



Lake County Strategic Plan

Investing in People and Our Communities

Our Mission

Deliver exceptional, financially and environmentally responsive and responsible services that promote a safe, affordable, healthy, and resilient community.



Lake County Strategic Plan

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OUR MISSION

Deliver exceptional, financially and environmentally responsive and responsible services that promote a safe, affordable, healthy, and resilient community.

OUR VISION

Lake County is a place where all people, families, and businesses have the opportunity to thrive, and its government is an innovative leader and model of excellence.

OUR VALUES

Lake County Government carries out its mission and conducts its responsibilities adhering to the following values:

Leadership

Provide leadership in communicating, interacting and cooperating with residents, businesses, other governments, and stakeholders, leading to innovative regional collaboration, increased efficiency and cost savings, and improved quality of life.

Fiscal Responsibility

Uphold fiscal integrity, make performance-driven decisions based on future impacts and social costs, manage priorities, leverage partnerships for more efficient use of resources, and maintain sustainable and prudent financial operations. This includes a balanced budget, strong reserves, and an AAA financial rating, with a commitment to transparency, honesty, reliability and accountability.

Exceptional Service

Deliver cost-effective, efficient, responsive and high-quality services, with professionalism and courtesy to public trust and confidence.

Operational Excellence

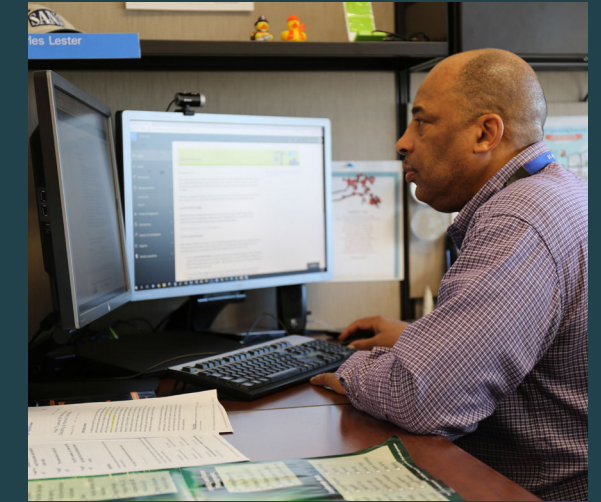
Be an employer of choice that promotes a culture that fosters continuous improvement through the implementation of new techniques, technologies, and operational efficiencies that maximize outcomes and promote positive change.

Environmental Stewardship

Encourage the adoption of environmentally sustainable policies and practices by residents, businesses, and County staff.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The County's team of dedicated and responsive professionals strives to deliver efficient, cost-effective, accountable, environmentally and fiscally sustainable services. Lake County is advancing several internal projects and regional initiatives that support the Lake County Board's adopted values, strategic goals, and actions. These initiatives help drive efficiencies and productivity, create a culture of innovation, foster interdepartmental and regional collaboration and partnerships, and produce positive, measurable results.



REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

Addressing Mental Health Crisis through Collaboration

Lake County will invest in services, legislation, and facilities to provide law enforcement with alternatives to incarceration for persons experiencing mental health crises. A mental health police drop off service is needed as part of a continuum of care to assist mental health providers to focus on treatment and prevention, intensive case management, and re-entry and after-care programs for previously incarcerated persons'.

To strengthen mental health services countywide, Lake County is committed to advancing sustainable community-level change by focusing on data-sharing and evidence-based practices to address the gaps and develop a connected, sustainable continuum of care.

Advancing Regional 911 Consolidation

Lake County, in partnership with the Lake County Emergency Telephone System Board (ETSB), will continue to advance efforts toward the regional consolidation of Emergency Telephone System Boards (ETSB) and Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP). This will result in a reduction of call transfers and service delays, while providing the same or better service more efficiently.



FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Using Data to Drive Decisions

Lake County is committed to using data to drive financial and policy decisions and maximize efficiencies and cost savings. To advance our value of delivering cost-effective services, Lake County will continue to conduct comprehensive operational assessments in departments to identify areas for efficiency and to streamline operations, both internally and cross-departmentally. The Land and Enterprise Service Teams will also continue to explore opportunities to enhance integration across departments to create efficiencies and improve service delivery.

Property Tax Communication

Lake County will collaborate with other governments to continue to improve communication, enhance transparency, and raise taxpayer awareness and understanding of property taxes and conduct a review the tax assessment and appeals process.

Capital Planning

Lake County will utilize a strategic and collaborative approach, for capital planning and facilities management to evaluate assets and prioritize projects and balance the capital needs across the organization.

Leveraging Shared Services to Gain Efficiencies

Lake County will continue to explore ways to collaborate and coordinate between its internal departments, elected offices and agencies as well as with other units of government through our shared services initiative to improve efficiency, and achieve cost savings. The County will also look for options to streamline the functions of districts and governmental bodies, through consolidation, in an effort to provide a more effective and efficient government.

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AND OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Investing in Technology

The County Board is committed to investing in technologies to deliver products and services in an efficient, cost-effective, transparent and secure manner. Lake County is a leader in providing online maps, consistently leveraging new tools to increase transparency and make it easier for the public to access information. Lake County is also investing in a new court case management system which integrates justice functions across County elected offices, and is pursuing integration of tax systems to improve overall efficiency and customer service. Wherever possible, the County will explore how technology will allow us to share service opportunities with municipalities.



LAKE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN THEMES

These colors are used to identify themes found in the strategies which follow.



GOAL 1: PROVIDE PUBLIC SAFETY AND ADVANCE AN INTEGRATED, DATA-DRIVEN JUSTICE SYSTEM

STRATEGIC STATEMENT: Create safe communities through an integrated, humane, data-driven justice system, including stakeholders and law enforcement personnel who embrace community policing to build public trust, and other innovative programs aimed at reducing crime, recidivism, family violence, and substance abuse.

HIGHLIGHT

New Program Checks in on those with a Mental or Behavioral Health Illness

The Sheriff's Office began a new program with the Health Department called Crisis Outreach and Support Team (COaST) to support residents with mental or behavioral health illness who interact with law enforcement. Within three days of a law enforcement officer encountering a mental health interaction or an opioid overdose, the COaST deputy will arrange a meeting with the individual or "cold call" their residence to check on their well-being. The deputy will then provide a "warm handoff" to the Health Department counselor, who will conduct a brief assessment, and if necessary, refer the person to appropriate services. Programs like this not only provide support for those in need, but it also reduces the likelihood of individuals being arrested or re-arrested.



Strategy 1: Shift resources from enforcement to prevention to reflect decreases in the crime rate, emerging trends in community policing and an integrated approach to treating the core causes of criminal activity and delinquent behaviors.

Inter-Organization
Cooperation
Quality of Life

Action A: Maintain and develop enhanced law enforcement programs targeted to reduce violence and prevent gang development and activity.

Action B: Collaborate with community partners to share, analyze and understand who is in the jail and what is impacting jail population with the objective of reducing the number of persons admitted to jail.

Action C: Collaborate with justice partners and the bar association to identify and address opportunities to reduce the time individuals stay in jail before trial, while maintaining public safety.

Action D: Train officers and first responders in community outreach, voluntary compliance, de-escalation techniques, and crisis intervention.

Strategy 2: Regularly evaluate and implement enhanced technologies to provide effective service, transparency, data sharing and integration throughout the justice system.

Inter-Organization
Cooperation
Grants & Specialty
Funding

Action A: Advance and support regional 911 consolidation. Evaluate and pursue both physical and virtual consolidation with partners.

Action B: Support the development and launch of internal and external dashboards to share public safety and justice public information that is accessible and easy to understand.

Action C: Support the selection and replacement of public safety technology.

Strategy 3: Evaluate and identify adult and youth criminal justice and diversion programs that address social, mental, emotional and behavioral health issues that can lead to criminal behavior.

Inter-Organization
Cooperation
Quality of Life
Economic
Development
Infrastructure
Non-Environmental
Sustainability
Grants & Specialty
Funding

Action A: Collaborate with community service providers to deliver effective programs such as job training, employment skills and opportunities, safe housing, transportation and other support services to assist previously incarcerated persons to develop successful life strategies.

Action B: Further develop a "deflection and diversion" crisis response model that includes triage/stabilization, housing, mobile response, training for law enforcement and first responders, and a crisis intervention system, to address mental health issues.

Action C: Maintain and develop enhanced law enforcement programs targeted to reduce drug abuse and criminal behaviors.

Strategy 4: Identify and promote intergovernmental approaches to reduce violence.

Inter-Organization
Cooperation
Quality of Life

Action A: Continue to support victim services, including those provided by the State's Attorney's Office Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), whose administrators work to ensure that a variety of accessible, trauma-informed services are available to residents of Lake County.

Action B: Support both long-term and immediate actions to address violence where it occurs, including the advancement of mental health services and opportunities for youth.

Action C: Promote common sense violence prevention laws by working with state and federal legislators and supporting funding bills that provide financial support for community-based violence prevention programs.

GOAL 2: ENHANCE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

STRATEGIC STATEMENT: Leverage the assets of the County – the Lake County Workforce Ecosystem, skilled talent, diverse communities, and effective infrastructure – to drive balanced growth, revitalization, economic opportunities, and jobs throughout Lake County.

HIGHLIGHT

Expanded Metra Schedule Makes it Easier for Reverse Commuters to get to Work

For every four residents that head south on Metra, three travel north to jobs in Lake County. Lake County businesses, local governments and partner agencies, and Metra combined forces to successfully launch MetraMore in 2019. This project expanded the train schedule on Metra's Milwaukee District North Line, making it easier for reverse commuters to travel between Chicago and Lake County.



Strategy 1: Enhance the economic climate and business investment readiness of Lake County.

Action A: Use business intelligence and market research for targeted business outreach, and engage all stakeholders, including organizations, educational institutions and public bodies, in the Workforce Ecosystem.

Action B: Enhance and align workforce development strategies with projected local industry job growth.

Action C: Retain a competitive workforce and foster growth of the County's private employers by investing in infrastructure such as transportation and affordable housing near employment centers.

Action D: Establish a system for assisting all businesses in the county to improve their environmental performance in ways that also improve financial performance over the long run. Become a leading community for local food production, renewables, recycling and a circular economy.

Action E: Work with local partners to identify barriers to retention and redevelopment. Focus on opportunities that utilize existing infrastructure and align economic opportunities with infrastructure investment strategies to stimulate redevelopment.



Strategy 2: Collaborate with units of local government to create and support employment centers with access to transportation and affordable housing for all Lake County communities.

Action A: Work with communities to encourage new and innovative integrated development methods and incentives, and to share data and information on retention and redevelopment opportunities.

Action B: Engage with economic development leaders and stakeholders, including chambers of commerce and local high schools, to share business intelligence, discuss best practices, and promote collaboration to advance economic and workforce development initiatives.

Action C: Work with the State to reduce barriers to local economic development.

Action D: Collaborate with local, state and federal entities, as well as community partners, to create affordable housing and eliminate barriers to fair housing.



Strategy 3: Pursue strategic economic development initiatives and create a communication program aimed at retaining and attracting business, stimulating investment, and establishing Lake County's prominence as a desirable place to work and live.

Action A: In conjunction with stakeholders, provide an integrated and cohesive message promoting economic development initiatives, the environment, tourism, recreation, the arts, culture, and quality of life.

Action B: Support tourism industry and Visit Lake County's advocacy for destination-enhancing product development and new signature events that support all Lake County amenities in Lake County Partners + Visit Lake County package (e.g., Lake County Restaurant Week).

Action C: Enhance standard of living by supporting economic development in underserved communities.



GOAL 3: IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE

STRATEGIC STATEMENT: Develop and implement solutions that support modern, equitable, comprehensive, safe, and sustainable transportation, water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure systems.

HIGHLIGHT

Lake County Joins Waze Connected Citizens Program

In 2018 Lake County launched a data-sharing partnership with Waze which gives our traffic engineers access to real-time road activity as reported by Waze users. Using the data from motorist insights, with information already generated through the Lake County PASSAGE system, operators can make well informed decisions and act to reduce congestion and help keep traffic moving.

Strategy 1: Provide County facilities to adequately meet long-term needs.

Action A: Develop a sustainable funding source and long-term strategy to address facility maintenance and expansion needs.

Action B: Work with departments and partners to regularly assess facility needs to ensure projects are incorporated into the Strategic Facilities Master Plan as needs evolve.



Strategy 2: Develop and implement transportation solutions that provide safe alternatives to single occupied vehicles.

Action A: Expand the system of non-motorized travel options available as outlined in Lake County's Policy on Infrastructure Guidelines for Non-Motorized Travel Investments.

Action B: To increase ridership, develop and implement "first mile-last mile" linkages (the gap at the start and end of every trip that's difficult for traditional transit operators to service in a cost-effective way) between transit locations and businesses, hospitals, retail, parks, and homes.



Strategy 3: Leverage and maximize the use of new and emerging technologies, applications, and studies to enhance the safety and capabilities of infrastructure systems located within Lake County and the region.

Action A: Continue to analyze and improve the Lake County PASSAGE system with new technologies and communicate its use and availability. Look for opportunities to partner on the expansion of the system's capabilities with outside vendors and municipalities into a Regional Intelligent Transportation System.

Action B: Continue to implement new cutting-edge technologies and business practices in the management of our water and wastewater treatment facilities.

Action C: Create and find new ways to protect and design flood-resilient infrastructure.



Strategy 4: Advance regional consensus on infrastructure solutions by collaborating with state and regional agencies, and local communities.

Action A: Develop a modern, multi-modal and comprehensive transportation plan that reduces trip times, air pollution and carbon emissions, protects our valuable open space and positions Lake County to be competitive in a 21st-century economy.

Action B: Advocate and work closely with the Illinois Department of Transportation, municipal, township and State elected officials to add capacity to state highway corridors based on the priorities identified in the updated Lake County State Highway Consensus Plan.

Action C: Monitor and utilize the data developed from Environmental Impact Statement on Route 53/120 and help engage stakeholders in a process to evaluate and consider alternatives.

Action D: Provide leadership, coordination and technical assistance to support stakeholders in implementing recommendations of the Lake County Paratransit Market Analysis study.



Strategy 5: Work collaboratively with State, regional and local agencies and County residents to reduce the number of fatal and serious injury crashes on Lake County roadways.

Action A: Work with the Lake County Sheriff, local law enforcement and other agencies to develop a public education safety campaign targeting distracted driving to reduce fatal and serious injuries.

Action B: Continue to use engineering best practices and available data in the design and construction of transportation improvements that enhance safety (i.e., modern roundabouts) and non-motorized transit.



GOAL 4: PROMOTE A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

STRATEGIC STATEMENT: Preserve the health of our natural resources, air, and drinking water through the widespread use of environmentally sustainable management practices, effective stormwater management, carbon footprint reduction, and the enhancement and rehabilitation of lakes and other ecological systems.

HIGHLIGHT

Communities Partner to Encourage Solar Power Installations in Lake County

As the cost of solar power decreases, community interest in solar energy is surging. Lake County, in partnership with local municipalities and with technical support from solar industry experts, convened a regional Solar Energy Task Force in 2019 to discuss best practices in regulating solar installations. Participants developed a model ordinance for communities to use in adopting state-of-the-art solar zoning codes, which will provide clarity on the solar options that can be installed and the path to implementing them.

Strategy 1: Implement renewable and conservation-related energy technologies and incorporate environmentally sustainable practices in the delivery of County programs and services.

Action A: Review, draft, adopt and implement policies and ordinances that promote sustainable environmental practices, such as the reduction of the County's carbon footprint, the encouragement of renewable energy technologies, and clean air regulations. Evaluate budgeting and procurement processes to support these initiatives across all departments.

Action B: Expand options for the County's fleet of vehicles, allowing for the procurement of battery operated or hybrid vehicles.

Action C: Analyze and work towards the reduction of the County's current carbon footprint through the development of a roadmap with methods that include the implementation of new technologies and practices including the use of solar power.



Strategy 2: Work with residents, businesses, and other governments to raise awareness about sustainable environmental choices.

Action A: Raise awareness through targeted community outreach and education on textiles drop-off sites, residential hazardous waste collection, surface water pollutant reduction, options for renewable energy, and water conservation.



Strategy 3: Implement long-term solutions for increasing waste diversion, reducing the toxicity of our waste, and developing long-term disposal options.

Action A: Continue to implement the recommendations from the 60% Recycling Taskforce.

Action B: Work with SWALCO and other stakeholder groups to support electronic recycling programs; creating end-markets for compost material; waste diversion and recycling within County facilities; food scrap diversion programs; reduction in total waste; waste diversion from landfills; composting; and recycling.

Action C: Develop educational programs with outreach focused on industry recognized recycling practices and guidelines.



Strategy 4: Protect and preserve natural resources and ecological systems.

Action A: Evaluate and promote alternative land use policies and practices. Research code updates to provide incentives for green infrastructure, including green site design innovations, to enhance the County's natural resources and ecological systems, such as sustainable agriculture and local food initiatives, sustainable agriculture, and hydroponic farming.

Action B: Improve air quality by establishing a schedule for building energy audits and fleet management, and by researching and implementing practices to reduce pollutants and exploring methods to measure the County's carbon footprint.

Action C: Implement and report on the Sustainability Chapter of the Lake County Regional Framework to encourage sustainable development practices.



Strategy 5: Develop a "One Water" Management strategy to holistically approach challenges throughout the entire water cycle.

Action A: Develop programs to reduce overall water consumption by migrating from wells to Lake Michigan water sources.

Action B: Improve the sanitary sewer system and reduce pollutants in all water sources through a sustained program to replace aging infrastructure that collects and treats sanitary waste.

Action C: Remain ahead of environmental discharge standards for water reclamation facilities and enhance the reuse of biological solids as class A fertilizers.

Action D: Develop programs to mitigate the effects of high rainfall events. Reduce storm water infiltration into the sanitary sewer collection systems.

Action E: Coordinate with municipal and agency stakeholders through watershed working groups to reduce pollutants from ground water runoff into water systems and develop an integrated governance approach to water management.



GOAL 5: BUILD HEALTHY, INCLUSIVE, AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

STRATEGIC STATEMENT: Improve quality of life for all Lake County residents by assuring the places where they live, work and play have the critical elements required to make communities safe, healthy, inclusive, and vibrant.

HIGHLIGHT

Community Members Participate in Mental Health First Aid Courses

More than 50% of people will be diagnosed with a mental illness or disorder at some point in their lifetime. Often times, individuals with mental health problems do not seek help. Hundreds of community members were trained in 2019 on how to notice when someone needs help, and how to assist someone developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis.



Strategy 1:
Improve policy, systems, and environmental design to promote improvement in health outcomes for all Lake County residents through the understanding of social and environmental determinants of health.

Action A: Leverage Live Well Lake County (LWLC) and the Lake County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) to assist in focused policy, system, and environmental interventions designed to improve the health of all County residents.

Action B: Increase the number of municipalities in Lake County which have safe routes for walking and biking through the WLC Walking Action Team and Go Lake County initiatives.

Action C: Encourage social service agency cooperation and continue to leverage and expand communication tools, information sharing and other resources to assist service agencies to treat clients holistically.

Action D: Continue to work with emergency preparedness teams in Lake County and partner organizations in the public and private sectors to cultivate disaster-resilient communities and individuals through outreach, joint planning, training, and workshops.



Strategy 2:
Expand access to behavioral health services in Lake County and reduce the stigma of behavioral health-related conditions.

Action A: Expand access to behavioral health services through joint development of substance abuse and mental health treatment planning and coordinated case management. In collaboration with community partners, launch a public awareness campaign focused on reducing the stigma of behavioral health-related conditions.

Action B: Support data-sharing initiatives of service providers in Lake County to create an increased understanding of population demand for behavioral health services and homeless services; availability of providers in Lake County; potential shifts in demand based on market trends; and coordinated efforts of service providers.

Action C: Evaluate gaps in meeting the needs of the chronically homeless and those experiencing mental health conditions and recommend strategies for addressing any gaps in service.



Strategy 3:
Foster a culture in Lake County that embraces diversity and inclusion, seeks to understand our differences and leverages the power of diverse perspectives and people in order to shape a brighter future for our communities.

Action A: Be leaders and role models in the community on issues of human dignity, equality, mutual respect, diversity and inclusion.

Action B: Develop and adopt a comprehensive county Equity and Inclusion Plan covering different areas such as housing, transportation, health and human services, the justice system and the environment.

Action C: Create internally focused goal areas such as leadership, operations, policies and budgets that include evaluation through an equity lens while being transparent by providing a system that is publicly visible.



