



The BRECC National Network

connecting coal communities

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**BUILDING RESILIENT
ECONOMIES *in*
COAL COMMUNITIES**

Think Outside the Box: Coal Communities Embracing New Roles to Spark Economic Development

October 10, 2024

TODAY'S AGENDA

Speakers:
Doug Lynott
Stacy Thomas
Stuart Clason
Hon. Dan Mosley

Panel Discussion:
How Can County
Leaders Expand Their
Roles to Support
Economic
Diversification?

Q&A



**Relevant
Resources**



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Doug Lynott
***Director, Division of Economic Development
Integration and Disaster Recovery, U.S.
Economic Development Administration***

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Stacy Thomas

***Director, Community Coaching Programs,
West Virginia Community Development
Hub, W.Va.***



RICHWOOD, WEST VIRGINIA

GATEWAY TO THE MONONGAHELA

Progress + Potential

- \$42M K-12 school facility under construction
- 45 new local businesses since 2016 flood
- \$30M over 4 years in infrastructure projects
- Armory renovated as community center by volunteers
- City pool renovated and supporting free swim days (through volunteer efforts!)
- Cultural events becoming strong economic driver for Richwood





The Richwood Dreamers

- Volunteers committed to positive progress
- **The only volunteer-based team formed in partnership with BRECC**
- The Dreamers have support from:
 - The City of Richwood
 - Richwood Chamber of Commerce
 - WV Brownfields Assistance Center
 - New River Gorge RDA
 - Summersville CVB
 - USDA Rural Partners Network



ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION PATHWAYS



Downtown Revitalization & Housing

- Make Richwood more investor-ready, address resident wellness by redeveloping the historic downtown, increasing efforts to recruit remote workers, and analyzing housing challenges.



Outdoor Recreation

- Invest in and expand existing natural assets to promote local health and encourage tourism.



Arts & Culture Throughline

- Integrate arts and culture throughout economic diversification pathways to encourage tourism and local pride.

Impacts of Combined Approach

- Holistic understanding of current and future community needs
- Coordinated growth strategies
- Supports investment in resident population **and** attraction efforts
- Informs investment decisions and project prioritization
- Future-proofing for Richwood



“The goal is to turn data into information, and information into insight.”

~ EDWARD TUFTE

Richwood Profile (2022)

- Total Population: 2,466
- 41.9% of the population is 55+
- Median Household Income: \$30,962
- Average annual salary for employed residents was \$41,726
- Labor Force Participation was 39.4%
- Richwood added 40 new businesses between 2019 -2023
- Median Home Value: \$68,000
- Average Age of Homes: 85 years
- 21% vacancy rate (majority residential)



Richwood Focus

Assets, Challenges, Opportunities

- Stock
- Availability
- Suitability
- Affordability
- **Future Demand**
- Economic Factors
- Land Use + Availability
- Environmental Constraints

Based on findings, we're now examining contributing social conditions.





Pro Tips from Richwood

- Free money is often available for housing studies
- Work with a trusted partner if you can
- Get input from residents
- Cast a wide net for input and feedback
- Volunteers can lead the charge, if necessary



"Data are just summaries of thousands of stories – tell a few of those stories to help make the data meaningful."

- Chip and Dan Heath





Stuart Clason
***Regional Growth Director, Utah Regional Growth
Association, Carbon and Emery Counties, Utah***



Regional Repositioning & Diversification

Southeastern Utah





BACKGROUND ON THE REGION

Southeastern Utah (Challenges):

- Made up of 4 Counties (Carbon, Emery, Grand, San Juan)
- Carbon and Emery County are long standing coal based economies
- Carbon County has no active mines and it's power plant was closed in 2015
- Region received Build Back Better 1st round designation

Existing Coal Related Infrastructure (Opportunities):

- Carbon and Emery has several existing infrastructure assets
 - Transportation Infrastructure (Rail, Road, & Air)
 - Electrical Infrastructure (Transmission, Generation, & Water)
 - Human Capital Infrastructure (Companies, Workforce, & University)

County Focus on Repositioning Assets to Diversify the Regional Economy:

- Renewable Energy Investments
- Energy Related R&D
- Supply Chain Expansion



CASE STUDY:

Carbon County Aviation Campus

Opportunity: Turning the Airport into an Aviation Hub

Carbon County and its partners is building out an aviation campus on the existing airport infrastructure originally developed for the coal industry.

In partnership with Utah State University the following programs are being or will be made available:

- Aviation Maintenance Technicians (AMT)
- Professional Pilot Licensure
- Airport Management
- Drone Pilot Certification



Aviation Maintenance Technicians (AMT) Program



Project Funding Amounts and Providers

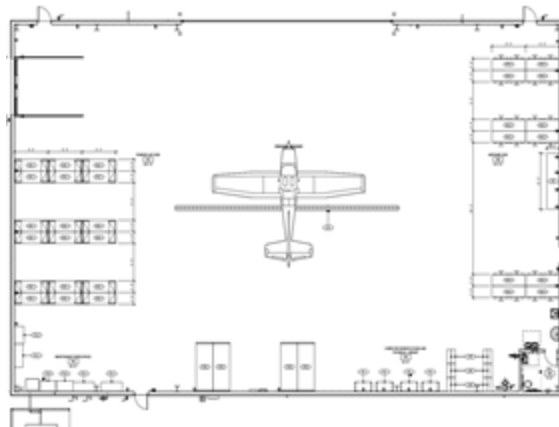
- EDA \$1,381,500
- State of Utah \$1,000,000
- SERDA \$7,500

Total \$2,889,000



New AMT Hangar Details and Uses

- New 10,400 sq ft hangar is under construction
- Starting in 2025 USU will expand AMT to Carbon County creating highly skilled individuals for multiple industries



Aviation Campus County Partnerships

- Utah State University
- Southeastern Regional Development Agency
- State of Utah



Thank you.



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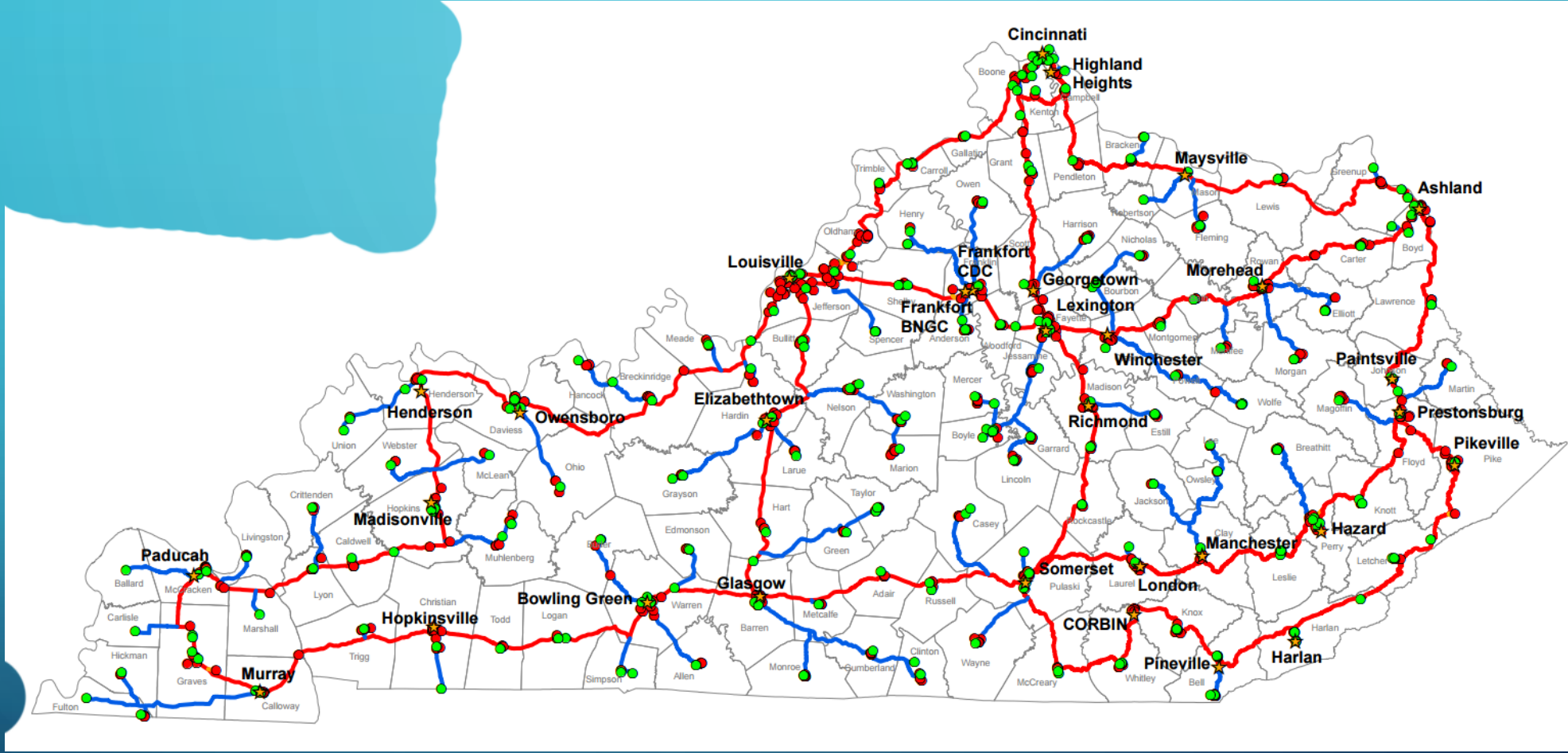
Hon. Dan Mosley
Judge/Executive, Harlan County, Ky.

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A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide consists of a network of white lines and small circles, resembling a circuit board or a digital network, set against a blue gradient background.

HARLAN COUNTY CONNECTED

BROADBAND EXPANSIONS LEADING TO ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION &
ENABLING DIGITAL WORKER RECRUITMENT





HARLAN COUNTY BROADBAND

SPEED TEST



The Center
for Rural Development

TEST FOR FUTURE SUCCESS

2ND OF 120 KENTUCKY COUNTIES FOR SPEED TEST PARTICIPATION

- SPEED TEST DATA SHOWED THE UNSERVED AND UNDERSERVED AREAS IN MUCH MORE DETAIL THAN FCC MAPS HIGHLIGHTED
- WE UTILIZED THIS DATA TO CRAFT GRANT APPLICATIONS & DISCUSS PRIVATE INVESTMENTS FROM EXISTING PROVIDERS
- EXPANSIONS OF BROADBAND HAVE LED TO JOB CREATION BUT ALSO A RECRUITING TOOL TO ATTRACT THOSE LOOKING TO RELOCATE



A NEW ERA FOR EAST KENTUCKY WORKFORCE & EMPLOYMENT





[From South Florida to Harlan County: Pedro's glad he made the move with SOAR and MakeMyMove \(youtube.com\)](#)

What are steps county leaders can take to expand their roles to support economic diversification?

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Questions for our panelists?

Please share your questions in Q & A

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Thank you for joining!

How can BRECC best support you?

Tell us what you'd like to learn more about! Email coal@naco.org

Next National Network Webinar: November 21, 2024, 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm