



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

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Governor Shapiro, Pittsburgh Steelers, and Visit Pittsburgh Celebrate City's Selection as the Host of the 2026 NFL Draft

Governor Shapiro strongly advocated for Pittsburgh, having multiple conversations with NFL leadership and sending a letter to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell in February announcing his support for the Pittsburgh Steelers' bid.

The Steel City is expected to see hundreds of thousands of visitors and a boost of over \$150 million into the local economy while hosting the draft.



Pittsburgh, PA – Today, Governor Josh Shapiro and Lieutenant Governor Austin Davis joined Pittsburgh Steelers President Arthur Rooney II, Pittsburgh Mayor Ed

Gainey, and Allegheny County Executive Sara Innamorato at Acrisure Stadium to celebrate Pittsburgh's selection as the host the 2026 NFL Draft.

Over the past year, Governor Shapiro had direct conversations with NFL leadership about bringing the draft to Pittsburgh and as part of his commitment to making Pennsylvania a national tourism destination, the Governor [wrote a letter](#) to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell in February 2024 announcing his support of the Pittsburgh Steelers' bid to host the 2026 or 2027 NFL Draft.

"As Governor of Pennsylvania, I have been proud to make the case for Pittsburgh to host the NFL Draft, from my direct conversations with NFL leadership at last year's Super Bowl, to our Administration's consistent work alongside the Steelers and our local partners over the past year to showcase Pittsburgh's great strengths," said **Governor Josh Shapiro**. "Pittsburgh has established itself as one of the most dynamic cities in the country – and it is the best choice to host the draft. With all eyes on Pennsylvania during America's 250th birthday in 2026, the Commonwealth is excited and ready to work together to host this historic draft and show the country what Pennsylvania is all about."

"The NFL draft is a life-changing event for hundreds of young men every single year, the culmination of decades of work and sacrifice for the players and their families," said **Lieutenant Governor Austin Davis**. "In 2026, Pennsylvanians can see the whole process, up close and personal, as the NFL brings the draft to Pittsburgh. I can't wait for the rest of America to get to experience everything I love about my hometown – the grit, the blue-collar attitude and our passion for the ultimate team sport, NFL football."

With today's announcement, the NFL Draft becomes the latest premier national and international event coming to Pennsylvania in 2026, including the United States of America's 250th birthday, the MLB All Star Game, the FIFA World Cup, NCAA March Madness, the PGA Championship, and more.

"We are excited that the City of Pittsburgh has been selected to host the 2026 NFL Draft," said **Art Rooney II, Pittsburgh Steelers President**. "This will be an amazing event that will highlight everything the region has to offer on a national and international level. I truly appreciate the work that has been done by VisitPITTSBURGH, the NFL, local and state officials, and internally within our organization to accomplish our goal of being selected to host the NFL Draft. We look forward to football fans from all across the country coming to enjoy our city's culture while also showcasing our rich football history and tradition in the region."

[VisitPITTSBURGH](#) estimates that the Steel City will see an economic impact between **\$120 million and \$160 million** in direct spending into Pennsylvania's economy as a result of hosting the Draft.

"Being awarded the 2026 NFL Draft is a testament to Pittsburgh's rich football legacy and a renowned recognition of our city's vibrant culture and welcoming spirit,"

said **Jerad Bachar, President & CEO of VisitPITTSBURGH**. “Momentum for Pittsburgh as the 2026 host city is only just beginning, and we look forward to working alongside our regional partners to plan and execute a world-class event that rolls out the black and gold carpet for football fans from across the country and around the world.”

Tourism is one of the largest and most important industries in Pennsylvania, generating over **\$76 billion** a year and supporting more than **486,000 jobs** across the Commonwealth – and that’s why Governor Shapiro’s 2024-25 budget proposal calls for an **\$18 million increase** in funding for tourism and business marketing to help attract more visitors to Pennsylvania and help the industry they support.

“Pittsburgh is honored to have been named the host city for the 2026 NFL Draft,” said **Mayor Ed Gainey**. “This once in a lifetime opportunity will allow us to showcase our city to an international audience, and it will give us a chance to say to our global fanbase, come on home to Pittsburgh. We are excited for everyone to see the transformation that has taken place, and to see Pittsburgh as more than the City of Champions, but a place where everyone is safe and welcome. A city where everyone has a chance to thrive, and where football erases the boundaries of our 90 neighborhoods, and we become one city, united, to cheer on our beloved Steelers.”

“Allegheny County is delighted to be the home of the 2026 NFL Draft. From greeting visitors at the updated Pittsburgh International Airport to showing off all of our fabulous cultural gems, we are a great place for sports fans from across the country to visit. Thank you to the host committee who helped put together this bid, we are looking forward to working with all of our partners to put on a welcoming and memorable NFL Draft,” said **Allegheny County Executive Sara Innamorato**.

The Governor joined the Steelers and the NFL today to announce Pittsburgh was selected as the 2026 NFL Draft host as a stop on his statewide RV tour highlighting the Commonwealth’s new statewide tourism brand and summer travel marketing campaign to encourage more people to travel across and visit the Commonwealth – *Pennsylvania: The Great American Getaway*.

Governor Shapiro knows that Pennsylvania offers unique tourism destinations for travelers that serve as a powerful economic engine for our economy, and the top tier events and sports that Pennsylvania will host in the coming years – including the NFL Draft – can be experienced in a single weekend by nearly 72 million people who live within a four-hour drive of thousands of getaways and experiences.

“This is exciting news for Pittsburgh and all of Pennsylvania,” said **DCED Secretary Rick Siger**. “Pittsburgh is one of the great American sports towns and one of the most dynamic cities on the East Coast – it is the perfect city to host the 2026 NFL draft. We can’t wait to showcase the Pittsburgh region to football fans from all over the world, and look forward to the tremendous positive impact the event will have on Pennsylvania’s economy.”

Governor Shapiro's [Economic Development Strategy](#) – the first of its kind in nearly two decades – also prioritizes the tourism industry and adopts a new marketing strategy to showcase all that Pittsburgh and the Commonwealth have to offer.

For more information on the Great American Getaway and all of the destinations Pennsylvania has to offer, go to visitpa.com.

For more information on how the Governor's proposed budget will support tourism and help Pennsylvania host more premier national and international events, visit shapirobudget.pa.gov.

See what Pennsylvanians are reading and hearing about Pittsburgh's selection to host the NFL Draft in 2026:

[Pittsburgh Tribune-Review: Politicians, Steelers expect '26 NFL draft to be biggest event in Pittsburgh history](#)

[Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: Steelers, city of Pittsburgh picked to host 2026 NFL draft](#)

[WPXI: Pittsburgh selected to host 2026 NFL Draft](#)

[WTAE: Pittsburgh celebrates historic 2026 NFL draft announcement](#)

[WTAE: 'Where professional football was born': Reaction to NFL Draft in Pittsburgh](#)

[ESPN: NFL announces Pittsburgh to host draft in 2026](#)

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