

City Report  
FIFA World Cup 2026

# Atlanta

Issued  
14th May 2026





# Atlanta

## Overview

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Country                   | United States of America  |
| Host stadium              | Mercedes-Benz Stadium (FIFA tournament-time name: Atlanta Stadium), Atlanta, GA   |
| Distance to Downtown      | 1 mile (2 km) from Downtown   |
| Stadium capacity          | 71,000  |
| Roof / cover type         | Retractable roof; fully air-conditioned   |
| Altitude                  | ~320 m (1,050 ft)   |
| Timezone (June-July 2026) | Eastern Daylight Time (UTC-4)   |
| Official language(s)      | English (Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese spoken in metro)   |
| Match count & dates       | 8 matches: 5 Group Stage (15 <sup>th</sup> –27 <sup>th</sup> June), 1 R32 (1 <sup>st</sup> July), 1 R16 (7 <sup>th</sup> July), 1 Semifinal (15 <sup>th</sup> July) |
| Primary airport(s)        | ATL (Hartsfield-Jackson) is the world's busiest passenger airport   |
| Population (metro)        | ~6.3 million  |

## Risk ratings

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

Atlanta hosts a semifinal on 15th July 2026, one of the two largest matches of any host city outside the Final. Mercedes-Benz Stadium is downtown with a retractable roof and full air conditioning. ATL is the world's busiest passenger airport, which is a strength for arrival capacity and a vulnerability for delay propagation. Atlanta is a tornado-belt city and has strong stadium-sheltering protocols.

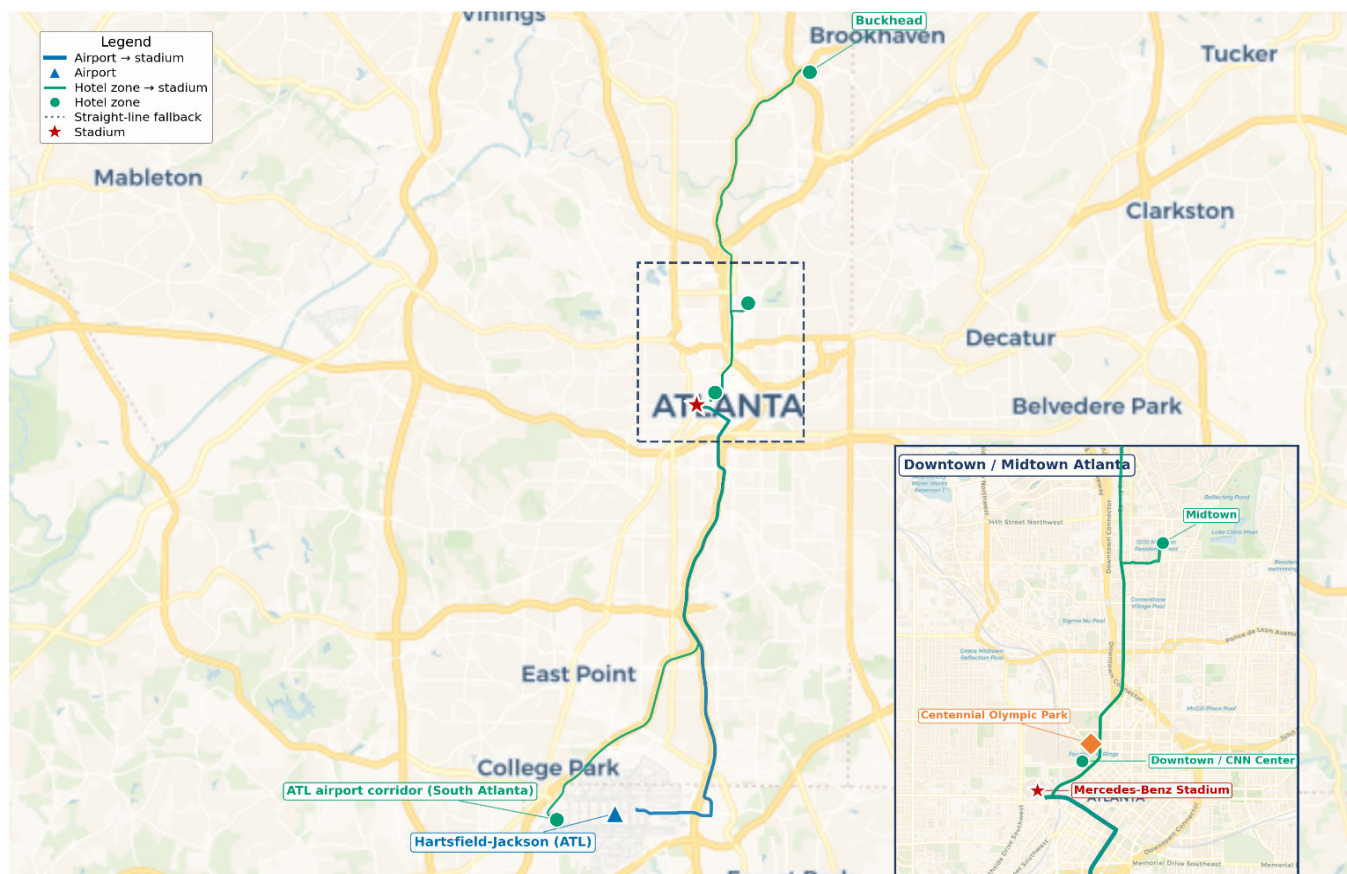
# Arrival, departure and transportation

## Airports and public transport

ATL is the main gateway to the city, located about seven miles (12 km) south of downtown. The MARTA Red/Gold lines connect ATL to the downtown area in about 20 minutes, and the airport is also well served by its connections to I-75 and I-85. Atlanta's other airports (PDK, FTY) are very limited for commercial travel.

## Recommended accommodation zones

Accommodation in Downtown Atlanta is within walking distance of the stadium and the FIFA Fan Festival, while Midtown is nearby and offers MARTA access to downtown. Buckhead is known for being more upscale and remains accessible via MARTA. The accommodation near ATL is well-suited to individuals who prefer to stay close to the airport.



# Security and medical risks

## Crime

Atlanta's violent-crime rate is moderately elevated but heavily neighbourhood-concentrated. Tourist zones, including downtown, Midtown, Buckhead, Inman Park and Decatur, are well-policed and present a low risk for travellers. Specific corridors, including parts of Bankhead, West End, and South Atlanta, have higher reported crime rates and are not on standard tourist routes. Crime on MARTA services is relatively low. Vehicle break-ins and petty crimes are the dominant risk to travellers.

## Terrorism

Atlanta has an elevated baseline counterterrorism posture as a major federal city, with the FBI's Atlanta field office, the CDC headquarters, and federal courthouses located there. FBI Atlanta, Atlanta PD, Georgia State Patrol, and JTTF coordinate. Visitors should expect heavy security at ATL, the federal building, the CDC complex, and the stadium perimeter, particularly for the semifinal.

## Unrest

While Atlanta has an active demonstration culture concentrated around the State Capitol, the federal courthouse, and the CDC complex, the risk of unrest is low throughout the tournament. Past sports celebrations have produced sporadic protest activity downtown.

## Natural Disaster

Atlanta experiences heat, severe thunderstorms, and tornadoes. Tornado activity in Georgia peaks in spring but is also documented in summer; the metro has stadium-sheltering protocols in place. 56 tornadoes have been recorded within 25 miles (40 km) since 1995, including seven significant tornadoes that resulted in two fatalities. Hurricane and tropical storm exposure is possible as remnants, but direct hits during the tournament window are unlikely. The earthquake risk is very low.

## Heat

Atlanta's average high temperatures in June and July are 87–90°F (31–32°C), with humidity regularly above 70%. Heat waves are highly likely to push temperatures over 95°F (35°C), with at least one heat wave reported during the tournament. Perceived temperatures are almost certain to be even higher due to high humidity. Mercedes-Benz Stadium's retractable roof and its air conditioning materially reduce fan heat exposure once inside, but pre-match queuing in summer Atlanta heat remains the dominant heat-illness risk.



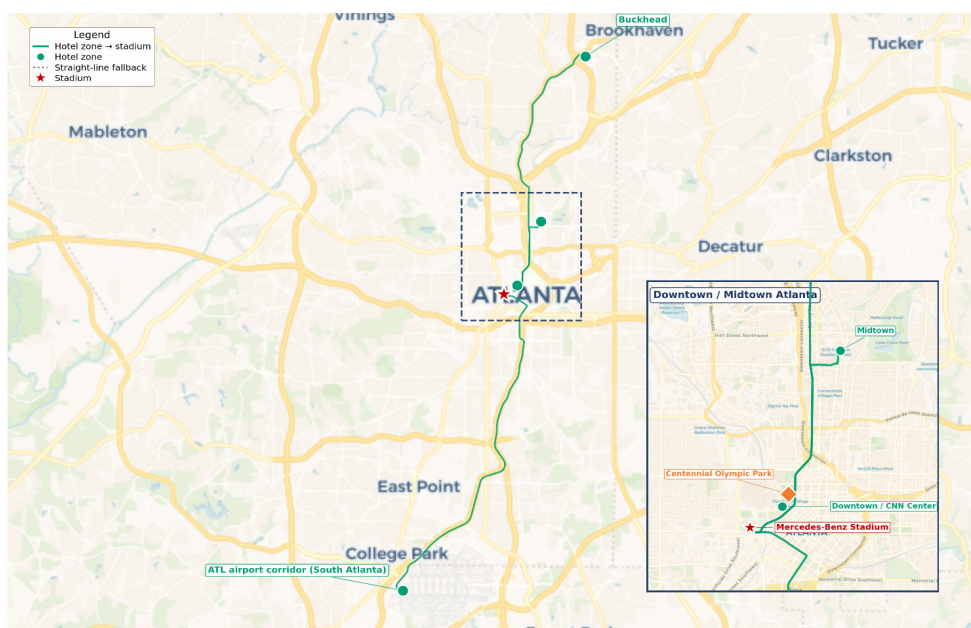
# Stadium and matchday

## Match schedule

| Date                  | Match                                    | Stage       | Kickoff (local) |
|-----------------------|--|-------------|-----------------|
| 15 <sup>th</sup> June | Spain - Cape Verde                       | Group H     | 12h00           |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> June | Czech Republic - South Africa            | Group A     | 12h00           |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> June | Spain - Saudi Arabia                     | Group H     | 12h00           |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> June | Morocco - Haiti                          | Group C     | 18h00           |
| 27 <sup>th</sup> June | DR Congo - Uzbekistan                    | Group K     | 19h30           |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> July  | Winner of Group L - 3rd E/H/I/J/K        | Round of 32 | 12h00           |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> July  | Winner of Match 86 - Winner of Match 88  | Round of 16 | 12h00           |
| 15 <sup>th</sup> July | Winner of Match 99 - Winner of Match 100 | Semifinal   | 15h00           |

## Transportation to the Stadium

Mercedes-Benz Stadium is downtown, served by MARTA Blue and Green lines, the Atlanta Streetcar (the Downtown Loop), and surface streets; it has one of the best transit-integration profiles of any US tournament venue due to its multimodal connectivity. Driving routes converge on I-75/85, I-20, and the Downtown Connector, with significant congestion almost certain; the city has not yet announced when it will begin implementing increased security measures on matchdays, which will also almost certainly increase congestion. The stadium has ample parking, but pre-purchase is required for tournament matches. The city is encouraging fans to take the MARTA lines to the SEC District and Vine City Stations. The semifinal on 15th July will run the largest perimeter footprint of any match in the city.



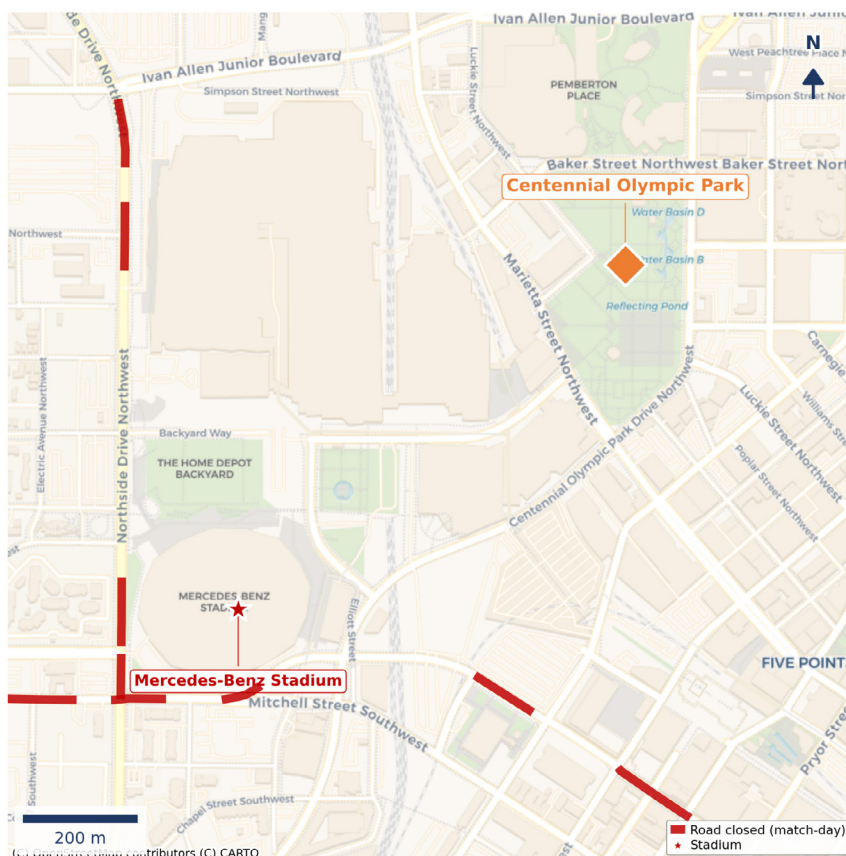
## Entry/Gates into the stadium

Per FIFA standard policy for the 2026 World Cup, Mercedes-Benz Stadium gates are expected to open two hours before kickoff. Clear-bag policy (up to 12" x 6" x 12" / 30.5cm x 16cm x 30.5cm) or a small clutch or wallet (up to 4.5 in x 6.5 in / 11 x 16.5 cm) is enforced per the stadium's published bag policy, with screening including a metal-detector and visual inspection. Prohibited items include professional cameras with detachable/telephoto lenses, drones, oversized signs/banners (with FIFA's typical size limit of ~2 m x 1.5 m), umbrellas, and any flagpoles. The retractable roof typically opens during pleasant weather and closes during heat and rain.



## Fanzones

The FIFA Fan Festival is planned for Centennial Olympic Park in downtown Atlanta, about 1 mile (1.5 km) from the stadium, and will run for up to 21 days. Centennial is Atlanta's primary event and festival venue with mature security operations; a security perimeter will highly likely be implemented for the duration of the festival.



# Match risk rating

| Match   | Date and Kickoff (All Times Local) | Match Risk Rating |
|---|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Spain – Cape Verde  | 15 <sup>th</sup> June 12h00        | MINIMAL           |
| Czech Republic – South Africa   | 18 <sup>th</sup> June 12h00        | LOW               |
| <p>This match is assessed as LOW risk, primarily due to the elevated likelihood of disruption to Atlanta's city centre and latent geopolitical tensions between South Africa and the United States. Precedent from previous European Championships indicate the Czech Republic's fanbase is likely to be relatively large, particularly as this is their first World Cup in twenty years. Czech football also has a moderate ultras presence, which means clashes, while unlikely, cannot be ruled out. This is South Africa's only match in the United States, which is liable to trigger small-scale rallies by fans denouncing the Trump administration's poor relations with South Africa following the acceptance of Afrikaners as refugees in 2025. Disruption in Downtown Atlanta, resulting from fan gatherings near Mercedes-Benz Stadium, the Atlanta fanzone, and public spaces such as Woodruff Park, is likely to affect Atlanta travellers and residents on matchday and MD-1. Disruption is also likely to affect all four MARTA lines, as well as key arterial roads such as Northside Drive, I-80 and I-25.</p>  |                                    |                   |
| Spain – Saudi Arabia  | 21 <sup>st</sup> June 12h00        | MINIMAL           |
| Morocco – Haiti   | 24 <sup>th</sup> June 18h00        | HIGH              |
| <p>This match is assessed as HIGH risk due to the elevated likelihood of fan unrest and latent geopolitical issues between the United States and Haiti. Haitian nationals are banned from travelling to the United States, with immigrants from the country also the target of significant rhetoric by Donald Trump during the 2024 election campaign. Accordingly, the heightened presence of immigration authorities in Atlanta in the lead-up to the match, while still unlikely, cannot be ruled out. Should immigration operations occur, this is liable to trigger localised protests, particularly given Atlanta's liberal political environment. Precedent from the 2025 FIFA Club World Cup indicates that Morocco is likely to have one of the largest fanbases at the tournament. Moroccan fans are liable to gather in large numbers on matchday and MD-1 near Mercedes-Benz Stadium, the Atlanta fanzone and gathering places in Downtown Atlanta such as Woodruff Park. Disruption on all four MARTA lines, as well as key arterial roads such as Northside Drive, I-80 and I-25, is likely to be recorded. While fan unrest in the vicinity of Mercedes-Benz Stadium cannot be ruled out, local and stadium authorities have relatively strong capabilities to handle large numbers of fans as a result of previous major American football games being held in Atlanta.</p> |                                    |                   |
| DR Congo – Uzbekistan   | 27 <sup>th</sup> June 19h30        | MINIMAL           |
| Round of 32   | 1st July 12h00                     | 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. Disruption in Downtown Atlanta, resulting from fan gatherings near Mercedes-Benz Stadium, the Atlanta fanzone, and public spaces such as Woodruff Park, is likely to affect Atlanta travellers and residents on matchday and MD-1. Disruption is also likely to affect all four MARTA lines, as well as key arterial roads such as Northside Drive, I-80 and I-25. local and stadium authorities have relatively strong capabilities to handle large numbers of fans as a result of previous major American football games being held in Atlanta.</p>   |                                    |                   |

| Match   | Date and Kickoff (All Times Local) | Match Risk Rating  |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| Round of 16   | 7th July 12h00                     | <p style="text-align: center; color: black; font-weight: bold;">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. Disruption in Downtown Atlanta, resulting from fan gatherings near Mercedes-Benz Stadium, the Atlanta fanzone, and public spaces such as Woodruff Park, is likely to affect Atlanta travellers and residents on matchday and MD-1. Disruption is also likely to affect all four MARTA lines, as well as key arterial roads such as Northside Drive, I-80 and I-25. Local and stadium authorities have relatively strong capabilities to handle large numbers of fans as a result of previous major American football games being held in Atlanta.</p>                 |                                    |  |
| Semifinal   | 15th July 15h00                    | <p style="text-align: center; color: white; font-weight: bold;">HIGH</p>     |
| <p>This match is assessed as HIGH risk due to elevated security and operational risks associated with its high profile. The event's high profile indicates that unrest and terrorism risks are elevated, though these are mitigated by the heightened security posture due to the large contingent of VIP fans expected to attend the match. Local and stadium authorities have relatively strong capabilities to handle large numbers of fans and high-profile sporting events, such as a World Cup semifinal, as a result of previous major American football games being held in Atlanta. Disruption in Downtown Atlanta, resulting from fan gatherings near Mercedes-Benz Stadium, the Atlanta fanzone, and public spaces such as Woodruff Park, is likely to affect Atlanta travellers and residents on matchday and MD-1. Disruption is also likely to affect all four MARTA lines, as well as key arterial roads such as Northside Drive, I-80 and I-25.</p> |                                    |  |

# Business as usual operations

Demand surges around match days, especially the semifinal; Interstates 75/85 and Interstate 20, along with the downtown area, are almost certain to be saturated around afternoon kickoffs. Crowding on MARTA services and at ATL is almost certain during the tournament, as the city is a major logistics hub. ATL Plane Train and concourse crowding at peak times throughout the tournament. The most-affected sectors are companies headquartered downtown or in Midtown. The media, logistics, and film/TV production sectors are expected to be affected. The Mercedes-Benz Stadium is downtown, so direct disruption to the CBD is almost certain to be high.

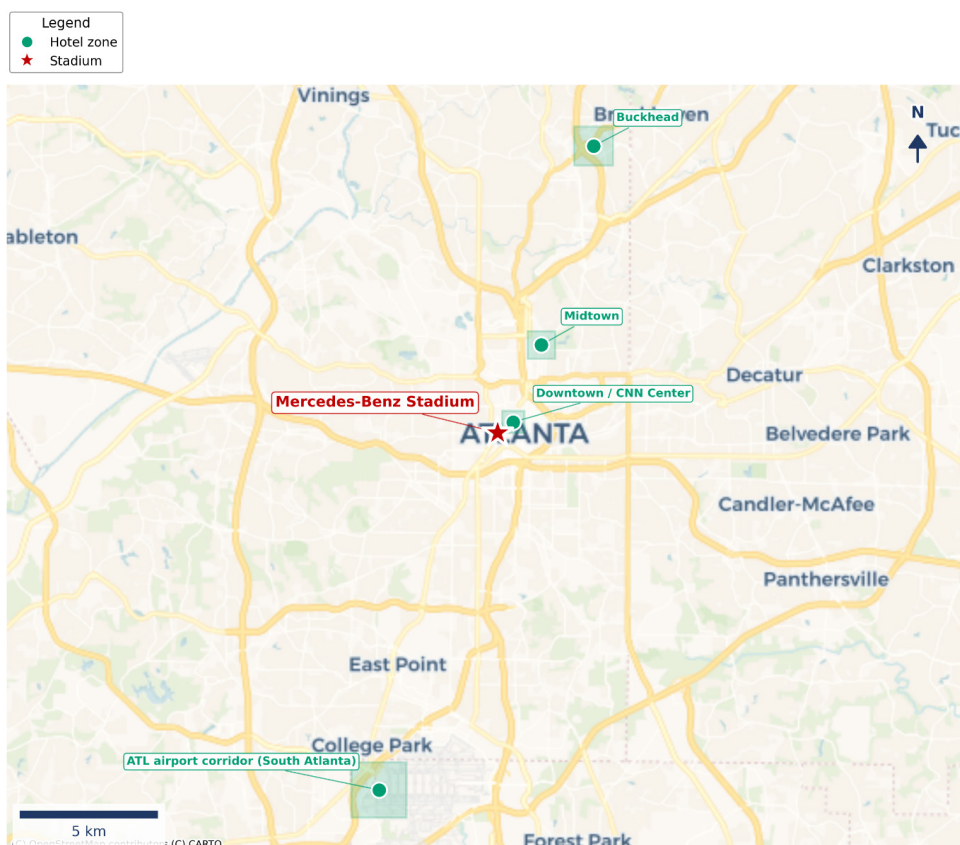
## Recommendations for Businesses

- Consider activating remote-work options for staff commuting via I-75 / I-85 / Connector, MARTA Red and Gold lines, or downtown corridors. Mercedes-Benz Stadium operations typically close adjacent surface streets, while the Fan Festival at Centennial Olympic Park saturates pedestrian flow through downtown. The semifinal on 15th July is the day most likely to face significant disruption.
- Pre-book hotel blocks for visiting staff as early as possible. Semifinal-week inventory in Downtown, Midtown, and Buckhead areas will be significantly constrained; consider Dunwoody or Vinings as backup options.

- Allow for extra travel time through ATL airport despite the airport's elevated capabilities in handling passenger surges during major events.
- Logistics operations should reschedule courier runs and cross-docking activity away from match-day Connector windows.
- Brief marketing/legal on FIFA-marks restrictions: Coca-Cola is a long-standing FIFA Partner (so Coca-Cola marketing has clearance), but Atlanta-headquartered non-sponsor competitors must take particular care; ambush-marketing enforcement around the Centennial Olympic Park Fan Festival will be aggressive.

## Recommendations for Residents

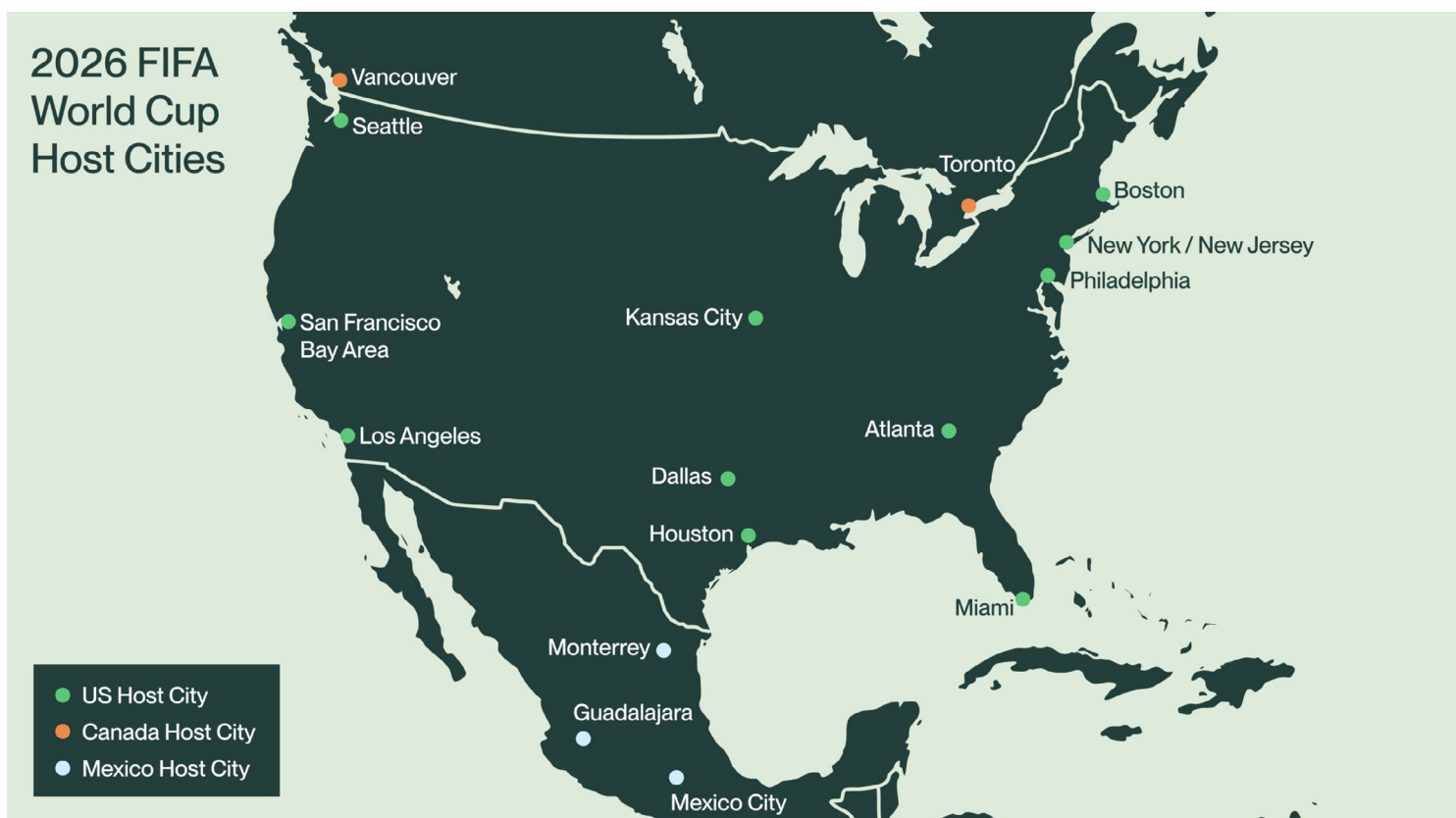
- Plan errands and medical appointments away from match-day afternoons, especially 15th July.
- Sign up for ReadyAtlanta and AlertATL to stay apprised of security, operational and weather developments.
- Refresh tornado-shelter plans (interior room, lowest level, away from windows).



# Multi City travel

Atlanta has the world's busiest airport and sits between FIFA's Eastern and Central clusters. Flights to NYC or Dallas are about two and a half hours, to Miami about two hours, to Mexico City about 3 hours, and to Vancouver about 5 and a half hours. Atlanta's MARTA system and the ATL airport make it a strong base for fans following multiple matches. Travellers

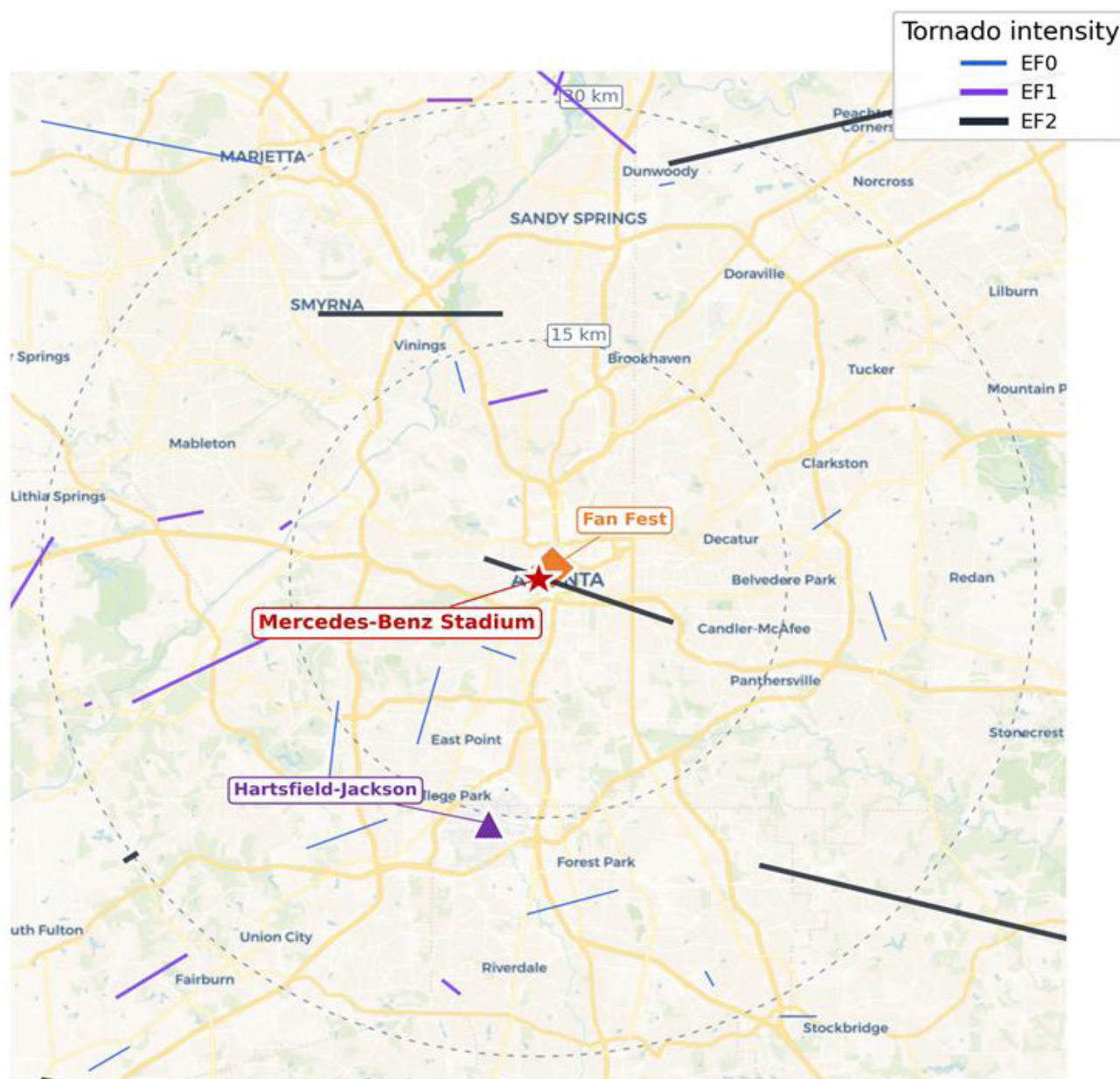
entering Canada need a passport; visa-exempt nationals flying in need a Canadian eTA before boarding, while visa-required nationals need a visitor visa unless they qualify for an eTA exception. Travellers to Mexico require a Visa unless they are from Canada, the USA, the EU, the UK, Japan, or select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



# City-Specific Risks

Atlanta sits in the southern extension of the US tornado belt. While the spring peak, from March to May, is past the tournament window, summer tornadoes are documented and operationally significant. Mercedes-Benz Stadium's retractable roof closes in severe weather, and the venue's mature severe-weather plan shelters fans on the lowest-level concourses. Visitors should know the standard tornado protocol (interior room, lowest

level, away from windows) for hotels and the Fan Festival and should monitor NWS Atlanta warnings during the tournament. The secondary Atlanta-specific risk is flight delays and cancellations at ATL, as ATL is the world's busiest passenger airport, and weather or operational disruptions cascade across the entire US air network. Visitors flying through ATL on semifinal week should build an extra buffer for connecting flights.



# General advice

- **During major events, plan journeys avoiding common protest flashpoints.** Public squares in downtown Atlanta and adjoining roads are likely to experience significant traffic disruption during prolonged demonstrations.
- **Take note of elevated rates of motor vehicle theft in Atlanta.** Petty criminals are liable to break into vehicles and open trunks to gain access to valuables. Refrain from storing non-essential vehicles and ensure your passport is stored in a separate compartment.
- **Pedestrian travel is advisable across virtually all of Atlanta before nightfall as long as basic security precautions are followed.** Exercise increased caution near Adamsville, Grove Park, Oakland City, Adair Park, and Mechanicsville and minimise non-essential movement during hours of darkness.



# 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%           |

This report was brought to you by the Healix Global Security Operations Centre (GSOC), providing clients with 24/7 access to dedicated professionals offering proactive, end-to-end risk management expertise and assistance.

The information contained herein does not constitute a guarantee by Healix and is not an insurance against risk. Information has been compiled on a best effort basis and Healix is not in any way responsible for the client's ultimate decision in response to the findings of this document.

## Are you happy with this report?

We would like to invite you to provide your feedback on this report by completing our short 1-minute survey.



Should you prefer, please feel free to speak directly with one of the Healix Security team or your Account Manager.

Click [here](#) to take the survey

## Discover more about how we can support you

 [enquiries@healix.com](mailto:enquiries@healix.com)

 [healix.com](https://healix.com)