

**The Merit Community Access Initiative (CAN) – Drive-up community Internet access zones:
A Proposal for an Additional Library Site Location at the Saline District Library to
Promote Community Resilience and Information Access for the Community SecondNets Project**

Improving Connectivity & Resilience in Michigan's Underserved Communities
Wi-Fi Access Expanded for Citizens through 50 Public Access Sites across Michigan
October 2020

More than 386,000 households in Michigan and 27% of our state's PreK-12 students lack access to broadband Internet. Our citizens' need for connectivity and the impact of the "digital divide," (those who have Internet access and those who do not) has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Households without broadband (high-speed Internet) access pay a steep societal cost. These individuals are unable to participate in safe, socially-distanced telemedicine appointments or stay connected with family and friends especially during times of crisis like we are in the midst of *right now*. Although educators have innovated lesson plans for remote learning, many PreK-12 children are restricted by their level of connectivity, negatively impacting rural and urban students alike. Simply put, Michigan residents and students without broadband access lack the ability to participate in the "new normal" way of life and staying connected during crises.

The Michigan Moonshot, is a collective call to action which aims to bridge the digital divide in Michigan. Through the [Michigan Moonshot](#) initiative Merit has partnered with corporate and community organizations to expand the Wi-Fi access of over 50 community organization sites. In this unique public private partnership Merit will pilot a Community Network Access (CAN) concept, in Detroit, Flint and Washtenaw County communities.

The negative impacts of this lack of broadband access on students, families and businesses in the region have been greatly aggravated by the COVID-19 crisis. In response to this urgent need, Merit will partner with technology providers, philanthropic organizations and Member Library and K-12 organizations. Merit will centrally manage an extension of building connectivity to provide parking lot Wi-Fi Internet connections to allow students, parents, and community members the ability to access the Internet from their vehicles, creating a safe, socially-distanced environment for participating, learning and connecting. Site rollouts began in October 2020 and will continue throughout the end of the calendar year.



Here is an overview of the program budget: **Connecting Organizations, Building Community**

Financials

\$285,000 – Philanthropic support from for-profit partners

\$124,109 - In-kind support from Merit Network, Inc.

\$409,109 - Total project budget

The estimated cost for adding each new location to CAN ranges from \$7,000 to \$10,000. If awarded, 2nd Nets funds would help expand our CAN project by one additional site at a community library, every one of which represents a new opportunity for access for entire neighborhoods. This particular proposal will enable support for an additional site location at the Saline District Library in Saline, Michigan.

Pilot parameters

- Appx 20 initial phase 1 POC sites located in central and southeast Michigan including both urban and rural locations.
- Primarily targeting library individual sites
- 9-12 month pilot life cycle

Member contributions/requirements:

- Desire to extend Wi-Fi access to community participants
- Prefer active Merit connection and Internet service subscriber, exceptions can be considered
- Ability to provide end-user support to community members
- Participate in development of Use Case
- Technical support for equipment issues
- Two switch ports (POE preferred)

Private Partner contributions:

- Internal Wiring components
- Equipment
- Turn-key installation professional services
- Funding

Merit contributions:

- Allow selected organizations to utilize their current Merit Internet connections and allow for complimentary bursting above their current subscribed bandwidth levels
- Centralized management of wireless equipment, security controls and filtering
- Centralized configuration & staging - equipment



- Data retention and analysis
- Development and publication of CAN use case
- Marketing support and press releases – manage state and national partners

Solution Specs

This platform provides Cloud Managed Wireless, offering end-to-end management which unifies WAN, LAN, wireless LAN, and mobile device management under a single pane of glass.

To help organizations securely transform their networks with SD-WAN and embrace direct Internet access, Cisco Umbrella has expanded to include secure web gateway, cloud-delivered firewall, and cloud access security broker (CASB) functionality, plus integration with Cisco SD-WAN, delivered from a single cloud-native platform.

- This technology solution is meant to provide connectivity to a publicly accessible area 24x7x365
- Security Camera (model #MV72X-HW) <https://meraki.cisco.com/products/smart-cameras/>
- Meraki AP (Model #MR46-HW) <https://meraki.cisco.com/products/wi-fi/>
- Umbrella <https://umbrella.cisco.com/products/umbrella-enterprise-security-packages>
- 2 SSID's
- CIPA Compliant controls are required for users under 18 years of age