



# LAKE COUNTY BROADBAND PLAN: **SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING**

September 1, 2023

# **DIG ONCE POLICY DISCUSSION**



# **DIG ONCE POLICY** | Following the signing of the State of Illinois Dig Once Act on July 28<sup>th</sup>, Lake County could explore enacting its own Dig Once Policy



Source: [National League of Cities](#); [Broadband Now](#)

## About “Dig Once” Policies

- **Dig Once policies provide a framework for streamlining and coordinating major infrastructure improvements.** State and local governments have enacted varying types of Dig Once policies.
- Many Dig Once policies focus on the installation of new broadband and telecommunications infrastructure (ex. buried conduits) during the excavation phase of major infrastructure projects – such as roadway or sewer system construction. **Dig Once policies aim to minimize right-of-way disruptions by laying the groundwork for broadband/digital infrastructure at the same time as other excavations.**
- Other Dig Once policies may be *less* focused on infrastructure build-out – and more on aligning departments and agencies so multiple investments can be made simultaneously (ex. upgrading water and sewer lines while rehabilitating a roadway).
- Dig Once policies can be applied to capital improvement coordination within a local government and across jurisdictions.

## Potential Challenges

- Road and infrastructure projects are typically costly and include a great deal of operational oversight and coordination. **Some places have opposed dig once policies as they may create more operational overhead and expenses.**

# DIG ONCE POLICY | State and local governments have enacted varying types of Dig Once policies

## Case Studies

- **Boston, MA:** Boston implemented its original Dig Once policy in 1988. In 1994, the city also implemented a policy that **required all telecom companies to install conduits in the same trench at the same time, on a shared-cost basis**. This policy requires a lead company to coordinate with other telecom entities in drafting engineering plans and estimating costs for the trenching and conduit installation. In 2018, the City adopted a Smart Utilities Policy that calls for the integration of five Smart Utilities Technologies (SUTs) across energy, water, telecommunications, and transportation. Each stage of development review involves multiple departments and agencies working in coronation.
- **Chicago, IL:** The City of Chicago created a specific office that handles coordinating construction projects across agencies and companies to minimize disruptions to the public. The Project Coordination Office was formed in 2012 to coordinate projects within public rights-of-way between different service providers and utilities and expanded to include telecommunications. **The office has helped the City save an estimated \$150 million in construction costs since 2012.**
- **San Benito County, CA:** San Benito County, part of the Central Coast Broadband Consortium (CCBC), implemented Dig Once practices as part of a multi-use streets policy. It requires county roadway construction projects to include installation of underground utility conduit. The County, which is part of a municipal broadband network, can then use the conduit to expand the network. The County may also utilize the CCBC's shadow conduit policy, which recommends that trenching digging projects include a **60-day window to notify other telecom or utility providers who may be interested in installing conduit at the same time**. The County encourages local jurisdictions to adopt similar policies.

Source: [Broadband Now](#)

# DIG ONCE POLICY | Lake County may consider enacting new policies to facilitate and streamline broadband expansion

Case Studies (cont.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Sandy, OR:</b> The City of Sandy requires private developers to install conduit when disturbing existing roads or building new ones and offers maps of existing installations so that developers can be strategic in how they install conduit. The City added broadband fiber to the list of municipal infrastructure that all new developments must include.</li><li><b>Arlington County, VA:</b> Arlington County does not have a specific Dig Once policy, but the county has reached “Dig Once” agreements with utility providers in the past. The County entered into one such agreement with electric utility Dominion Virginia Power. The utility needed to install underground conduit along a congested public right-of-way. The county required the utility to install fiber in parallel conduit for the county’s use.</li></ul>

Source: [Broadband Now](#)

Recommendation for Lake County
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>The exploration of a Lake County Dig Once Policy should be considered in tandem with other potential policies that further facilitate and streamline broadband expansion</b> – Dig Once, one touch policies for pole attachments, streamlined permitting process, and more.</li><li><b>These opportunities will be explored further as part of the final Lake County Broadband Plan.</b></li></ul>