



OFFICE OF THE CITY CONTROLLER CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

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PRESS RELEASE

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City of Philadelphia’s Investments in 250th Celebrations Could Return a Fourfold Payoff in Economic Activity

City Controller’s latest monthly economic report reviews public funding committed to supporting nation’s 250th birthday celebrations

PHILADELPHIA – Philadelphia City Controller Christy Brady today released the February 2026 Municipal Money Matters, the office’s monthly economic report, that identified \$620 million in the City’s budget dedicated to support preparations for the nation’s 250th birthday.

The city’s Fiscal Year 2026 budget includes nearly \$120 million across its General, Transportation, and Capital funds. A breakdown of this funding includes:

- \$70 million for public safety and essential services, including police, fire and emergency management,
- \$45 million to support and enhance special events through partner organizations, and
- \$4.6 million for Community Life Improvement Program (CLIP) projects, including neighborhood beautification and Mural Arts projects.

In addition, the City has committed approximately \$500 million toward capital improvements at Philadelphia International Airport. While these investments are not exclusive to the 250th celebrations, they are intended to support increased passenger volume associated with major events happening in 2026.

“As the birthplace of American democracy, the city is making a significant investment to play a central role in the nation’s 250th birthday celebrations,” Brady said. “These are critical investments to ensure safety, neighborhood improvements and events that all Philadelphians and visitors can enjoy.”

Tourism and large-scale events provide important employment opportunities for the city, particularly in the hospitality sector. Visit Philadelphia, the region’s official tourism marketing agency, previously estimated that the increase in tourism associated with major events in 2026 could generate between \$1.3 to \$2.5 billion in economic activity citywide. That represents a return of roughly four-to-one.

“For every dollar the city invests, it could see up to four dollars in return,” said Brady. “Smart investments today can return lasting economic benefits tomorrow.”

Visit <https://controller.phila.gov/> to view the City Controller's February 2026 Municipal Money Matters.

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