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LeBron James: Supercommuter? Inside Wild Rumors NBA Pro Will Live in New York City and Travel to Philadelphia 76ers Via Helicopter

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Wally Skali/Getty Images; Getty Images

[NBA legend LeBron James](#) caused quite the stir when he confirmed that he had [signed a new deal with the Philadelphia 76ers](#)—but his move to the team has now sparked even more confusion amid reports that the basketball pro is planning to live in [New York City](#) and then "supercommute" to the [Pennsylvania](#) city via helicopter.

James, 41, announced on July 24 that he would be joining the 76ers, noting that he believes the team has a genuine chance of "winning another championship."

"I believe I can help make the Philadelphia 76ers a championship team and I am so excited to energize a new fan base and start this incredible journey one last time," he wrote [in a post shared on X](#).

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But while the athlete appears completely committed to the [Philadelphia](#) team, reports now suggest that he isn't quite so keen on actually living there—and is instead looking at whether he could set up home in [New York](#) City, then travel to 76ers training and games in a helicopter.

The scenario is an incredibly complex and costly one that would see the NBA icon jostling not just with the price of his helicopter flights, but also New York City's newly enacted pied-à-terre tax, changing regulations around private helicopter travel, and a quagmire of tax legislation.

Still, experts believe that James could be willing to pay whatever price necessary to fulfill his dream of living in New York City, a goal he is understood to have had for some time now.

ESPN insider Brian Windhorst stated during an episode of the network's series "Get Up" that James had always had an interest in living and playing in New York City—suggesting that he may have chosen the 76ers, at least in part, because of the team's proximity to the Big Apple.



Rumors have surfaced that LeBron James (seen with his wife, Savannah) will not live in Philadelphia when he joins the 76ers, but will instead reside in New York and commute to his new team via helicopter.

Taylor Hill/WireImage

"When LeBron emerged from this decision-making cocoon that he was in, he had an interest in living in New York City," he said.

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However, Windhorst further noted that the timing simply wasn't right for James, explaining that, in any other year, the NBA legend would likely have been wooed heavily by the New York Knicks.

"For 15 years, the New York Knicks dreamed of LeBron coming to that conclusion. And it was the Knicks, actually, at this time, as the defending champions, who were not interested in LeBron," he went on, adding that James' agent, Rich Paul, had confirmed that the Knicks were not among the "20-something teams" that reached out to express interest in signing the NBA star.

Speculation about James' supercommuter plans has sparked a frenzy of interest from fans and pundits alike—with many questioning exactly what that kind of arrangement might look like.

Perhaps the most-asked question is just how much it will cost to travel between New York City and Philadelphia so frequently. The 76ers currently have 41 regular-season home games scheduled for 2026 and 2027—and, like most NBA teams, also host multiple training sessions a week.

Luckily, the flight from New York City to Philadelphia is only 45 minutes long—compared to about 90 minutes by car—which means that James wouldn't have to spend too much time in the air. However, there is, unsurprisingly, a very significant cost associated with this kind of travel.

Charter helicopter services like Blade and Zip Aviation charge anywhere from \$3,900 to \$4,425 for a one-way flight from New York City to Philadelphia, a price that guarantees the passenger full use of a six-passenger aircraft.

However, that is not the only sum that James will have to factor into his budget.

If he decides to work in Philadelphia, but live in New York City, he will be subject to multiple tax bills, [according to Fortune](#), which reports that James would have to pay Philly's nonresident wage tax, in addition New York state and city resident taxes.

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There are three heliports in Manhattan available for public use. Getty Images



The flight from New York to Philadelphia takes about 45 minutes. David Dow/NBAE via Getty Images

Should he choose to buy a home in New York, rather than rent, he will also likely be subject to the city's new pied-à-terre tax, which will be imposed on all second homes valued at \$1 million or more.

The tax's graduated thresholds kick in at 4% for second homes valued above \$1 million, 5.25% for homes valued above \$3 million, and 6.5% for homes valued at \$5 million and higher.

James already owns multiple properties across the U.S., including an extraordinary custom-built megamansion in Beverly Hills, CA, which he has spent years building on the site of a \$36.75 million estate he tore down soon after purchasing it in 2020.

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Ironically, work on that expansive abode—which is believed to serve as James' primary residence—appears to finally be drawing to a close, according to images recently [published by the New York Post](#), just as he prepares to leave [California](#).

It's thought that his son, Bronny James, who still plays for the Los Angeles Lakers, will continue to use the home in his father's absence, however.

James also still owns property in his hometown of Akron, OH, having purchased a sizable dwelling there for \$2.1 million back in 2003.

The NBA pro bought the expansive dwelling when he was just 18, shortly after he was selected by the Cleveland Cavaliers as the No. 1 pick in the 2003 NBA draft.

Of course, James has made clear that money is not an issue for him; when he signed his two-year \$8 million deal with the 76ers, he took a staggering annual pay cut of nearly \$49 million, having previously earned \$52.6 million a season when he was playing with the Lakers.

While the athlete did not comment on the financial details of his contract when announcing his move to the 76ers, he attempted to preempt comments about the salary slash, noting in his statement that his desire to play with the team had nothing to do with money.

"I'm not going for money, I'm not going for family," he insisted.



It's unclear whether James might buy a home in New York City—having already splashed out more than \$36 million on a property in Beverly Hills, which he then demolished to make way for a custom mansion.

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*The athlete also owns a property in his Ohio hometown, which he purchased when he was just 18.
Google Maps*

According to Forbes, James currently boasts a net worth of \$1.4 billion, having become the first active NBA player to achieve billionaire status. Much of his earnings have actually come from deals netted away from the basketball court, including lucrative partnerships with brands like Nike and Beats by Dre.

There are additional barriers standing in the way of James' potential supercommute, however, including the safety risks involved in helicopter travel and a potential move toward banning all nonessential helicopter flights in and around New York City.

When reports first surfaced about the proposed flights between Manhattan and Philadelphia, many NBA fans were quick to call attention to the deadly 2020 helicopter crash that killed NBA legend Kobe Bryant, his 13-year-old daughter, Gianna, the aircraft's pilot, and five other passengers.

Others highlighted a 2025 helicopter crash that killed six people when the tourist aircraft they were traveling in crashed into the Hudson River.

In the wake of that crash, Mayor Zohran Mamdani stated at a mayoral debate that he was opposed to all nonessential helicopter travel in and around the city—while the New York City Council passed a bill that could cutdown all helicopter use by placing stricter noise regulations on nonessential air travel.

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[According to Gothamist](#), there were more than 17,000 noise complaints related to helicopter use made in the 12 months between June 2025 and June 2026, and pressure is growing on Mamdani to take action in stemming the number of nonessential flights being taken.

It's unclear, however, whether any action will be taken before James begins his time with the Philadelphia team.

Given that his contract with the 76ers only ties him to the team for two years, it may be that James opts to rent a home in New York, instead of actually buying, although he has yet to share any information about his residential plans.

Should his reported helicopter commute idea actually come to fruition, James may want to focus on areas in Manhattan that are actually home to a heliport. There are currently three New York City heliports available for public use: one at West 30th Street, another on East 34th Street, and a third in the Financial District.

Plenty of celebrities have used these facilities over the years, including pop star Taylor Swift, who owns an enormous apartment in Tribeca, which is about an 11-minute drive from the downtown heliport.



There are a number of exclusive New York buildings favored by celebrities, including Olympia Dumbo, where former Brooklyn Nets player Ben Simmons lives. Pavel Bendov

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One Wall Street is a new development with a huge spread of sporting amenities just a stone's throw from Manhattan's downtown helipad. Colin Miller

Tribeca has long been a hub for A-list Manhattan homeowners thanks to its array of high-end buildings, many of which have been designed to ensure residents' privacy and security.

One such building on Greenwich Street, which is described as "paparazzi-proof," has drawn in a laundry list of celebrity residents over the years, including Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds, Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel, Lewis Hamilton, and Jennifer Lawrence.

Records show that there is currently a penthouse property available in this building—which is [listed with an asking price of \\$35 million](#).

Then there is [One Wall Street](#), just a few blocks away from the downtown helipad, and offers a wildly-impressive spread of amenities, including a private fitness center, steam rooms, a massage treatment room, and a swimming pool.

He could, of course, opt to follow in the footsteps of a fellow NBA player by snapping up former Brooklyn Nets star Ben Simmons' apartment in the exclusive Brooklyn neighborhood of Dumbo, just across the river from the downtown helipad.

Simmons purchased the five-bedroom duplex apartment inside the high-end Olympia Dumbo building for \$14 million in 2023, before it was even completed, but chose to [list the unit for \\$14.99 million](#) in April of this year, following his trade to the Los Angeles Clippers.

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Rumors about James' potential residency in Manhattan have not sat well with 76ers fans, who have been quick to question why he might be so hesitant to live in the city he has said he is so committed to.

Barstool Sports founder Dave Portnoy slammed the reports, [stating in a recent podcast](#): "This is a dark day for Philadelphia and I'm OUTRAGED."

"LeBron is saying I will play for Philly, but your city is trash and I will live in NYC," another X user commented, while a third chimed in: "LeBron said, 'I'd rather pay higher taxes than live in Philly.'"

Still, there are some 76ers devotees who are happy to welcome James with open arms, regardless of where he lays his head, with several noting that, provided he plays well for their team, they don't mind where he lives.

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