

Own Goal? Despite promises of economic gold, most in YVR, GTA say World Cup matches not worth public costs

Widespread dissatisfaction over disruption, FIFA's share of revenue and demands

June 9, 2026 – Before a single ball is kicked, a single substitution made or a single red card shown, the pre-game rituals of people living in Canada's two World Cup host cities - Vancouver and Toronto – include more pessimism and criticism than cheer and song.

New data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute finds seven-in-10 in both Greater Toronto (70%) and Metro Vancouver (72%) saying the public costs of reportedly \$1 billion apiece in funding across multiple levels of government are “not worth” the trade-offs of hosting the world, and the World Cup, in their home cities.

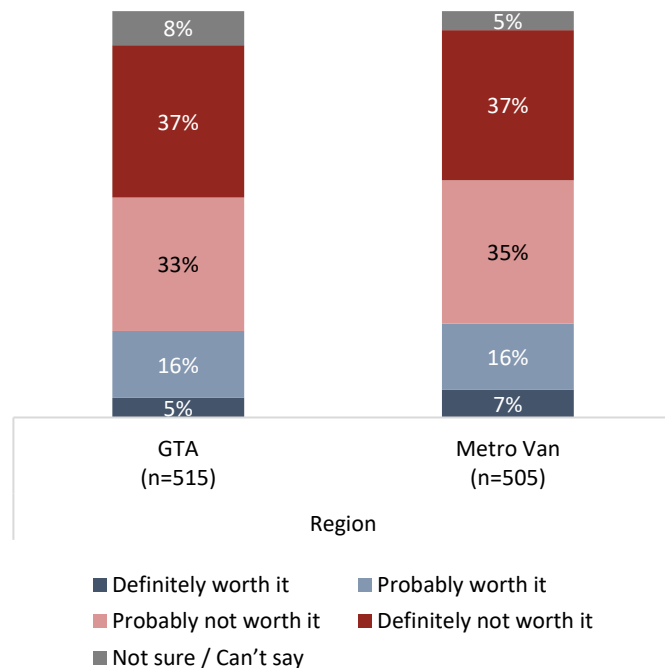
At issue for city residents: disruption, street closures, and security perimeters; lopsided accrual of revenue to FIFA, soccer's global governing body; and a rearrangement of their city's summer cultural and event calendar that many view as an “unacceptable” requirement of hosting.

In both Vancouver and Toronto, there are more who say they are “disinterested” in watching the matches in any way (51%, 59% respectively) than excited the World Cup is coming to their cities (34%, 39% respectively).

More in the GTA believe hosting the World Cup is a poor investment for Toronto (47%) than a good one (20%); same goes for those in Metro Vancouver (51%, 21%).

And when the final bill is tallied, only one-third in each city (Toronto, 33%; Vancouver, 32%) believe their municipal government will be fully transparent about the total cost of hosting.

Do you think [your city] hosting World Cup matches is worth the public cost?



METHODOLOGY:

The Angus Reid Institute conducted an online survey from May 7 – 11, 2026, among a randomized sample of 1,803 Canadian adults. Respondents are drawn from the [Angus Reid Forum](#), a large-scale online panel developed to include Canadian residents in each of the 343 federal ridings in Canada and representative of the Canadian population by age, gender, family income, ethnic status and education. The sample was weighted to be representative of adults nationwide according to region, gender, age, household income, and education, based on the Canadian census. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding. The survey was self-commissioned and paid for by ARI. Detailed tables are found at the end of this release.

For more information on our polling methods, [click here](#).

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About ARI

*The **Angus Reid Institute (ARI)** was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion research foundation established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating to the public accessible and impartial statistical data, research and policy analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.*

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More disinterest than excitement for World Cup in host cities

As Vancouver and Toronto welcome global fans of the beautiful game to watch the World Cup, complaints over high ticket prices, questions over the use of public funding, and inconveniences from the event's footprints in busy downtown cores mean denizens of Canadian host cities have not exactly been chanting "Ole, Ole, Ole!"

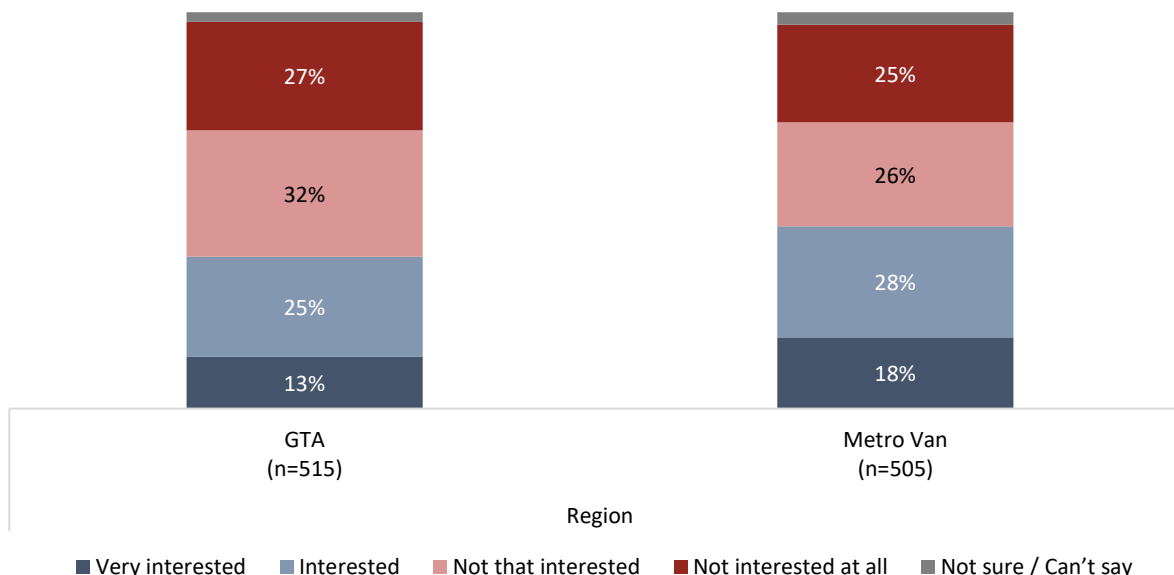
For only the third World Cup in the competition's history, Canadians will at least have a home team to cheer for as the country's best male players compete in Toronto and Vancouver. But interest in the tournament itself is muted at best in Canada's two host cities. More describe themselves as disinterested than interested, while fewer than two-in-five (36%) describe themselves as "excited" that their home city will be hosting matches ([see detailed tables](#)):

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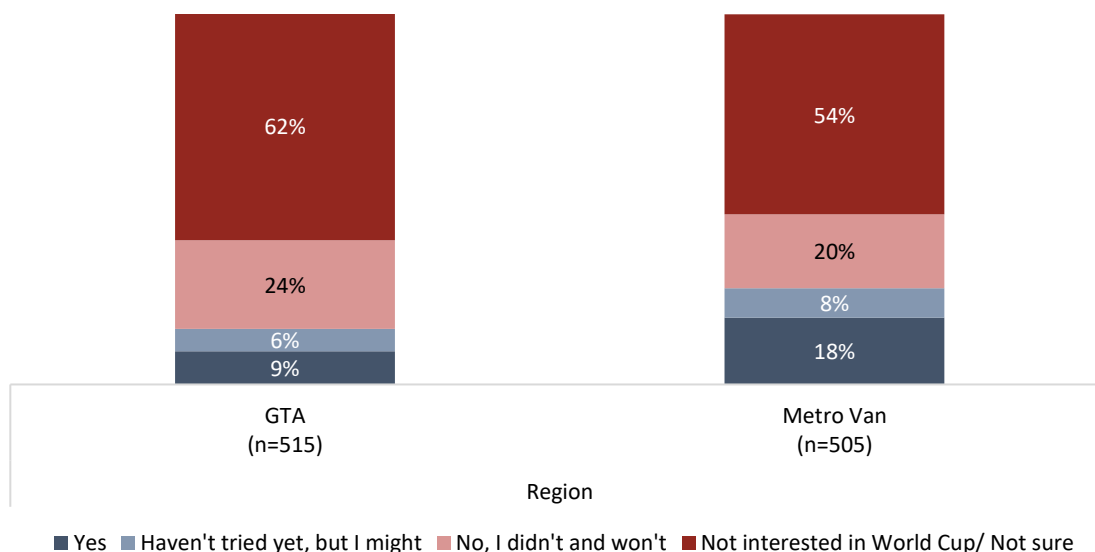
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How interested are you in watching any of the 2026 World Cup matches, whether in person, on television or online?



One-quarter (26%) in Vancouver say they tried to get tickets, or they might still. One-in-six (15%) in Toronto say the same. However, many aren't interested in watching games and among those interested one-in-four (24%) in Toronto and one-in-five (20%) in Vancouver say they won't be trying to get in the stadiums.

Did you try to get tickets for any of the games?



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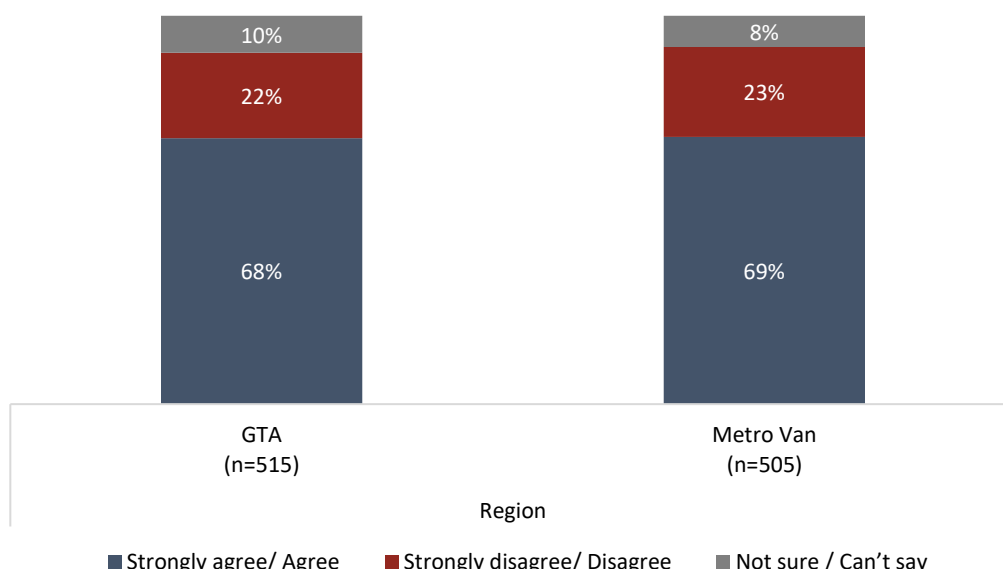
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Two-thirds say World Cup 'creates too much disruption'

In Vancouver and Toronto, road closures have already begun and are set to disrupt traffic flows in the cities' downtowns from now until the end of July for not only the matches themselves, but for massive fan festivals during the length of the tournament.

The disruption is more unwelcome than not. More than two-thirds in Vancouver (69%) and Toronto (68%) say the event creates "too much disruption for people who live and work" in those cities.

Agree vs. disagree - "The World Cup will create too much disruption for people who live and work in [my city]"



Public spending 'not worth it' according to seven-in-10

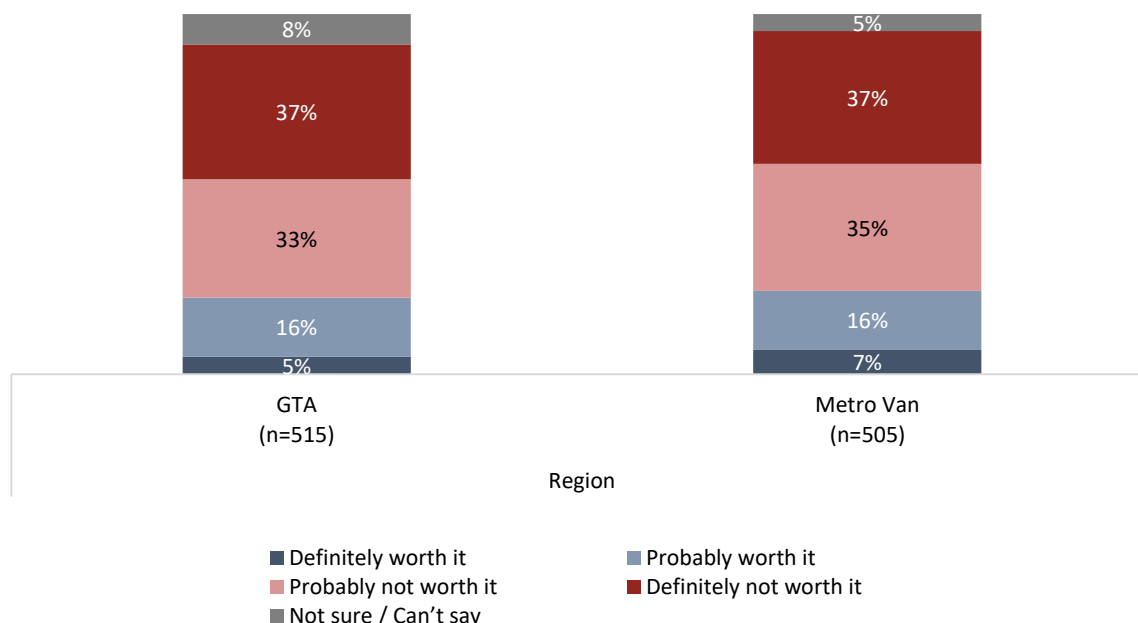
The traffic upheaval and security-related closures is one of, but not the only cost, to be born by the Canadian public for the World Cup. The Parliamentary Budget Officer estimates the cost to taxpayers combining outlays from federal, provincial, regional, and municipal governments will exceed \$1 billion. When that figure is put in front of those living in the host cities, a majority believe hosting World Cup matches is "definitely" or "probably" not worth it.

Fewer than one-quarter in Toronto (21%) and Vancouver (23%) disagree, and believe the benefits outweigh the costs:

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Knowing estimates suggest it will require more than \$1 billion in public spending from federal, provincial, municipal and regional governments, do you think [your city] hosting World Cup matches is worth the public cost?



Little trust in municipal, provincial governments to be transparent about costs

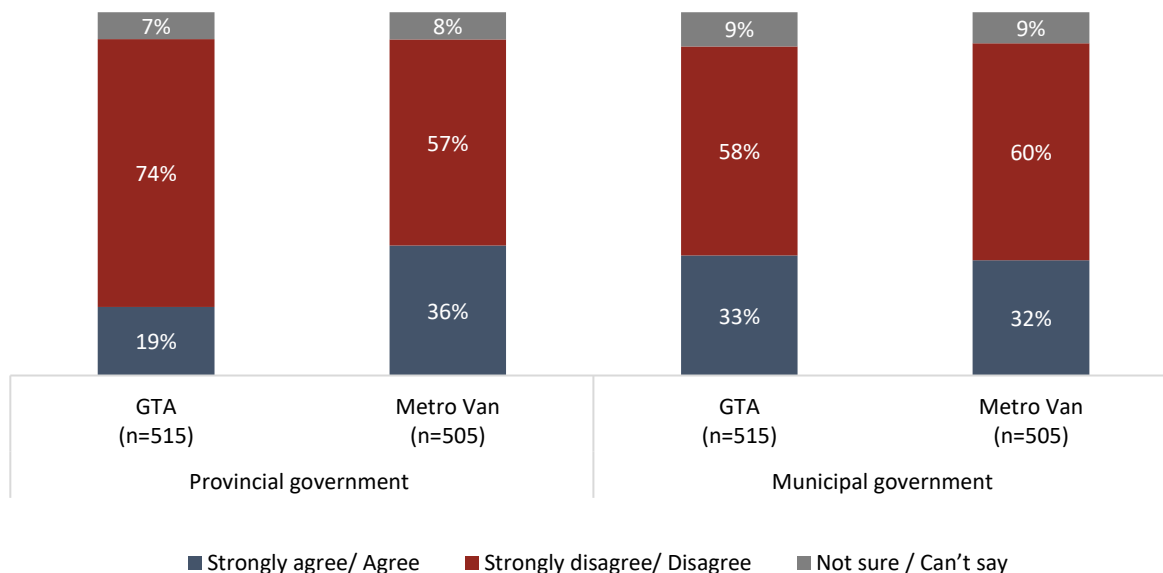
The PBO's estimate does not account for overruns and there is significant concern from those in Vancouver and Toronto that neither their provincial nor municipal government will be upfront with the tournament's final cost. A majority in both cities say they do not trust their governments to be transparent on the final bill.

In both cases, the current expected bill has far outpaced the initial projections when the cities' bid for the games. In 2018, the plan in Toronto projected a cost of \$30 million to \$45 million to host the tournament; in Vancouver, an initial estimation pegged the cost at \$240 million. The current cost projections are \$380 million for Toronto and \$624 million for Vancouver.

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Agree vs. disagree - "I trust my [provincial/municipal] government to be transparent about the total cost of hosting"



FIFA demands, share of revenue viewed as 'unacceptable' by most

The World Cup has reshaped the summer calendar in both Vancouver and Toronto. [As part of the contract for hosting](#), "substantial cultural events" are forbidden the day before, day of or day after World Cup games in those cities. This blackout period runs between June 11 and July 3 in Toronto, excluding five non-consecutive days; and June 12 and July 8 in Vancouver, excluding seven non-consecutive days. This has impacted typical summer events in both cities and is [one of the major reasons](#) why Montreal reportedly withdrew its bid to co-host the World Cup.

Three-quarters in both Toronto (76%) and Vancouver (76%) believe cancelling local festivals is an unacceptable part of co-hosting World Cup matches.

Although, as noted above, many decry the disruption brought by the soccer matches, those in both Toronto and Vancouver are split as to whether the street closures and special traffic routing present throughout the World Cup are acceptable or not.

Evidently, it is the financial aspect of the event that is bothering many in Toronto and Vancouver. Most believe it is unacceptable for FIFA to receive most of the revenues while governments and taxpayers are left holding the bag for any cost overruns.

The host city agreements that Toronto and Vancouver signed with FIFA were kept away from public scrutiny in the lead-up to the World Cup. It took [freedom of information requests and lawsuits from journalists](#) to reveal Toronto's and Vancouver's obligations and FIFA's demands. Approaching three-quarters (73%) in Toronto and two-thirds (67%) in Vancouver believe it's unacceptable that these contract details are kept confidential:

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Do you think each of the following is acceptable or unacceptable as part of [your city] hosting World Cup matches?				
	Region	Completely/ Mostly acceptable	Completely/ Mostly unacceptable	Not sure / Can't say
Cancelling local festivals/gatherings that compete with FIFA events	GTA	17%	76%	7%
	Metro Van	19%	76%	4%
FIFA receiving most of the ticket, sponsorship, and broadcast revenues	GTA	16%	78%	7%
	Metro Van	15%	79%	6%
Street closures and special traffic routes for teams, officials, and FIFA executives	GTA	44%	52%	5%
	Metro Van	49%	46%	5%
Governments agreeing to use taxpayer dollars to cover cost overruns	GTA	8%	87%	5%
	Metro Van	13%	83%	4%
Governments keeping contract details confidential during negotiations	GTA	19%	73%	9%
	Metro Van	27%	67%	7%

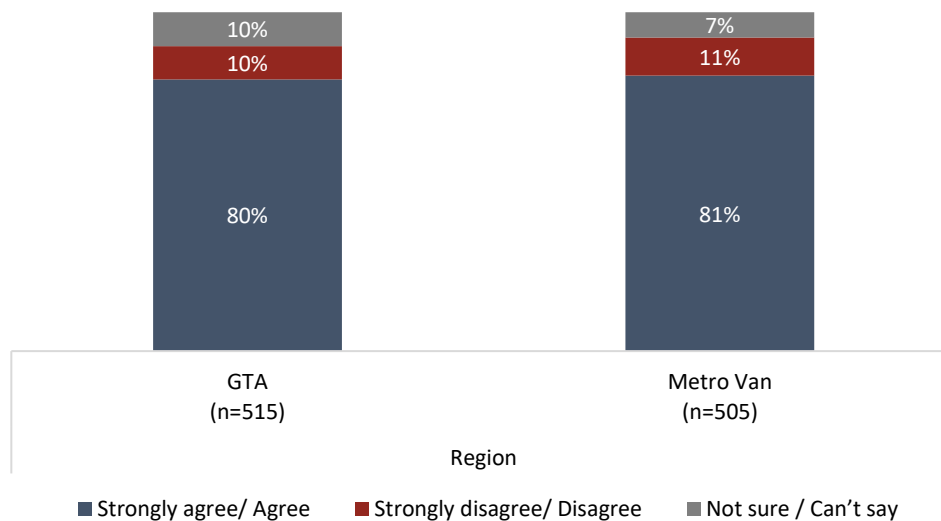
Four-in-five believe World Cup benefits FIFA, sponsors most of all

There is little disagreement among those in Toronto and Vancouver as to who is the primary beneficiary of the World Cup tournament: FIFA, sponsors, and big businesses:

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Agree vs. disagree - "The World Cup will mostly benefit FIFA, sponsors and large businesses"



For detailed results by age, gender, region, education, and other demographics, [click here](#).

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