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Subject: Dallas proposes vehicle-free zones downtown for 2026 FIFA World Cup crowds
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Dallas proposes vehicle-free zones downtown for 2026 FIFA World Cup crowds

FOX 4 DFW

By [Lori Brown](#)

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Dallas to close downtown streets for World Cup travel

Dallas is planning to create "vehicle-free zones" downtown on one or more weekends during the FIFA World Cup.

The Brief

- Dallas plans to create vehicle-free zones downtown to accommodate massive crowds and pedestrians during the FIFA World Cup this June.
- City leaders are proposing street closures on Main Street for either four Sundays or one full weekend, featuring themed events and vendor spaces in the streets.
- The total cost of the project remains unknown, as officials have not yet detailed the budget for required barricades, public safety, or staffing.

DALLAS - The City of Dallas is laying out a plan to capitalize on the thousands of visitors who will pour into North Texas for the FIFA World Cup in June.

This week, city leaders discussed a plan to make room for pedestrians and vendors where streets are now.



Vehicle-free zones in Dallas

What we know:

Even though the World Cup games will be played in Arlington, Dallas is preparing for crowds of their own. The city is planning to create vehicle free zones in Downtown Dallas on one or more weekends during the tournament.

So the plan to open up downtown Dallas streets... is to close them. It's a concept the city tested during Halloween, with 71,000 people buying in. City staff say the event ran smoothly, with effective barricade placement and logistical management.

The city is now proposing either four Sunday closures during the World Cup, or one weekend.



Dallas City Council on downtown traffic

Local perspective:

Dallas city councilwoman Cara Mendelsohn urged the city to open the streets to pedestrians as much as possible, especially 4th of July weekend.

"Let's celebrate America 250 and show our international visitors how we really celebrate July 4th and our birthday," said Mendelsohn.

The city is proposing closing main street between the streets of Ervay, Field and Akard, between Elm and Commerce.



Mendelsohn suggested the city collaborate with Downtown Dallas Inc to have different themes in different parks.

"One can be obviously about our founding fathers, but also civil rights era, space age, like different parts of our history that you can be like, oh, let's go over to Main Street Garden, they're doing this. Oh, let's go over to this park, they are doing that. I think there's just a huge opportunity here to get people out in the streets, have a very significant police presence, not a significant homeless presence, and really change that narrative from what people think downtown is," said Mendelsohn.

Other concerns ahead of the World Cup

Big picture view:

The concept of filling downtown streets with pedestrians on weekends is one becoming popular around the country with events like Viva Calle in San Jose.

Councilman Bill Roth suggested the city also open up free parking downtown.

"People are still going to be trying to drive. And I think that one of the biggest impediments that people have when coming downtown for events is they got to figure out if they're going to spend a lot of money on parking," said Roth.

Councilman Zarin Gracey said the push should be for public transportation.

"The point is so we can shut it down so that we can have fewer cars, have more walkability. And I think we would, if we haven't... I want us to consider ways we can include incentives for taking dark," said Gracey.

It's a concept that the city could continue long after the FIFA World Cup.

"Frankly, I'd like to see it happen one weekend a month going forward," said Paul Ridley of the Dallas City Council.



What's next:

The city did not present how much the proposed closures would cost for barricades and public safety.

Street closures normally require special event permits where organizers pay the bill for costs involved.

The city is also exploring fees for vendors to rent space in the streets.

The Source: Information in this article was provided by FOX 4's Lori Brown at the Dallas City Council meeting.

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