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A crew from C-SPAN will roll into Pittsburgh next week to dive into the rich history and literary chops of the city and region. The public-affairs cable network is partnering with Comcast for its Steel City visit, which will air Nov. 19-20 as part of C-SPAN's "Cities Tour" — a series that started in 2011 to spotlight small- and mid-sized cities across the country. "Pittsburgh obviously is a larger city, but we've been going to some larger cities," said Debbie Lamb, a coordinating producer for C-SPAN. "There are so many cities out there with a story to tell, and we want to tell it."

While in Pittsburgh, the three-member crew will film at the Senator John Heinz History Center, University of Pittsburgh's Archive Service Center, Fort Pitt Museum, Andy Warhol Museum, the Carnegie Library in Oakland and other locations. Some subject matters to be covered include Andrew Carnegie, steelmaking, August Wilson and the history of blacks in the region, H.J. Heinz Company, the French and Indian War, Pittsburgh's pre-colonial era and notable politicians. "There's a lot in Pittsburgh," Lamb said. "We can't show everything."

Andy Masich, president and CEO of the Heinz History Center, plans to squeeze in as much as he can during a driving tour highlighting local history. "What I'd really like to do is drive around in an Uber self-driving car," Masich said, noting that continuing innovation could be juxtaposed with all that happened here over the past 200 years and more.

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The tentative tour route includes the Duquesne Incline up to Mt. Washington for a view of the rivers and Pittsburgh's layout, over to Oakland to see Schenley Park, the

Cathedral of Learning and Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum, and then the Strip District's markets before hitting the North Side to highlight the beginning of professional football here and its past as Allegheny City. "The amazing thing is that the city is so compact," Masich said. "The Three Rivers have brought people together over the centuries. You can pack a lot of history into such a small area."

Like previous segments on Pittsburgh that have appeared on the Smithsonian Channel,

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Discovery, History and National Geographic, Masich said C-SPAN offers a chance to showcase the story of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania. "C-SPAN has a huge audience that is national," he said. "And that is a great opportunity for Pittsburgh to strut its stuff."

Mayor Bill Peduto will sit down for an interview with C-SPAN producers. He said being part of the "Cities Tour" will not only help Pittsburgh tell its story but also show what the city is today. "For 30 years, people of Pittsburgh have seen this city change, and to us it's a vastly different city than it was in the 1970s. But to the rest of the world, they don't know that," Peduto said. "Whenever I talk to reporters or visitors who come here for a first time, they're in a sense of shock and awe — shock that it is not a rusted-out old town with mills falling into a river and awe of how truly beautiful this city

is. "What this is doing is just helping to bring that recognition of where we are today to the rest of the world."

"Cities Tour" airs on C-SPAN2's "Book TV" and C-SPAN3's "American History TV" on the first and third weekend of each month. The project focuses on the literary life and history of selected cities across the country, conducting interviews with historians, authors and civic leaders and visiting museums and historic sites. C-SPAN conducts public outreach during the visits. This weekend's "Cities Tour" features Grand Rapids, Mich. Other upcoming cities include Pueblo, Colo., Tucson and Tempe, Ariz., Fresno, Calif., and Richmond, Va. Harrisburg will be featured Jan. 21-22. – **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review**

Duane Hartness said he had to fight for a service that millions of Georgians take for granted: decent internet. With one provider available, the north Georgia insurance agent said he pushed until he had enough bandwidth through Windstream to work from his Tallulah Falls home. "You can't make them perform. You just have to keep trying," he told lawmakers during a meeting on rural broadband held Thursday.

Many Georgians living in the rural parts of the state are not as fortunate, though. A statewide survey showed, as of last year, about 84 percent of the state had access to the broadband internet, which the Federal Communications Commission defines as 25 megabits per second. That left about 638,100 people without broadband.

Some FCC data paints a rosier picture, with a Georgia Chamber of Commerce representative referencing a map showing Georgia with 97 percent coverage. Rep. Susan Holmes, R- Monticello, bristled at that estimate. "We wouldn't be doing this if we had that kind of coverage," Holmes said after Thursday's meeting.

Members of a legislative study committee will likely hear more stories similar to what Hartness experienced as they tour the state this fall. Legislators were in Toccoa Thursday and will head to Glennville, located about 60 miles west of Savannah, on Sept. 29. What they found in northeast Georgia was frustration among residents over slow speeds, inconsistent coverage and unreliable connections while many businesses, schools and others in community seem to enjoy adequate service. "When you advertise broadband speeds of 'up to three meg' or 'up to six meg' and you what you get is close to zero, I think most of us become a little cynical about that phrase 'up to,'" Hartness said. "I guess it does include zero."

Holmes said addressing the problem will require action from the state. "If the state doesn't push this, it's not going to happen, and if it doesn't happen, shame on us," Holmes said. "I don't mean regulate. I don't mean fund. We've got to make it easier. We've got to push public-private partnerships," she added. She said she also wants the state to offer incentives to providers who are reticent to spend money in sparsely populated areas of the state.

After hearing from frustrated residents and community leaders, Sen. Steve Gooch, R-Dahlonega, who co-chairs the committee, sought to reassure service providers. "We need the Windstreams, the AT&Ts, the Comcasts," he said. "We're not running anybody off. We're trying to keep them here, keep their jobs here, but encourage more investment." One proposal is the elimination of a sales tax on telecommunications network equipment. Others have recommended boosting coverage by restoring state funding for local public-private projects and doing more to hold companies accountable when their service is not as advertised.

Steve Fortmann, meanwhile, questioned what government can do and whether residents should even wait to find out. The Royston resident said he was shocked when he discovered his family did not have high-speed service when they first moved from Atlanta a few years ago. What he said he found instead was 1.5 megabits per second speeds, which was not fast enough to view the online videos needed for the

family's home-study program. It certainly wasn't fast enough to stream Netflix. "I know, that's not very important, but quality of life for your family is important," he said. "Sometimes you just want to watch Curious George with your four-year-old."

Fortmann started his own wireless company, Paladin, which serves 200 customers and has 600 people on a waiting list. The company's site says the business "was born out of necessity and exists to fill the gaps left by major service providers who don't think our region is worth investing into." Fortmann said the solutions for coverage in rural Georgia already exist. "You're telling me getting internet a mile away isn't feasible but we can shoot somebody into space? That's a little crazy to me," he said. – **Community Newspaper Holdings Inc.**

Kentucky's Republican governor said he is "absolutely committed" to completing a statewide broadband network despite questions about how the state will pay for its share of the \$270 million project.

A group of private companies has borrowed more than \$270 million to build the network. Kentucky officials promised to pay the companies about \$28 million a year for internet service, including \$13 million from the state's public school districts, which the companies would use to pay off the loan. But state officials soon found they could not use the money from public school districts, creating a \$13 million gap.

On Friday, Gov. Matt Bevin stood with U.S. Rep. Hal Rogers in the rotunda of the state Capitol to promise the project would be completed. He said the funding gap had been resolved, but offered few details. The project, dubbed KentuckyWired, was launched under the administration of former Democratic Gov. Steve Beshear. It was pitched as a 3,000 mile network of fiber optic cables that would touch every county in the state, with an emphasis on attracting technology jobs to the beleaguered eastern Kentucky coalfields.

But the project quickly ran into problems. A contract to provide internet access to the state's public school districts was withdrawn after a protest filed by current contract holder AT&T. And several private communications companies worried the project would steal a large chunk of their business. In January, Bevin said he had concerns about the project's financing. Since then, the Kentucky Communications Network Authority has scaled back the size of the project by signing agreements to use the existing fiber networks of two private companies: Cincinnati Bell Telephone System in northern Kentucky and the Eastern Kentucky Network, a group of five rural communications companies covering 21 counties.

Those agreements shaved more than \$10 million from construction costs. And Finance Cabinet Secretary William Landrum said the authority plans to make up the rest of the money by selling some of the network's excess capacity to private companies. "I feel very confident about it," Landrum said. "I've got partnerships now that when I first came in the administration they wouldn't even be in the same room. Now we're all arm in arm."

But construction of the network has been delayed by up to a year, and it is unclear how the state will make up the money in the meantime. In addition to the annual payments, the state legislature has already spent \$30 million on the project, of which \$13.5 million has been spent on purchasing about 2,000 miles of fiber optic cable and other equipment.

Bevin said he does not plan to ask the legislature to use taxpayer money as a stopgap. "I don't want you all to get bogged down in the details. Truth be told, we don't have all the exact details because the wire hasn't been laid," he said, adding: "Understand this project will be done and has the absolute commitment of this administration." – **Louisville Courier-Journal**

Twitter Inc.'s high-profile debut live-streaming a National Football League game went off without a glitch Thursday night, but low viewership numbers indicate that most football fans still prefer to watch the game on traditional TV. An average audience of 243,000 viewers per minute watched the New York Jets beat the Buffalo Bills via a live-stream broadcast on Twitter, according to the NFL. That pales in comparison with the average of 15.4 million people who watched the game on CBS and the NFL Network.

Twitter's viewership is also lower than the 2.36 million people per minute who watched Yahoo Inc.'s live-stream of the Jacksonville Jaguars and Buffalo Bills game last October, a game played in London and broadcast early Sunday morning in the U.S. and that automatically played across Yahoo's properties. Each viewer on Twitter watched an average of 22 minutes of game action, the NFL said, nearly in line with the 25-minute average digital viewership of the game across Twitter and digital offerings from Verizon Communications Inc., the NFL Network and CBS.

In total, the NFL said 2.1 million unique viewers world-wide tuned into the live game broadcast via Twitter, watching it for at least three seconds with the video player in full view. CBS and NFL Network's coverage received 48.1 million viewers for at least one minute of time. The low viewership turnout on Twitter compared with traditional TV suggests that it may still take some time for people to get used to watching games on the go. According to NBC, the average audience for the live-stream of last Thursday's matchup between the Carolina Panthers and the Denver Broncos available on the NBC Sports app, NBC.com 'TV Everywhere,' and NFL Mobile from Verizon totaled 278,000 viewers. Twitter's numbers leave something to be desired in light of the fanfare leading up to its first NFL game live-stream.

Thursday night's game was a coming-out party of sorts for Twitter's live-streaming strategy, the cornerstone of its plan to become the premier destination for live events. Twitter is trying to appeal to advertisers by capitalizing on its strength as a real-time service and the growing trend of cord-cutting viewers. On the bright side, anecdotal evidence shows that viewers were generally pleased with Twitter's stream of the CBS Corp. feed of the game between the New York Jets and Buffalo Bills. The live-stream of the game was available on Twitter's mobile app and website as well as Apple Inc.'s Apple TV, Amazon.com Inc.'s Amazon Fire and Microsoft Corp.'s Xbox One.

There was a slight delay between the CBS broadcast and the Twitter live-stream, but viewers largely complimented the high-definition quality of the game that appeared to stream for most without interruption. Football fans who otherwise wouldn't have had access to the game gave a thumbs-up, and users who had forgotten they had Twitter accounts had a reason to come back. Some users requested certain features, such as only showing tweets about the team they support in the accompanying Twitter feed. That feed, curated by the company, included tweets with the hashtag #TNF or those that mentioned one of the teams or players. "It was exciting to see how the experience played out on Twitter with how fans reacted to the first [Thursday night] football live stream," a Twitter spokesman said.

The positive reviews may help win over marketers who were on the fence about Twitter's live-streaming ad pitch. Twitter, which paid \$10 million for rights to the 10 Thursday night games this season, has been allotted about 15 local in-game ad spots for each. Advertisers such as Bank of America Corp., Anheuser-Busch InBev NV and Ford Motor Co. have bought sponsorship packages, which were priced between \$1 million to \$8 million. Initial reactions from some participating advertisers were promising. "I think we're feeling pretty good about it from a business standpoint. I know we're feeling great about it from an experience standpoint," said Lou Paskalis, senior vice president and enterprise media executive at Bank of America, adding that the Twitter live-stream could open up new ways for brands to interact with viewers during the game.

The 2.1 million viewers who at some point watched Thursday's game on Twitter exceeded Mr. Paskalis's expectation that the live-stream would draw at least 1.5 million total viewers. Twitter had informed him that Bank of America's ads during the Thursday night game had a 98% completion rate. "That makes us really happy." "The free aspect is huge," said Francois Lee, executive vice president and investment director at MDC & Partners media agency Assembly. By offering free streaming on the go and the ability to watch on the big screen through Apple TV and Amazon, Twitter is directly competing with networks such as CBS and Comcast Corp.'s NBC, he said.

At an investor conference Thursday, CBS Chief Executive Les Moonves said that before too long he expects to strike a deal with the NFL to stream games on its video-streaming site CBS All Access. Others who work with advertisers were more cautious. "I feel as though it's a nice compliment to the broadcast, but hardly a seismic change in how NFL is consumed," said David Campanelli, senior vice president and director of video investment at media agency Horizon Media, which works with brands such as Geico insurance and Corona beer.

While Thursday night's technological feat was a success, plenty of questions remain. Do viewers enjoy watching the game with running Twitter commentary alongside a smaller screen, or did they opt to minimize the social feed to watch the game full-screen? And after the initial buzz wears off, will this become a bona fide alternative to watching broadcasts that are available elsewhere? "I think the Venn diagram of those who want to watch the NFL on a portion of a small phone screen while tweeting is pretty small," RBC Capital analyst Mark Mahaney said in an email. Thursday night football games last season averaged more than 17 million viewers on CBS and the NFL Network, according to Nielsen. – *Wall Street Journal*



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