



LIVING CITIES LAUNCHES CAPITAL + CULTURE PLATFORM AHEAD OF THE 2026 FIFA WORLD CUP

Living Cities Launches the Capital + Culture Platform to Examine Ownership, Wealth, and Opportunity as the World Comes to Atlanta - a Capital of Black Influence

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As Atlanta prepares to welcome the world during the 2026 FIFA World Cup, Living Cities today announced the launch of Capital + Culture, a national platform exploring one of the defining economic questions facing American cities: when investment, tourism, contracts, and global attention arrive, who has the opportunity to capture the value they create?

Hotlanta has never had a problem attracting attention. The question is whether attention creates ownership.

For decades, the city has shaped American culture, business, politics, entrepreneurship, sports, entertainment, and innovation. Long before the world turned its attention to Atlanta, Atlanta was influencing the world.

The city earned the nickname Hotlanta because it became impossible to ignore. Its culture traveled. Its talent traveled. Its influence traveled. Its ideas traveled.

As generations of artists, activists, entrepreneurs, executives, athletes, creators, and innovators emerged from the city, Atlanta became something more than a destination. It became a declaration. Proof that the South was not simply participating in America's future. It was helping to define it.

But Atlanta is more than a cultural city.
Atlanta is a civic city.

It is the home of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the home of Congressman John Lewis, who challenged a nation to get into "good trouble."

It is a city where movements were organized, democracy was defended, institutions were challenged, and the moral imagination of America expanded.

That matters.

Because Atlanta's influence has never been limited to culture. It has always been about power. Civic power. Cultural power. Economic power.

The city has long understood that visibility without justice is not enough. Representation without access is not enough. Progress without ownership is not enough.

More than two decades ago, Atlanta's influence was captured in a phrase that still resonates today: The South Got Something to Say.

The statement was bigger than music. It was bigger than entertainment. It was a declaration of economic, cultural, and political relevance.

A declaration that talent, innovation, influence, and opportunity were not confined to traditional centers of power.

Today, as the FIFA World Cup prepares to bring global attention, investment, tourism, contracts, sponsorships, and economic activity to Atlanta, Living Cities believes the city faces another defining question. Not whether attention will come. Attention is already here. Not whether investment will come.

Investment is already coming. The question is whether attention creates ownership.

Because economic activity and economic ownership are not the same thing.

Money can move through a city without building wealth inside it. Contracts can be awarded without creating ownership. Culture can generate billions while the communities that helped create it remain disconnected from the value it produces.

Entire economies can grow while wealth remains concentrated. Entire cities can prosper while opportunity remains uneven.

And few cities understand that tension better than Atlanta.

"Atlanta has spent decades creating culture, creating influence, and creating economic value," said Joe Scantlebury, President and CEO of Living Cities. "The question now is whether opportunities created by events like the World Cup expand ownership, expand wealth, and expand access for the communities that helped make Atlanta what it is."

CAPITAL + CULTURE

Through its Capital + Culture platform, Living Cities is exploring one of the defining economic questions facing American cities:

When a place creates value, who captures it? Who receives contracts? Who gains customers?

Who acquires assets? Who builds businesses?

Who accumulates wealth? Who moves from participation to ownership?

Because ownership is where prosperity becomes generational. Ownership is where economic impact becomes economic power. Ownership is where opportunity becomes legacy.

The World Cup will bring visitors. It will generate spending. It will create headlines. But, Atlanta's greatest opportunity may not be measured in attendance figures, hotel occupancy rates, or economic impact projections. It may be measured by whether more entrepreneurs gain access.

Whether more businesses gain contracts. Whether more communities gain ownership. Whether more families gain wealth. Whether more people gain a stake in the future being built around them.

The matches will end. The visitors will leave. The cameras will move on. The question is whether opportunity stays.

The true measure of success is not how much money arrived. It is how many people had the opportunity to participate in the value it created. And, if Atlanta has taught America anything, it is that influence alone is never enough.

The next chapter is ownership.

ABOUT LIVING CITIES

Living Cities is an Action Engine for Equitable Cities—a member collaborative of leading philanthropic foundations and financial institutions committed to closing income and wealth gaps in the United States and building an economy that works for everyone.

For 35 years, Living Cities has collaboratively advanced policy and systems changes nationwide, promoting profitable and inclusive wealth-building. Living Cities addresses barriers to capital investment through knowledge sharing and collective action among its members, partners, and an extensive network of city leaders around the country. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/LivingCitiesCapital-Culture>

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