

Living Cities' Capital + Culture Series Explores How Philadelphia Can Build a Lasting Economic Legacy Beyond the Games

PHILADELPHIA, PA, UNITED STATES, July 13, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Few cities have shaped America's story more than Philadelphia.

It is where the nation's founding ideals took root. It is a city built by neighborhoods, entrepreneurs, workers, institutions, and generations of people who believed opportunity should belong to everyone willing to work for it.

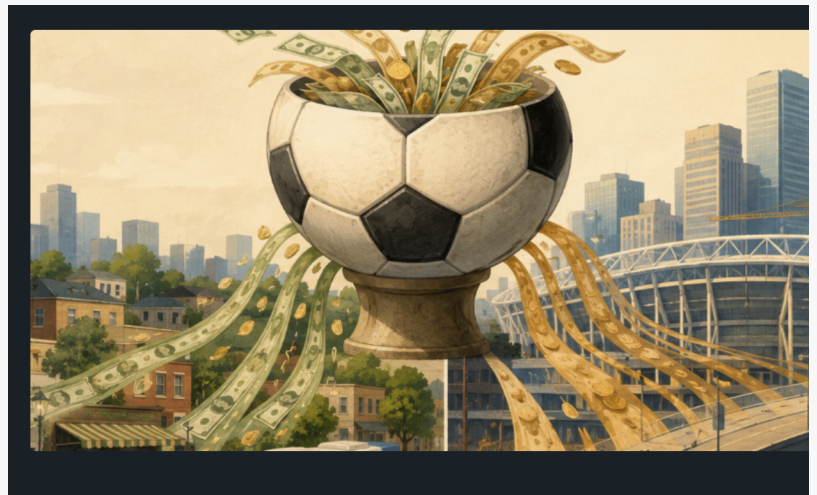
Now Philadelphia is preparing to welcome the world.

The FIFA World Cup will bring international attention, millions of visitors, significant investment, and new economic activity to the region. The opportunity is extraordinary.

Living Cities believes the more important question is whether that opportunity will extend beyond the stadiums and into the neighborhoods that define Philadelphia.

Major events often generate billions of dollars in economic activity.

But economic activity alone does not guarantee economic opportunity.



Visitors spend money. Contracts are awarded. Development accelerates.

Yet local businesses can still struggle to access procurement opportunities. Entrepreneurs can remain disconnected from new markets. Residents can witness investment without experiencing ownership. Neighborhoods can gain visibility without realizing lasting economic benefit.

Through its Capital + Culture series, Living Cities explores a broader question: How can major sporting and cultural events create lasting economic opportunity for the communities that host them? Philadelphia provides one compelling opportunity to examine that question and consider how global investment can strengthen community wealth, entrepreneurship, workforce participation, neighborhood investment, and local ownership.

"The conversation around major events often begins with economic impact," said Joe Scantlebury, President and CEO of Living Cities. "The more important conversation is economic participation. Success isn't simply measured by how much money comes into a city. It's measured by who has the opportunity to build businesses, create wealth, and participate in the future that investment creates."

Philadelphia offers one of America's most compelling places to examine that challenge.

The city's neighborhoods have long been engines of entrepreneurship, innovation, culture, and civic life. Small businesses, commercial corridors, cultural institutions, and community organizations have helped shape Philadelphia's identity for generations.

The World Cup creates an opportunity to strengthen those existing assets—not simply celebrate them.

Who receives contracts? Who gains access to capital? Who builds new customer relationships?

Who expands their business? Who secures workforce opportunities? Who builds wealth that remains in Philadelphia long after the final match has been played?

Those questions will ultimately define whether the World Cup becomes a temporary economic event or a lasting economic legacy.

"Philadelphia has always represented the promise of opportunity," Scantlebury said. "The opportunity before us now is to ensure that global investment strengthens local communities and creates pathways for more Philadelphians to participate in the city's continued success."

Living Cities believes the success of the World Cup should be measured by more than attendance figures, hotel occupancy, tourism spending, or projected economic impact.

The more meaningful legacy may be whether local entrepreneurs expanded their businesses.

Whether neighborhood commercial corridors became stronger. Whether workforce investments created new pathways to economic mobility. Whether communities gained assets that continue generating opportunity long after the tournament concludes.

The visitors will leave. The matches will end. The headlines will fade. But Philadelphia's economic legacy will remain.

And the most important question may not be how much investment arrived.

It may be those who had the opportunity to build from it.

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 helped advance policy and systems changes nationwide, promoting profitable and inclusive wealth-building. Specifically, Living Cities addresses barriers to capital investment through knowledge sharing and collective action among its members, its partners, and an extensive network of city leaders around the country.

Learn more at <https://livingcities.org/>

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