LakeCounty

LAKE COUNTY
DIGITAL
GROWTH
INITIATIVE

Waukegan Community
Development Committee

Waukegan Public
Wi-Fi Project

Matt Meyers, Deputy County Administrator
January 5th, 2026

1/14/2026

Lake County Digital Growth Initiative
Broadband and Digital Equity Action Plan

LAKE COUNTY DIGITAL GROWTH INITIATIVE

LakeCounty

Availability & Access
Expand countywide access to reliable, high-speed broadband infrastructure

1. Support the BEAD Process
2. Implement a Dig Once Policy
3. Public Wi-Fi

Adoption & Affordability
Remove barriers to affordable internet, device access, and digital skills training

4. Device Distribution Campaign
5. Expand Digital Navigators
6. Coordinate Digital Literacy Programming

Governance & Sustainability
Build an ecosystem of local partners to drive digital inclusion efforts

7. Hire Digital Equity Staff
8. Create a County-led Broadband and Digital Equity Coalition
9. Launch a Digital Equity Resource Website

Check out the Lake County Broadband and Digital Equity Action Plan
https://lakecountyil.gov/broadband

Our Vision: **A connected, thriving, and inclusive Lake County where the internet is accessible and affordable and where all residents are equipped with the resources needed to participate in an increasingly digital society.**

From Planning to Implementation: Aligned Initiatives

Lake County Broadband & Digital Equity Action Plan
- Availability & Access: Expand countywide access to reliable, high-speed broadband infrastructure
- Strategy 3-1: Increase free, public internet access in downtown areas using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds
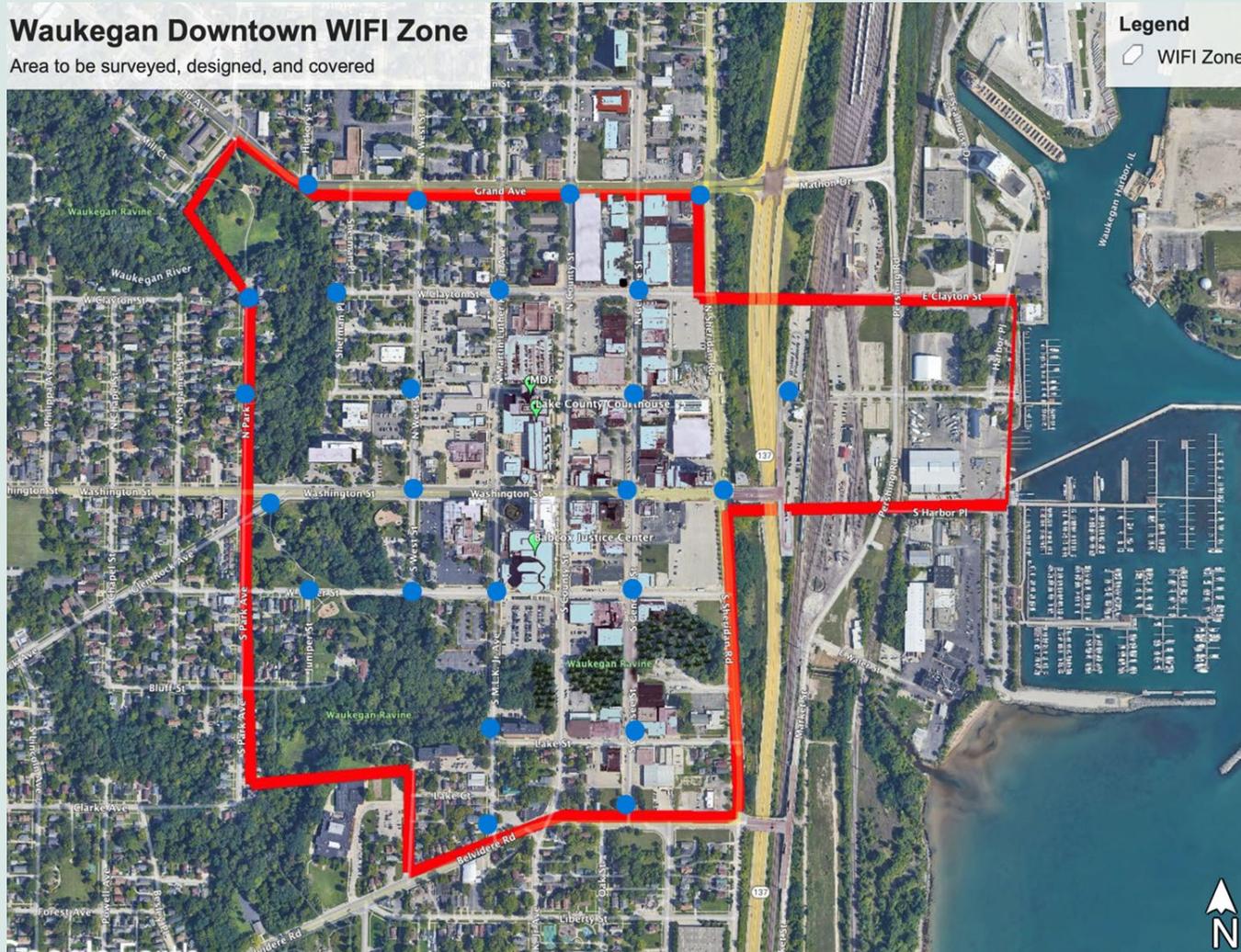
Rebuild Waukegan Campaign
- Downtown revitalization, economic development, and community reinvestment

Waukegan Public Wi-Fi Project
- Free, public Wi-Fi deployed in priority areas to support residents, businesses, and visitors

Mockup of Waukegan Public Wi-Fi Network

Waukegan Downtown WIFI Zone
Area to be surveyed, designed, and covered

Legend
◯ WIFI Zone

Requested Action Today:

Approval to authorize the County to enter into an intergovernmental agreement with the City of Waukegan to implement the Public Wi-Fi Project.

IGA Approval Enables:

- Formal County - City partnership
- Installation and operation of public Wi-Fi infrastructure
- Launch of the Waukegan Public Wi-Fi in a downtown area

1/14/2026

Questions