

City Report
FIFA World Cup 2026

Seattle



Issued
20th May 2026



Seattle

Overview

Country	United States of America
Host stadium	Lumen Field (FIFA tournament-time name: Seattle Stadium), Seattle, WA
Distance to Downtown	Downtown Seattle, within walking distance of most central hotels
Stadium capacity	65,123
Roof / cover type	Partial overhead canopy covering most seats; field is open. Not climate-controlled
Altitude	~5 m (16 ft)
Timezone (June-July 2026)	Pacific Daylight Time (UTC-7)
Official language(s)	English (significant Spanish, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Korean and Tagalog communities)
Match count & dates	6 matches: 4 Group Stage (15th–26th June, including USA vs Australia on 19th June), 1 R32 (1st July), 1 R16 (6th July)
Primary airport(s)	SEA (Seattle-Tacoma International) is the primary gateway; PAE (Paine Field) serves as a domestic secondary
Population (metro)	~4.0 million (Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue metro)

Risk ratings

Security	LOW
Travel Disruption	LOW
Medical Infrastructure	LOW
Natural Disasters	MODERATE
Storms/ Hurricanes	LOW
Heat	LOW

Seattle hosts six matches at Lumen Field. Roughly 750,000 visitors are expected across the tournament window. Tournament-window security operations have been classified at SEAR-2 (the Super Bowl is SEAR-1 by comparison). Pioneer Square will operate as a publicly closed pedestrian zone on all six match days,

with road closures from approximately 02h00 and full vehicle exclusion from four hours before kickoff through two to three hours after final whistle. Principal tournament-window exposures are wildfire smoke from the region's fire season starting in late June and the Cascadia subduction-zone seismic risk.

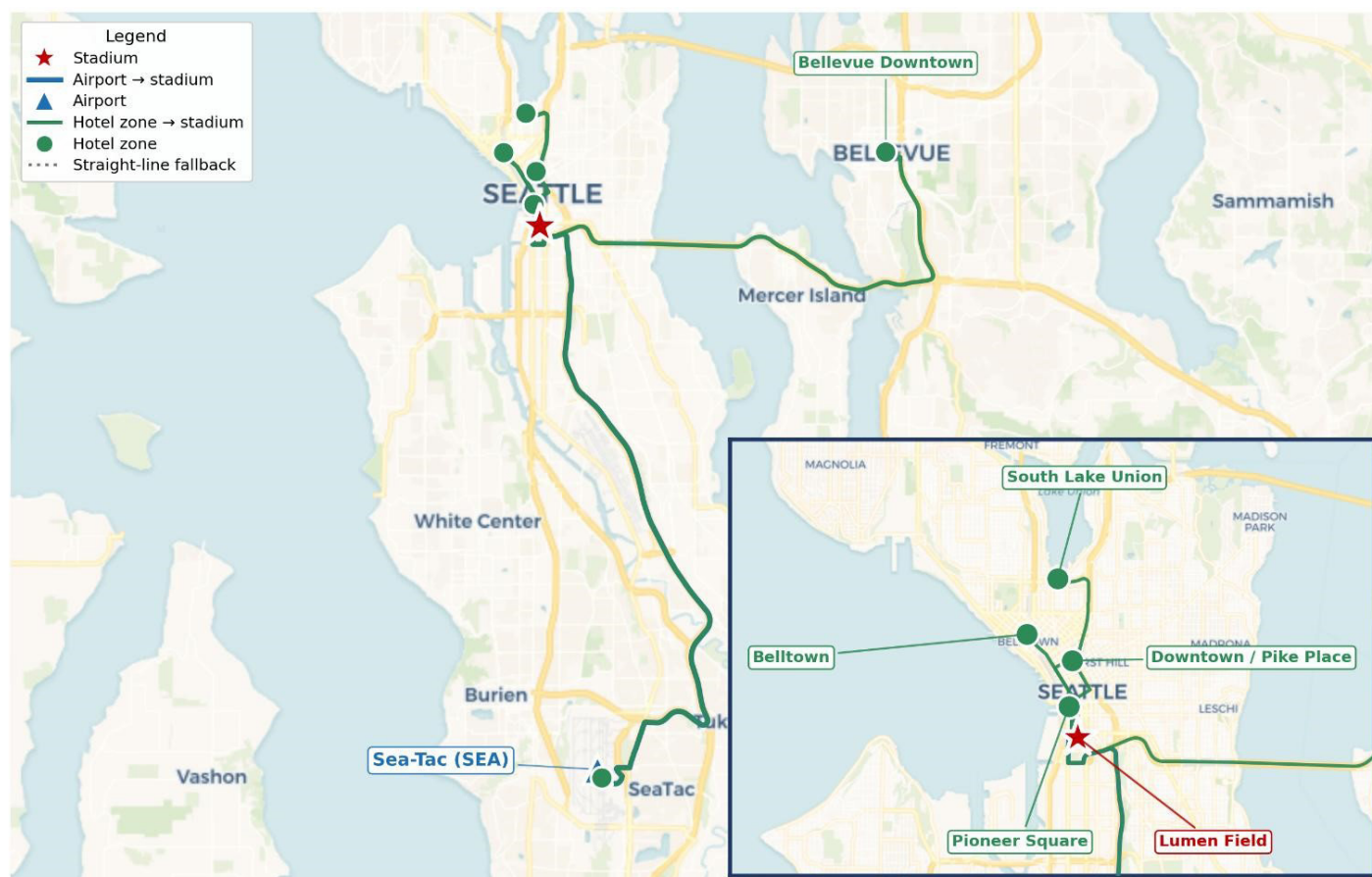
Arrival, departure and transportation

Airports and public transport

SEA (Seattle-Tacoma International) is the primary airport, about 14 miles (22 km) south of downtown. The Sound Transit Link Light Rail connects SEA to downtown in about 40 minutes and runs directly to the Lumen Field stop. Travellers are advised to allow two and a half hours for international departures during the tournament window. PAE (Paine Field) is a smaller domestic-focused secondary airport, located about 25 miles (40 km) north of downtown.

Recommended accommodation zones

Downtown Seattle offers walking-distance access to Lumen Field, with Pioneer Square immediately adjacent to the stadium. Belltown is about 2 miles (3km) north of Lumen Field, which is likely to take about 5 minutes by taxi or 20+ minutes by bus on match days, and is a reasonable alternative within walking range of Pike Place and downtown. Bellevue is a lower-risk area, but is logistically more difficult due to its location across Lake Washington, 20–30 minutes from Lumen Field. SeaTac offers airportadjacent options about 20 to 30 minutes south of the venue.



Security and medical risks

Crime

Seattle's violent crime rate is moderate for a US metro of its size. Tourist zones, such as Downtown, Capitol Hill, Belltown, Pioneer Square, Pike Place Market, the SoDo entertainment district and the Seattle Center, are well-policed and low risk during daytime. Property crime, including vehicle break-ins and downtown street thefts, is well documented by local authorities, and visitors should not leave valuables in vehicles. Specific neighbourhoods have higher concentrations of street-level disorder: the Chinatown-International District, with 12th Avenue South & South Jackson Street a documented hotspot, as well as parts of Pioneer Square after dark, and the downtown 3rd Avenue corridor between Pike and Pine, which is cited as the location with the most concentrated drug use and homelessness.

Terrorism

Seattle maintains an elevated baseline counterterrorism posture as a major port and tech hub. The coordinating apparatus is FBI Seattle, as well as

various local police authorities and the Seattle Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), working through a centralised live-monitoring operations centre in Renton active during match windows. Lumen Field venue measures publicly proposed for the tournament include 26 new temporary CCTV cameras, climb-proof outer fencing, vehicle-barrier installation along access roads and a security envelope active from four hours before kickoff to three hours after final whistle. Visitors should expect visible security at SEA airport, the Lumen Field perimeter, the Pioneer Square pedestrian zone, the four Unity Loop fan-celebration sites and the Alaskan Way waterfront throughout the tournament window.

Unrest

Seattle has an above-average risk of unrest compared to other American host cities, particularly around political and economic issues. Protest flashpoints are concentrated around Westlake Park, Cal Anderson Park (Capitol Hill), the federal courthouse and the University of Washington campus. The risk of -unrest risk remains low. Tech-industry and immigration-policy demonstrations

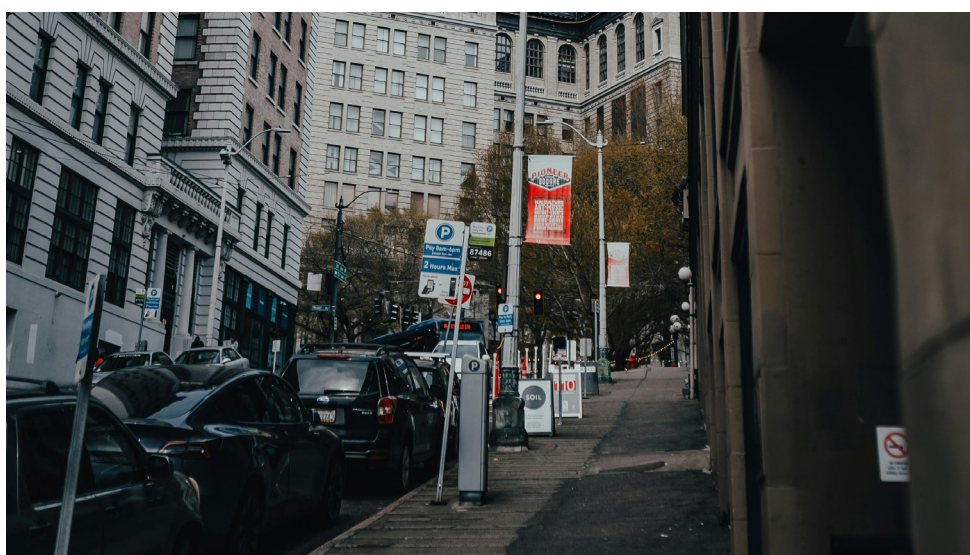
are liable to result in road closures, heightened security, and associated travel disruption.

Natural disaster

Seattle's location on a fault line makes earthquakes a low-probability but high-impact natural disaster risk, with a moderate or severe earthquake almost certain to be disruptive to the World Cup and business operations. Wildfire smoke from the Pacific Northwest wildfire season is a more likely weatherrelated risk, particularly for travellers with underlying health conditions. Wildfires in the region are relatively common, with larger fires in Central Washington and Southern British Columbia liable to result in smoke travelling across to Seattle. FIFA has confirmed it has no fixed AQI threshold for match suspension, and Lumen Field's partial canopy offers minimal protection from particulate matter. Visitors with asthma, COPD or other respiratory conditions should pack N95 masks and monitor AirNow daily during the tournament window.

Heat

Seattle's June and July baseline is mild, with average highs of 72–78°F (22–26°C). Heat waves can affect the city; the 2021 Pacific Northwest heat dome caused fatal heat illness across the region, underscoring the city's latent heat risks. Lumen Field's partial canopy provides shade for most seats, but the venue is not climate-controlled.



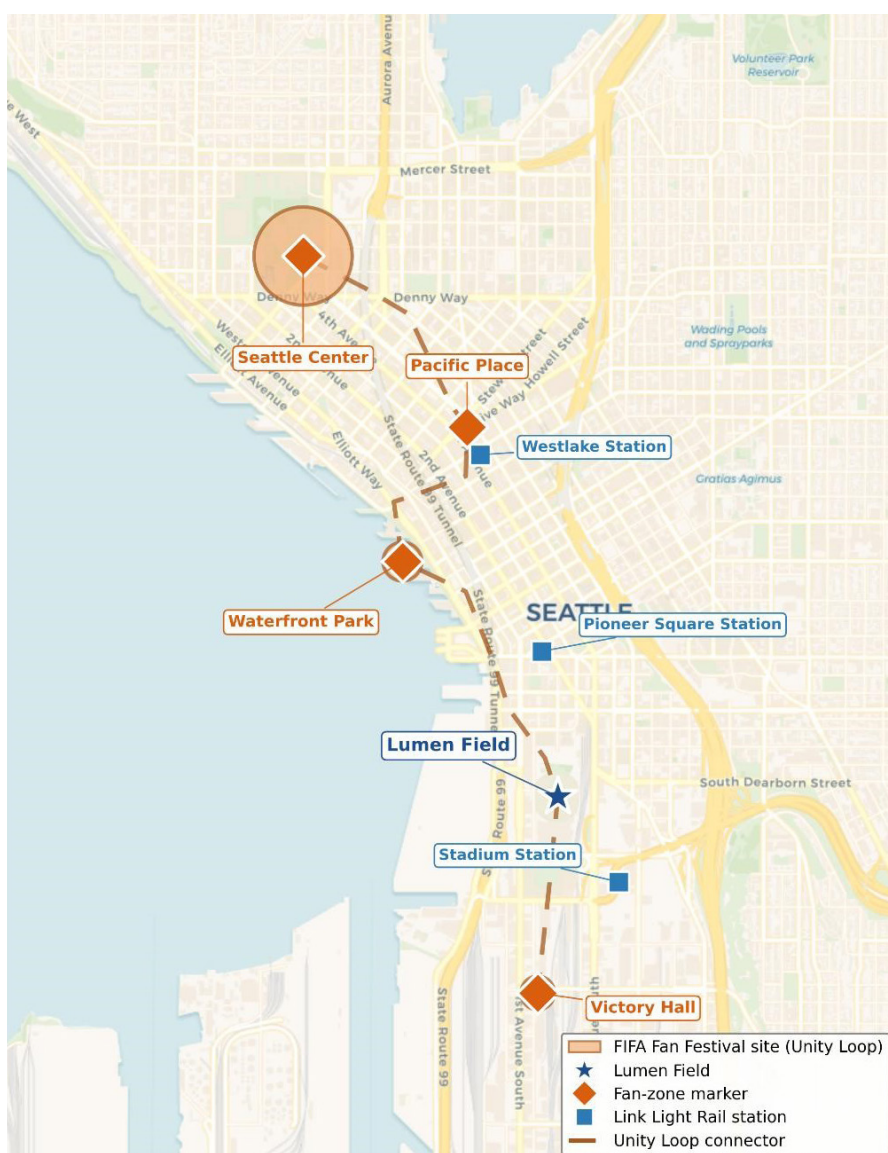
Stadium and matchday

Match schedule

Date	Match	Stage	Kickoff (local)
15 th June	Belgium - Egypt	Group G	12h00
19 th June	Australia - United States	Group D	12h00
24 th June	Bosnia and Herzegovina - Qatar	Group B	12h00
26 th June	Egypt - Iran	Group G	20h00
1 st July	Winner of Group G - 3rd A/E/H/I/J	Round of 32	13h00
6 th July	Winner of Match 81 - Winner of Match 82	Round of 16	17h00

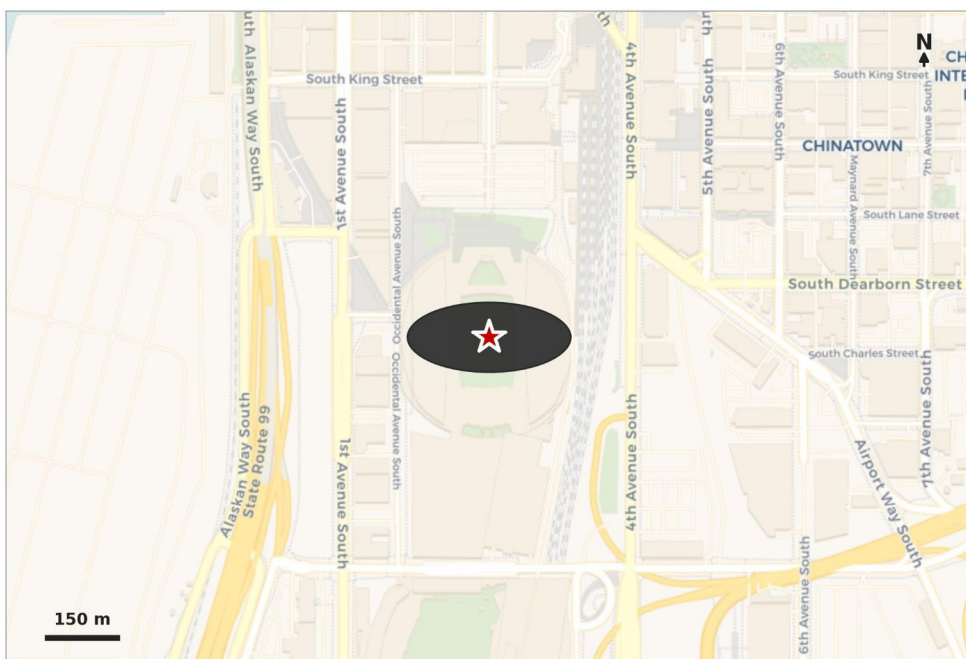
Public transport and transportation to the stadium

Lumen Field sits in downtown Seattle, adjacent to T-Mobile Park, the home of the Seattle Mariners, and is served directly by Sound Transit Link Light Rail via Stadium Station. For the tournament, Sound Transit has committed to Link service every four minutes between Lynnwood and the International District / Chinatown station during match windows, and to special Sounder commuter-rail round trips for each of Seattle's six matches with departures timed to arrive before kickoff and return trips approximately one hour after the final whistle. A free waterfront shuttle launches on 21st May, connecting Lumen Field with Seattle Centre, Pioneer Square, Waterfront Park, the Olympic Sculpture Park, the downtown ferry terminal, Chinatown-International District and Pike Place Market. Pioneer Square operates as a fully closed pedestrian zone on all six match days, with a parking ban from 02h00 (local time) and vehicle exclusion from four hours before kickoff. Driving routes are constrained; travellers and residents should anticipate I-5 and SR-99 to be saturated in both directions for several hours on either side of kickoff. The venue is open-air, with a partial canopy, and not climate-controlled.



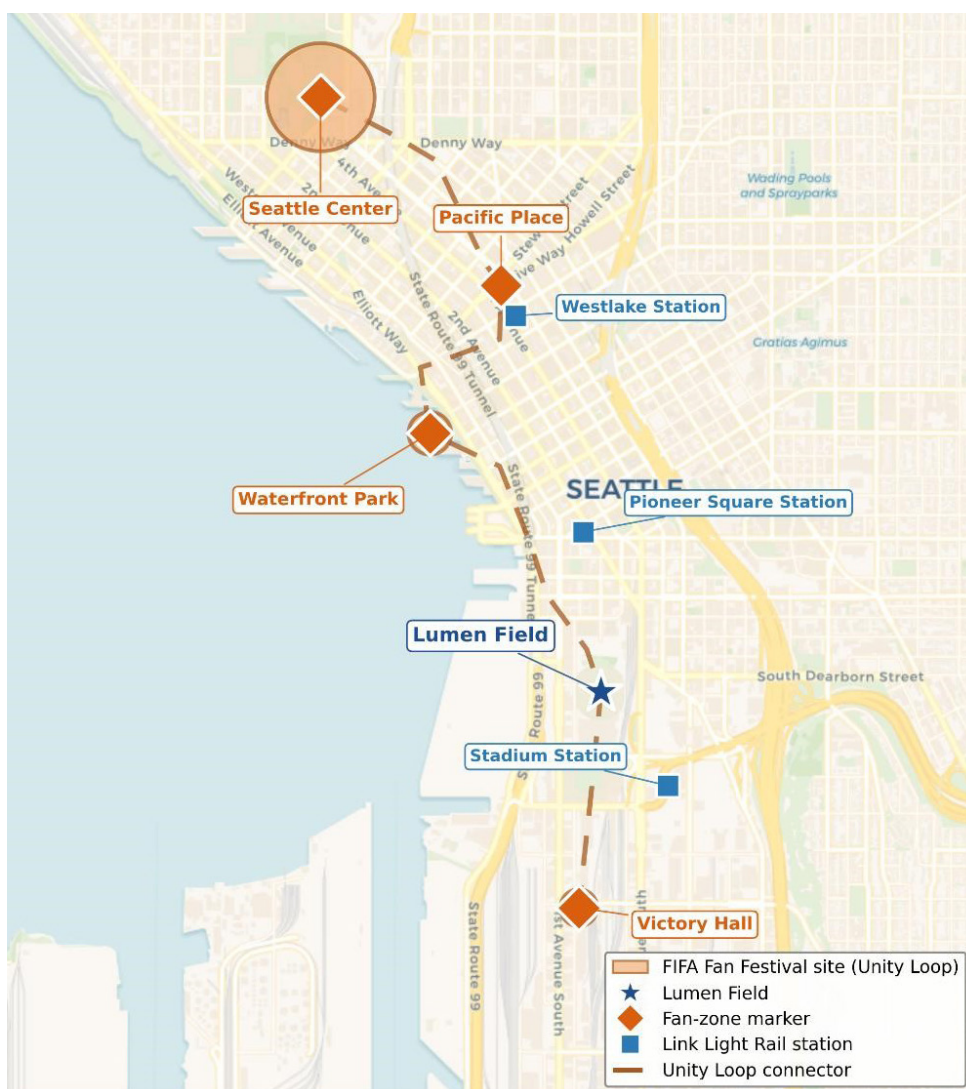
Entry/gates into the stadium

Per FIFA standard policy for the 2026 World Cup, Lumen Field gates are expected to open two hours before kickoff. A FIFA-standard clear-bag policy is enforced (maximum 12" x 6" x 12" / 30.5cm x 16cm x 30.5cm), and there is no bag check or storage on-site. The screening is conducted by a metal detector and visual inspection. Lumen Field's tournament security envelope is active four hours before kickoff and three hours after the final whistle. Prohibited items include professional cameras with detachable or telephoto lenses, drones, oversized signs and banners (FIFA's typical size limit is ~2 m x 1.5 m), umbrellas and any flagpoles.



Fanzones

Seattle is running a distributed four-site "Unity Loop" fan-celebration model at Seattle Centre, Pacific Place, Waterfront Park and Victory Hall, all free and open to the public, running from 11th June to 19th July 2026. Programming spans match screenings, live music, cultural festivals, public art, gastronomy, gaming zones and youth soccer activations. Each site operates its own screening perimeter. Because Seattle uses a distributed-site model rather than a single Fan Festival, fan-flow congestion will concentrate on the Link Light Rail spine and the new waterfront shuttle. Pioneer Square is the most likely location for fan gatherings and associated disruption on both matchdays and non-matchdays.



Match risk rating

Match	Date and Kickoff (All Times Local)	Match Risk Rating
Belgium – Egypt	15th June 12h00	LOW
<p>This match is assessed as LOW risk due to anticipated fan turnout and associated disruption in Seattle. While Belgium and Egypt’s fanbases are likely to be moderately sized, fan turnout is assessed to be high enough to pose a credible risk of disruption in Downtown Seattle. Egypt is designated by FIFA as one of the countries with an elevated-risk fanbase due to the influence of ultras in the fanbase; accordingly, while clashes and fan disorder are highly unlikely, they cannot be ruled out. Disruption is most likely to affect the vicinity of public areas in Downtown Seattle, such as Belltown, Pioneer Square and Seattle Center, where gatherings by both fanbases are likely to take place. Key transit routes like the Sound Transit Light Rail, First Hill Streetcar, and RapidRide C, E, and H bus lines are likely to face demand surges, with road disruption likely on major routes like I-5, I-90, and Seattle’s bridges.</p>		
USA – Australia	19th June 12h00	MODERATE
<p>This match is assessed as MODERATE risk due to the participation of a host nation. USA fans are likely to travel in large numbers to the city’s fanzone and to restaurants and bars in the city centre to watch the match, increasing the risk of disruption throughout the city centre, primarily in the area that includes Downtown, Belltown, Pioneer Square, and Seattle Center. Attendance by Australian fans is likely to be high due to flight connectivity and precedent from past World Cups; however, clashes between the two fanbases have a remote chance of occurring. Key transit routes like the Sound Transit Light Rail, First Hill Streetcar, and RapidRide C, E, and H bus lines are likely to face demand surges, with road disruption likely on major routes like I-5, I-90, and Seattle’s bridges.</p>		
Bosnia and Herzegovina – Qatar	24th June 12h00	MINIMAL
Egypt – Iran	26th June 20h00	HIGH
<p>This match is assessed as HIGH risk due to elevated risks associated with unrest, as well as societal and cultural issues. FIFA has designated this match as the official Pride Match of the World Cup, which is liable to result in protests by local right-wing groups as well as by segments of the Egyptian and Iranian fanbase, two countries which have criminalised the status or affiliation of LGBTQ+ individuals. Egypt is designated by FIFA as one of the countries with an elevated-risk fanbase due to the influence of ultras in the fanbase. Protests against the Iranian government by local residents are highly likely to be recorded, with Seattle and nearby Vancouver having sizeable Iranian diasporas. As with other Iran matches, anti-Iranian government protests are likely to occur regardless of whether Iran plays in the fixture or is replaced by another team. Fan turnout to the match by Iranian and Egyptian fans is likely to be relatively high. Accordingly, key transit routes like the Sound Transit Light Rail, First Hill Streetcar, and RapidRide C, E, and H bus lines are likely to experience demand surges, with road disruption likely on major routes like I-5, I-90, and Seattle’s bridges.</p>		
Round of 32	1st July 13h00	MODERATE
<p>This match is assessed as MODERATE risk due to elevated security and operational risks commensurate with the knockout stage. While the teams are not confirmed for this match, knockout stage matches are more likely to involve two teams with large fanbases, with a higher likelihood of disruption and fan unrest if it is a rivalry match or involves a fanbase with ultras presence. The risk of disruption is heightened throughout the city centre, primarily in the area that includes Downtown, Belltown, Pioneer Square, and Seattle Center. Key transit routes like the Sound Transit Light Rail, First Hill Streetcar, and RapidRide C, E, and H bus lines are likely to face demand surges, with road disruption likely on major routes like I-5, I90, and Seattle’s bridges.</p>		

Match risk rating

Match	Date and Kickoff (All Times Local)	Match Risk Rating
Round of 16	6th July 17h00	<p>MODERATE</p>
<p>This match is assessed as MODERATE risk due to elevated security and operational risks commensurate with the knockout stage. While the teams are not confirmed for this match, knockout stage matches are more likely to involve two teams with large fanbases, with a higher likelihood of disruption and fan unrest if it is a rivalry match or involves a fanbase with ultras presence. The risk of disruption is heightened throughout the city centre, primarily in the area that includes Downtown, Belltown, Pioneer Square, and Seattle Center. Key transit routes like the Sound Transit Light Rail, First Hill Streetcar, and RapidRide C, E, and H bus lines are likely to face demand surges, with road disruption likely on major routes like I-5, I90, and Seattle's bridges.</p>		



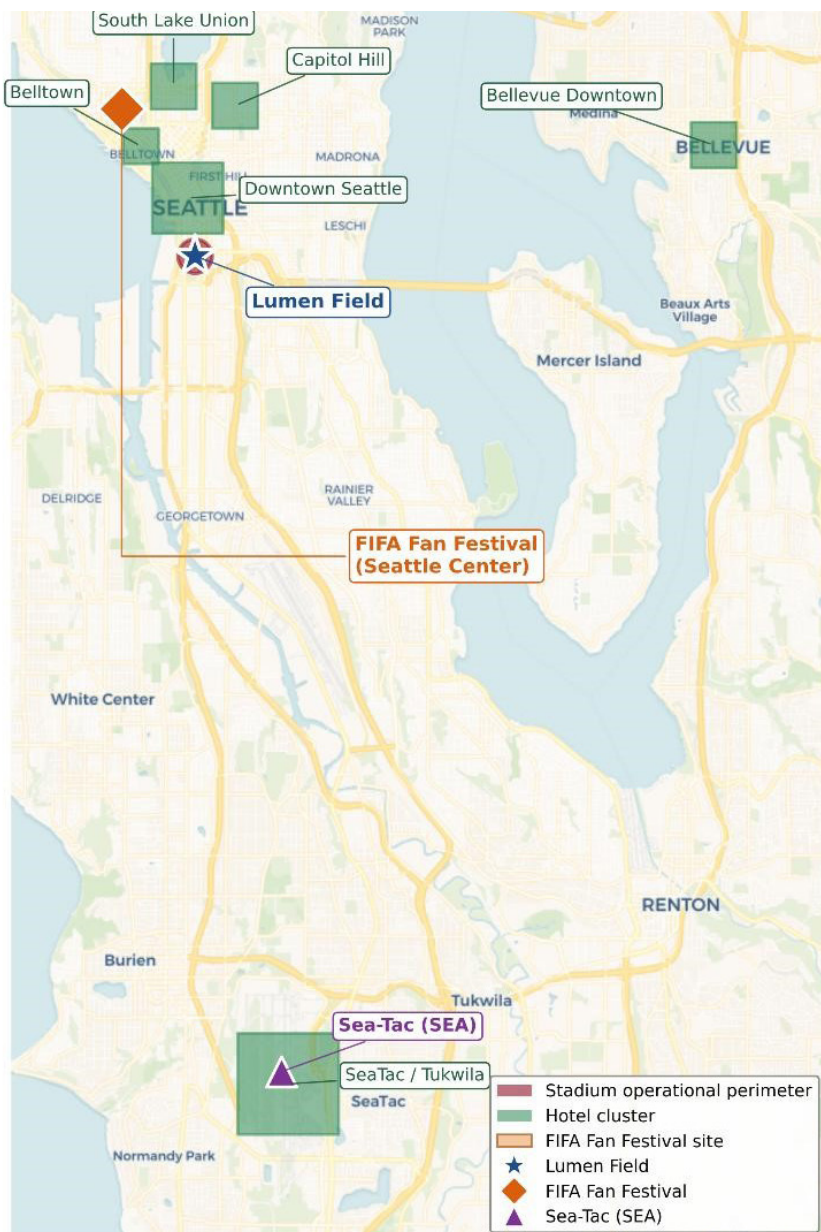
Business as usual operations

Demand surges around match days. Sound Transit Link Light Rail operates at peak capacity; I-5 and SR-99 reach capacity around afternoon kickoffs. Downtown Seattle hotels, particularly in SoDo, Pioneer Square and Capitol Hill, are most likely to be affected by high demand. The USA vs Australia match on 19th June will be the largest visitor surge. Most affected sectors include tech, aerospace, maritime and port logistics, and coffee and retail.

Recommendations for businesses and organisations

- Consider activating remote-work options for staff commuting via I-5, SR-99 or downtown corridors. Match-day Lumen Field operations close adjacent surface streets in SoDo and pull traffic onto I-5 in both directions. Sound Transit Link is the recommended public transit option.

- Pre-book hotel blocks for visiting staff well ahead. Downtown, Belltown, Pioneer Square and Capitol Hill clusters will be saturated for the tournament window; consider Bellevue or SeaTac as overflow options.
- The Port of Seattle's Pier 91 sits roughly four miles north of Lumen Field, but downtown traffic is almost certain to affect cruise passenger transit on match days. Coordinate with cruise lines on embarkation timing for Alaska-cruise turnarounds.
- Maintain a wildfire-smoke contingency throughout the tournament. Pacific Northwest fire season can push downtown AQI above 100 with little warning. Stock N95 masks for visiting staff.
- Brief marketing and legal teams on FIFA-marks restrictions: enforcement around the Seattle Center Fan Festival and the SoDo perimeter is expected to be the most strict, particularly given Seattle's tech-sponsor density.



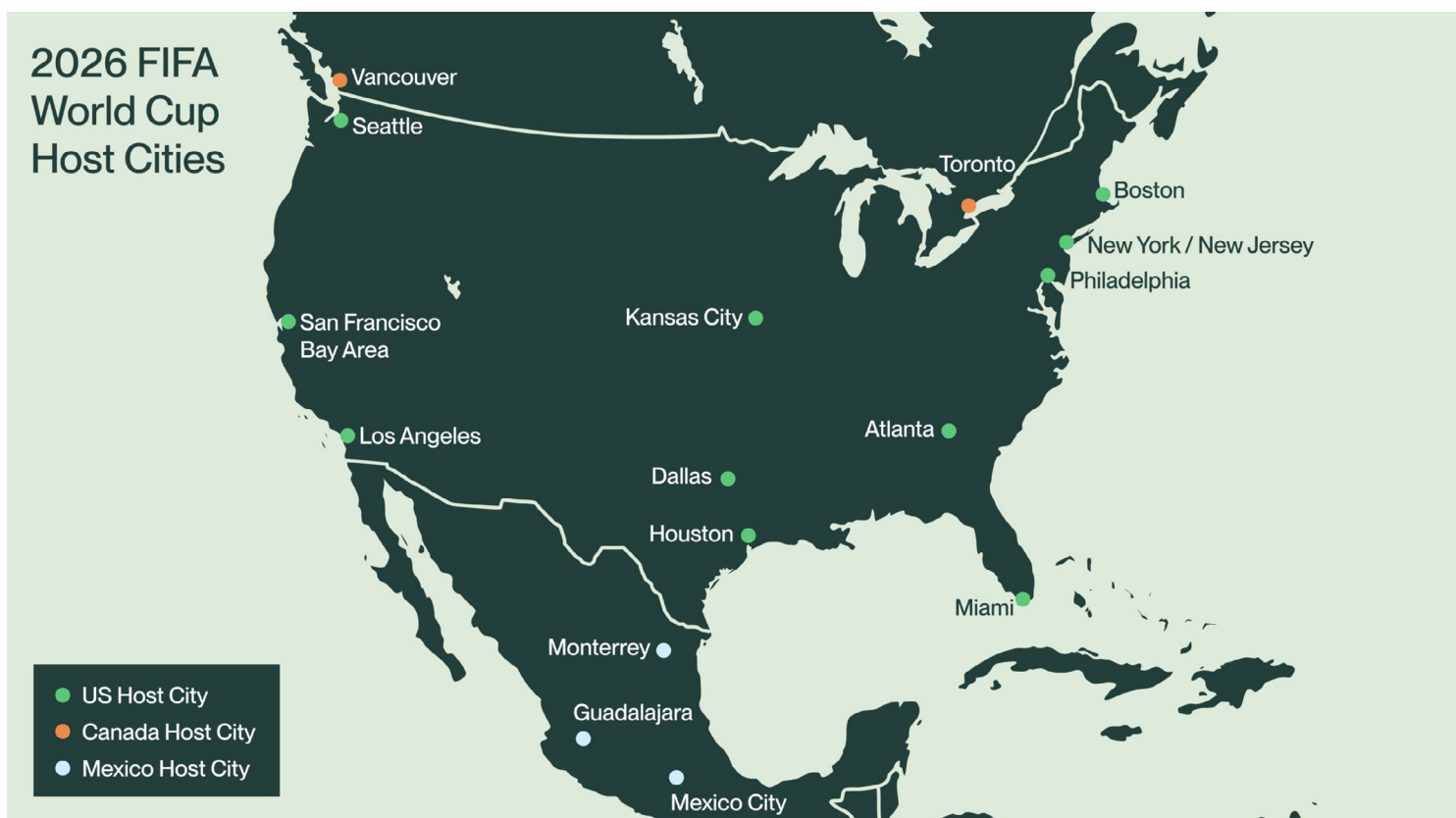
Recommendations for residents

- Plan itineraries away from match-day afternoons, particularly USA vs Australia on 19th June.
- Refresh earthquake-preparedness kits given that a major earthquake is the dominant low-probability, high-consequence Pacific Northwest hazard, and stock N95 masks for wildfire-smoke episodes.
- Sign up for AlertSeattle and King County Alerts to stay apprised of security, operational and severe-weather developments.

Multi city travel

Seattle sits in FIFA's Western cluster with Los Angeles, San Francisco, Vancouver and Guadalajara. Vancouver is a three-hour drive (or a one-hour flight) with a border crossing. San Francisco is about two hours by air, Los Angeles about three hours and Toronto about five hours. Travellers entering Canada need a passport; visa-exempt nationals

flying in need a Canadian eTA before boarding, while visa required nationals need a visitor visa unless they qualify for an eTA exception. Travellers to Mexico require a visa unless they are from Canada, the USA, the EU, the UK, Japan, or select other countries. See the Special Advisory for routing guidance.

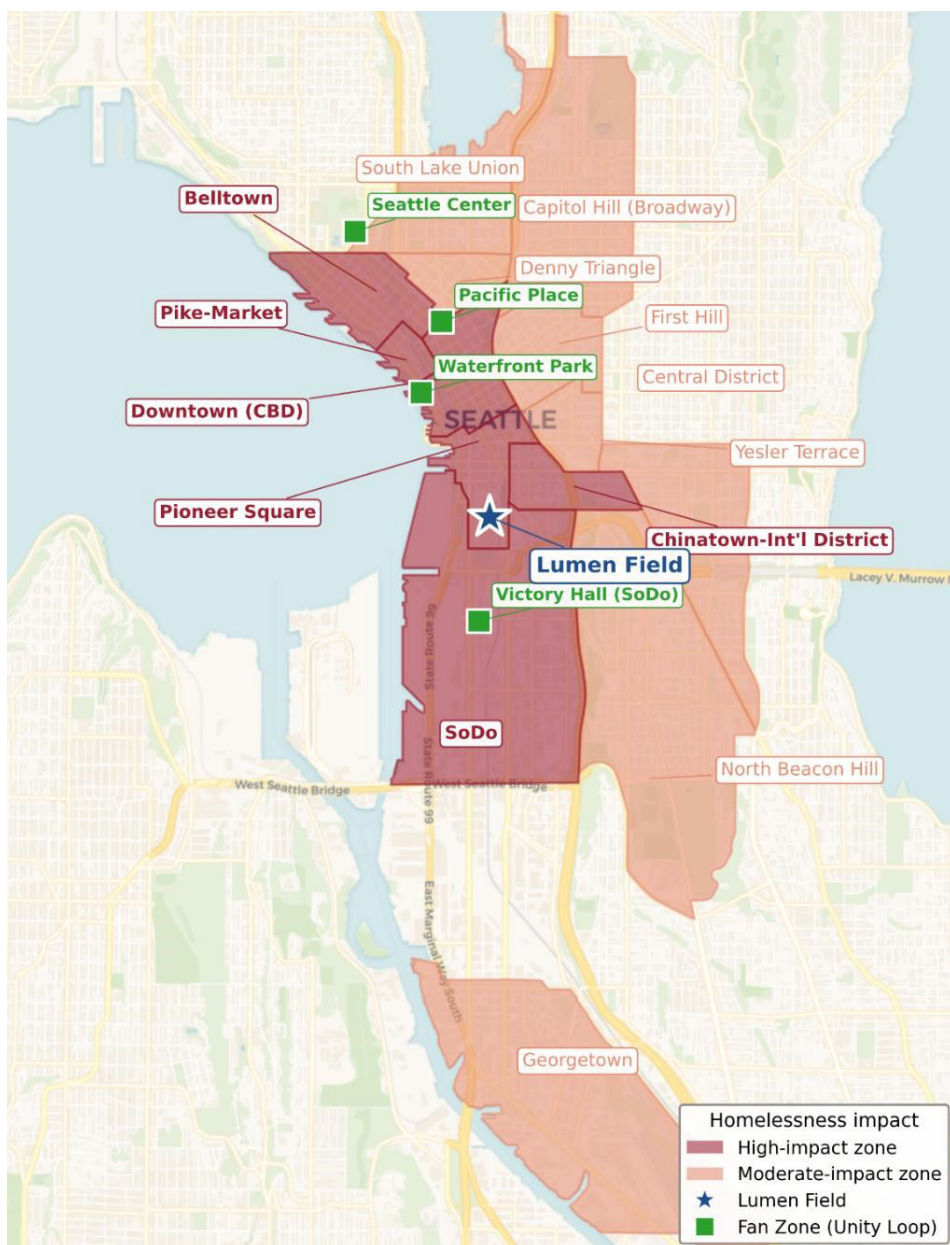


City-specific risks

Seattle’s defining tournament window, city-specific risk for visitors moving between accommodation, fan zones, and the venue is the concentration of its unsheltered population. King County hosts the fourth largest unsheltered population in the US, with the 2024 Point-in-Time Count recording more than 16,000 individuals experiencing homelessness on a single night.

Within the tournament-window operational footprint, consisting of the downtown core, Lumen Field and the four Unity Loop fan zones, the highimpact concentration zones as of May 2026 are Pioneer Square, the Chinatown-International District and SoDo, all of which are immediately adjacent to Lumen Field, and the Downtown CBD / Belltown / PikeMarket block, where most

accommodation and three of the four fan zones are located. Operational implications: the SoDo / Pioneer Square / Chinatown-ID triangle that frames Lumen Field overlaps directly with the city’s most concentrated unsheltered encampment activity, so fan flow on matchdays will route through areas with visible homeless presence. Personal safety incident rates in these zones remain meaningfully lower than the encampment activity might suggest. Gunshots at encampments declined by 64% and encampment fires by 45% from 2022 to 2024. However, visitors should expect frequent panhandling, visible substance-use activity, and short-term route changes when police operations are active.



General advice

- **During major events, plan journeys avoiding common protest flashpoints.** Westlake Park, Cal Anderson Park, the federal courthouse and the University of Washington are likely locations for organised demonstrations.
- **Ensure that all valuables are removed from vehicles before parking in public places.** If unavoidable, ensure that vehicles are locked and belongings are not visible from the exterior. Visitors should consider the heightened risk of vehicle break-ins when deciding whether to opt for insurance coverage on a hired car.
- **Leave valuables in the accommodation when walking in higher crime areas.** Store essential valuables such as cell phones and wallets in internal or sealed pockets to minimise the risk of pick-pocketing.
- **Pedestrian travel is advisable across Downtown, Capitol Hill, Belltown, Pioneer Square and Seattle Center before nightfall as long as basic security precautions are followed.** Exercise increased caution along 3rd Avenue downtown and parts of Pioneer Square after dark.
- **Take note of elevated risks of travel disruption on major highways during peak hours.** Major arterial roads such as I-5, I-90 and State Route 520 are the most frequently affected by traffic disruption during morning and evening peak hours.
- **Ensure travel account for risks posed by wildfire smoke, particularly for travellers with underlying health conditions.**
- **Familiarise yourself with basic earthquake safety measures, such as “drop, cover, and hold on”.** Follow all guidance from local authorities and emergency services in the case of an earthquake.



Appendix: methodology

Risk ratings

MINIMAL	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH	EXTREME
Locations in this category are likely to be affected by small-scale, peaceful, protests that occur sporadically and represent no security risk but may cause temporary localised travel disruption.	Locations in this category are likely to be affected by small-scale protests and low-level clashes, resulting in a heightened police presence in the affected areas. Multiple arrests are reported, resulting in travel and operational disruption.	Locations in this category are likely to be affected by medium to large-scale protests and multiple low-level clashes. Local businesses are at a heightened risk of being damaged and looted, resulting in operational disruption.	Locations in this category are likely to be affected by large-scale protests and clashes taking place resulting in the deployment of National Guard units to contain the unrest. Movement restrictions are implemented to contain unrest, resulting in significant operational disruption.	Locations in this category are likely to be affected by significant civil unrest resulting in the temporary absence of law and order. Strict movement restrictions are imposed and a significant deployment of National Guard units leads to severe operational disruption.

Incident impact ratings

MINIMAL	LOW	MODERATE	SIGNIFICANT	CRITICAL
Incidents in this category are routine within the risk environment and do not pose a threat to life. Incidents rarely impact beyond the immediate vicinity and / or there is negligible implication associated with the risk factor.	Incidents in this category are routine within the risk environment but rarely pose a threat to life and / or the casualty impact is incidental and highly localised. Incidents rarely impact beyond the immediate vicinity or the implications are incidental.	Incidents in this category are fairly common for the risk environment and may pose a threat to life, occasionally resulting in mass casualties. The impact is typically restricted to the immediate vicinity and / or is incidental.	Incidents in this category occasionally occur in the risk environment and typically pose a credible and imminent threat to life, occasionally resulting in mass casualties. The impact may spread beyond the immediate vicinity.	Incidents in this category are highly out of the ordinary for the risk environment, pose a significant and imminent threat to life and will likely result in significant mass casualties. The impact is likely to have wider-reaching implications.

Risk trends

RAPIDLY IMPROVING	IMPROVING	STABLE	DETERIORATING	RAPIDLY DETERIORATING
The situation is improving in the short term, with the potential for an event to cause a sudden and unexpected improvement.	The situation is improving in the medium term, at a steady and predictable rate.	The situation is unlikely to see a significant improvement or deterioration over the medium term.	The situation is worsening in the medium term, at a steady and predictable rate.	The situation is worsening in the short term, with the potential for a sudden and unexpected deterioration.

Source evaluation criteria

CANNOT BE JUDGED	UNRELIABLE	RARELY RELIABLE	FAIRLY RELIABLE	USUALLY RELIABLE	RELIABLE
No basis exists for evaluating the reliability of the source.	Lacking in authenticity, trustworthiness, or competency. Frequent history of misinformation or inaccuracy.	Significant doubt about authenticity, trustworthiness or competency. Some history of misinformation or inaccuracy.	Doubt about authenticity, trustworthiness, or competency. History of some valid information.	Some doubt about authenticity, trustworthiness, or competency. History of valid information most of the time.	No doubt of authenticity, trustworthiness, or competency. History of being reliable almost all of the time.

Information validity

CANNOT BE JUDGED	CONFIRMED FALSE	LIKELY FALSE	POSSIBLY TRUE	PROBABLY TRUE	CONFIRMED TRUE
No basis exists for evaluating the validity of the information.	Confirmed as false by reputable independent sources.	Not confirmed. Possible but not logical. No other information on the subject or information is contradictory.	Not confirmed but reasonably logical. Limited other information on subject.	Not confirmed but logical in itself and consistent with most other information on subject.	Confirmed by reputable independent sources and logical in itself.

Forecasting

REMOTE CHANCE	HIGHLY UNLIKELY	UNLIKELY	EVEN CHANCE	LIKELY	HIGHLY LIKELY	ALMOST CERTAIN
<5%	10% - 20%	25% - 35%	40%-50%	55%-75%	80%-90%	>95%

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