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OPINION



What should Philly do, create, or fix for 2026? We want your ideas.

What would get you excited for everything coming here next year, from the Semiquincentennial to the World Cup? Let us know so we can share your suggestions.



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Independence Hall will be in the national spotlight in 2026. What ideas do you have to help make Philly shine for the nation's 250th anniversary celebrations, the FIFA World Cup, the MLB All-~~Star~~ ... [Read more](#)

Alejandro A. Alvarez / Staff Photographer

by Stephanie Farr | Columnist

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Sometimes it feels like if Philadelphia takes on one more national or international event in 2026 — even if it's a wafer-thin one, like a breath strip-eating contest — this city might explode.

Don't get me wrong, I'm excited for it all: the nation's [250th anniversary](#) celebrations, the [FIFA World Cup](#), the [MLB All-Star Game](#), and the [NCAA Division I college basketball tournament](#).

Or at least I want to be excited.

I'm not sure why that spark within me hasn't ignited yet. Maybe because all of it — and the very functionality of our city — is in jeopardy if state legislatures don't get their act together and [properly fund SEPTA](#), or perhaps it's because I don't feel like there's a lot to celebrate about the state of our nation right now.

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Maybe I'm not jazzed yet because I see things in Philly that need to be fixed but have gone ignored for so long they've become a part of the landscape, or it could be that I haven't heard of an event that's gotten me really stoked yet (I want to be excited about the [FIFA World Cup Fan Fest](#) site on Lemon Hill, if I could only picture anything on Lemon Hill).

In an attempt to light my little 2026 spark, I attended [a meeting at the Museum of the American Revolution](#) last month where City Council members, event leaders, and stakeholders discussed how prepared Philly is for next year.

I listened for hours as Council members asked questions about time capsules, economic impact, and prioritizing jobs for Philadelphians, and as organizers talked about commemorative benches, neighborhood tours, and marketing campaigns.

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But my interest was most piqued at the end, when the floor was opened for questions and Ernest Rouse, a member of the Association of

Philadelphia Tour Guides, got up and asked what the plan was for public bathrooms, because we sure as heck don't have enough as it already (this is a tissue issue [close to my heart](#)).

Though Rouse never got a solid answer, it was a great question, one which reminded me that often, the best inquiries and ideas come not from those in power or in charge, but from we, the people.

And so I thought we might give our leaders an assist: What ideas do you have for 2026?

It could be for any or all of the events, it could be something to be created, destroyed, or fixed, or it could be something so off-the-wall and pie-in-the-sky it just makes you laugh (because, Lord knows, we need that now too).

Depending on the response, I hope to deliver your ideas to the city this summer in a missive that will appear online and in print. I have no actual power, so I can't promise our officials and local organizers will act on any

of them, but you never know what might happen just by speaking up.

If you could keep your ideas to the five categories listed below. I'd

appreciate it.

I've provided some of my own wishes for 2026 under each category.

Please send me your ideas via email to sfarr@inquirer.com or in the submission form below.

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Simple things that are easy and free or cheap to do

- Fix the old Reading Terminal Market clock on Market Street near 12th outside the Pennsylvania Convention Center so it finally tells the right time.
- Remove the sign on Sixth Street near Arch pointing to the Philadelphia History Museum — which has been [closed for SEVEN YEARS](#).

Things that take some amount of time and/or money to address

- In front of the Wawa on Chestnut Street near Sixth, right next to Independence Hall, [bronze plaques honoring the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence](#) were embedded into the sidewalk for

the Bicentennial. Today, at least 31 of the plaques have been damaged or removed. Repair them or get rid of them because it looks terrible.

- Give us a [permanent car-free street](#) or pedestrian-only zone. I was in Boise, Idaho, the other week and even they had one. Granted, there's more potatoes than people there but still!

Big things that take time, money, and cooperation

- We're really going to invite the world to Philly and we still [don't have an intercity bus terminal](#) with a bathroom to welcome folks? It's an embarrassment, one that needs to be fixed.

- Make [the top of City Hall](#) the same color as the rest of it, or make the rest the same color as the top. It's a beautiful building, except that it looks like Mr. Freeze lives in the tower.

Fun activities and events

- Create a mascot village. They've been rolling out the Phanatic, Gritty, and the other guys for all of the 2026 press conferences, so

organizers are already leaning on them to hype people up. Let's create an oversize mascot village where people can meet our very real imaginary celebrities. They could play soccer, set up a mascot merch store, or compete in obstacle courses. Mascots from around the world could stop by for a visit.

- Have a roving, sing-along production of the musical *1776*. The Walnut Street Theatre is already [putting it on next spring](#), let's bring it to the people on the streets for a few days — with cue cards so we all know when to tell John Adams he's "obnoxious and disliked."
- Create a Benjamin Franklin beer crawl. I want to dress up as Ben Franklin with people of all races, genders, heights, and ages and go drinking together. Let's clear out every purveyor of receding hairline wigs and spectacles in the market. And anyone who [misquotes Franklin](#) by saying: "Beer is proof God loves us and wants us to be happy," gets a beer poured on their head.

Off-the-wall ideas

- Host an outdoor screening of *National Treasure* on Independence Mall and just before the part where Nicolas Cage climbs Independence Hall, the film cuts out and a spotlight shines on Nicolas Cage actually free-solo climbing Independence Hall. BAM!

- Reenact the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, but do it with the Philadelphia Eagles portraying the Continental Congress.
- Ban all red coats for the year.

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