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EDUCATION

San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo, City Council members announce new fund to connect 50,000 households to internet

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The City of San Jose says internet connectivity is crucial in setting up young students for success, so it is creating a new fund that will give 50,000 households internet connection.

By [David Louie](#)

Tuesday, February 12, 2019 07:20PM

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other cities across the Bay Area and California.

It's creating a special fund called the Digital Inclusion Fund with \$2.2 million in fees it generates annually from renting space on city light poles to AT&T, T-Mobile and Verizon for the new generation of 5G cellular antennas.

The money will go toward providing 50,000 San Jose households with high-speed internet connections.

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It's an education issue for the city, which sees internet connectivity and computer science training as crucial in providing young students with the knowledge and tools to succeed in school and in future careers.

As part of the initiative, San Jose is using its neighborhood libraries for after-school sessions to teach 5,000 students per year how to code.

While \$2.2 million per year is insufficient, it will be seed money that Sunne McPeak believes will prime the pump to get foundations, grants, and corporate donations flowing into the Digital Inclusion Fund to help prepare young people for careers in computer science and related technology fields.

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McPeak is the president and CEO of the California Emerging Technology Fund, which has been selected as a partner with the City of San Jose to raise money. It's estimated \$24 million will be available on programs.

Two students from San Jose's Lincoln High School spoke at a City Hall news

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Junior Meilyn Wong said until high school, she had never been exposed to coding and other aspects of technology.

Senior Linda Mimila said she sees a number of fellow students who don't have internet connections at home.

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Mayor Sam Liccardo said the era of students camped out at fast food restaurants as their only source of internet access should end in San Jose, whose moniker is the Capital of Silicon Valley.

McPeak sees San Jose's initiative as a model that other communities can replicate with revenue from leasing public light poles to wireless carriers.

We'll have more on this story on ABC7 News at 4:55 p.m. and 6 p.m. Tuesday.

See more articles about the City of San Jose.

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