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Next Century Cities' Members Featured in Benton Institute's Broadband for America's Future: A Vision for the 2020s

Washington D.C. – A new report from the Benton Institute for Broadband & Society, released on **October 30, 2019**, featured an impressive variety of research and success stories from Next Century Cities member communities nationwide. [Broadband for America's Future: A Vision for the 2020s](#) by Senior Fellow Jonathan Sallet outlines a comprehensive broadband policy agenda for the next decade designed to help grow the American economy, strengthen communities, and empower workers. The report identifies deployment, competition, affordability & adoption, and community anchor institutions as four building blocks of good broadband policy.

Sallet promotes various models that Next Century Cities' municipalities are using to encourage broadband competition and improve local connectivity. The case studies include 5G digital inclusion strategies in **San Jose, Calif.**; public-private partnership models in cities like **Lawrence, Kan.**; municipal broadband projects in **Fairlawn, Ohio**, and **Wilson, N.C.**; **Ammon, Idaho's** innovative open access network; and **Virginia Beach, Va.'s** investment in middle mile infrastructure.

While there is a strong connection between broadband and economic growth, illustrated in places like **Chattanooga, Tenn.**; **Lafayette, La.**; **Portland, Ore.**; and **Charlotte, N.C.**, the report emphasizes the importance of ensuring equitable access to high-speed connectivity. Referencing Next Century Cities' work, Sallet points to forward-thinking programs to connect affordable housing residents to broadband in **San Francisco, Calif.** and **Austin, Texas**, as well as broader digital inclusion efforts in **Louisville, Ky.**; **Kansas City, Mo.**; **Cleveland, Ohio**; **Boston, Mass.**; **Seattle, Wash.** and many others.

Francella Ochillo, Executive Director, Next Century Cities:

"In *Broadband for America's Future: A Vision for the 2020s*, Jonathan Sallet confirms a principle at the core of Next Century Cities: local leadership is an integral component of any national broadband deployment strategy. In a digital society, our most ambitious societal goals require that every community, and every resident therein, has access to high-speed broadband networks. Ensuring that all residents are able to take the additional step of broadband adoption cannot be accomplished without supporting strategic outreach and problem-solving initiatives at the local level.

"Next Century Cities' members have embraced unique challenges in their communities, using grit and innovative thinking to connect some of the nation's most hard-to-reach

populations. While the local leaders behind those efforts have worked tirelessly without fanfare or applause, some of their most remarkable accomplishments have been memorialized in this report.”

Read more about Next Century Cities’ member initiatives [here](#). Read the report in full [here](#).

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Next Century Cities is a non-profit membership organization of over 200 communities, founded to support communities and their elected leaders, including mayors and other officials, as they seek to ensure that all have access to fast, affordable, and reliable internet access. Next Century Cities celebrates broadband successes in communities, demonstrates their value, and helps other cities to realize the full power of truly high-speed, affordable, and accessible broadband. For more information, visit www.nextcenturycities.org.