



NEW ZEALAND
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Manatū Aorere

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Los Angeles as a global sports hub for the next decade

MARKET INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Summary

- Over the next decade, Los Angeles is set to become a global sports hub, driven by a significant lineup of global sporting events. Notably, the 2028 Olympic Games (LA28) is projected to be the largest peacetime gathering in history. Building on the success of the 1984 Games, LA28 will use existing venues and invest heavily in public transport under a “no-build, no-car” model. Los Angeles is also set to be one of the host cities for the most viewed global sporting event, the FIFA World Cup 2026.
- These events offer strategic opportunities to promote New Zealand and New Zealand businesses. New Zealand sporting organizations are gearing up to leverage these opportunities. The New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC) is progressing a Memorandum of Cooperation with Culver City on a New Zealand themed Fan Zone for the duration of the Olympics. The Hospitality House and Fan Zone would be open and free to the public.
- New Zealand Football is also advancing preparations for North America after qualifying for the FIFA World Cup 2026.

Report

Los Angeles is set to host a significant number of major sporting events over the next decade, which includes, but is not limited to:

Event	Date
FIFA Club World Cup	July 2025
NBA Allstar Weekend	February 2026
Superbowl LX	February 2026
HSBC World Rugby 7's Finals	May 2026
FIFA World Cup	Summer 2026
LPGA Women's Open Golf Championship	June 2026
Superbowl LXI	February 2027
Olympics and Paralympics	Summer 2028
Rugby World Cup	2032

Competition brings opportunity

New Zealand Football has accelerated its FIFA 2026 World Cup preparations following the All Whites’ historic direct qualification—their first in 16 years—after defeating New Caledonia 3-0 in March 2025 at Eden Park. It’s expected that participation in next year’s tournament will be worth at least NZ\$20 million, with that number to increase if the All Whites can progress beyond the first round. New Zealand Football is investing in long-term development, including an NZ\$8.4 million FIFA Legacy Fund to expand girls’ and women’s football from 2026 onward, reinforcing the federation’s commitment to deepening impact ahead of the North American tournament.

Los Angeles' Olympic track record

Los Angeles last hosted the Olympics in 1984. The 1984 Olympics is widely considered to be the most financially successful modern Olympics and continues to serve as an example on how to run and leverage an Olympic Games. By using existing sport infrastructure and generating corporate sponsorship, the 1984 Games generated a profit of over US\$250 million. This context creates high expectations on Los Angeles for what it will deliver for its 2028 hosting of the Olympic Games (LA28).

With an anticipated five million visitors (Paris 2024 had 3.3 million) and an estimated US\$18 billion in economic output, LA28 will be the largest peacetime gathering globally, spanning over 40 venues from Los Angeles County to San Diego. Building from the experience of 1984, LA28 will follow a “no-build” model, leveraging and upgrading existing infrastructure, and a “no-car” policy (requiring significant enhancements to public transport). Over 150 heads of state are anticipated for the opening ceremony, nearly double the number that attended the opening ceremony for Paris 2024

LA28 – going for gold

Off the back of a successful Olympic Games for New Zealand in Paris in 2024 (where the New Zealand Team won ten gold medals – our best-ever result), the New Zealand Olympic Committee (NZOC) is already well underway with preparations for LA28. The fact that the United States is New Zealand's second largest trading partner means that there is likely to be significant interest across New Zealand in leveraging LA28 to optimal effect.

During its April visit to Los Angeles, the NZOC co-hosted an event at the Culver Hotel with New Zealand Football. This event provided an update to key stakeholders on New Zealand's preparations towards FIFA 26 and LA28. The presentations underscored that both FIFA 2026 and LA28 present substantial opportunities for New Zealand to strategically capitalise on the commercial potential of two global spectacles—the world's most widely viewed sporting event and the largest international gathering.

New Zealand Plans for Hospitality House and Fan Zone in Culver City

The NZOC is looking into Culver City serving as the official home base for the New Zealand Olympic Team during LA28. In May 2025, Culver City Council agreed to progress to a Memorandum of Cooperation to establish a New Zealand Hospitality House and Fan Zone in collaboration with the NZOC. This initiative would centre around the

Culver Steps precinct, featuring the iconic Culver Hotel and surrounding streets, showcasing New Zealand culture, business, and creativity. Proposed features are intended to include:

- Large-scale public viewing screens for Olympic broadcasts;
- Māori cultural programmes and potential involvement of Pacific neighbours;
- A VIP zone for commercial partners and dignitaries;
- A celebration of New Zealand Arts and Culture (e.g. a New Zealand Film Festival) hosted at the Culver Theatre; and
- Branding and engagement opportunities for New Zealand companies and partners.

Culver City's proximity to LA28 venues—including UCLA's Olympic Village, Downtown Los Angeles, and SoFi Stadium—makes it an excellent strategic location. The project is expected to generate strong foot traffic and visibility. The Fan Zone would function as cultural, and commercial anchor during the Games, enabling New Zealand to engage global audiences and VIPs. For New Zealand, the Fan Zone presents a unique platform for trade promotion, creative sector exposure, as well as people-to-people connections.

Opportunities

FIFA 2026, LA28, and the pipeline of major sporting events in Los Angeles present substantial opportunities, and an audience for New Zealand to strategically capitalise on the commercial potential of the global spectacles. It provides a stage for relevant New Zealand stakeholders to:

- Showcase New Zealand athletes, culture, and national identity on a global stage;
- Deepen trade and investment partnerships, for example in creative industries, food and beverage, tech, sustainability, and Māori business; and
- Promote tourism, leveraging heightened visibility and goodwill generated through sports.

Altogether, the next decade of sports in Los Angeles offers New Zealand an unparalleled platform to strengthen its global visibility, deepen international relationships and business connections, and champion its identity on the world stage.

For New Zealand businesses interested in commercial opportunities related to LA28, all LA28 procurement will be managed via rampLA.org, with most contracts released 18 months prior to the Games. LA28 is also currently working on upcoming reports on transport, sustainability, and small business engagement.

More info

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