COOL & CONNECTED:
REVITALIZING LOCAL ECONOMIES WITH BROADBAND SERVICE

Cool & Connected helps small towns use broadband to promote main street development. Beginning in September, ten coal-impacted communities in Appalachia will participate in *Cool & Connected*. Five small towns from around the country are already participating in the program. USDA's Rural Utilities Service, EPA's Office of Sustainable Communities, and the Appalachian Regional Commission sponsor *Cool & Connected.*

Cool & Connected helps people leverage broadband to create walkable, connected, economically vibrant streets that improve human health and the environment.

Sources: Cool & Connected
U.S. Census Bureau

Alabama

Haleyville, Alabama, will pursue a downtown broadband strategy that promotes business recruitment and development, diversifies the economy, and connects the library and City Hall to people through digital archives and e-government initiatives.

Ohio

Southern Ohio Port Authority in **Portsmouth, Ohio,** aims to use the historic and commercial districts' broadband and public Wi-Fi capabilities to increase the number of people who walk and open businesses, as well as connect downtown amenities to recreation areas by utilizing information kiosks and QR Code/smart phone technology.

Zanesville, Ohio, will receive planning assistance to increase new employment opportunities, support the emerging arts culture, and develop an app for visitors to explore the walkable downtown.

Pennsylvania

Clarion, Pennsylvania, will receive planning assistance to increase their local communications capacity to market nature-based tourism, motivate people to invest along the historic Main Street, and create an incentive for students at Clarion University to stay in the community.

Curwensville Regional Development Corporation in **Curwensville, Pennsylvania,** plans to create a downtown coworking space for professionals, students, or entrepreneurs to use as an alternative to working from home or commuting long distances.

The World's #1 Coworking Space

Forbes magazine named Montrose, Colorado's Proximity Space the best place to cowork. Montrose is one of five **Cool & Connected** pilot partner communities.

"With a gigabit connection and main street frontage, Proximity Space has quickly become an anchor in the evolving downtown ecosphere," Proximity Space co-founder Dennis Lankes told *Forbes*. Coworking space allows people to access high-speed internet, conference rooms, and office equipment, and is one of many ways that small towns can leverage broadband to boost main street development.

Guppta, K. (2016, July 15). Where To Work? The 10 Best Coworking Spaces On Earth. Retrieved from Forbes: http://www.forbes.com/sites/kaviguppta/2016/07/15/where-to-work-the-10-best-coworking-spaces-on-earth/#c3ae23b7e9fe

Community workshops allow everyone's ideas to be heard.

Tennessee

Erwin Utilities and **Erwin, Tennessee,** will receive planning assistance to construct a comprehensive marketing plan for their downtown broadband connection, aimed to attract young professionals, visitors, and investors.

Virginia

Jonesville and Pennington Gap, Virginia, will receive planning assistance to market and develop Wi-Fi zones, extend broadband service, and promote main street development by attracting potential anchor tenants.

Amenities like broadband, walkable streets, and parks help communities create more vibrant neighborhoods.

West Virginia

Bluefield, West Virginia, will help downtown businesses take advantage of broadband and promote startups under the city's new Creating Resilient Economies by Assisting Transforming Entrepreneurs (CREATE) initiative.

The Mary H. Weir Public Library and community partners in **Weirton, West Virginia,** will receive planning assistance to increase and expand broadband services and Wi-Fi zones to bring visitors, families, and businesses to the downtown area.

Broadband lets small, rural communities promote their businesses to a larger marketplace.

The Williamson Health and Wellness Center in **Williamson, West Virginia,** will leverage broadband access and Wi-Fi zones downtown and at educational institutions to cultivate a skilled workforce, help people open businesses, and enhance the use of heath care technology.

For more information: https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/cool-connected