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New NJEDA-Led Initiative Will Fund Fan Zones, Watch Parties, Festivals, and Street Fairs Across the Garden State in Partnership with the NY/NJ Host Committee

TRENTON – Governor Mikie Sherrill today announced the launch of a new \$5 million initiative to bring the excitement of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ to every corner of New Jersey. The initiative, led by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) in partnership with the FIFA World Cup 26 New York New Jersey Host Committee (“NYNJ Host Committee”), will support communities across the state in creating extraordinary fan experiences throughout the World Cup – including during the tournament’s historic Final – while investing in small businesses, cultural associations, and community nonprofits.

“New Jersey is the beating heart of the 2026 World Cup, and this initiative makes sure that every New Jerseyan – no matter where they live can be part of this once-in-a-generation moment,” **said Governor Sherrill**. “From fan zones to neighborhood watch parties to street fairs, we are investing in the communities and small businesses that make New Jersey extraordinary. The World Cup is coming to our state – and we are going to make sure it belongs to New Jerseyans first.”

About the Initiative

The initiative will support two distinct categories of World Cup programming statewide. First, it will fund major fan zone experiences strategically distributed throughout New Jersey, creating large-scale public viewing destinations for fans across the state. Second, it will provide targeted support for small and mid-sized community watch parties, festivals, and street fairs, ensuring that celebrations are accessible and locally rooted in communities of all sizes.

As part of this initiative, the Authority will prioritize supporting events that are high-impact, beneficial to small businesses, and reflective of the rich and diverse cultures that will be represented by competing World Cup nations – many of which have deep roots in communities across New Jersey.

“The World Cup is an unparalleled opportunity to showcase New Jersey to the world and drive real economic impact for our businesses and communities,” **said Evan Weiss, CEO of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority**. “This initiative is about more than soccer – it’s about making sure that the energy and investment generated by this global event flows directly to the small businesses, cultural organizations, and neighborhood nonprofits that are the backbone of our state. We look forward to sharing the details of these funding opportunities and partnering with communities across New Jersey to make this a World Cup to remember.”

A Partnership Built for New Jersey

The initiative is being developed in close collaboration with the NYNJ Host Committee, which is leading the regional effort to prepare for and celebrate the 2026 FIFA World Cup, including the tournament’s Final, set to be played at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

“New Jersey will be at the center of the world’s biggest sporting event, and we have a responsibility to make sure its benefits are felt statewide,” **said Alex Lasry, CEO of the New York New Jersey Host Committee**. “Governor Sherrill’s investment expands access, drives business activity in local communities, and ensures the World Cup delivers lasting economic impact across the state. This is exactly the kind of leadership and partnership that will make the World Cup transformative for this region.”

This initiative is funded by previously appropriated Fiscal Year 2026 dollars. Pending approval by the EDA Board, more information about this initiative will be announced by the NJEDA and the Host Committee in the coming weeks. Organizations and community groups interested in learning more are encouraged to monitor the NJEDA’s and the Host Committee’s official communications for updates.



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