagement, human rights research and socialization were the longest periods of this process.
- **5. HUMAN RIGHTS RESEARCH:** GRAVES CIVIC SOLUTIONS did exhaustive research on the local, state, and federal regulatory environment pertaining to human rights issues, attended trainings and identified best practices that informed our thinking.
- **6. STRATEGY FORMATION AND SOCIALIZATION:** Once our consulting team completed all of the focus groups, trainings and research, we had extensive review, dialogue and debate that included both the full Bid Committee and the community. During our review and ratification process, we had an ongoing feedback loop where we socialized our 100-point strategy with community stakeholders, in the Human Rights Committee, and with the full DENVER 2026 Bid





Committee. In addition to circular reviews with the community and our committees, we also presented our vision to the Governor and Mayor's Office – who were very supportive.

7. FINAL REVIEW AND RATIFICATION: Finally, our full DENVER 2026 Bid Committee reviewed and ratified our 100-point plan before sending it to FIFA for consideration.

III. Responses to New Follow-Up Questions from Ergon:



Figure 4: CONCACAF Gold Cup at EMPOWER Field at Mile High Stadium in Denver.

Stakeholder Engagement:

1. Were any considerations made regarding how to make engagement accessible to different stakeholders? If so, what were these and how did this influence engagement (e.g., holding virtual meetings to allow for a variety of stakeholders to attend).

Yes, in the interest of both accessibility and public health in the midst of the COVID pandemic, all stakeholder engagement was conducted by zoom (virtually), email and phone. Each focus group, public presentation and one-on-one conversation was curated with accessibility and equity in mind. DENVER 2026 was mindful and strategic about architecting a community outreach strategy that included marginalized communities, public, private and non-profit interests. Tailored-communications solutions were also used to accommodate people requiring ASL translation and language justice accommodation.





2. A number of proposed stakeholders listed in the Ergon report were not engaged by the city (trade unions, city procurement, fans groups). If this was the case, what is the reasoning? Although a number of trade unions are mentioned in the report, it does not appear that the city has carried out engagement efforts with trade unions so far. Is it likely that these stakeholders will be engaged in the future?

DENVER 2026 has had extensive engagement with trade unions (also referred to as "labor unions" or the "labor community"), and invited labor leaders to participate in our largest focus group with representatives from 15 different labor unions who collectively represented tens of thousands of workers across the Denver metro area and the state of Colorado (see Appendix A: Human Rights Strategy Stakeholder Engagement Log, 4/23/20). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Colorado had 182,000 union members in 2020. In addition to these members, another 20,000 wage and salary workers in the state were represented by a union on their main job or covered by an employee association or contract while not union members themselves.¹ DENVER 2026 heard from labor representatives and union leaders that represented more than half of all registered labor members in Colorado.

During the recent DENVER 2026 follow-up presentation to FIFA and Ergon Associates on our 100-Point Human Rights Strategy December 9th, we were joined by Dewey Jackson, the President of the Denver Area Labor Federation / AFL-CIO, who is a strong advocate for Denver to host World Cup matches in 2026. Mr. Jackson represents 90,000 union employees across the Denver Metro Area and has affirmed the quality of DENVER 2026's outreach to the labor community – and our intention to work with unions to navigate labor rights issues during the 2026 FIFA World Cup.²

Further, in Appendix B: DENVER 2026 Human Rights Strategic Plan, Section B: Wages and Workers Rights / Labor Rights, a robust plan for continued labor engagement has been outlined that includes a variety of proactive steps and remedies for labor rights, including the establishment of a labor-management council, the creation of a labor-grievance hotline, and facilitated community conversations about enhancing wages and workers' rights in Denver.

² Denver Area Labor Federation: https://www.denverlabor.org/about-us
Presented To:





¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics: https://www.bls.gov/regions/mountain-plains/news-release/unionmembership_colorado.htm

3. Could the city clarify whether stakeholders were given an opportunity to review and comment on the report prior to submission? Has the final report been shared with stakeholders?



Yes, DENVER 2026 had an ongoing community feedback loop that allowed focus group participants, community stakeholders and the entire Bid Committee structure to offer ongoing feedback and preview the progress as we shaped the final report. There were multiple review sessions by all groups that culminated in a final review by the Bid Committee, and a thorough review process that allowed the community and our Bid Committee to

debate key provisions, refine the 100-Point Strategy and formally ratify the final product. In addition to ongoing opportunities where focus group participants offered additional feedback by phone, zoom and email, we also had formal reviews with the Governor of Colorado and the Mayor's Office who expressed their support for our direction and approved the final product (please see the *DENVER 2026 Human Rights Review* presentation from December 9, 2021, Slide 15: Review and Ratification).

Finally, on December 31, 2021, DENVER 2026 will formally publish its final 100-Point Human Rights Strategy and supporting documentation on the denver2026.com website.³ We have also begun a formal public relations strategy and are actively taking interviews from local publications about our human rights strategy and the public engagement process.

4. Can the city provide any letters of support from public bodies, the private sector, or organisations representing affected groups?

Yes, numerous community letters of support have been submitted to the DENVER 2026 Bid
Committee, including from 41 Mayors from across the Denver Metro Area who represent approximately 2.6 million constituents, half of Colorado's population. Other letters of support include; the Regional Transportation District which manages all transit operations around the Denver metro area; the Downtown Denver Partnership responsible for all programming in the downtown core, cleaning and maintenance; the Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking, a nationally recognized non-profit that works to

³ DENVER 2026 website: www.denver2026.com Presented To:





mitigate the risk of human trafficking (which is prominent during Mega-Sporting Events); and many other letters and individually signed Human Rights pledges from residents and community leaders (see Denver2026.com).



5. Could the city explain what process was undertaken to review and evaluate risks (e.g., how risks highlighted by Ergon were taken into consideration, how other risks were identified, what sources of information were consulted)? Could you tell us a little how stakeholders helped inform risk identification? How did stakeholders help inform risk identification?

DENVER 2026 began with a thorough analysis of the Ergon assessment of the human rights risks in Denver. After a comprehensive review of the risk report, our Human Rights Sub-Committee expanded the list to include numerous other areas of concern not identified by Ergon that DENVER 2026 thought

should be monitored. Next, our Human Rights Committee selected a series of nine focus groups to further explore risk profiles and potential issues that could have a negative impact on the lived experience of various at-risk communities. The list of potential human rights risks was further expanded by focus group participants who represented a diverse array of at-risk communities who have historically been marginalized and have experienced human rights abuses; including hate crimes, sexual assault, human trafficking, discrimination, and inequitable treatment by law enforcement. Other safety risks were also identified by local police departments and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and all participating stakeholders provided recommendations for best practices in deterring the assessed risks – as well as aspirational standards for human rights.

In addition to extensive stakeholder engagement to assess human rights risks and opportunities, GRAVES CIVIC SOLUTIONS completed robust research of local, state, federal, and international policies and global best practices to improve the human rights environment; they also attended trainings facilitated by the *Centre for Sports and Human Rights* to learn about risks that children face during mega-sporting events; held dozens of conversations with community leaders at all levels of Denver's ecosystem and distilled the themes from all sources into a cohesive summary of risks and a 100-Point actionable human rights strategy.





6. Has the city considered, for example through stakeholder engagement, the severity of identified risks? (e.g., has the city considered the likelihood of the risks materialising, or the potential for impacting a certain group of rightsholders or a wider population).

Yes, as referenced above and as outlined in detail under Section II, 2A in the DENVER 2026 Candidate Host City Human Rights Stakeholder Engagement Report, the DENVER 2026 Bid Committee curated an exhaustive list of human rights risks that may be activated during a mega-sporting event (MSE), including but not limited to: sexual harassment and assault, hate crimes, human trafficking and exploitation, barriers to participation by socioeconomic status, LGBTQIA plus rights and access, gender inequities, senior citizen access and participation, freedom of expression and assembly, protection of domestic and foreign journalists, freedom of movement and travel, protocols and processes to address grievances and find remedies, minority contracting and anti-corruption processes and procurement, language justice, asylum council general support, neighborhood impacts during events protection of privacy, dignified engagement of people experiencing homelessness, equitable policing wages, terrorism, complications from the COVID-19 pandemic and workers' rights.

The DENVER 2026 Bid Committee believes it is important to speak directly to these risks, not be defensive; and meet the challenges of a citywide event head on. We recognize that while hosting a global sporting event, host cities must manage the impacts of numerous cultural frames, competing values, histories and local protocols through clear human rights standards that are aggressively communicated, tracked, and managed with supportive communication strategies and community support. DENVER 2026 is now equipped with a 100-point strategy that was cultivated by our community and informed by subject matter experts (please see the *DENVER 2026 Human Rights Review* presentation from December 9, 2021, Slide 8: Factors That Will Influence the Human Rights Environment, and *Appendix B: DENVER 2026 Human Rights Strategic Plan*).

7. Has the city identified whether which activities related to the tournament may lead to heightened risk? Would mitigation measures be key to preventing risk from materialising?



Per the response above under question 6, DENVER 2026 recognizes that all mega-sporting events trigger heightened risks that must be taken seriously - and that both preventative measures and plans for agile responses to mitigate risks as they emerge are necessary. While the cultural, economic, and quality of life benefits of hosting a mega-sporting event are undeniable, host cities must recognize that risks and adverse events

will emerge. DENVER 2026 in partnership with the community, local and state government, and the law enforcement community, are committed to doing all it can to engage in thoughtful preparation to deter risks – and be agile in managing threats as they emerge. Key to a successful response strategy is Presented To:





collaboration, clear communications protocols, a strong culture that prioritizes human rights in thought and action, and structures for crisis management.

8. Has the city considered whether risk and mitigation measures may change in the time leading up to the tournament? Has the city considered how the aftermath of the pandemic will affect the hosting of the tournament or the risks identified in relation to it?

Yes, DENVER 2026 has a forward-looking posture and will actively consider changes in the global environment that may impact the tournament and require flexibility and dynamic solutions. From social unrest to climate change and terrorist threats, we recognize that ongoing re-assessment will be necessary to calibrate the human rights strategy and keep it relevant for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

To account for the complexities of the evolving risks of hosting an international sporting event like the FIFA World Cup in the era of a global pandemic, DENVER 2026 expects that it will have to be agile and fluid in its response infrastructure. Under Section II, 2A in the DENVER 2026 Candidate Host City Human Rights Stakeholder Engagement Report, under the category COVID-19 Risks and Mitigation Measures, we outline our intention to leverage the lessons learned from Denver/Colorado's early response to the COVID crisis. We plan to use existing best practices in mobile clinics, rapid-testing and immunization facilities. The use of these methods created a model-response to the early stages of the public health crisis.

Denver will also implement widespread hand-sanitizing stations, consider self-testing kits, mobile test clinics and work closely with local and state public health agencies to respond to and monitor risks and coordinate crisis management. DENVER 2026 has the benefit of leveraging a COVID-19 Playbook developed in partnership with UC Health that enables at-scale COVID-response through mass-mobilization clinics and collaboration with other health and government agencies.

9. Could the city describe the process through which it will decide on concrete milestones for the upcoming years?

The DENVER 2026 Bid Committee will contract professional project planning and project management services for the 100-Point Human Rights Strategy. This process will create concrete milestones for the upcoming years, create structures for accountability, and add key performance indicators (KPIs) to mark our progress and points of concern.







Figure 5: Travelers arriving at Denver International Airport and taking the train to downtown.

10. Could the city provide additional information on existing measures to address all identified risks? (For example, in relation to disability access and housing rights)

You will find an extensive, itemized list of actions in *Appendix B: DENVER 2026 Human Rights Strategic Plan*. DENVER 2026 has curated a 100-Point Human Rights Strategy that includes sections on both Disability Rights and Housing Rights. Concerning our plan for Disability Rights, actions include:

- an accessibility audit across all venues and transportation networks across Denver's World Cup sites
- an assessment of way-finding and pictographs and auditory cues to enhance navigation for people with disabilities
- strategies to promote employment opportunities in the disability community during the World
 Cup
- and training of all front-line staff on the protocols for engaging with and assisting people with disabilities





The DENVER 2026 plan to address housing rights and people experiencing homelessness can also be found in *Appendix B*. Highlights of the plan include volunteer opportunities for visitors, residents and people experiencing homelessness during the tournament. Volunteers will be able to assist unhoused populations by building houses in partnership with organizations like *Habitat for Humanity*. There will also be service projects that advance the sport of soccer, including park cleanups, and the creation of mini-pitches. Our plan also includes mobile cleanup stations for people experiencing homelessness that restore their dignity through mobile laundry and bathing facilities and workforce development centers for day-jobs and participation through sponsored events. Finally, addressing the intersectional needs of youth experiencing homelessness will be a priority.



Figure 6: A mural in Denver's RiNo (River North) neighborhood.



11. Please provide any feedback given by stakeholders on the quality of the stakeholder process, existing or planned measures to address risk, and the contents of the report, if applicable.

As noted by local stakeholders who participated in our December 9th presentation to FIFA and Ergon Associates, DENVER 2026 has received enthusiastic support and affirmation of our process by numerous stakeholders. Focus group participants have celebrated our public engagement process as groundbreaking; and that it created opportunities to be heard that did not

previously exist. There



Figure 7: Participants in Denver's annual PRIDE Parade.

is broad consensus that the 100-Point Human Rights Strategy is a product of many community voices, hours of discussion and thoughtful engagement. All the potential risks identified to marginalized communities were raised by community stakeholders who also proposed solutions that are reflected in the report.

12. Could the city confirm how stakeholders would be involved in the development and implementation of planned measures? How would that engagement take place?

The implementation of the DENVER 2026 100-Point Human Rights Strategy will be informed by community-led committees separated by each area of the plan (i.e., Disability Rights, LGBTQIA+, Labor Rights, Children, etc.) and guided by our Bid Committee. The DENVER 2026 Human Rights Sub-Committee and the Bid Strategy Committee will track the overall implementation of the 100-Point plan as monitored through the project plan, but all operational activities, events add engagements will be informed by a broad coalition of stakeholders from start to finish. Each sub-committee of DENVER 2026 will also play a role in designated areas providing subject matter expertise and shared responsibility for execution based on their area of responsibility (i.e., Legal and Administration, Stadiums and Venues, etc.).

FIFA



13. Are there any existing measures being expanded or strengthened to contribute to the opportunities for a positive human rights legacy that have been identified? Is there any additional information the city could provide on the role of stakeholders in helping devise and deliver opportunities?



Figure 8: Bicyclists enjoying Denver's downtown environment.

See above response to question 12. The DENVER 2026 100-Point Human Rights Strategy was devised wholly from community feedback, we therefore believe it is imperative to continue with broad community stewardship of the plan for grassroots adoption and engagement. We also believe that ongoing community investment is essential to foster agile solutions as the needs of FIFA changes and unknown challenges arise. DENVER 2026 is committed to harnessing continuous community leadership and feedback on this plan.

Complaints and Remedy:

14. The report highlights the potential creation of a human rights command centre and hotline for the submission of grievances in relation to the tournament. Does the city believe this mechanism may help support vulnerable groups in raising concerns and receiving remedy? In what way?

The DENVER 2026 Bid Committee recognizes that the scale of the World Cup necessitates a robust and accessible system for reporting, tracking, and addressing human rights abuses – and to help visitors connect with support and community service opportunities. To mount a cohesive solution and oversight

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mechanism that is agile and responsive, we will establish a human rights command centre to coordinate all the pieces of the plan and spur communication between stakeholders including law enforcement, venue operators and frontline staff.

A cornerstone of the command center will be a human rights hotline to help identify human rights abuses and aid distressed parties, which may include people facing or escaping human trafficking, lost minors, and translation needs. The hotline could also assist visitors interested in volunteering during the event and create an efficient and uniform funnel to screen and route needs to be matched with the appropriate information and connect guests with opportunities. DENVER 2026 plans to partner with Denver area non-profit organizations, as well as local and state government to leverage existing hotline infrastructure. This will allow us to leverage a tested and reliable system for the use of World Cup patrons.



Figure 9: A child at the Denver March Powwow, an annual cultural event hosted by indigenous communities.



IV. Next Steps:

The DENVER 2026 Bid Committee has taken FIFA's requirements very seriously and we are exceedingly proud of our due diligence process for the creation of the DENVER 2026 100-Point Human Rights Strategy. Now that our strategy is complete, we are preparing to operationalize it upon FIFA's selection of Denver as one of ten host cities in the U.S. for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Upon our selection, DENVER 2026 will take the following next steps to begin standing up its 100-Point Plan:

continue public engagement: Denver 2026 will post its 100-Point Human Rights Strategy and all supporting documentation to the denver2026.com website by December 31, 2021. It will also launch a public relations strategy outlining our commitment to human rights; educate the public about the risks and opportunities of mega-sporting events; and cultivate human-rights champions in our city. Engagement will include earned media, public interest articles and community engagement.

ALLOCATE RESOURCES: DENVER 2026 will evaluate the fiscal note of each human rights action and set up a supporting budget to underwrite the expense of the plan or solicit financial partnerships to cover costs.

ENGAGE PROFESSIONAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT: DENVER 2026 will set up professional project management of the 100-Point Strategy to ensure appropriate tracking, follow up and implementation of all critical initiatives.

ASSIGN SUPPORTING COMMITTEES: DENVER 2026 will convene supporting committees composed of both community members and the DENVER 2026 Bid Committee to begin addressing assigned tasks and executing on our 100-Point Human Rights Strategy.

V. Appreciation:

On behalf of the DENVER 2026 Bid Committee and the broader Denver community, we would like to thank FIFA for creating the opportunity for our city to engage in a meaningful and productive dialogue about the human rights risks of Mega-Sporting Events, and to think critically about the positive global example that we would like to set for human rights at the 2026 FIFA World Cup — and beyond. If given the privilege of hosting World Cup matches, DENVER 2026 will strive to host the most safe, welcoming, inclusive, and accessible World Cup in FIFA's history. We believe that DENVER 2026 has the potential to be a new model that can dignify the human experience and support the desired values and brand of the FIFA World Cup.







DENVER 2026 Bid Committee Co-Chairs:

Dr. Bob Contiguglia and Manny Rodriguez

DENVER 2026 Human Rights Sub-Committee:

Anthony E. Graves

DENVER 2026 Bid Strategy Committee & Human Rights Strategy Lead Principal, GRAVES CIVIC SOLUTIONS

Jerome Davis & Tami Door Human Rights Sub-Committee, Co-Chairs

Jon Lehmann

Director of Government and Regional Affairs Comcast Corporation

Adeeb Khan

Vice President of Corporate Social Responsibility Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation

James Mejia

CEO

Denver Film

Matthew Burkett

CEO

The Fly Fisher Group

DENVER 2026 Administrative Support:

Sammy Bianchi

Convention Sales & Denver Sports Coordinator VISIT DENVER

Presented To:



Andrew Contiguglia
The Contiguglia Law Firm

Jayne Buck Good Hue, LLC

Derek Okubo
Executive Director
Denver Office of Human Rights
and Community Partnerships

Temi Osifodunrin

Founder, International Heritage Cup – Denver & Co-Chair, DENVER 2026 Sports Community Engagement Subcommittee

