



Case study

Citizens Bank Park Teams Up with Evolv to Improve Experience for Phillies Fans and Security Staff

Citizens Bank Park

LOCATION: Philadelphia, PA

MLB TEAM: Philadelphia Phillies

OPENED: 2004

CAPACITY: 42,792

WEBSITE: www.mlb.com/phillies/ballpark

Solution Snapshot

Goals

- Deliver a great ingress experience without sacrificing safety
- Minimize security screening lines that caused fans to miss the first pitch
- Reduce the high nuisance alarm rate of metal detectors
- Shrink the number of security screening systems to improve operational efficiency
- Minimize security guard stress and fatigue
- Help avoid intrusive, lengthy secondary screening checks
- Get real-time analytics on traffic flow, alarm rates, and more

Solution

People

- Delivered onsite training to security guards during onboarding and deployment
- Provided online training to security staff through the Evolv Academy
- Evolv Customer Success Manager provided onsite support for the first month after deployment to ensure seamless operations
- Evolv team provided support and training for Evolv Insights®

Process

- Evolv Solutions Engineering configured and planned Evolv deployment according to the Phillies' ConOps and goals
- Updated ConOps Playbook to reflect operational changes by migrating from metal detectors to Evolv

Technology

- 5 Evolv Express® Dual-Lane Systems
- 4 Evolv Express Single-Lane Systems
- Evolv Cortex AI®
- Evolv Insights®

Outcomes



Shrank the security screening footprint by nearly 75%—going from about 50 walkthrough metal detectors to 9 Evolv Express systems



Reallocated almost 75% of ingress security staff to other areas of the park for improved security



Minimized security guard fatigue resulting from tedious and intrusive screening processes



Reduced lines that formed before security screening on opening day and other games where spikes in ingress flow occur



Experienced a lower nuisance alarm rate with Evolv over metal detectors

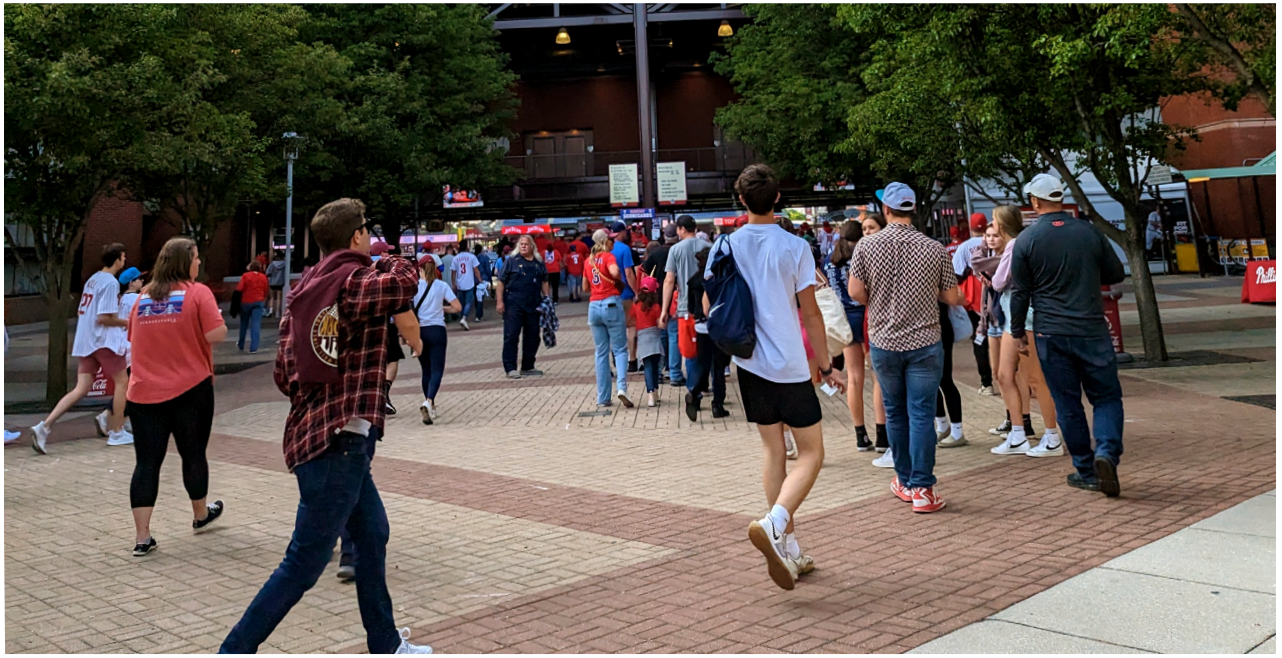


Created a seamless, unintrusive security screening experience for fans—reducing time to complete a secondary check from minutes to less than 40 seconds



Minimized security screening lines in front of security screening on opening day

Evolv is the Preferred Fan Screening Provider of the Philadelphia Phillies



Metal Detectors Implemented a Decade Ago as World Climate Had Shifted

Salvatore DeAngelis has seen a lot over the past two-and-a-half decades working for the Philadelphia Phillies.

He began as an usher at the age of 17 when the team still played at Veterans Stadium. “I served as a gameday employee and then was hired as an intern in 1998,” recalls DeAngelis, who currently serves as the Vice President of Operations and Security for the Phillies. “When I graduated from college in 1999, I was hired full time and my career progressed to my current role.”

In 2004, when the Phillies moved into Citizens Bank Park, DeAngelis was there to witness the opening. “Security in the form of metal detectors wasn’t in discussion at the time,” he recalls. “But as things changed throughout the country and the world, safety has been elevated as a top priority. With that in mind, we implemented walkthrough metal detectors at our stadium entrances about 10 years ago. We take safety very seriously at the park and have implemented various security layers, including periodic K-9 sweeps of the park.”

“

When the first pitch occurred this year, I was watching our entrances and they weren’t flooded with fans like in the past. I could see the ground and all my fears were washed away. I knew we had made the right decision and Evolv was a positive step for our security posture.”

- Salvatore DeAngelis, VP of Operations and Security,
Philadelphia Phillies

Metal Detectors Negatively Impact Fan Experience and Frustrated Staff

While the metal detectors performed their function, they had a negative impact on the fan experience.

DeAngelis indicates that fans would complain—everything from the time they had to spend waiting in line, to missing first pitches, to the inability to get concessions before the start of a game.

Kevin Hackenbrack, the Director of Security Operations for the Philadelphia Phillies, adds that the Citizens Bank Park security staff found the walkthrough metal detectors very frustrating to manage. “The team did not like the process around secondary security checks where they had to go into the fan’s personal belongings,” he says. “It was a very intrusive process but was necessary to keep everyone safe. Fans also felt uncomfortable with the screening process and didn’t like security

staff going through their belongings when a security alarm occurred. We needed a more seamless process for screening fans when they enter the park.”

On a related note, security staff experienced fatigue in their four-hour shift. The repetition and monotony of security checks using a metal detector had an increasingly negative impact over time. “This increased the likelihood that something could be missed during secondary security checks,” DeAngelis says. “Plus, the security staff had no idea where to look on the person’s body or bag with the metal detectors.”





Looking For and Selecting a New Security Screening Solution

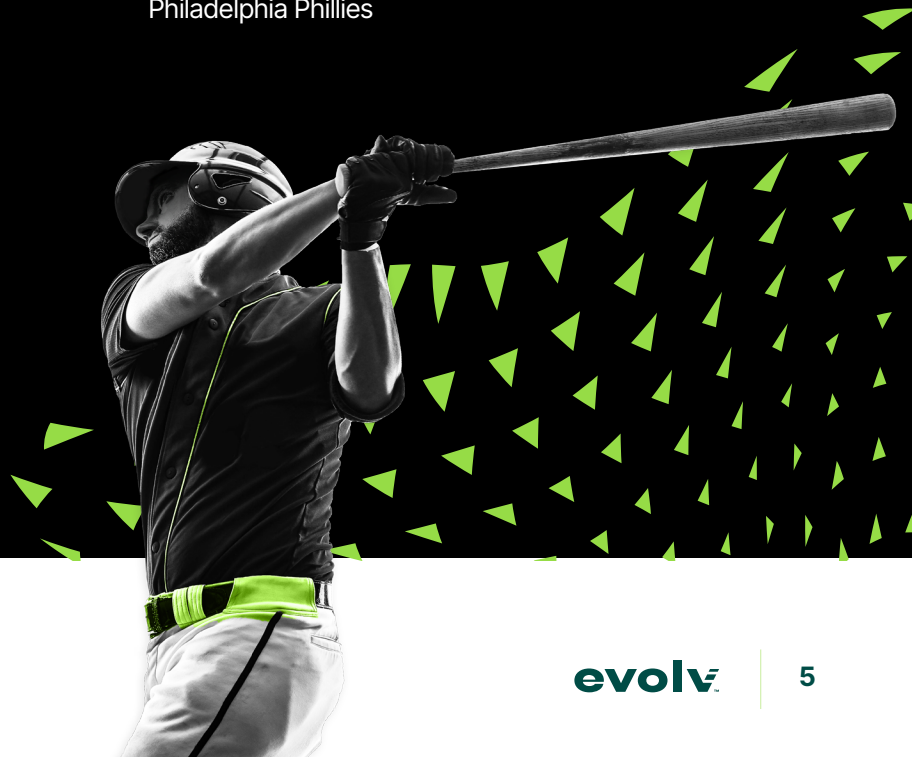
With the above in mind, the Citizens Bank Park team began looking for an alternative to the walkthrough metal detectors about three years ago.

“We were very thorough in our investigation and assessed multiple options,” DeAngelis explains. “We narrowed our options down to only a few after doing a lot of thorough research. Evolv checked all our boxes, but we wanted to ensure that we were making the right decision and conducted pilot testing of Evolv in 2022. It passed with flying colors and we concluded that we wanted to go live with Evolv on opening day for the 2023 season.”

Hackenbrack was not at Citizens Bank Park for the pilot, as he only joined as a full-time employee in February. Before, he had worked for a service partner of the Phillies, where he had become familiar with the Evolv Express. “I was familiar with Evolv before coming here, having experienced Evolv at various other facilities around the city, and I was all-in from the very start,” Hackenbrack says.

“Evolv is where safety meets experience. You don’t need to compromise one for the other. Evolv enables us to create a special dynamic that facilitates both.”

- Kevin Hackenbrack, Director of Security Operations,
Philadelphia Phillies



Getting Ready for the 2023 MLB Season

To prepare for the go-live deployment on opening day, the Citizens Bank Park team was very thorough in terms of working with Evolv, operational changes, and training of its security team.

“We needed to ensure that we got the deployment right from the start,” DeAngelis says. “MLB is different from other sports in that we have 81 home games and some homestands can last 15 or 16 games.” On top of the Phillies’ home games, Citizens Bank Park also hosts a number of other events. “This year alone, we have five concerts. We have other events like college graduations and smaller events like weddings, birthday parties, corporate events, and bar mitzvahs,” DeAngelis says.

Yaniv Yaron was assigned to work with the Citizens Bank Park team as Evolv’s Customer Success Manager. “I work with a lot of teams and venues,” he describes. “When I found out the Phillies were joining the Evolv family, I was very excited and there was no question that I would be assigned to their account. I grew up in Philadelphia and have a special connection with the team. I was even at the celebration parade in 2008 after we won the World Series.”

As a starting point, the Evolv team assessed each gate’s configuration. “The security footprint is always a consideration for all customers,” says Yaron. “We worked with the Citizens Bank Park team to define the right placement at each gate, ensuring we could maximize efficiencies. They had some gates where they only had three or four walkthrough metal detectors before but at other gates, they had 12 to 14 metal detectors. The configuration of each Express® system was key.” A total of five Express dual-lane systems and four single-lane Express systems were deployed.

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Evolv and Citizen Bank Park Work Together on Training and Onboarding

The training that Evolv provided was a critical part of the preparation.

“We spent a lot of time training the security team on the Evolv Express before our opening game,” Hackenbrack conveys. “We focused our training on both flow control and threat resolution aspects. We wanted to provide our security staff with a step-by-step process in the ConOps playbook so they knew exactly what to do. Flow control pacing was important as we didn’t want our ticketing team to become overwhelmed.”

Along with training, Yaron and Evolv’s Solutions Engineering team worked with Hackenbrack’s team to update their ConOps playbook. “We had to make significant changes to our processes and operations,” Hackenbrack says. “In addition to

these changes, we spent significant time training our security staff on the operational adjustments. Security staff were accustomed to a high volume of security alarms and were concerned Evolv wasn’t detecting all the threats since its alarm rates are dramatically lower. Part of our training was explaining how the Evolv Cortex AI technology works. As soon as they understood that Evolv isn’t focused on detecting metal but threats, they were full believers.”

“

The mobile app makes it even easier to use Evolv Insights. I can check traffic flows and threat detection as I walk around the ballpark. I don’t need to go back to my desk and log into the desktop app. This enables me to be more efficient as well as react with greater intelligence when a threat is found.”

- Kevin Hackenbrack, Director of Security Operations,
Philadelphia Phillies

Evolv Insights® Analytics Used to Continuously Drive Efficiencies

After the first week of the season was completed, Yaron and the Citizens Bank Park team met to discuss how to use Evolv Insights to optimize operations and efficacy.

“Kevin, Yaniv, and I sat down to look at the analytics from Evolv Insights and we still do so after every series and homestand now,” DeAngelis relates. “One of the things that we’ve done is to improve our staffing allocation. We look at how many fans came through each gate and plan staffing for future games.”

“Data is my favorite part of Evolv,” Yaron adds. “The joint team looks at traffic flow down to the level of five-minute increments. This enables us to pinpoint gates where lines are forming.” In those instances, Citizens Bank Park can focus on further training staff, as well as repositioning and reconfiguring Express lanes for optimal traffic flow.

Hackenbrack adds, “We can also assess ticketing traffic flow and identify instances where ticketing is failing to keep up with the volume of fans being screened by the Express systems. In response, staffing additions can be made to ticketing to accommodate a higher traffic flow.”

The Citizens Bank Park team also relies on Evolv Insights to assess the amount of average time it takes to conduct a secondary screening check on each fan. “Right now we don’t have a KPI around the time for secondary checks, though our goal is to keep them around 30 or 40 seconds,” DeAngelis says. “But if we elected to have a goal, we could easily implement one and measure it with Evolv. This is something we could never have done with the metal detectors.”

The Evolv Mobile App Puts Information at Their Fingertips in Real Time

The Evolv Insights mobile app is something Hackenbrack downloaded before the first game of the season, and which he has become an avid user of.

“Evolv Insights provides us with valuable data,” he says. “The mobile app makes it even easier to use Evolv Insights. I can check traffic flows and threat detection as I walk around the ballpark. I don’t need

to go back to my desk and log into the desktop app. This enables me to be more efficient as well as react with greater intelligence when a threat is found.”

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We want our fans to have a great time when they come here. This is one of the reasons we love Evolv—which makes security screening easy and fast without sacrificing security. It is not intrusive like the metal detectors.”

– Salvatore DeAngelis, VP of Operations and Security,
Philadelphia Phillies

First Impressions: Skepticism Washed Away

DeAngelis was a bit skeptical about the Evolv systems leading up to the beginning of the 2023 season.

"In the past, screening and getting everyone into the park for the first pitch was a real challenge," he says. "When the first pitch occurred this year, I was watching our entrances and they weren't flooded with fans like in the past. I could see the ground and all my fears were washed away. I knew we had made the right decision and Evolv was a positive step for our security posture."

Having seen Evolv in action at other venues in Philadelphia, Hackenbrack was not as concerned prior to deployment. "I was 100% confident that the Evolv Express would work," he says. "I had seen Express systems work at other facilities and knew they would perform the same for us. On opening day in the past, we would have 10 or 15-minute lines form before the metal detectors because they simply could not scale to accommodate the traffic flow right before the start of a game. These lines didn't exist this year due to Evolv."

DeAngelis reports that the security staff took some convincing before deployment. "Our security staff was reluctant at first," he notes. "As occurs whenever a change is introduced, the security staff was anxious. However, once we started doing training with them, their fears went away and they became quite excited about using the Express systems this year. Even though going from metal detectors to Evolv was a big change for them, the feedback has been very positive from them. They've also been very engaged and provided constructive feedback throughout the deployment process and then since we went live at the beginning of the season."





Fans Experience the First Pitch

Feedback from fans since opening day has been very positive as well.

“We want our fans to have a great time when they come here,” DeAngelis says. “This is one of the reasons we love Evolv—which makes security screening easy and fast without sacrificing security. It is not intrusive like metal detectors. The majority of fans walk through the Express lane and simply keep on walking to ticketing. For those who set off an alarm, the secondary security check is minimally intrusive.”

With the walkthrough metal detectors, lines before gates could grow to be as long as 15-minute waits. “Our wait times for security screening are virtually nonexistent now,” DeAngelis says. “Fans who waited until the last minute to arrive at the park often missed the first pitch with metal detectors. There is a new reality with Evolv with an enhanced and smooth security experience for fans. For example, for opening day, which is always our busiest and most hyped game of the season, our fans traditionally tailgate prior to the game and don’t enter the park until the last minute. In the past, some would miss the opening pitch; the metal detectors simply could not scale and we had lines of fans waiting to get into the stadium. This year, we had virtually no lines, and fans were able to see our pregame ceremonies and make it to their seats for the first pitch.”

Hackenbrack concurs with DeAngelis’ assessment of the fan response. “Our fans really like the convenience of the new screening process with Evolv,” Hackenbrack describes. “It gives them a more seamless entry process and they enjoy it more. They have provided very positive feedback.”



New Experience from Flow Control to Threat Resolution Makes Park Experience Better

Hackenbrack indicates that Flow Control with Evolv is much different than it was with the walkthrough metal detectors.

“Security guards in the Flow Control position can greet fans as they walk through the Express lanes,” he says. “Fans really appreciate the interaction and it adds to their positive experience—something that wasn’t possible with the metal detectors.”

Fans also appreciate the changes in secondary screening. “The red box on the Express tablet tells our security team exactly where to look,”

Hackenbrack. “The location of the purported threat is pinpointed by a red box. In addition to making the secondary check immensely faster, this makes the experience unintrusive.” He notes that the focus the team placed on training before going live with the Evolv technology played an important part as well. “We want it to be very easy for our guests to come into the park, and Evolv makes this possible,” he says.



Dramatically Reduced Screening Footprint

Operationally, Citizens Bank Park has seen positive benefits as well.

“We dramatically reduced the number of security screening systems to manage—going from around 50 walkthrough metal detectors to five Express dual-lane systems and four Express single-lane systems,” Hackenbrack reports. “This is nearly an 85% reduction in systems to manage and nearly 75% reduction in screening lanes.”

One of the single-lane Express systems is used for screening staff and media and is employed as a mobile system. With it, the Citizens Bank Park team has been impressed with the ease of tearing down, setting up, and relocating the system. “This flexibility is not something we had with metal detectors,” Hackenbrack says.



Reallocation of Security Staff from Ingress to Elsewhere in the Park

Another benefit of the reduced security screening footprint is the ability to redeploy security staff from ingress to other areas of the park.

On average, Citizens Bank Park used three staff per metal detector. The same number of staff are used for the Express systems—one staff in the Flow Control position to monitor traffic coming through the Express lane, one in a Threat Resolution position to manage secondary security screening, and a third staff member to manage the overall process and assist in traffic flow. Previously, with the walkthrough metal detectors, Citizens Bank

Park had to allocate 150 security staff for security ingress. This was reduced to around 40—a nearly 75% reduction with fewer systems to manage.

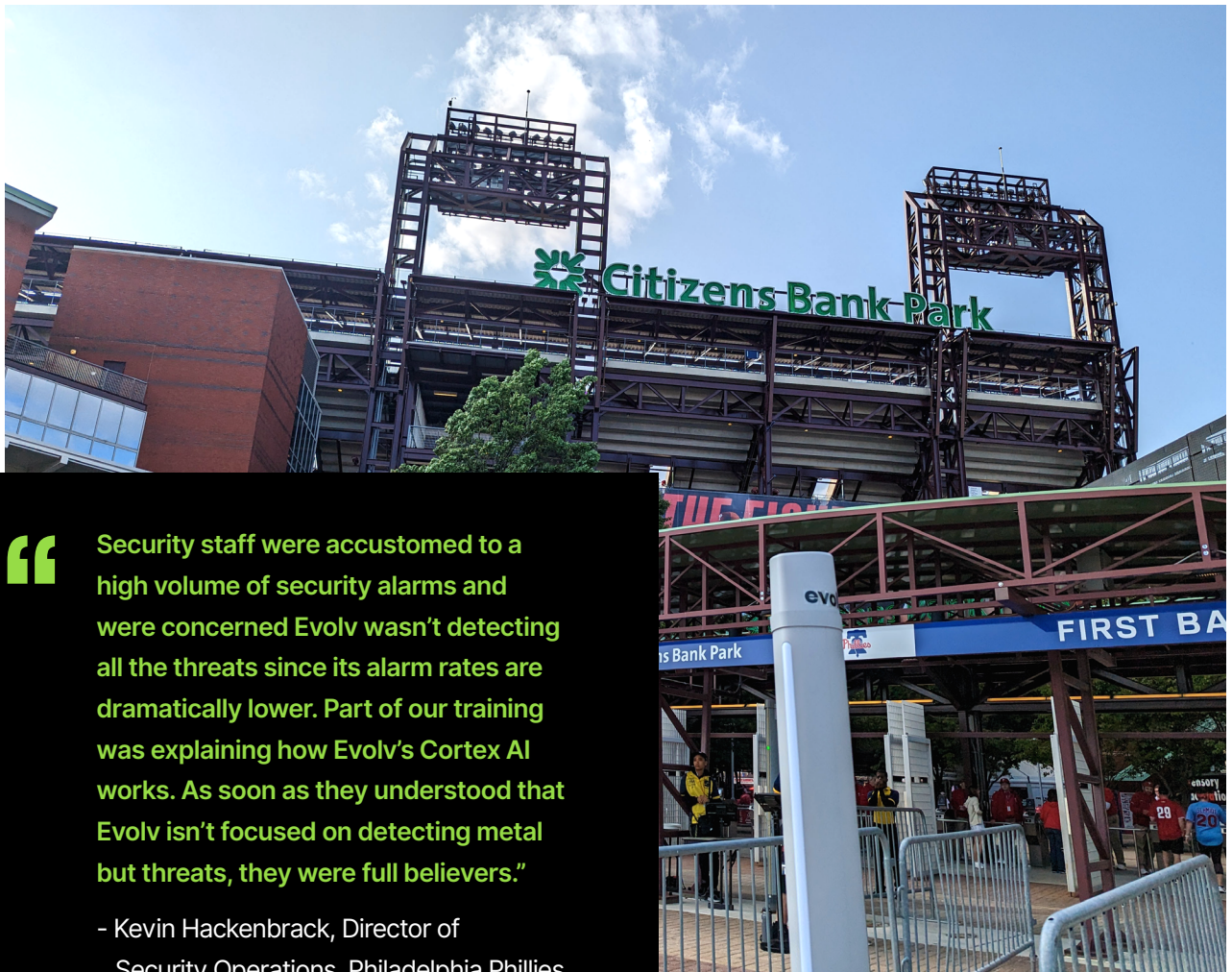
“Having these staff at other areas of the park improves our security and enables us to enhance the fan experience,” DeAngelis says. “With Evolv, we now need to use less than half the number of staff required to manage the metal detectors.”

Where Safety Meets Experience

All of this results in a sense of pride for DeAngelis and Hackenbrack.

"I like the fact that when you come to our ballpark, you have a great time, win or lose, and that our staff is actively delivering this experience with the help of technology like Evolv," DeAngelis explains. "Our entire department has one goal to make sure that everyone who comes into the ballpark, regardless of the event, has a great time and is safe. The benefits of Evolv for Citizens Bank Park can be summed up in three ways. Number one is speed. Number two is efficiency. And finally, all this is done without sacrificing security."

"Evolv is where safety meets experience," Hackenbrack adds. "You don't need to compromise one for the other. Evolv enables us to create a special dynamic that facilitates both. Often, fans are unaware they went through security screening because Evolv is so seamless. They can focus on enjoying the experience with family and friends while knowing that we will keep them safe."



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Contact us to learn more about helping to create
safer zones where you live, learn, work or play.

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